

SERMON
Sunday of All Saints (1st Sunday of Matthew)
(Mt. 10:32-33, 37-38, 19:27-30)
(7 June 2026)

Our Holy Church comes today, my beloved Christians, on the Sunday following Pentecost—after the coming of the Comforter Spirit into the world—to remind us what the results and fruits of the coming of the Holy Spirit are; what the new reality is that bursts, we might say, “like a mighty rushing wind” (cf. Acts 2:2) into the history of the world and renews all things. This new condition, this new power, is holiness, the supreme fruit of the Spirit. That is why the wisdom of the Fathers places this present Sunday of All Saints immediately after the Sunday of Pentecost, in order to show in this way as well the direct and indissoluble connection between holiness and the All-Holy and Life-giving Spirit.

It is as though the Church says to us today: “See how the Holy Spirit transformed our world. The whole inhabited earth has been filled with saints—from North to South and from East to West: Apostles and Martyrs, Ascetics and Righteous ones, with Panagia the Mother of our Lord foremost among them.” Therefore today is a great feast, in which our Church celebrates the saints of all ages, all places, and every rank—known and unknown, forgotten and humble, as well as great and beloved by the people. It is as though the Church does not distinguish among them, but celebrates and honours them all together as one body, with particular splendour and solemnity, because one and only one and indivisible is the source of holiness: the All-Holy Spirit, who proceeds from the Father and is sent through the Son.

Christ speaks to us in today’s Gospel about attaining this very holiness, about its prerequisites and “conditions” —not, of course, in a legalistic or moralistic sense, as though through a code of behaviour one merely improves ethically. Holiness is obviously not confined to morality nor exhausted by moralism. Rather, it is that gift which Christ gives to the human person; it is the fullness of life bestowed by the Holy Spirit, which transformed all those people whom we celebrate on this Sunday and gave them strength either for martyrdom, for ascetic struggles, for bearing the cross of pain, sickness, and injustice, and above all and chiefly for total love of the Lord. For this, in the end, is holiness: love and union with Christ.

And in today’s Gospel the Lord sets before each one of us three basic prerequisites in order to transcend our individuality and be united with Him.

First of all, Christ asks of us a “confession of faith”: that we believe in and confess Christ as true and perfect God and man, without being led astray by various heretics. Holiness and heresy are two realities absolutely incompatible with one another. All the saints whom we celebrate today are genuine children of the One, Holy, Catholic Church, and not of the various heretical and schismatic groups that ravage our faith.

The second thing the Lord asks of us is to give absolute priority to our relationship with Him. Indeed, He expresses this with a phrase that is often misunderstood: “He who loves father or mother more than Me is not worthy of Me; and he who loves son or daughter more than Me is not worthy of Me” (Matt. 10:37). Clearly Christ does not mean that we should not love and care for our family members—far from it. Rather, the Lord asks us not to give absolute value to biological relationships, which in any case will cease in the Kingdom of God, but before and above all to strive to become children of God and heirs of the Kingdom.

And the third thing the Lord asks of all of us is the taking up of our Cross—that is, patience and endurance amid the sorrows and difficulties of daily life. These are virtues that in our days have been lost, since Christians have ceased to pray and seek the mercy of God, desiring only temporary and fleeting happiness; and when something unpleasant happens, they rebel and complain against God. Without the Cross, we shall never see the Resurrection.

On this path, then, let us walk, my beloved brethren, as the Lord asks of us today, so that we may become like All the Saints whom we celebrate and inherit eternal life.