

## Closing Prayer

All-holy God,  
you call your people to holiness.  
As we keep the festival of your saints,  
give us their meekness and poverty of spirit,  
a thirst for righteousness,  
and purity of heart.

May we share with them the richness of your kingdom  
and be clothed in the glory you bestow.

Grant this through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,  
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
God for ever and ever.

*Opening prayers · All Saints<sup>3</sup>*

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<sup>3</sup> *Opening prayers : scripture-related collects for the years A, B and C from the sacramentary / International Commission on English in the Liturgy. – Norwich : Canterbury Press, 1999.*

## All Saints' Day

*1 November · (All Saints' Sunday is the Sunday between 30 October and 5 November inclusive)*

### Principal Service readings<sup>1</sup>

Daniel 7. 1-3, 15-18

Daniel's dream of the four beasts and of the holy ones of God

Psalms 149

Praise for the Lord and victory for his people

Ephesians 1.11-23

Christ is head over all things

Luke 6.20-31

The Lukan beatitudes

### Opening Prayer

Lord Jesus Christ,  
speak to our hearts in the stillness,  
keep us steadfast in the foundation that cannot be shaken,  
lift up our eyes to behold the vision of your glory;  
and perfect our faith, now and always. Amen.

Society of Saint Francis

### Gospel Reading

#### *The Beatitudes*

<sup>20</sup>Then Jesus looked up at his disciples and said:

‘Blessed are you who are poor,  
for yours is the kingdom of God.

<sup>21</sup>‘Blessed are you who are hungry now,  
for you will be filled.

‘Blessed are you who weep now,  
for you will laugh.

<sup>22</sup>‘Blessed are you when people hate you, and when they exclude you, revile you, and defame you on account of the Son of Man. <sup>23</sup>Rejoice on that day and leap for joy, for surely your reward is great in heaven; for that is what their ancestors did to the prophets.

<sup>24</sup>‘But woe to you who are rich,  
for you have received your consolation.

<sup>25</sup>‘Woe to you who are full now,  
for you will be hungry.

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<sup>1</sup> Other readings are appointed for the Sunday if these are used on 1 November.

‘Woe to you who are laughing now,  
for you will mourn and weep.

<sup>26</sup>Woe to you when all speak well of you, for that is what their ancestors did to the false prophets.

<sup>27</sup>But I say to you that listen, Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, <sup>28</sup>bless those who curse you, pray for those who abuse you. <sup>29</sup>If anyone strikes you on the cheek, offer the other also; and from anyone who takes away your coat do not withhold even your shirt. <sup>30</sup>Give to everyone who begs from you; and if anyone takes away your goods, do not ask for them again. <sup>31</sup>Do to others as you would have them do to you.

Luke 6.20-31 NRSV<sup>2</sup>

## Comments and Questions

Luke’s Beatitudes seem to have a common source with Matthew’s (Matthew 5.1-12). However, whereas the setting in Matthew is a mountain, Luke sets his on a plain (6.17). Matthew’s version comes after the calling of four disciples and a general statement about Jesus’ ministry (Matthew 4.18-25), while Luke’s follows the call of the twelve and a general statement about Jesus’ ministry (6.12-19). Luke’s version is about a quarter the length of Matthew’s, for Matthew includes much material found elsewhere in the gospels, and offers interpretative material, so that scholars conclude that Luke follows more closely their common source.

Matthew has eight beatitudes whereas Luke has four, followed by four maledictions. Matthew gives blessings spiritual interpretations, whereas Luke lists four classes of the underprivileged whose disadvantages evoke God’s blessing and the reversal of material disadvantage (cf. 16.25). In Matthew Jesus uses the third person (Blessed are those ...) whereas in Luke he uses the second person (Blessed are you ...). The four maledictions are warnings corresponding to the beatitudes. Throughout Luke’s gospel there is an emphasis on the dangers of wealth and the need for almsgiving (see 3.11; 6.30; 7.5; 11.41; 12.33-34; 14.13-14; 16.9; 18.22; 19.8; Acts 9.36; 10.2, 4, 31).

<sup>2</sup> New Revised Standard Version Bible is copyright © 1989 Division of Christian Education of the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the United States of America.

## Quotations

### 1

One of the dangers of having a lot of money is that you may be quite satisfied with the kinds of happiness money can give, and so fail to realise your need for God. If everything seems to come simply by signing cheques, you may forget that you are at every moment totally dependent on God.

Mere Christianity / C. S. Lewis. 1942

### 2

Blessed are the single-hearted, for they shall enjoy much peace. If you refuse to be hurried and pressed, if you stay your soul on God, nothing can keep you from that clearness of spirit which is life and peace. In that stillness you will know what His will is.

Amy Carmichael, 1867–1951

### 3

Jesus makes it clear that the way to God is the same as the way to a new childhood. The innocence that is reached through conscious choices. The Beatitudes offer me the simplest route for the journey home, back into the house of my Father. And along this route I will discover the joys of the second childhood: comfort, mercy, and an ever clearer vision of God. It’s a place where I can live in freedom without obsessions and compulsions.

*The return of the prodigal son: a story of homecoming* / Henri J. M. Nouwen. 1991

## Related topics

*For further study:*

Saints; eschatology; kingdom of God; soteriology