

## **ALL SAINTS**

*Gospel: Matthew 5:1-12*

When Jesus saw the crowds, he went up the mountain; and after he sat down, his disciples came to him. Then he began to speak, and taught them, saying:

“Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.  
Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted.  
Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth.  
Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled.  
Blessed are the merciful, for they will receive mercy.  
Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God.  
Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God.  
Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.  
Blessed are you when people revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account. Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven, for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you.”

### **REFLECTION 1:**

### **SAINT A (ANOTHER)**

At this time, the eyes of the Catholic world are focused on the Synod for the Family in Rome. Today we celebrate the Feast of All Saints when we honour those men and women who were outstanding in living out in full their Baptismal and Confirmation commitment. Most of the canonised saints with whom we are familiar, although born and reared within the family, lived out their saintly lives as celibates (single) as priests, monks, nuns, bishops and popes. For instance, of the 14 saints we commemorate this November, only two, St. Elizabeth of Hungary and St. Margaret of Scotland, were married, having three and eight children respectively. The majority of Christians are married men and women and it would be unhelpful to think that the honour of sainthood could be dived against them.

The saints have played a pivotal role in the growth and development of the Christian faith. They dared to live fully the life of a Christian. So it is important that the story of their deeds be kept alive amongst us. It is so easy to cast the lives of the saints into mere objects of cult, the flavour of the times or use them only to obtain favours. One saint in his lifetime, St Damien, the Leper priest, was accustomed to saying to people, 'don't honour me, honour Jesus Christ, don't imitate me, imitate Christ, he is the original, I am only a pale copy'.

The Feast of All Saints brings the holy ones to our attention precisely because they imitated Christ in his life on earth. The famous classic by Thomas à Kempis, *The Imitation of Christ*, reminds us that only by following Jesus Christ can we be deemed worthy of the Kingdom. It's little use saying we have great devotion to this or that saint, if that devotion doesn't change our lives. The words of Christ need to be fleshed out by example. We may even forget what the saints have said, but if we remember how they lived it could change our lives. One does not need to be a celibate monk, priest, nun, bishop or pope to be a saint. Saint A Another, married or single - odds even will do!