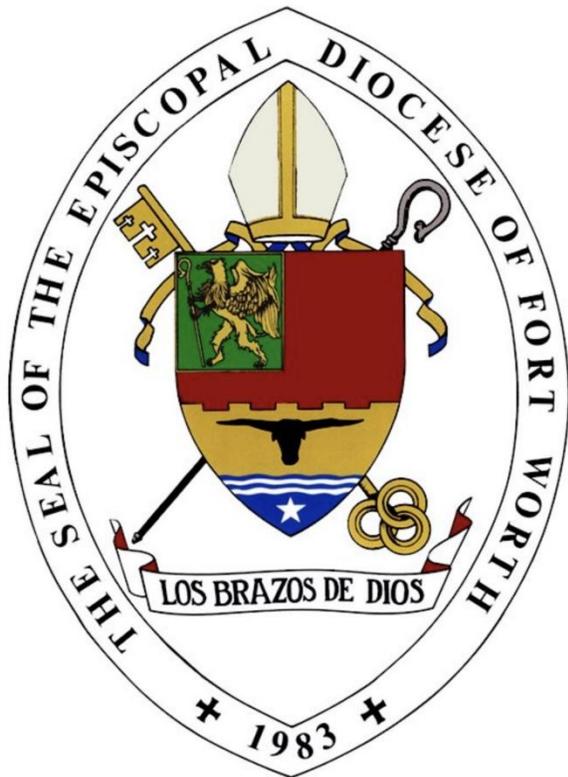


EQUIPPING THE SAINTS

A lectionary-based Sunday school curriculum for Pre-K through High School



ALL SAINTS' DAY

November 1 or
Transferred to
Sunday between
October 30 and
November 5

A free resource created by the Christian Education Commission
of the Anglican Diocese of Fort Worth

Sunday School Curriculum for All Saints' Sunday, Year A

Lectionary Texts:

Ecclesiasticus 44:1-14 or Revelation 7:9-17

Psalms 149

Revelation 7:9-17 or Ephesians 1:(11-14)15-23

Matthew 5:1-12

Ecclesiasticus 44:1-10, 13-14

Let us now sing the praises of famous men,
our ancestors in their generations.
The Lord apportioned to them great glory,
his majesty from the beginning.
There were those who ruled in their kingdoms,
and made a name for themselves by their valor;
those who gave counsel because they were intelligent;
those who spoke in prophetic oracles;
those who led the people by their counsels
and by their knowledge of the people's lore;
they were wise in their words of instruction;
those who composed musical tunes,
or put verses in writing;
rich men endowed with resources,
living peacefully in their homes--
all these were honored in their generations,
and were the pride of their times.
Some of them have left behind a name,
so that others declare their praise.
But of others there is no memory;
they have perished as though they had never existed;
they have become as though they had never been born,
they and their children after them.
But these also were godly men,
whose righteous deeds have not been forgotten;
their prosperity will remain with their descendants,
and their inheritance to their children's children.
Their descendants stand by the covenants;

their children also, for their sake.
Their offspring will continue forever,
and their glory will never be blotted out.
Their bodies are buried in peace,
but their name lives on generation after generation.

Psalm 149

1 Hallelujah!
Sing to the LORD a new song; *
sing his praise in the congregation of the faithful.

2 Let Israel rejoice in his Maker; *
let the children of Zion be joyful in their King.

3 Let them praise his Name in the dance; *
let them sing praise to him with timbrel and harp.

4 For the LORD takes pleasure in his people *
and adorns the poor with victory.

5 Let the faithful rejoice in triumph; *
let them be joyful on their beds.

6 Let the praises of God be in their throat *
and a two-edged sword in their hand;

7 To wreak vengeance on the nations *
and punishment on the peoples;

8 To bind their kings in chains *
and their nobles with links of iron;

9 To inflict on them the judgment decreed; *
this is glory for all his faithful people.
Hallelujah!

Revelation 7:2-4, 9-17

I saw another angel ascending from the rising of the sun, having the seal of the living God, and he called with a loud voice to the four angels who had been given power to damage earth and sea, saying, "Do not damage the earth or the sea or the trees, until we have marked the servants of our God with a seal on their foreheads."

And I heard the number of those who were sealed, one hundred forty-four thousand, sealed out of every tribe of the people of Israel.

After this I looked, and there was a great multitude that no one could count, from every nation, from all tribes and peoples and languages, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, robed in white, with palm branches in their hands. They cried out in a loud voice, saying,

"Salvation belongs to our God who is seated on the throne, and to the Lamb!" And all the angels stood around the throne and around the elders and the four living creatures, and they fell on their faces before the throne and worshiped God, singing,

"Amen! Blessing and glory and wisdom and thanksgiving and honor and power and might be to our God forever and ever! Amen.

"Then one of the elders addressed me, saying, "Who are these, robed in white, and where have they come from? "I said to him, "Sir, you are the one that knows. " Then he said to me, "These are they who have come out of the great ordeal; they have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.

For this reason they are before the throne of God, and worship him day and night within his temple, and the one who is seated on the throne will shelter them. They will hunger no more, and thirst no more; the sun will not strike them, nor any scorching heat; for the Lamb at the center of the throne will be their shepherd, and he will guide them to springs of the water of life, and God will wipe away every tear from their eyes."

Ephesians 1:(11-14) 15-23

¹¹ We were also chosen to belong to him. God decided to choose us long ago in keeping with his plan. He works out everything to fit his plan and purpose. ¹² We were the first to put our hope in Christ. We were chosen to bring praise to his glory. ¹³ You also became believers in Christ. That happened when you heard the message of truth. It was the good news about how you could be saved. When you believed, he stamped you with an official mark. That official mark is the Holy Spirit that he promised. ¹⁴ The

Spirit marks us as God's own. We can now be sure that someday we will receive all that God has promised. That will happen after God sets all his people completely free. All these things will bring praise to his glory.

Paul Prays and Gives Thanks

¹⁵ I have heard about your faith in the Lord Jesus. I have also heard about your love for all God's people. That is why ¹⁶ I have not stopped thanking God for you. I always remember you in my prayers. ¹⁷ I pray to the God of our Lord Jesus Christ. God is the glorious Father. I keep asking him to give you the wisdom and understanding that come from the Holy Spirit. I want you to know God better. ¹⁸ I pray that you may understand more clearly. Then you will know the hope God has chosen you to receive. You will know that what God will give his holy people is rich and glorious. ¹⁹ And you will know God's great power. It can't be compared with anything else. His power works for us who believe. It is the same mighty strength ²⁰ God showed. He showed this when he raised Christ from the dead. God seated him at his right hand in his heavenly kingdom. ²¹ There Christ sits far above all who rule and have authority. He also sits far above all powers and kings. He is above every name that is appealed to in this world and in the world to come. ²² God placed all things under Christ's rule. He appointed him to be ruler over everything for the church. ²³ The church is Christ's body and is filled by Christ. He fills everything in every way.

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.

Overview of the Texts:

Each of the texts today speaks of what happens to the faithful. The promise is eternal peace in the love of God. What comfort we find in knowing that those who love Jesus find eternal rest in his loving arms! Today we celebrate All Saints' Day. The great Saints, faithful servants of God, are a guiding light to the saints of the world that are growing in knowledge and love of the world. Capital S Saints are those that are recognized by the Church as shining examples of those who have given their love and often their lives in the service of God. They are the heroes of the faith, great teachers and mentors to us, and our ever-present prayer partners. Lowercase s saints are you and me. We aspire to holiness in our day-to-day vocations. We also aspire to that same heavenly peace that the uppercase Saints do. We may not ever get the chance to show our faith in the way many of the Saints have – by amazing religious legacies, miraculous actions, or in dying for the faith – but we can seek holiness in our everyday life. We can seek it at work, home, school, in social circles, and when we are alone. Holiness isn't just for Sundays!

Sometimes the role of Saints in our own religious life is confusing. Are we praying TO the Saints? Are they equal to God? We pray WITH the Saints, and the Saints pray for us. They are not co-equal with God, but as very holy people, they offer valuable intercession with the Lord they have loved and served so well. What can they do for us? First and foremost, they pray for us. Some Saints have special intentions in their prayer for particular types of people or situations (St. Christopher for travelers, St. Jude for lost causes, St. Peregrine for cancer patients, St. Michael for police officers). In addition to praying for and with us, the Saints offer us an example of holiness, selflessness, service, and faith. We look to their lives to inspire us in our own pursuit of holiness. They remind us of what to aim for even if we are not as highly focused as the Saints. We also learn about our own history as Christians as well as having a clearer understanding of God's will through their actions. On this day, we honor the Saints that are such an important part of our faith.

PreK-Kinder / Pre-Reader Lesson Plan:

Opening Prayer: Lord's Prayer

Supplies & Preparation:

Supplies: Paper option: multiple colors of construction or tissue paper, black construction paper, scissors, glue. Scratch off option: small scratch off rainbow sheets (available in most craft stores or online from Sax Arts and Crafts). Plastic mosaic tile

option: clear colored plastic mosaic tiles (available from Oriental Trading Company), gel glue, small (5") needlepoint hoops, clear plastic (any kind will do – saran wrap, a section of ziplock bag, cellophane, etc.

Preparation: Paper option: cut pointed arch outlines from black construction paper, tear construction or tissue paper. Scratch off option: purchase or order cards. Plastic mosaic option: order mosaic tiles, load plastic into needlepoint hoops, make sure you have plenty of gel glue.

Activity:

Go on a field trip into the church and look at the stained glass windows. These almost always include scenes of Saints. Look at how the Saints are depicted. There might be something in the picture that indicates something about the life of the Saint and maybe a symbol of how they were martyred. If your parish is named for a Saint, discuss that Saint's life and why they were chosen as the name of your parish.

Help the students understand what a Saint is. Saints are people who have lived holy lives that are an example to all who love Jesus. Saints can teach us things about how to be a good servant of God. Saints often teach about the kingdom of God and what kind of lives we should live. Sometimes Saints perform miracles or have miracles happen to them. Saints help God and help us. Once someone becomes a Saint, they are a good person to pray with because they have a special love for us and want to help us to know God better.

Craft:

As a craft, have the children make stained glass windows depicting themselves as saints (explain that we can all be saints – or "God's helpers"), or the church's namesake, or their favorite Saint. The windows can be made in any one of the following ways:

- Construction or tissue paper bits, black construction paper window frame (a pointed arch outline*), glue sticks, paste or glue. *For best results, fold paper in half lengthwise and cut the outside shape, then cut out the middle giving a one inch margin. As students glue the pieces of paper on make sure the pieces overlap with the black frame and each other so that the whole piece hangs together.
- Black scratch off paper that reveals rainbow colors underneath (available from Sax Arts and Crafts under the title "Multi-Color Scratch-Art Paper", also usually available at crafts stores like Hobby Lobby or Michael's).

- Transparent colored plastic multi-shaped mosaic tiles (available from <http://www.discountschoolsupply.com/Product/ProductDetail.aspx?Product=1397&rec=PDHtop>) and gel glue on clear plastic in a small needlepoint hoop – lay down copious amounts of blue gel school glue to glue in plastic tiles and fill in all gaps between tiles with glue.

Closing Prayer: Lord's Prayer

Elementary Lesson Plan:

Opening Prayer: Lord's Prayer, Hail Mary, Glory Be

Supplies & Preparation:

Supplies: white paper or card stock, saint crest examples, list of saint symbols, markers, glue if needed.

Preparation: research saint crests on the internet, print samples.

Activity:

Have the children read about the Saints in your windows or Saints that share their name or any that they find interesting. For a large list of Saints and their life stories, refer to www.newadvent.com.

Give them pages with blank shield/crest outlines on them. Students can find out a given Saints' symbol(s) and create a crest on the shield. You can prepare for this by pulling up images or info on sites like http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Saint_symbolism or by googling the words "saint crests" in the image search. Print off enough samples for the children to be able to choose from. Have each child give a brief report on their saint.

You can make these shields sturdier by either printing them on heavy card stock or gluing the paper copies to cardboard or poster board.

Closing Prayer: The Collect of the Day

Junior High/Senior High Lesson Plan:

Opening Prayer: Lord's Prayer, Apostles' Creed, Hail Mary

Supplies & Preparation: None

Discussion:

Have the students research more recent, modern Saints and Martyrs. This will give them a keener understanding of what some people are willing to do in the name of their love for the Lord. Modern examples will make the Saints seem more real. Rather than some person with a weird name from centuries ago getting burned at the stake, they can learn about people with which they can more closely identify. Ask them to pick their own "patron Saint," someone that they admire and would like to be more like. It is common in some denominations for youth that are being confirmed to choose a Saint name as their identity. This is a way for the youth to confirm his/her faith and set his/her sights on a goal of holiness in his/her life. Examples can be found in books that can be checked out of the local library ahead of time or collected from websites that cover such topics. To get a list of modern Saints, Google the phrase "modern Saints" or "Saints of the 20th Century" or similar titles. Print out some profiles for the students to explore. Have the students discuss the Saint they chose, expressing why they chose the person, what they most admire about the person, and how they hope to be like them.

Closing Prayer: The Collect of the Day