

## **All Saints Sunday 11/05/23 – A**

Today we gather to remember the saints who have lived and served faithfully. This body of Christ meant something to them, and this is what kept them active here. Today we have heard from present saints who have found a home here and are active.

On this All Saints Sunday, when we come to the table, remember that we will all be together around Jesus. My mother has always said that when she takes communion she is taking it with those saints who are already at home. We are the communion of saints gathering around Jesus to be strengthened, to be reminded that we have and continue to receive forgiveness, salvation and new life.

Everyone is welcome at this table. Today In our second lesson from Revelation we hear about one of John's visions. Picture this - There was a great multitude of people gathered before the throne. They were from every nation, from all tribes and peoples and languages, robed in white with palm branches in their hands. What a picture of diversity and inclusion!

Gathering before the throne can be for us gathering around the altar. It reminds us that in Jesus' eyes we are all viewed equally. It is where we remember that God's agape, sacrificial love was poured out through Jesus for all of us. The white robes in this lesson can remind us of this. It is one of the reasons for the white pall that some churches use at funerals to remind us that Jesus sees all of us the same.

The altar is also a place where we can bring ourselves just as we are. It is where we can bring our joys and concerns. The place where we can bring it all, what we are confused about, people we are concerned about, victims of injustice. It is a place where the voices of suffering can be heard.

We can gather around the altar in solidarity with all of the saints. This is what it means to be the communion of saints, the body of Christ, the beloved community. As the people gathered before the throne, and for us the altar, we can all shout "Blessing and glory and wisdom and thanksgiving and honor and power and strength be to our God forever and ever! Amen!"

Can you imagine if for just a moment, if we could recognize the beauty in the diversity of God's creation? It is where we are centered on bringing worship to God in Jesus Christ on the throne, around the altar along with those saints who have gone before. This is what we are doing today!

So today we gather around the altar as the communion of saints. Those of us worshipping here today and those who have gone before us. Each of us, all

together have come to worship Jesus. In this body of Christ, Faith Lutheran Church, we are strengthened by Jesus in the bread and wine, his body and blood, that we may go out and tell others about Jesus who offers all forgiveness, salvation and new life, to continue sharing the Gospel as our saints did who have gone home and they are now cheering us on.