

DIAKONIA Prayer Letter November

Since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles. And let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us, fixing our eyes on Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of faith.

Hebrews 12: 1-2a (New International Version)

Many church traditions commemorate the lives of particular saints during the year. For instance, October 4th - the Feast of St Francis – is recognised ecumenically as the final day of the Season of Creation.

All Saints Day (November 1st) is a time when the church takes time to reflect upon those – now departed - in whom we have seen the grace of God powerfully at work. It is a time when we can offer thanks for their example of faith in times of extraordinary crisis as well as the most ordinary circumstances. It is a time to remember those we have personally known who have borne faithful witness to Christ throughout their lives and have now, having fought a good fight, gone to their rest.

Our lives are connected together. Through baptism we become members one of another in Christ, members of a company of saints whose mutual belonging transcends death:

One family, we dwell in him, one Church, above, beneath;
though now divided by the stream, the narrow stream of death.

(Charles Wesley)

Take time this month to reflect on the 'everyday saints' who have inspired you, encouraged you – and left an example for you to follow. Take time to name them and what it is about their lives that inspires your journey of faith. And consider this also... the way your life and journey of faith might even now be serving as an inspiration and encouragement to others.

A pastoral prayer

Living God, in whom there is no shadow or change, we thank you for the gift of life eternal, and for all those who, having served you well, now rest from their labours. We thank you for all the saints remembered and forgotten, for those dear souls most precious to us. We bless you for their life and love, and rejoice for them "All is well, and all manner of things will be well." God of Jesus and our God, mindful of all those choice souls who have gone on ahead of us, teach us, and each 21st-century disciple of every race and place, to follow their example to the best of our ability:

- to feed the poor in body or spirit,
- to support and comfort the mourners and the repentant,
- to encourage the meek and stand with them in crises,
- to affirm those who hunger and thirst for righteousness,
- to cherish and learn from the merciful,
- to be humbled by, and stand with, the peacemakers.

Let us clearly recognise what it means to be called the children of God, and to know we are to be your saints neither by our own inclination nor in our own strength but simply by the call and the healing holiness of Christ Jesus our Saviour. Amen! *(Prayer by Bruce Prewer)*

Encourage us, Creative Spirit, to walk with footprints weighed in gratitude, to choose energy that sustains all life so that we leave only love in our trail.

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