

**Lessons and Discussion Questions  
for Sunday, Nov. 1, 2020 All Saints' Day**

Below are our lessons for Sunday as well as questions for you to ponder before we gather for Coffee Hour. Even though each of you will be discussing only one of the questions, my hope is that by providing you with all of the questions our time of sharing will be enhanced.

**The First Lesson  
Revelation 7:9-17**

After this I, John, 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."

**Psalm 34:1-10,22**

1 I will bless the Lord at all times; \*  
his praise shall ever be in my mouth.  
2 I will glory in the Lord; \*  
let the humble hear and rejoice.  
3 Proclaim with me the greatness of the Lord; \*  
let us exalt his Name together.  
4 I sought the Lord, and he answered me \*  
and delivered me out of all my terror.  
5 Look upon him and be radiant, \*  
and let not your faces be ashamed.  
6 I called in my affliction and the Lord heard me \*  
and saved me from all my troubles.  
7 The angel of the Lord encompasses those who fear him, \*  
and he will deliver them.  
8 Taste and see that the Lord is good; \*  
happy are they who trust in him!  
9 Fear the Lord, you that are his saints, \*  
for those who fear him lack nothing.  
10 The young lions lack and suffer hunger, \*  
but those who seek the Lord lack nothing that is good.  
22 The Lord ransoms the life of his servants, \* and  
none will be punished who trust in him.

## **The Epistle**

### **1 John 3:1-3**

See what love the Father has given us, that we should be called children of God; and that is what we are. The reason the world does not know us is that it did not know him. Beloved, we are God's children now; what we will be has not yet been revealed. What we do know is this: when he is revealed, we will be like him, for we will see him as he is. And all who have this hope in him purify themselves, just as he is pure.

## **The 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."

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### Group Discussion Questions for Coffee Hour

Today is All Saint's Day, a time that we commemorate the lives of those who lived into the reality of being members of God's community. To quote the Rev. Dr. Andrew Harmon: *Over the centuries, the church has identified the lives of the saints as tangible expressions of the beatitudes, of bodies who are poor in spirit, who mourn, who hunger and thirst for righteousness, who pursue peace. And so, it is fitting that our gospel text on this All Saints' Day is from the first portion of Jesus' Sermon on the Mount, a section concerned with the enumeration of the beatitudes.*

**Group One:** Do you find the practice of reflecting on the life of those who are no longer with us to be encouraging or discouraging? Why?

**Group Two:** In reading through the Beatitudes mentioned in today's lesson, do you see a role for yourself? Do you sense a call to serve others?

**Group Three:** Do you believe that our presence (meaning St. Peter's Church) in this community matters to those living in the community? In this time of social distancing, how might our church improve our service to this community?

**Group Four:** How are you and your loved ones doing in this time of pandemic and social distancing? Are there concrete ways that St. Peter's can serve you better?

**Group Five:** One of the verses in our lesson for today speaks of those who "hunger and thirst for righteousness." What do you think this means? Why would such hunger be a positive characteristic for those belonging to God's community?

**Group Six:** In our Psalm for today the opening verse states: *I will bless the LORD at all times; his praise shall ever be in my mouth.* What does this verse mean to you? Should we take these words literally? Please explain your answer(s).