A.M.D.G. All Saints Day – B Text: Revelation 7: 9-17

 November 1, 2015

**9**After this I looked, and behold, a great multitude that no one could number,from every nation, from all tribes and peoples and languages, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed in white robes, with palm branches in their hands, **10**and crying out with a loud voice, “Salvation belongs to our God who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb!” **11**And all the angels were standing around the throne and around the elders and the four living creatures, and they fell on their faces before the throne and worshiped God,**12**saying, “Amen! Blessing and glory and wisdom and thanksgiving and honor and power and might be to our God forever and ever! Amen.”

**13**Then one of the elders addressed me, saying, “Who are these, clothed in white robes, and from where have they come?” **14**I said to him, “Sir, you know.” And he said to me, “These are the ones coming out of the great tribulation. They have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. **15**“Therefore they are before the throne of God,  and serve him day and night in his temple;  and he who sits on the throne will shelter them with his presence. **16**They shall hunger no more, neither thirst anymore; the sun shall not strike them, nor any scorching heat. **17**For the Lamb in the midst of the throne will be their shepherd, and he will guide them to springs of living water,
and God will wipe away every tear from their eyes.”

2015年11月1 号 万圣节主日  启示录7章：9-17节

**此后，我观看，见有许多的人，没有人能数过来，是从各国、各族、各民、各方来的，站在宝座和羔羊面前，身穿白衣，手拿棕树枝，大声喊着说：“愿救恩归与坐在宝座上我们的　神，也归与羔羊。” 众天使都站在宝座和众长老并四活物的周围，在宝座前，面伏于地敬拜神，说：“阿们！颂赞、荣耀、智慧、感谢、尊贵、权柄、大力都归与我们的　神，直到永永远远。阿们！” 长老中有一位问我说：“这些穿白衣的是谁？是从哪里来的？” 我对他说：“我主，你知道。”他向我说：“这些人是从大患难中出来的，曾用羔羊的血把衣裳洗白净了。所以，他们在　神宝座前，昼夜在他殿中事奉他。坐宝座的要用帐幕覆庇他们。他们不再饥、不再渴，日头和炎热也必不伤害他们。因为宝座中的羔羊必牧养他们，领他们到生命水的泉源； 神也必擦去他们一切的眼泪。”**

**For All The Saints**

**向所有的圣人致敬**
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Today is All Saints Day in the Christian Church. We, in the United Church, don’t tend to focus as much attention on All Saints Day as do some of our Christian sisters and brothers like the Roman Catholics, Lutherans and Anglicans. But as it falls on a Sunday this year, I thought it would be good to talk a bit about the meaning behind this special day – and to hear again the important

messages that All Saints Day proclaims.

**按照基督教教义， 今天是万圣节。我们联合教会不像我们的兄弟姊妹教会，如罗马天主教会、路德教会以及圣公会那样注重万圣节。但是今年的万圣节正巧赶上是主日，所以我想我们来探讨一下这个特别日子后面的涵义、再来听听万圣节所传达的信息，会是件很好的事情。**

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The Christian Church has widely observed the Festival of All Saints since around the year 600 AD. – although stories of Christian martyrs in the faith have been circulating since the days of the Early Church – shortly after Jesus’ death. The account of the stoning of Stephen in the book of Acts

would be one example. But there are many – many – stories of the saints through the ages.

**从大约公元600年左右，基督教会就开始广泛地庆祝万圣节。但是基督教殉教者的故事在耶稣死后不久就已经流传开来。《使徒行传》里司提凡被石头打死的故事只是其中一例，历代还有很多很多圣人的故事。**

As I was preparing for this morning, one story that piqued my interest in particular was that of St. Denis – who is formally known as Saint Denis of Paris. But after reading his story – I think he should be called the Patron Saint of Preachers! You see, back in the 3rd century, Denis was tasked with converting people throughout Gaul – an area encompassing most of West Europe - which included modern day France, Germany, Belgium, Luxembourg, and parts of Italy and the Netherlands. In fact, he was doing such a good job of it, he really annoyed the local pagans. So to stop Denis from converting any more of their followers they beheaded him.

**当我在准备今早的传道时，圣人丹尼斯，正式称谓是“巴黎的圣德尼”的故事引起了我特别的兴趣。读了他的故事之后，我觉得他应该被称为“传道人的榜样”。回望公元三世纪，丹尼斯的任务是让高卢人皈依基督教。西欧大部分地区都是高卢人居住区，其中包括现在的法国、德国、比利时、卢森堡，以及意大利和荷兰的部分地区。事实上，丹尼斯的传道卓有成效，令当地的异教徒们非常气恼。为了阻止丹尼斯让更多的异教徒皈依基督教，他们将其斩首。**

Now beheading tends to put an end to most people’s ambitions - but according to legend, Denis just picked up his head and kept on preaching - presumably after a hilarious slapstick routine where his decapitated body stumbled around the execution grounds in search of its head. He supposedly then marched and preached a sermon for six miles before finally dropping dead - although we have to wonder how effective his last attempt at conversion was.I’m sure if *we* saw a headless guy walking towards us - we’d be too busy fleeing in terror to give his religious beliefs any serious thought, regardless of how convincing his arguments were! Oh - and as proof that God has a sense of irony- Denis is the patron saint of people suffering from headaches. We can only assume he responds to the prayers of headache suffers by appearing in a vision and telling them to suck it up because they totally don’t know what real head pain is like!

**现在斩首可能打击了大部分人的雄心——但是根据传说 ，丹尼斯捡起他的头继续传道 - 大概是经过一唱滑稽的闹剧后，他为了找到他的头，被砍下头的身体撞到了行刑的地方。 据说他然后继续布道并前行了6 英里最后死了——虽然我们不知道他最后一次尝试去转变听众是否有效，我确信如果我们看到了无头的家伙向我们走来——我们会恐怖的逃离，不可能对他的宗教信仰有的任何严肃的思考 ，不管他的辩论有多么令人信服的论据！哦——还对神的讽刺意义有了证明—— 丹尼斯 是患头痛病的人的守护神。我们只能推断他用一种幻觉对头痛病患者的祷告做出反应， 并告诉他们要忍受 ， 因为他们完全不知道真正的头痛是什么样!**

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Many of the stories of the saints and the art that depicts them – portray them – like Saint Denis - in difficult and often grisly circumstances. But there are also many who were not only joyful but had terrific senses of humor.Stories about the overt humor of the saints reach as far back as the early Roman martyrs -- that is, from the very earliest days of the church. In the third century, St. Lawrence, who was burned to death on a grill, over hot coals, called out to his executioners, "*This side is done. Turn me over and have a bite.*" And in the fourth century, St. Augustine of Hippo, puckishly prayed, "*Lord, give me chastity ... but not yet."*And saintly humor continues up until modern times. Perhaps the most well-known contemporary example is John XXIII - who served as pope from 1958 to 1963. His most famous joke came when a journalist innocently asked him, "*Your Holiness, how many people work in the Vatican*?" Pope John paused, thought it over, and said, "*About half of them*."

**很多圣徒的故事，艺术作品上描绘了他们——描述——像 圣丹尼斯 - 在困难的、往往是可怕的情况下。 但也有很多人不只是快乐 ，还是很棒的幽默感的故事。幽默感的圣徒可追溯到早在罗马的烈士——这是最早期的教堂。 在第三世纪的圣劳伦斯 ，他被烧死、在很热的煤炭上他召唤他的刽子手 ， “这一面烤好了。翻一下我的身体，过来 咬一咬。”四世纪的希波城的圣奥古斯丁顽皮地祷告说 , “主啊 ，给我贞操 ... 但尚未。 ” 圣徒的幽默继续 直到当代社会。 也许是最著名的当代的例子是 约翰XXIII - 从 1958 年到 1963 年担任教皇的职位。 他的最著名的笑话是当记者天真地问他 ， “教皇陛下，有多少人在梵蒂冈工作 ? ”教皇约翰 停了一下，想了想 并说 ， “大概有一半”。**

Let me ask you - what do ***you*** think of when you hear the term ‘saint’?

 **让我问你——当你听到“圣徒”你是怎么想的 ?**

Often, when we think of saints – we think of those who have earned entrance into something like a Christian Hall Of Fame – those who have reached a higher level of Christian perfection. But this is not, in fact, a biblical perspective. The New Testament never uses terms to refer to a special Hall of Fame group of Christians. The New Testament always uses the word ‘saint’ to refer to the whole church and every believer.

**通常 , 当我们想到圣徒--我们认为，那些已获得进入类似像基督教的杰出人物---那些已达到较高水平的完美的基督徒。 但事实上这不是 圣经的观点。 在新约圣经中从未提起过的基督教社团的特殊的杰出人物。 新约圣经中的始终使用 “圣徒”来代表整个教会和每个信徒。**

Take for example, St. Paul’s letter to the church at Rome …. He begins: *“To all God’s beloved in Rome, who are called to be saints: grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.”* (1:7) And he addresses his 2 letters to the church at Corinth by writing, *“To the church of God that is in Corinth – to those who are sanctified in Christ Jesus – called to be saints, together with all those who in every place call on the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.”* Sainthood, for Paul was not a status to be earned – but a gift of grace to be claimed by everyone who is a follower of Jesus.

**例如 ，圣保罗给罗马教会的信 ，他开始写到： “在罗马的所有的神所爱的人，都被称之为圣徒 : 恩惠赐给你们，来自神我们的父和主耶稣基督的平安。” 他给在哥林多教会的两封信中写到：“在哥林多的神的教会 - - 那些在耶稣基督里圣洁的基督徒 - 被召为圣徒 ，以及所有那些在每个地方被称之为以主耶稣基督的名义的人 。对 保罗来说，神圣的圣徒不是一种去挣得头衔 -- 而是对跟随耶稣的每一个追随者的恩赐。**

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There is a particular church in Willmar, Minnesota that has taken this promise to heart – and actually built it into their building. The name of the church is Vinjy Lutheran – named for saints in the Scandinavian tongue of the founders.

**在明尼苏达州的维尔马尔有一个特别的教堂 ， 就采取了这一承诺 - --实际上把这个承诺建到他们的教堂里。 该教会的名字是 Vinjy 路德教会 --是用创造斯堪的纳维母语的圣徒的名字来命名的 。**

The church is built in the round. And at the time of its building, the congregation commissioned a well-known Minnesotan sculptor to carve a wooden relief into the interior walls of the church. He carved two rows in the round above the pews encircling the entire congregation. The first row quotes a passage from the book of Hebrews, chapter 12 – referring to the saints as a cloud of witnesses. It reads – starting in the front and circling round:*“Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses. let us lay aside every weight and the sin that clings so closely, and let us run with perseverance the race that is set before us, looking to Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of our faith.”*At that point – when that verse from Hebrews is finished – the circle of the text is complete and unbroken.

**教会建成一个圆形。 在建造的时候，教会委托著名的明尼苏达州的雕刻家 雕刻一个木头浮雕并嵌入内墙。 他围绕着教会在椅子上面并有雕刻两行文字：第一行引自希伯来书第 12 章提到把圣徒比做像云围绕着我们的见证人。 经文可以在教堂前面开始读起，然后经文环绕整个教堂 ： “所以我们的周围有像巨大的云一样缠绕着我们的见证人。让我们脱下各种拖累，和容易缠住我们的罪，以坚韧认得心奔跑那摆在我们面前的赛程，专一注视耶稣，就是那位信心的创建者和完成者。”当希伯来书的这段小节雕刻完成的时候，在这一行环绕的这段经文完整和连续的。**

Then – beneath that row of scripture – is another row of text that contains the names of saints – the saints who were chosen and beloved and graced by God – not because they ***earned*** sainthood but because God bestowed on imperfect, sinful people – God’s grace. It starts with Adam and Eve - and then Abraham and Sarah – and then it continues through the Hebrew Scriptures. Halfway around – the name of Mary, the mother of Jesus, is carved into the wall – and then it moves through the New Testament and the names of the saints from church history – until it finally finishes in the 20th Century with the name of the Second World War Era, German theologian, Dietrich Bonhoeffer.

**然后 - 在这段经文的下面下方——是另一行写下了很多圣徒的名字 - 所选的圣徒是神所爱的和恩典的，不是因为他们挣得的圣徒的地位，而是因为神赐给那些不完美的、有罪的人——这就是上帝的恩典。 它开始是亚当和夏娃，然后亚伯拉罕和撒拉——然后继续通过“希伯来圣经”。到了 一半左右 -- 基督的母亲玛利亚的名字， 被 雕刻在墙上 -- 然后通过“新约圣经”和教会发展的历史中出现的圣徒名字 -- 直到最后到 20 世纪，第二次世界大战争时期 出现的圣徒--- 德国神学家潘霍华。**

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But that circle of names isn’t complete. There is a gap – a blank spot that keeps the circle open. And in that empty spot – there is just enough room for a couple more words. The designers of the church intended that we would know that there’s just enough room for two more names. Can you guess what they are? *You and Me*. The designers of that church wanted you and me to know the biblical promise that we, too, are – by the grace of God – saints. Our names are virtually added to those of the saints through the ages. And when that happens – the circle becomes unbroken.

**但这种循环的名子并没有完整。 在名字之间留有距离——的空白处 使循环打开。 并在这一空白位置 - 有足够的地方可以添加更多的字。 我们会知道教会的设计师打算 留下足够的空间用于两个以上的圣徒的名字， 你能猜出它们是什么吗 ? 他们是你和 我 。教会的设计者 想要教会你和我知道圣经的承诺 ，我们也都是靠着神的恩典 ---我们也会成为 圣徒。 我们的名字实际上会世世代代添加到这些圣徒名字中间。 在这种情况 -- 围绕教堂的循环就变为连续。**

I love the vision of those founders of Vinjy Lutheran Church. I love the image of the ‘cloud of witnesses’ or the ‘Communion of Saints’ surrounding and holding us close in spirit. All those through the ages who have tried to follow in the footsteps of Jesus – saints through the ages – including those ***we*** have known and loved in ***our*** lifetimes – and who are with us still in our hearts and memories. I have often – over the years I’ve been here at West Point Grey – sat alone in the sanctuary and felt the presence of those who have given so faithfully of themselves over the years -permeating the walls and space in *this* place. And it has given me a sense of peace and encouragement along the way.

**我喜欢这些 Vinjy 路德教会创建人的远见。 我喜欢 “缠绕如云的见证人”的想象或是“圣徒聚会”在我们周围并把我们在圣灵中紧紧相拥。 所有的这些圣徒古往今来 试图跟随耶稣的脚步 --古往今来 这些圣徒——包括那些我们已知的和我们这一生所爱的- - 他们是我们的心中和记忆中。 我常常 - 多年来在我们教会 -我 独坐在圣殿时有一种这些圣徒和我们同在的感觉，多年来他们给我们信念。这些都弥漫在墙面和这个空间。 它一直给我的感觉是平安和鼓励。**

And I love to think that we, too – stand in that long line of saints through the ages – called and chosen by God to be God’s hands and feet to the world of ***our*** day. Not perfect by any means – not even extraordinary most of the time – but saints none the less – trying our best to follow in the footsteps of Christ as best we can.

**我也爱思考的是我们，——站在这些古往今来的圣徒中间 -- 他们是由神拣选并做为神的双手和双脚的来到这个世界 。他们绝对是 不完美 - 甚至在大部分的时间里并没有特别之处——但是他们依然是圣徒——我们要尽最大努力追随耶稣。**

All God asks of any of us is that we live, as best we can, into the potential with which we are created as a one-of-a-kind, never-to-be-repeated human being – and as the preacher, Barbara Brown Taylor says, “*to love as you are loved, to throw your arms around the world, and to shine like the sun.”*

**神要求我们的生活尽可能最好。并把我们造成一类有潜力、我们尽我们最大的潜力生活、不能再类和复制的人类。最为作为传道者、芭芭拉 · 布朗 .泰勒 说 ： “爱你的亲人 ，拥抱世界，像太阳一样闪耀。”**

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And we don’t have to do it alone, either. We have all this company – all the saints sitting right here – whom we can see for ourselves – all you’se guys! - as well as all the ‘cloud of witnesses’ who have gone on before – egging us on, and surrounding us with love and encouragement. Because we are a part of them – and they are a part of us – in this grand enterprise of faith to which God calls us.

**我们不必孤军奋战。 我们圣徒陪伴 -- 所有圣徒坐在这里，因为我们自己，我们可以看到了他们 -- 你们在座的就是。 以及所有“像云一样缠绕的见证人”在前面离开我们而去的，仍然在鼓励我们，用爱环抱我们。 因为我们是他们的一部分 -- 他们都是我们的一部分——在这一巨大的信仰中 ， 神呼召我们。**

Thanks be to God. Amen **感谢神。 阿们**。