

Homily. Solemnity of Christ the King. Yr.C. 23/24 November 2019.

We live our lives surrounded by saints and we don't even notice them. When we do recognise them it's often too late and with too little appreciation. We meet these saints in our homes and here in our Parish and in the wider Church. We encounter these saints at work, at school and at play, and we pass them by every day on our streets.

These saints aren't perfect people who never ever get anything wrong, nor are they people without any annoying quirks of mannerism or irritating character traits. Like all of us these saints have been battered and bruised by life, but they've never become twisted or defeated by it. They've got up from their falls and they've risen time and again above their weaknesses and the setbacks they've encountered, all without letting themselves become embittered or cruel. Perhaps some of our own family are saints like this? Maybe some school mates or work colleagues could be numbered among them, or some of the women and men who help us with our lives, our faith journey, our community responsibilities and with our struggles and our ills.

As he did this weekend, St. Paul often wrote of the saints, saying that all who believe in Jesus Christ belonged to the saintly community. Paul knew that the saints of God were those who chose to let Jesus come near to them and live within them, letting Him guide their lives with His mercy by freely co-operating with God's grace and forgiveness. Saints such as this prove their holiness by the constancy of their lives, by their fidelity to their commitments, and by lovingly serving and sacrificing of themselves for

the betterment of others; even for the good of people like you and me. This is how they follow the call and live out the example of Christ the servant King, growing in His Spirit by generous the way of the Cross.

As much as I'd like to leave my words at this I simply can't, because though the saints of everyday are many, they aren't yet all of us. There are others, maybe lots of others, who serve only themselves, their aims and wants at the expense of those who are weaker, less powerful and influential, poorer, needier and more dependent. These others cast darkness into this world, the shadow of which falls over all of us. Such persons and powers aren't to be feared, though they can seem fearful at times. Rather, they are to be challenged by our goodness and stood up to with the courage that comes from our kindness and integrity, our following in the believing, hoping and loving way of our King.

This is our Baptismal call, strengthened in the Sacrament of Confirmation and nourished here in this Church in each and every Eucharist we celebrate together, and with our Lord. Jesus is the King of Universal service, saving us and the world. Joyfully we've been chosen to be part of His family, His Church. On this day God's message is as clear to us as it's vital; sinners who repent are forgiven; the broken, rejected and excluded end up in Paradise; love and sacrifice wins over the world to holiness, and death finally gets swallowed up in the victory of God's mercy and new life. Let's never forget that this is who we are and what we're all about as the saints of Light who share in the Kingship of the Crucified Christ.