

# FAITH @ HOME

Week of November 1, 2020

All Saints

## ADULT AND SMALL CHILD

**READ:** Matthew 5:1-12

**REFLECT:** Jesus spent a lot of time teaching about the way God wants the world to be. Jesus taught that God wants people to take care of each other, comfort each other when they hurt, listen to the people who get overlooked, help each other, forgive each other, see the good in each other and want what is right. God wants us to make peace with one another, and honor people who follow God even during hard times. Jesus said that we can work with God to make the world this kind of place.

On All Saints Day, we take time to remember the people who did their best to make the world the way God wants it to be. Some Saints are remembered all over the world and even have special days and communities named after them. You might recognize some of them: St. Francis, St. Patrick and St. Theresa of Calcutta (Mother Theresa). Others saints we remember on All Saints day might not be famous around the world, but they are people who are important to our churches, families or friends because they taught us something about loving God or loving people, too.

What saints can you remember today?

**RESPOND:** Draw a picture of a few people you think are saints because they taught you how to love God and people. They might be from your church, family or community. After you draw your pictures, make a simple meal that a small child can help put together. When you eat together, put the pictures you drew on your dinner table and tell stories about them while you enjoy eating together.

## ABOUT OUR CONTRIBUTOR: MICHELLE BULLOCK



Michelle Bullock serves as Rector at St. Peter's by-the-Sea Episcopal Church in Swansboro, NC. She has a Bachelor's degree in Elementary Education (Appalachian State University) and Master's of Divinity (Duke Divinity School) and has a background in youth and children's ministry, and formerly served as a school chaplain. She and her husband have two daughters in preschool and elementary school. You can follow Michelle on her website at [revbullock.com](http://revbullock.com).

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All Saints

## ADULT AND ELEMENTARY

**READ:** Matthew 5:1-12

**REFLECT:** November 1 is a special day in the church. Known as All Saints Day, it is a time when we remember and give thanks for heroes of the faith—people who have done extraordinary things because of their love for Jesus. Saint Tarcisus is one of those heroes. We don't know very much about his life, but he was probably elementary-school age when he stood up for Jesus. Around 250 CE (220 years or so after Jesus died), Tarcisus was a young altar server. Some people in those days didn't like Christians and persecuted them just because they believed in Jesus. Christians had to worship and praise God in secret—even taking communion was dangerous. One Sunday, Tarcisus volunteered to take the communion bread that had been blessed by the priests to those who were imprisoned. On his way there, some other boys saw him and began to tease him. Their bullying turned violent when they saw that he was carrying something for the church, and they beat him up just for being a Christian. He died from his injuries, becoming what we call a martyr for the church—someone who is willing to stand up for what they believe in and sacrifice everything.

**RESPOND:** What do you think about the story of Tarcisus? Most of us do not face such danger in our lives simply because of our faith. But we all have experiences where we have a choice to do God's work or to do something else. What are some examples of that in your life? How can strive to love and serve God, even when others make fun of you for your beliefs? Read this week's gospel lesson, Matthew 5:1-12. Think about Tarcisus's story when you hear Jesus saying who is blessed. What do his words mean to you today?

## ABOUT OUR CONTRIBUTOR: RICHELLE THOMPSON



Richelle Thompson lives in the beautiful bluegrass of Kentucky, near Cincinnati, with her husband, their two children, a horse, a cat, and two dogs. She serves as the deputy director and managing editor of Forward Movement, a ministry of the Episcopal Church and publisher of the daily devotional, *Forward Day by Day*.

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## ADULT AND YOUTH

**READ:** Matthew 5:1-12

**REFLECT:** Did you know that the word *blessed* can also be translated as *happy*? In the Beatitudes, Jesus takes familiar words, images, and ideas and turns them upside-down to make us think deeper about what happiness really is. Think outside of the box and look at his words in the Beatitudes to find what maybe is the real meaning of life, faith, and how to serve others. Jesus redefines the meaning of happiness here and maybe now is our time to do so also.

**RESPOND:** During this time of year, we see the sun setting earlier and earlier, the leaves on the trees are falling, and the days are getting colder. On October 31st we celebrated the darkness in All Hallow's Eve. You may have dressed up, wore a mask, and found life and joy in the darkness.

On November 1st, we celebrate the brightness in the feast of All Saints. We remember and recognize the goodness of the souls that have gone on before us in the past year. We decorate the church in white and light. Though we mourn the loss of those in our lives, we celebrate and recognize where they are now. It is light and dark working together. It is in times like these that we remember God is with us in the places of fear or pain. God brings us peace and light. Think about where you see the balance of light and dark in the world. Who do you celebrate and recognize this year on All Saints?

## ABOUT OUR CONTRIBUTOR: LAUREN WAINWRIGHT



Lauren Wainwright currently serves as the Director of Student Ministries at Good Shepherd Episcopal Church in Dallas, TX. She has worked with large and small churches across several dioceses over the past 13 years, serving in youth ministry. Lauren is originally from Hattiesburg, Mississippi where she first began her call to ministry but has called Dallas home for the past 4 years. In her free time, she enjoys reading, Netflix watching, and spending time with her 2 dogs at home.

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All Saints

## ADULT AND ADULT

**READ:** 1 John 3:1-3

**REFLECT:** What a gift it is to be known as all of God's children. Together with various languages, races, cultures, political stances, traditions and beliefs, we get to know that it is in our very existence that we are a part of God's creation, that was called 'good'; that is loved beyond our comprehension. For me, being a Child of God is a big part of my identity and is a large responsibility that calls us each to live our lives knowing that we are forever bound to one another. Wherever we go, and in whatever we do, we are to show through our words and actions God's never-ending love for one another; God's liberation for the unjust among us, and God's peace for an ever-changing world. We are to walk drenched with those life-changing waters that pour over our heads, making us new at baptism. As we walk this week, which includes election day for our nation, I invite us each into reflection and action of how we might live, reflecting today, tomorrow, and in the weeks and years to come that we are God's children, and God is with us, and binding us together always.

**RESPOND:** All Saints Day is a day where we may find ourselves remembering the saints who came before us and recognizing the saints that continue to walk with us and form within us. Each day of the week, is a good time to remember the foundation of such a Christ-Centered life: reviewing our baptismal covenant, looking at how you may live and continue to live out The Seven Practices of The Way of Love, and even remind ourselves of the Five Marks of Mission of The Episcopal Church. By revisiting this foundation either alone or with others who make up God's children, we can reflect individually or collectively on how we might journey onward anew in the days ahead making sure that our faith is known each day in our lives.

## ABOUT OUR CONTRIBUTOR: CHRISTOPHER DECATUR



The Rev. Christopher Decatur is the Deacon in Charge at St. Luke's Episcopal Church in Cleveland, Ohio. He is a graduate of Virginia Theological Seminary. Prior to seminary, Chris served at Trinity Cathedral in Cleveland, OH as the Associate Minister for Children, Youth, Family, Young Adult and Campus Ministries. Chris also has served as "The Chair of The Subcommittee for Racial Reconciliation and Justice for The Standing Commission on Liturgy and Music." Chris has an undergraduate degree in Comparative Religion from Cleveland State University and years of studies and practicing of Early Childhood Education at both CSU and as a student at The Catholic University of America.

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