***POSSIBLE* Prayer of Church for 🕊 All Saints' Day, November 1st, 2026 F.OS.L**

Let us pray to the LORD our God who raised Jesus from the dead, and pray for the whole Church of God in Christ and for all people according to their needs.

Blessed are You, O God, and blessed are those whom You have redeemed through the blood of the Lamb, washed in the saving water of Baptism, and brought to faith by the Spirit. Keep us in this faith and in holy fear, lest we depart from Your way and are lost to the eternal future You have prepared for us. *LORD, in Your mercy*, **hear our prayer.**

Heavenly Father, salvation belongs to You and to the Lamb! Preserve our Synod president; our circuit visitors; and all our pastors as they bring to us the message of salvation. *LORD, in Your mercy*, **hear our prayer.**

Grant that all who have been baptized into Christ's death and Resurrection may die to sin and rise to newness of life and so pass with Him through the gate of death and the grave to their joyful Resurrection. *LORD, in Your mercy*, **hear our prayer.**

LORD of all, all power and might are Yours forever and ever. Give wisdom to our president; our governor; and all who make, administer and judge our laws. Allow them to serve with honor, and let their decisions be well pleasing unto You. *LORD, in Your mercy*, **hear our prayer.**

Gracious Father, remember the sick, the homebound, those who mourn and all the afflicted *[especially **Our Savior** & **Faith Prayers**] and all those we each keep in our hearts in personal prayer.* Strengthen them to endure in their suffering, and in Your compassion keep them in the true faith until the day of final deliverance, health and peace. *LORD, in Your mercy*, **hear our prayer.**

Almighty God, bless all who hunger and thirst for righteousness, that in faithfulness we would approach Your Altar, trust the Words of Christ, and receive His body and blood for the sustenance of our bodies and souls. *LORD, in Your mercy*, **hear our prayer.**

Heavenly Father, grant that we may be brought to everlasting life with the faithful who have gone before us who now rest from their labors as we wait to join them in Heaven. *LORD, in Your mercy*, **hear our prayer.**

O God, You have knit Your chosen people together into one communion in the mystical body of Your Son, Jesus Christ, our LORD. Give to Your whole Church in heaven and on earth Your light and Your peace. *LORD, in Your mercy*, **hear our prayer.**

Standing with those of every tribe and nation before the throne and before the Lamb, we rejoice and cry out: Salvation belongs to our God, who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb. To Him be the glory, with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen**.

ALL-SAINTS' DAY 2026 Matthew 5:1-12 *WHAT'S A SAINT?* 11.1.26 F.OS.L

SWANs vs. CRANEs [SNAILS] There's an old **legend of a swan and a crane**. A beautiful swan alighted by the banks of the water in which a crane was wading about seeking snails. For a few moments the crane viewed the swan in stupid wonder but then inquired:

"Where do you come from?"

"I come from Heaven!" replied the swan.

"And where is Heaven?" asked the crane.

"Heaven!?" said the swan, *"Heaven! have you never heard of Heaven?"* And the beautiful bird went on to describe the grandeur of the Eternal City. She told of streets of gold, and the gates and walls made of precious stones; of the river of life, pure as crystal, upon whose banks is the tree whose leaves shall be for the healing of the nations. In eloquent terms the swan sought to describe the hosts who live in the other world, but **without arousing the slightest interest** in the crane.

Finally the crane asked: *"Are there any **snails** there?"*

"Snails!" [replied the swan;] *"No! Of course **not**."*

"Then," said the crane, as it continued its search along the slimy banks of the pool, *"you can have your Heaven. **I want snails**!"*

[MORAL OF STORY?...] This fable has a deep truth underlying it. How many a **son or daughter** to whom God has granted the advantages of a Christian home, has turned her or his back on it and searched for snails! How many a man will sacrifice his wife, his family, his **all**, for the snails of sin! How many a **girl** has deliberately turned from the love of parents and home to learn too late that heaven has been forfeited for snails!

WHAT'S A SAINT? What comes to your mind when you hear the word "**Saint**"? Mental pictures of men and women long dead whose relics are enshrined in ancient Cathedrals? Images of people who appear to be so spiritual that they are exempt from sin? The New Testament gives us another picture. Saints are believers in Jesus Christ made Holy by His blood. For that reason the Apostle Paul, for example, writes to *"the **Saints** in Corinth"* or *"To all God's beloved in Rome, called to be **Saints**."* In other words, Saints are Christians. Saints are **in Heaven** before the Throne of the Lamb singing hymns of High Doxology in praise of their Redeemer. And saints **are here on earth**, joined together with *"Angels, archangels,*

and the whole company of Heaven" [ala, the **Proper Preface**] praising the same Lord Who is adored in Heaven.

JESUS = BEATITUDE/S Whether in Heaven or on earth, the saints are not self-made. We were made saints **by the Lord Whose Blood has purchased salvation** for us and whose Word declares us to holy and blessed. That takes us to the Holy **Gospel** appointed to be read in the churches on All Saints' Sunday. We know this section of Holy Scriptures as the "Beatitudes," the words of blessing. **Martin Franzmann** summarizes the thrust of today's Gospel when he writes, *"Jesus' Beatitudes declare what He is and what He gives."* Our Lord Jesus Christ Who speaks these Words of the **Sermon on the Mount** is actually **speaking about Himself**.

HOW JESUS IS _ _ _ Jesus is the One Who is **poor in spirit**, as in His Humiliation He is totally and completely dependent on His Father and receives from His Father the Kingdom of Heaven. Jesus is the One **Who mourns**. He is *"well-acquainted with grief,"* says the **Prophet Isaiah**. He **weeps over Jerusalem**, as she does not know her Messiah and He is comforted by the Father who **turns His grief into perpetual joy in His Resurrection** from the dead. The High-born Prince of Heaven is not ashamed to humble Himself to be born of a Virgin, coming to us in all lowliness and **meekness**, **gentle** and **lowly** in heart. He rides into Jerusalem as a Passenger on a lowly donkey, moving toward Calvary. To Him is given *"All authority in heaven and on earth."* As the only-begotten Son of the Father, **He inherits the earth**. This Lord says, *"My '**food**' is to do the work of Him Who sent me, and to accomplish His work"* [**John 4:34**], and He is **thirsty**…**for our salvation**. And He **is filled**, for His death on the Cross has won for us the very Righteousness of God. Sent from the Heart of the Father, the Son is **merciful** and He has **obtained mercy**, not for Himself, but for us who were destitute in our sin. The Son demonstrated the **purity of heart** as with single-minded obedience He held fast to His Father's Word and will when assaulted by Satan's **temptation in the wilderness** and again as He willingly suffered and died under the **death sentence that belonged to us**. Crucified and risen, He sees His Father's face in glory everlasting. He is the Prince of Peace Who makes peace for us by the Blood of His Cross, reconciling us to His Father so that we are now sons of God. He is persecuted for righteousness' sake and in the shame of that suffering brings His Kingdom - **the Kingdom of Heaven** - to us sinners. Like the prophets of old, He is **reviled and falsely accused**. Yet for the joy that is set before Him, He endures the Cross so that His reward becomes our reward.

IS ALL *FOR US!* All that the Son of God is, **He is for us**. His blessedness is **our** blessedness. This Lord Jesus Christ is the Blessed One Who comes in the Name of the Lord and in His Cross, He makes us blessed. That is why our Lord says [in **John l4**] *"I go to prepare a place for you, I will come again and will take you to myself, that where I am you may be also."* And so in the Book of **Revelation** it is announced from Heaven, *"Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord ... that they might rest from their labors, for their deeds follow them."* [**Revelation 14:13**]

A GREAT CLOUD OF… And so today, **All Saints'** Sun**Day**, we are reminded that we are surrounded by so **great a cloud of witnesses**. We are **not walking alone** on this pilgrimage to the City whose Builder and Maker is God. We are saints here on earth and we share in a blessed, sweet Communion with those whose rest is won. Some of you come to church on this All Saints Sunday with the memory of a parent, grandparent, a spouse, even a child or other loved one who died in the faith **fresh in your memory**. They are at the same Table with us today, as there is another side to this Altar that the human eye cannot see and sitting at the other side of the Table are all those who have died in the Lord. While here in time and space we eat and drink the Lamb of God's Body and Blood, they feast at the Marriage Feast of the Lamb in His Kingdom which has no end. Suffering and shame are gone. Tears are wiped away. Their joy is everlasting. Thanks be to God!

WE ARE **ONE** WITH And we are **one with them**. Yes, it is true, to use the words of that majestic hymn which we sing [ELH 554] *"We feebly struggle, they in glory shine."* But we are one with them in our Lord Jesus Christ. They were redeemed by His Blood and so are we. They were Baptized into Christ and so are we. Today we are given a glimpse of the future that awaits us [The **Supper**] and with that glimpse of the glory that is yet to come, the encouragement to press on, to run the race set before us with all the vigor that the Gospel gives, for God is faithful and He will bring us to His Heavenly Kingdom. *"Salvation belongs to our God Who sits on the throne and to the Lamb."* **Blessed All Saints**. ***IJ'N, Amen. SDG***

*The peace of God which passes all understanding guard and keep you **to life everlasting**. Amen.*