



Sunday of All Saints

“Our holy Fathers instituted this feast [Sunday of all Saints] and directed it to be kept after the feast of the Descent of the Holy Spirit, as if to set before us an example of how the coming of the all-Holy Spirit enabled them [the saints] to attain sanctity. He made holy and all-wise those who were of the same nature as we...” It is the duty of all to pursue sanctity: *For this is the will of God, your sanctification* (1 Thess. 4:3); *Be you therefore perfect, as also your heavenly Father is perfect* (Matt. 5:48). The Church shows us the lives of the saints to give us a pattern how to achieve holiness. “What is holiness? Holiness is living according to the commandments of God and the Church; it is the daily fulfillment of God’s will, constant fidelity to the duties of one’s state...”

Metropolitan Andrew Sheptytsky believed that living a holy life was essential: “In my opinion, the source of our failures and of all the plagues that afflict our church and national life, is our failure to apply ourselves seriously to living our Christianity and the teachings of the Gospel...”

There are other motives for venerating the saints. “By honoring the saints, we honor God...[they] did not become saints by their own power—their holiness is the result of God’s grace.” They are God’s closest friends.

The saints are members of the same Church as we although “they belong to the Church Triumphant while we still struggle as members of the Church on earth or the Church Militant. They are not indifferent to our welfare and salvation.”

The saints are powerful intercessors in all our needs. “You [the saints] are set over the whole human race as protectors of souls, healers of bodies, strong pillars of the faith, the perfection of priesthood, the forgiveness of sins, the foundation and support of the Churches, medicine for sickness, rest for travelers, the helm of those who sail, help to the sick, a defense for those in battle, a lift to those who have fallen, a strength to the afflicted, guides to those who have lost their way, guardians of the just, a consolation to those who mourn, a mighty aid to all and a refuge of firm hope” (Deacon Constantine in a sermon approved by the Seventh Ecumenical Council).

(Quotations from [A Byzantine Rite Liturgical Year](#))