

## A few words from the Vicar ....

*For all the saints, O Lord  
who strove in thee to live,  
who followed thee, obeyed, adored,  
our grateful hymn receive.  
(Richard Mant 1776-1848)*

Strictly speaking All Saints day falls on 1<sup>st</sup> November each year. However, with our usual Anglican sleight of hand, we actually celebrate it on the nearest Sunday, which this year falls on Sunday 4<sup>th</sup> November.

Anyway, I've been thinking about what we can do on 4<sup>th</sup> November to reinforce our understanding of all things saintly. Well, I know it's short notice (but I know all of you like a challenge) so I've come up with a cunning plan, a wheeze, something special .... Why don't we all come to Church dressed as saints?

Nothing fancy or extreme you understand (unless you want to of course). For example you don't need to dress up as St Francis (complete with menagerie) or St Bartholomew (often depicted holding his flayed skin neatly folded over his arm).

Just come as a 'normal' common or garden saint. There are plenty to choose from! Billions in fact!

But before you phone the Vicarage as disgusted of Ainsworth to complain about the short notice, before you dig out the sewing machine or start delving into your dressing up chest, don't panic!

How about this for an idea? You could come dressed as yourself, wearing the clothes you normally wear to Church. In fact, I insist!

For the Bible teaches us that a saint is anyone who is a Christian believer, that is to say anyone who is bound to God forever through repentance and faith in Jesus Christ.

For example, writing to the Church in Corinth it is clear that St Paul regards all members of that Church to be saints. This is what he says:

*'To the church of God which is at Corinth, to those who are sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints, with all who in every place call on the name of Jesus Christ our Lord, both theirs and ours....'* 1 Corinthians 1:2 (NKJV).

So, at the moment you accept Jesus into your life, at the moment you turn to him as Lord and Saviour, you become a saint (no matter how unsaintly you might feel at times). For Jesus died for our sins and has made it possible for all of us to experience the power of God's love and forgiveness in our lives.



*Saint Francis of Assisi in Ecstasy.*  
An oil painting by Jusepe de Ribera (1642)

So come to Church on 4<sup>th</sup> November (and every other Sunday for that matter) dressed as the saint you already are.

And if you are not counted amongst the saints yet, then why not become one?

All it takes is a moment to say sorry to God, to acknowledge that Jesus died for your sins and to welcome Him into your life as Lord and Saviour. For Jesus calls all of us to in turn to Him just as we are and to experience the power of God's love and forgiveness our lives. Jesus accepts all and rejects nobody, no matter how unsaintly we might feel.

Every Blessing

*Dave*