

**Feast of All Saints Cycle B  
November 1, 2000**

**By Father Charles Bowes**

**Revelation 7:2-4, 9-14  
1 John 3:1-3  
Matthew 5:1-12**

## *We are all meant to be saints.*

There is an old Baptist hymn which sings in part:

*“Lord, I hear of showers of blessing  
Thou are scatt’rin’ full and free  
Show’rs the thirsty souls refreshing  
Let some drops now fall on me,  
Even me, Lord, even me  
Let some drops now fall on me.”*

I can remember earlier times during which our heads and aspirations were turned heavenward. Days when this was a feast of human destiny – All Saints. Augustine and Monica, Benedict the Moor and Martin de Porres, Felicity and Perpetua, were trotted before us as a testimony to what God had in store for the least of us if we did the divine will and lived like Jesus. There was a place for even me. So our eyes were fixed on things not of this world. We wanted to be, we were going to be, saints.

I try to visit the school classrooms regularly and talk about the saints – but I dare say for most of our young folks and for most of us, our hearts’ desire has turned from the vertical to the horizontal. We don’t hear too much talk of sainthood, except to reflect on how unattainable it is. We are, after all, “only human.” And in the popular mind the book of Revelation has

Hollywood handling – its images characteristic of doom and gloom and destruction. We would rather not talk about the last days in human destiny as eternal and victorious; besides, we have Nintendo and Disney World and Funships and Waverunners and Alan Greenspan, so what’s a heaven for? But the feast of All Saints is our feast, too – we are all to be saints beginning even now, and we’re connected to all those who are already and who are becoming such.

Note that there are in the book of Revelation 144 thousand who are to be saved. Twelve, the perfect number in biblical arithmetic, times twelve and then multiplied by a thousand, a number signifying the infinite. So the number to be saved and sealed is not the least conceivable but the greatest imaginable – including even me.

144k all dressed in white robes made white in the blood of the Lamb. Blood – that symbol for us of disaster and destruction – blood is for the author of Revelation, the essence of life. The life-giving Lamb of God drenches our soiled baptismal garments if we let him and makes them white and ready for the feast of heaven.

The old hymn continues:

*“Vine of Heaven, Vine of Heaven  
Let Thy blood atone for me  
Even me, Lord, even me.”*

We can be joyful and thankful at this feast as we become convinced that the images of the book of Revelation are intended to assure us of the victory of suffering and living by gospel values. That though I may consider myself least, I too shall be caught up among the saints. They are my blessed assurance that I am an heir of salvation, purchase of God, born of his spirit, washed in his blood.

*“Even me, Lord, even me.”*

So, fear not. Strive to enter by the narrow gate. Live here as if it were heaven, where the order of the day is obedience to God’s way. Fear not, if in spite of their great commissions and omissions, the living God can cover papal sins and make saints with his blood, for not a few but a huge number whom no one can count from every race and tongue are sealed to be victorious and eternal.

“Even me.”

**We are all meant to be saints.**