

Beaminster Area Team

God our Father, renew our hope. By the Holy Spirit's power, strengthen us to pray readily serve joyfully and grow abundantly rejoicing in Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Week: 1st November, All Saints' Day

Old Testament Reading: Revelation 7:9-17
Psalm: Psalm 34: 1-10
New Testament: 1 John 3:1-3
Gospel Reading: Matthew 5: 1-12

Reflection on the Gospel reading:

A plain reading of the Beatitudes could lead to a degree of scepticism. As a matter of common experience, those who mourn are not always comforted, and the merciful sometimes get a mouthful rather than receiving mercy. So what was Jesus saying? Was it a set of high standards to make us raise our game? Was it a new law so impossible to keep that we would have to turn to grace instead? Or was it something else again?

In a world where so many values are topsy-turvy, it's not surprising that when truth arrives, we think it's upside down. The Beatitudes leave us floundering because they're so bewilderingly different. Jesus is putting before us the values of a new world, the upside-down world that's actually the right way up. He's not just encouraging us to try harder; he's telling us to be born again, to come alive to the new creation that's already bubbling up beneath the surface everywhere. We just have to release it, claim it and live it.

When I look at my own life, it seems like a comedy of errors; there's not much sign of the new creation. But appearance and reality are often confused. There are signs of that upside-down kingdom breaking through the concrete in our world time and again, in astonishing feats of forgiveness, gifts of generosity, selfless caring, commitment to justice, love of neighbour and of enemy. This good news would flood the world if it could only get heard. As we celebrate All Saints' Day, what could we do that would demonstrate that upside-down new world in our actions today?

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The Collect for All Saints' Day:

Almighty God,
you have knit together your elect in one communion
and fellowship in the mystical body of your
Son Christ our Lord: grant us grace so to follow your blessed saints in all virtuous and godly living that
we may come to those inexpressible joys that you have prepared for those who truly love you; through
Jesus Christ your Son our Lord, who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever. **Amen**

Worship to enjoy at home

BBC Radio 4, 8.10am Sunday Morning Worship,
Songs of Praise BBC1 1.15pm

A Useful Telephone Link from The Church of
England. This is a free number where you can
listen to prayers, reflections and hymns and join
in worship with others.

