Vatican

Francis, the comic strip



Pope Francis celebrates Mass on All Saints' Day, Nov. 1, in the chapel of his Vatican residence at the Domus Sanctae Marthae. (CNS/L'Osservatore Romano)

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Like stained glass windows, the saints allow the light of God to permeate the darkness of sin in the world, Pope Francis said on the feast of All Saints.

Just as light enters a church through multi-colored windows, the lives of saints shine forth "according to their own shade," the pope said Nov. 1.

All the saints "have been transparent, they fought to remove the stains and darkness of sin so that the gentle light of God can pass through," the pope said. "This is the purpose of life, even for us."

Before reciting the Angelus prayer with people gathered in St. Peter's Square, the pope said the day was a "feast for us not because we are good but because God's holiness has touched our lives."

The day's Gospel reading from St. Matthew, in which Jesus proclaims the beatitudes, contains the road map for "a blessed and happy life," which the saints followed through in their own lives and deeds, he said.

"Happiness is not in having something or in becoming someone," the pope said. "No. True happiness is being with the Lord and living for love."

The beatitudes, he continued, do not require "extravagant gestures" or superhuman strength, but are for those "who live through the trials and hardships of daily life."

"That is how the saints are," Pope Francis said. "Like everyone, they breathe the polluted air of evil that is in the world, yet they never lose sight of Jesus' footsteps along the way."

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Departing from his prepared remarks, the pope said the feast of All Saints also is "a family feast" that celebrates the lives of people who deserve recognition for helping further God's work in the world.

"Today, there are so many," the pope said. "Thanks to these unknown brothers and sisters who help God bring the world forward, who live among us. Let us greet them all with applause."

Recalling the first beatitude from St. Matthew's Gospel, Pope Francis said Christians should emulate the lives saints who while "poor in spirit," believed their true treasure was in God and not "in power or money."

"At times, we are unhappy because we lack something or we are not recognized as we would like to be," the pope said. "Let us remember: Our beatitude does not lie here but in the Lord and in love. Only with him, only loving others can we live a blessed life."