

Sunday Readings Reflections of 11/1/2015

Reading 1 Revelation 7:2-4, 9-14

In this reading from the Book of Revelation, the author, who calls himself John, writes after the year A.D. 70. It was a time of terrible persecution of Christians. In his writing, he urged them to persevere in their faith. In a vision the author sees "a huge crowd which no one could count" from every nation on earth. They stand in triumph before the throne of God and the Lamb (Christ), dressed in white and holding palm branches, the sign of victory. John is told who they are: those who survived the great trial and washed their robes in the blood of the Lamb. This is symbolic language. It means that these people, in their own lives, have participated in the suffering and death of Christ.

This washing makes their robes white, like the robes of those who have been baptized into Christ. We, too, are washed clean when we share in the death of Christ through the waters of Baptism. We may not be asked to die for our faith like so many of the early Christians. But we are called to be strong in our faith even when we are ridiculed by others.

Reading 2 John 3:1-3

In this reading we are reminded of the consoling hope we have as children of God. The world may not agree, John says, yet that is in fact who we are. One day we will see God face to face.

As children of God, we should live sinless lives. All children try to bring credit to their parents and their brothers and sisters. How much more should this be our aim as God's children.

Gospel Matthew 5:1-12a

This reading from the Gospel of Matthew contains the Beatitudes. These statements are a summary of the way to sainthood for all the thousands and thousands of people who have followed Jesus faithfully. They show how the followers of Jesus today are to live for God's kingdom. All the rewards promised here will have their fulfillment in God's kingdom in heaven.

Jesus calls us all to holiness. By following the teachings of Jesus and the Church, celebrating the sacraments, and trusting in the guidance of the Holy Spirit, the way to heaven lies open for us. Our journey of faith may not be an easy one. There will be many hardships and challenges along the way.

But if we walk humbly with our God, we will one day reach the place of justice and peace where God reigns forever.