



# Ten ways to Celebrate the Saints

**On All Saints Day we remember our ancestors in faith. The phrase 'communion of saints' refers to all who have been baptized in Christ, those living and those who have died. The word 'saint' is also used to refer to particular people whose lives have witnessed to the love of God in extraordinary ways. Some of these people are known to only a few. They may be among our own deceased friends and relatives. Others have been officially honoured or canonized by the Church.**

## 1. Dust off those photo albums

Our lives are full of saintly people who have touched our lives. Today, revel in the company of saints who have walked the path of faith and love with you. Perhaps open the family photo album and enjoy some precious memories.

## 2. Do something special

All Saints is a great feast day, so do something celebratory to mark it. Play a beautiful song/hymn throughout the day. Open a nice bottle of wine. Shout your children an ice cream or some small treat. Take a stroll in the park. Romance your spouse. Celebrate in a way that is meaningful to you.

## 3. Share a family meal

Share a family meal in honour of the saints. Invite the relatives or neighbours. Let the small children dress up as their favourite saint. Pray an extended grace together. Light a candle and read a scripture passage. Table topic: share a story of one about your favourite saints.

## 4. Pray by the graveside

Visit a sacred place which commemorates the life of a saint. This might be the grave where your husband or child is buried. Or it might be a shrine that honours a saint who is dear to you, to your family, your community. Spend some quiet time there in the presence of the Lord.

## 5. Read stories

Offer your child a book or DVD about one of the great saints of the Church. Replace your own junky novel or TV viewing with an account of the life of a saint. Be enriched and challenged by the inspiration of their story.

## 6. Celebrate the Eucharist

On All saints Day celebrate Mass with your local parish community. Prepare beforehand by reflecting on the readings and focusing on special intentions to be prayed during the Mass.

## 7. Grieve and heal

The saints help us to view life's heartaches from the perspective of the resurrection. Death is not the end! In Christ we will live forever. Even now as the body of Christ we are bonded with one another beyond the grave. Today,

bring to God any grief and 'unfinished business' connected with a loved one.

## 8. Ponder an image

If a picture speaks a thousand words, how much more a sacred icon of the Blessed Virgin Mary, or an image of Michaelangelo's Pieta. Ponder a beautiful image of a saint who is dear to your heart: a painting, a postcard, a sculpture. Your chosen image might be a photograph of a loved one.

## 9. Give a saintly gift

Is somebody in your circle celebrating a birthday close to All Saints Day? Gift this person with a book/DVD/momento that depicts a special saint, perhaps the one after whom he/she was named.

## 10. Renew your commitment

Our saintly ancestors in faith were people of great courage and conviction. When we find ourselves becoming cynical or discouraged, the saints help to raise our sights, fill us with hope and shake us out of our earthbound way of seeing things. Today, with robust faith like the saints, renew your commitment to God and to the Church!

Helpful Hint

Why honour the saints? Because our Catholic faith is a profoundly communal experience. The way one member lives life affects the whole faith community. When we honour the saints we are allowing ourselves to be influenced by their radical faith, their fidelity and creativity, their boundless love for God. To honour the saints is to be drawn into a deeper relationship with God and God's people.