



Spiritual Reflection for the Family

All Saints

The Communion of Saints

Materials Needed

Bible

Preparation for the Family Leader

The Communion of Saints is the community or family of the entire people of God. This communion includes those people who already enjoy the presence of God in heaven, and those faithful to God on earth. Your family can reflect on the communion of saints—those holy people who have gone before us, and those living among us. Your family is a part of the communion of saints.

1. Introduction to the Theme

Ask family members if they know what the “Communion of Saints” is. Then share this in your own words:

When we die, we don't suddenly stop being members of the Church. The Church considers both living and deceased members to be part of the faith community. When a person leaves this world and moves on to eternal life, he or she is still a member of the body of Christ. So we never really lose touch with our neighbors, friends, and relatives when they die. We remain united with them as a community of believers in Christ.

Not everyone who is a saint becomes famous. Some saints are very well known. Some of these saints have special feast days which we celebrate every year. But other saints don't. We celebrate all of the saints on the feast called All Saints.

We also celebrate saints still living here on earth. As members of the Church and followers of Jesus Christ, members of this family belong to the communion of saints.

2. Time for Storytelling

Family members share stories about saints using the suggestions below as a guide.

For younger children:

If the children participated in All Saints events in the community, ask: What saints did you learn about? Who are they? What did they do? How did they show Jesus that they loved him? Who do you know who you think is a saint? Why? If you read stories of saints with the younger children, let them tell you about the saints.

For older children and adults:

Name names. That is, name your family's personal “communion of saints.” This list could include actual saints of the Church, non-canonized saints of recent history or the present, and saints in your own family. How are all of these people a part of the Body of Christ? What gifts have they (or do they) bring to God's people?

3. Stories from Our Faith Tradition

Read the Beatitudes, Matthew 5:1-12.

- ❖ Members of the Communion of Saints “do” the beatitudes. How have you seen these beatitudes in action?
- ❖ Why do you think the Church uses this Gospel reading for the feast of All Saints?
- ❖ Which of the beatitudes is your family best at living? With which beatitude do you struggle?

4. What Our Family Can Do

- ◆ Gather pictures of the “communion of saints” that is your family—both living and deceased. Create a family altar or prayer place to visually depict the communion of saints.
- ◆ Set an extra place at the dinner table every night during the month of November for a

“saint.” Some nights, this could be a deceased relative sitting at the table with your family, other nights it might be one of your family member’s favorite saints of the church, or modern day “saint.” Talk about how the whole Communion of Saints is present with your family, and how they are connected with us to Jesus. The communion of saints supports each of us in being saints in our own way.

Reflect back on your family’s experience of All Saints.

- ❖ How have you seen the communion of saints at work in your community? During the month of November, look for signs of the communion of saints among you.