

# Gleaning In The Fields Of Light

## *Saint All Of Us*

By Ken Woodley

Great. Wonderful. Just right. But look around you and see for yourselves.

We've all got our costumes on. We're wearing our All Saints Day Sunday outfits. Yes, you and you and you. And even me. All of us sitting in these pews or, for those who are reading this digitally, wherever you are sitting or standing.

And the really strange thing is that they're not really costumes at all. We're wearing the stuff we wear every Sunday or every day of the week.

That's the point. As hard as it is to believe.

Me? A saint?

Not hardly. Couldn't be. I know myself too well to stake any claim to sainthood. But the rest of you? Absolutely.

I know. Each of you is shaking your head, as well. You have the same doubts as me. You don't believe for a moment that you're a saint. You know yourself too well to stake any claim to sainthood.

But, that's really the point. Saints aren't perfect. The actual canonized, hall-of-fame, stained-glass-window saints weren't perfect at all.

Look at Saint Peter and Saint Paul, for crying out loud. They were as flawed as anybody. You and I can't walk on water. But neither could Peter, even with Jesus there reaching out to him.

And, gosh, how about Paul?

During the time he went around calling himself Saul, he was an accomplice to many acts of violence, and at least one death—he was there holding the cloaks of those who stoned Saint Stephen.

None of us has done anything like that. Still, we doubt our saintliness. So, consider this:

Jesus has called each one of us the light of the world.

To me, being thought of by Jesus as the light of the world is more amazing than being a saint. But it's true. Jesus said so. We've all been lit up by Jesus in our lives. We've all been kindled by God to shine evidence of heavenly love and grace in the world.

If we're good enough for Jesus, and good enough for God, that should be good enough for anyone. Good enough, even, for ourselves to realize how loved by God and Christ we really are.

Loved as individuals and collectively as a church family.

And how brightly that love shines through us out into the world, filling corners of darkness with light. Because that's what saints do and, trust me, none of the saints ever thought of themselves as saints. Only we think of them that way. But saints, in spite of their human foibles, give people a glimpse of God's presence in the world.

Or maybe, just perhaps, it's actually *through* their—through *our*—fractured places that God is most able to shine into us, and out through us into the world.

A second way to look at All Saints Day is to consider how all of us together are very much an obvious saint in this world. All of us together have been canonized, in a sense, because we are—you and me—St. Anne's.

Each one of us is a part of everything St. Anne's is doing in this world.

And that means that each of us is a part of so much, from the food pantry to the clothing exchange, from the grocery bags full of Thanksgiving feasting to the Angel Tree, and from the space in Rose Hall that we share with others to that small, freshly-painted wooden box of non-perishable foodstuffs set on a pole next door for anyone in need at any hour of any day. And that is only part of it.

There is so much that we do collectively and individually, small moments of compassion that change a minute in someone's day. But that changes an hour in their day, and so alters their day. That, in turn, changes their week and so redirects their month. Which changes their year and so transforms their life and, very truly, changes the world for them.

And so, too, changes the world for us.

All saints together.

Giving, and receiving, God's love and grace through each other.

