

“Keep your eyes on the prize.” On this Solemnity of All Saints, there’s no doubt in my mind that this principle was front and center in the hearts and minds of the saints: those men, women, and children who’ve gone before us in history and show us what it means to be holy. Now you might ask “what *is* the prize?” The ultimate and supreme *Prize is our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ* and eternal happiness with Him forever in Heaven.

Between an upcoming presidential election and a pandemic that are causing so much division, stress, anxiety, and fear for so many people, the Lord is speaking personally to us today through the Liturgy of the Word on this great Feast of All Saints with the desire to refocus our hearts and minds on our *ultimate* destiny as human beings – and that is the *grand prize* of eternal union with God and all the angels and saints in the Kingdom of Heaven.

Brothers and sisters, in these uncertain and turbulent times, the saints show us the way! The saints were so successful and powerful *precisely* because they were so *focused* on Christ our Savior and eternal happiness with Him! There’s no doubt in my mind that the saints were

the most focused people on earth! Their grace-filled focus on our Lord Jesus and His victory over sin, suffering, and death enabled them to *live life to the full without fear and with great joy and hope!* The saints were so focused on Christ and Heaven that they were not afraid to carry *any* cross and endure *any* suffering. They knew that if they faithfully followed Christ to the end, they would be victorious, sharing in the glory of His Resurrection. The saints knew with great faith that our Lord Jesus is the *Kingdom of Heaven incarnate* and that *wherever He is, there is Heaven.*

In many ways, the saints suffered so much more than us, and yet their intense focus on Christ empowered them to *persevere and never give up*, even in the midst of great suffering and persecution. For the saints, *personal holiness was the most important reality*—holiness being that intimacy with Christ that leads to a life of love and virtue.

The saints show us what is *most important* in life—*and guess what*: it's *not* politics and elections. Now please don't misunderstand me: While every political election is important and this upcoming election is *extremely important*, we should not let it consume us and bog

us down to the point where we forget that we are *first and foremost disciples of Christ* and that our Lord Jesus *alone* is our hope and salvation. We should not allow this upcoming election to consume us to the point where we forget that our ultimate goal and destiny is personal holiness and eternal happiness with God in the Kingdom of Heaven. We cannot allow this upcoming presidential election make us forget who our *eternal Savior is!* I'll give you a clue: *it's not any political candidate running for office!*

Now before I go further, let me clarify: politics and government are *necessary and important* for the sake of temporal, human affairs. The Church affirms that politics and government are necessary and important for the sake of protecting human life and dignity and preserving the common good. Christ's Church affirms the legitimacy and necessity of civil authority and the rule of law—and *yes* politics is a noble vocation that calls forth men and women dedicated to selfless service for the sake of human dignity and the common good. In fact, there were many great saints who were involved in politics and government: St. Thomas More, St. Catherine of Siena, St. Louis IX, St.

Margaret of Scotland, St. Henry II, St. Joan of Arc, St. Casimir, St. Elizabeth of Portugal, St. Wenceslaus, and St. Helena.

As Catholics, the Church calls us to be active, well-informed, and faithful citizens who readily bring our faith into the public sphere. As disciples of Christ, we have a serious moral obligation to properly form our consciences based on the teachings of Christ and His Church. The saints knew this and that is exactly what they did. With a *well-formed conscience*, we're then called to participate in political life through voting and other peaceful means—all for the sake of the common good and for upholding the intrinsic and equal dignity of *every human life* from conception until natural death.

Now with the theological virtue of faith, which *defined* the saints, we must know that while politics and government are *important*, they are not *everything—they're certainly not the end-all, be-all of human existence!* With the faith of the saints, we must establish a hierarchy of importance in our life with *Christ* and *our Catholic faith at the top* of that hierarchy, followed immediately by our family and then our friends. It's been said before and I'll say it again: we worship *God, not*

government! We worship God **alone!** The saints knew this with a deep and strong faith, hope, and love! And when we honor the saints, we are indeed worshipping **God,** Who was the center of their lives!

Brothers and sisters, we **don't worship politicians,** we don't worship government, and we don't worship power—if we did, these would be false gods who would destroy us spiritually. Moreover, we should not look to government and politicians to solve **all of our problems**—in fact, the reality is that they **can't** solve **all** of our problems! We should be wary of any politicians or candidates who promise us a perfect utopia here on earth! The saints remind us that the only absolute perfection will be with Christ in the Kingdom of Heaven.

So **breaking news:** politicians are not our messiahs or saviors! These people cannot save us from sin, suffering, and death! The One who **does save us** from sin, suffering, and death is the One who died on the cross for us and rose from the dead! So brothers and sisters, regardless of who wins this presidential election, always remember that **our Lord Jesus Christ alone** is our eternal hope and salvation! Christ

alone is our Savior! He *alone* can give us the true and lasting freedom, happiness, and peace that we seek.

Through the saints, our Lord Jesus reminds us that this world, while important, *isn't everything*. I know that may seem hard to accept at times, especially *now* given the hyper-intensified focus of so many on this highly contentious, emotional, and divisive presidential election, which I cannot wait to be over. Brothers and sisters, today on the Solemnity of All Saints, our Lord Jesus wants us to keep everything in perspective. Our merciful Savior wants us to be like the saints and maintain a healthy and faith-filled perspective, rooted in *hope*, which recognizes that while this world is *important*, it's certainly not *everything*, and that our *true* home is in Heaven with the Triune God.

So as we prepare to worship and encounter our Lord Jesus Christ in the Most Holy Eucharist—our *only* Savior Who *is* the Way, the Truth, and the Life, let us pray for the grace to have the focus of the saints and *always* keep our eyes on the prize, which is eternal happiness with Christ in the Kingdom of Heaven.