

Thoughts on the Daily Word

30th Week of the Year. Friday 1st November. Solemnity of All Saints. Readings: *Apocalypse 7:2-4,9-14; Psalm 23; 1 John 3:1-3; Matthew 5:1-12a.*

Our Jerusalem Bible version of the Gospel today always brightens me up! It talks about being 'happy'. I am sure that it is a good translation, though I am no biblical scholar! It makes me feel good because I can imagine happy smiling faces on those who hear this story and discover that they really are blest by God. One of the things I missed the most during the pandemic time was the inability to engage with the children in our wonderful school. The happy smiling faces told me that our school is all that we want for our children, to know that they are special and loved and that they have a future. I can imagine the faces of our children listening to Jesus and hearing how special they are, truly blessed and beaming. That seems to me what holiness is really all about; sanctity and saints are never really miserable. I have been blest to see pictures and the bodies of some of my special saints, Therese, with that lovely smile and Bernadette, lying at the chapel at Nevers, so peaceful and gentle. I also saw my priestly inspiration, Pope St. John XXIII, lying in St. Peter's, it seemed with a gentle smile on his face. That is of course the challenge for us. Holiness is and should be a joy, as Pope Francis constantly reminds us. It is not an achievement, a mountain to climb or an exam to pass, it is a gift to be received. The struggle is to be open to that gift.