“THE SHAPE OF HOLINESS”

Revelation 7:2–4, 9–14 • Psalm 24 • 1 John 3:1–3 • Matthew 5:1–12a



When we think of saints, we often imagine extraordinary people whose holiness seems beyond our reach. Yet today's Gospel tells a different story. Jesus calls blessed the merciful, the peacemakers, the gentle, those who hunger for justice, and those who carry sorrow with faith. Holiness, it seems, is not reserved for a spiritual elite. It begins in the ordinary circumstances of life.

In the Book of Revelation, John sees an immense multitude from every nation, people, and language standing before God. What a beautiful image of the Church! Different faces, different histories, different journeys — yet all belonging to one family.

Over these past weeks, Holy Cross has reminded me of that vision. Our celebrations, our ministries, and the generous tables we have shared reveal a community rich in gifts and traditions. But the Gospel invites us to go further. A welcoming parish is not simply one that opens its doors; it is one where everyone discovers that they truly belong.

The saints were not perfect people who never struggled. They were people who allowed God's grace to transform their struggles into compassion, their weaknesses into trust, and their faith into love. Perhaps there are saints among us already: someone quietly caring for a sick spouse, a volunteer serving without recognition, a parishioner choosing forgiveness when resentment would be easier.

Today, let us remember that holiness is not about becoming extraordinary in the eyes of the world. It is about allowing God's love to become visible through our ordinary lives. And that is a calling open to every one of us.

Fr. Efren