

All Saints' Day

Middle School · Student Edition

For the student: Read along, fill in the blanks, and write your answers on the lines. Your parent has the answers.

Step 1 Understand the Collect

Most collects follow a five-part pattern: the **address** (the One to whom we pray), the **reason** (what God has done or promised), the **petition** (what we ask), the **purpose** (what we hope will result), and the **ending** (the closing that names the Trinity).

Almighty and everlasting God, You knit together Your faithful people of all times and places into one holy communion, the mystical body of Your Son, Jesus Christ. Grant us so to follow Your blessed saints in all virtuous and godly living that, together with them, we may come to the unspeakable joys You have prepared for those who love You; through Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

1. Mark each part of the collect. Are any parts missing?

2. "Of all times and places." Who belongs to this one communion?

3. The collect asks us to "follow" the saints. Follow them in what? Why does that not mean earning heaven?

Step 2 Understand the Gospel

Read the Gospel on your own.

Matthew 5:1-12

1 Seeing the crowds, he went up on the mountain, and when he sat down, his disciples came to him. **2** And he opened his mouth and taught them, saying:

3 "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. **4** Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted. **5** Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth. **6** Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be satisfied. **7** Blessed are the merciful, for they shall receive mercy. **8** Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God. **9** Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God. **10** Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

11 "Blessed are you when others revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account. **12** Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven, for so they persecuted the prophets who were before you."

1. The Beatitudes describe people who are poor, mourning, meek, and persecuted. Why call them "blessed"?

2. What does "poor in spirit" (v. 3) mean?

3. Who fits every Beatitude perfectly?

4. Why does Jesus tell persecuted people to "rejoice" (vv. 11-12)?

Step 3 Find the Collect in the Gospel

1. Find at least two places where the collect's words appear in the Gospel. Explain each one.

2. Today's first reading says of the saints, "They have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb" (Revelation 7:14). What does that teach about how saints are made holy?

Step 4 The Small Catechism

The Third Article. I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy Christian church, **the communion of saints**, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen. **What does this mean?** I believe that I cannot by my own reason or strength believe in Jesus Christ, my Lord, or come to Him; but the Holy Spirit has called me by the Gospel, enlightened me with His gifts, sanctified and kept me in the true faith. In the same way He calls, gathers, enlightens, and sanctifies the whole Christian church on earth, and keeps it with Jesus Christ in the one true faith. In this Christian church He daily and richly forgives all my sins and the sins of all believers. On the Last Day He will raise me and all the dead, and give eternal life to me and all believers in Christ. This is most certainly true.

Cross-reference. "Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight, and sin which clings so closely, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, looking to Jesus, the founder and perfecter of our faith." (Hebrews 12:1-2)

1. What does "the communion of saints" mean?

2. Luther says the Holy Spirit "calls, gathers, enlightens, and sanctifies the whole Christian church." What does that say about who the saints are?

3. Hebrews calls the saints "a cloud of witnesses." According to verse 2, where should we look?

Think about it. Who is a saint? Read Philippians 1:1 and Revelation 7:14 and be ready to talk about it.

Step 5 Wrap It All Up

1. Write a short collect of your own for this day. Use all five parts.

Pray today's collect together. Then answer:

2. What does Jesus do for you as one of His saints?
