

# Communion of Saints

The **Communion of Saints** is the Church's belief that all who belong to Christ—on earth, in heaven, and in purgatory—are united as one body in Him. This communion is rooted in the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ and expresses the deep spiritual unity shared by all members of the Church.

## What Is the Communion of Saints?

The Communion of Saints refers to three interconnected realities:

- **The Church on earth** (the faithful who are still on their pilgrimage of faith)
- **The Church in heaven** (those who have died and now share in the fullness of God's presence)
- **The Church undergoing purification** (those being prepared to enter into the fullness of heaven)

All three are united in Christ, forming one spiritual family bound together by love, prayer, and grace.

## Called to Holiness

The Second Vatican Council emphasized that **all baptized Christians are called to holiness**. Holiness is not reserved for a few, but is the universal vocation of every disciple of Jesus Christ.

The Church teaches that the faithful are called to:

- Witness to the love of Christ in the world
- Live lives shaped by justice, mercy, and compassion
- Participate actively in the mission of the Church
- Grow in holiness through prayer, sacraments, and service

The call to holiness is not only personal but also communal and global. Christian holiness is expressed in care for the poor, commitment to justice, solidarity with those who suffer, and participation in the life of the Church.

## Saints as Models of Faith

The saints are men and women who have lived the Gospel in extraordinary ways. They show us what it means to follow Christ in every age, culture, and circumstance.

While each saint is unique, all point to the same reality: **the transforming love of Jesus Christ**.

The Church honors saints because their lives:

- Reveal God's grace at work in human history
- Inspire us to live more faithfully
- Remind us that holiness is possible in every state of life

The liturgical calendar of saints helps the Church remember and celebrate these witnesses throughout the year. Each saint's life highlights a particular aspect of the Christian mystery and invites the faithful to deeper discipleship.

## A Living and Diverse Communion

The Communion of Saints reflects the universality of the Church. Holiness is found among:

- Men and women
- Rich and poor
- Married and single
- Clergy, religious, and laity
- People from every nation and culture

While the history of canonized saints has not always fully reflected this diversity, the Church continues to recognize that holiness is present in every people and place. The Holy Spirit continues to raise up witnesses in every generation.

### **Saints for Our Time**

Every age of the Church reveals new expressions of holiness. In our time, the saints are those who:

- Stand with those who suffer
- Defend human dignity and justice
- Work for peace and reconciliation
- Bear witness to Christ even in difficulty or persecution
- Live the Gospel with courage and love

The saints are not distant figures from the past; they are living witnesses who continue to inspire the Church today.

### **Our Participation in the Communion**

Through Baptism, we are already part of this great communion. We are united with the saints in heaven and supported by their prayers. At the same time, we are called to pray for one another and to grow together in holiness.

The Communion of Saints reminds us that:

- We are never alone in our faith
- The Church is larger than what we see
- Love transcends death
- Holiness is both a gift and a calling