Inspired By the Saints #November

A guide for personal prayer before the Blessed Sacrament this November. Written for a vigil of Eucharistic adoration, an extended time of prayer spent in His presence on the first Friday of the month, it can also be used for any quiet moment with Jesus this November, as we look up to the saints and pray for those who have died.

Jesus, I'm here in front of You again tonight.

I just want to be here, looking at You and letting You look at me.

November starts with two days that invite us to lift our gaze: the feast of All Saints and the commemoration of the faithful departed. First we celebrate those who are already with You in heaven; then we remember and pray for those who have died.

The two dates remind me of something I tend to forget: my life has a destination. I'm not here only to get things done, check boxes, have a good time, get through difficulties, and collect experiences. I was made to find You and to live with You forever.

But Jesus, the word "holiness" feels too big for me. When I think of saints, I picture extraordinary people, very different from me: people who have paintings made of them, who did heroic things, and who seemed to have a faith without doubts or ups and downs.

But I know that the feast of All Saints isn't only about those with an image or a date on the calendar. It also celebrates a multitude of people whose

names we'll never know: people who had a family, a job, friends, tiredness, worries, and flaws; people who learned to love You within an ordinary-looking life. Those saints probably looked a lot like the people I run into every day.

None of them were born with everything figured out. They too had to learn to trust, to ask forgiveness, and to start over. What made them saints wasn't a perfect life, but letting You into it.

So this feast is for me too: I can be a saint.

Pause for a moment. What do you feel hearing this? Excitement, disbelief, fear, indifference? Tell Jesus honestly.

The mission You entrusted to St. Josemaría and Opus Dei is a reminder that many, many people are called to seek You and become saints right in the middle of the world, inside their everyday life. That means I don't have to wait for my life to change before I begin. I don't need a different personality, fewer weaknesses, a perfect schedule, or extraordinary circumstances. You're waiting for me in this life, exactly as it is, in the good parts and the bad ones.

I can find You while I study or work, at home, with friends, on a route I've walked a hundred times, or in a task no one sees. I can draw close to You by doing what's right in front of me well, caring for the people around me, getting back up after I mess up, and offering You even the things that cost me. Holiness doesn't begin when my flaws disappear. It begins when I let

You into my struggle. It isn't about doing something impressive every day: it's discovering that no day is too small to matter when I live it with You.

Jesus, don't let me settle for a life lived only halfway. Don't let me just drift through my days without asking what – or who – it's all for. Help me find the paths to You that are hidden in the same old places.

November also asks us to remember those who have died. Some people stay present even though we can no longer see them. They come back to us through a photograph, a song, a phrase, a gesture we picked up from them without noticing. Some absences still ache. Maybe there were conversations left unfinished, words we never said, or moments we didn't know to treasure at the time.

Tonight I want to bring some of their names and faces before You.

> Think of the people who have died for whom you want to pray. Remember a moment you shared with them and offer them to Jesus.

Thank You for their lives, and for everything they gave me.

Pope Leo XIV says that Christian memory isn't mere nostalgia. It's gratitude for what God has done and responsibility for what He's entrusting to us now. He also says that our hope isn't believing everything will turn out fine, but knowing that Christ has risen and that no darkness gets the last word. Help me remember that way, Jesus. Don't let thinking of those who've died leave me stuck only in what I've lost. Let their memory teach me to be grateful, to pray, and to make better use of the time I have left.

Remembering that my life will end doesn't take away its value. It gives it back. It helps me discern what's urgent and what's important, instead of pouring energy into comparisons, irritations, and worries I probably won't even remember in a few years. It pushes me to say "I love you" while I still can, to ask forgiveness instead of putting it off until tomorrow, and to actually be present with people before all that's left is missing them.

If today were one of my last days, what would I change? Who would I make time for? What conversation would I stop putting off? How would I want to have loved?

Stay in silence for a moment. Let these questions shed light on your life, to help you live more freely.

Jesus, I don't want thinking about Heaven to pull me away from the earth. I want it to make me love this world more, not less. The saints never checked out of the world. In fact, because they loved You, they took the lives of the people around them seriously. They cared for others, worked, taught, healed, listened, served, and left the world a little better than they found it. I can do the same with the part of the world You've put in my hands: my family, my friends, my studies or work, the people I live alongside, the atmosphere I create wherever I am.

Please watch over the Pope. Hold him up in his mission, and help me pray for his intentions. I pray for those who are grieving, those who are sick, those afraid of death, and those sitting with someone through their final days. Help us learn how to be close to them, even when we don't know what to say.

Jesus, I don't want to leave this vigil afraid of life slipping by. I want to leave wanting to live it to the full. I want to walk toward Heaven with my feet planted on the ground, seeking You each day, starting over as many times as it takes.

Today I'm daring to ask You for something big: make me a saint.

Not in some imagined life, not in different circumstances. Make me a saint in my real life, both in the things people see and the things no one knows about, on my good days and on the days I can barely manage to move forward.

Teach me to live with my eyes on heaven.