

- The 33rd chapter of Exodus recounts the story of Moses begging the Lord to see His glory. Yet, our Lord said to Moses that no man can see the face of God and live.
- So, the Lord stationed Moses in a cleft in a rock and covered over him with His hand. And after the Lord passed by, He removed His hand so that Moses could see His back.
- This state of being able to get some sense of the Lord, yet not being able to see our Lord face to face is akin to our earthly pilgrimage as Christians.
- We know that we encounter the Lord in the Sacraments, most especially in the Eucharist. We hear His voice in the Scriptures, and sense His friendship in our prayer and communal gatherings. And yet, we still long to *see* Him.
- Truly, as the Psalmist laments today: *Lord, this is the people that longs to see Your face.*
- As we come to know our Lord through the Scriptures and the Sacraments, as we experience Him in our interactions with others, as we commune with Him in our prayer, we come to love our Lord. Hopefully, we come to love Him intimately.
- Yet intimacy is a demanding thing, is it not? Intimacy demands that we know our beloved fully, totally, and without reserve. And being intimate with God is the deepest longing in the human heart, whether we know it or not.
- It is thus that we long to see God's face, just as Moses did in the desert so long ago.
- Amazingly, the 6th Beatitude, which we hear in our Gospel today, teaches us that those who are clean of heart will see God.
- Of all the blessed promises our Lord makes to those who practice the Beatitudes, perhaps *seeing* God is the most incredible, for in seeing God we will, in some way, be able to know Him Who is completely ineffable, and the intimacy we desire with Him will be realized.
- This unimpeded vision of God is the blessing enjoyed by the saints alone: both those who've been canonized and formally recognized as saints, and those quiet souls who, though not canonized, lived holy lives nonetheless and are enjoying the glories of Heaven.
- As we honor all the saints today, Holy Mother Church invites each of us to aspire to their ranks, to live our earthly lives so that, when we die, we might join that great cloud of witnesses eternally beholding our Lord face to face in Heaven.
- Of course, this requires that we learn to be clean and pure of heart here on earth.
- As St. John tells us in his first epistle, we are children of God. And as children of God, we will one day be made like God, for we shall see Him as He is. And everyone who has this hope of seeing God makes himself pure. What does this all mean?
- It means that our Lord, Who has created us in His image and likeness, wants us to live up to this image, which we have marred and disfigured by our sins. For we cannot enter into the Beatific Vision until we bear this likeness to God.
- The saints are the people who have fulfilled that image God has of them. They are people who have lived a life of holiness to a heroic degree and who have no need of the purifying fires of purgatory.
- By their lives the saints remind us clearly of our call to purity and holiness of life. They remind us of the necessity of living in faith, hope, and love, and they show us the joy of embracing a life of virtue.
- The saints are people who have proven not only that living a life of holiness is possible in this life, but that holiness is possible for any person living in any circumstance.

- But most importantly, the saints remind us that God has an image of who He wants us to be, and that we should strive with all our might to be that man or woman God has envisioned us to be from all eternity.
- So it is that we must do all we can to rid ourselves of the stain of sin. Of course, this is not something we do on our own. We must repent of our sins and amend our lives, but we must also turn to our Lord, seeking His forgiveness and mercy, most especially in the confessional.
- Beyond repenting of our sins, we must pray, discern and follow God's will, practice our Faith with integrity, endeavoring to grow in virtue and seeking to make reparation for our sins. As we do all this, we are gradually transformed into that person our Lord has called us to be.
- If we manage to live lives of holiness here on earth, accepting God's mercy for the times we have fallen short, and become that person that God desires us to be, then we enter the joys of Heaven and live intimately united with our Lord, seeing Him face to face, for all eternity.
- Perhaps the thought of becoming a saint sounds difficult and burdensome, for who of us has not been discouraged by the struggle to overcome our sins?
- Yet when we examine the lives of the saints, what we learn is that sainthood is not so much about being morally perfect as it is about not giving up when we do sin!
- Sainthood is not about perfecting and relying upon our own gifts and merits. It's about humbly accepting and relying up on God's grace and striving to cooperate with that grace to do His will – no matter what the cost.
- Above all the lives of the saints are all marked with an unshakeable faith in God, an unrelenting hope in His goodness and mercy, and an unwavering charity in serving God and neighbor.
- And the beautiful thing is that sainthood is possible for each and every one of us, if only we are heroic enough to pursue it.
- As we honor the saints in Heaven today, may we seek to be like them, truly longing to see God's face. And may we trust in the faithful intercession of the saints, that we will one day join their ranks, and share in the intimacy of the Beatific Vision.