

Grace to you and peace from God our Father and our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

As I write and record this, the “fall back” time change hasn’t happened yet.

But, by the time you watch it, it will have...and thanks be to God!

I know there are people who will disagree with me. I get that. And, likely, whenever it is that we “spring ahead” I’ll hold the opposite opinion from the one I **now** hold (at which point the people who disagree with me now will agree with me...So, everybody’s happy.).

But, oh my...I grateful for this change.

Truth be told, I never know if we are going *into* daylight saving time or *out* of it, and – for that matter – I’m never really sure whether I’m gaining or losing an hour of sleep (but I *do* remember trying to “prep” my kids for the change when they were younger). All I know is that I am thankful that there is now more light in the morning when I get up.

I don’t remember caring all that much about it as a kid...Maybe it’s that my responsibilities have shifted. It’s not just *me* that I have to get going in the morning. I have to drag my children (*teenagers, no less!*) out of bed and make sure they have something their bellies before I drop them at school before the bell rings at 7:00. It is still dark as pitch when I drive them...which makes it kind of scary. Despite the school zone (which folks really do pay attention to for the most part around where we live), I drive with a real sense of anxiety that I will hit a wayward high schooler who isn’t paying attention.

There is one woman, she’s a teacher, who rides her bike to school every morning along the same route we drive. She is *so* diligent and consistent. I’ve seen her for three years now. Well, I guess I didn’t see her last year, since school was virtual. In any case, she understands the danger.

Not only does she wear a helmet, but her helmet has a light on the *back* of it so she can be *seen*, and one on the front so she can see where she is *going*.

Ends up she is my daughter’s homeroom teacher (and Lucy, my daughter, has deemed her “cool.”).

Honestly, I’m not sure what a homeroom teacher does these days. I should really find out.

It used to be that you started your day, *every* day, with your homeroom teacher.

I hope that’s still the case.

I think it would be good for my kid (for *all* of the kids) to be reminded at the beginning of every day, *by a really cool adult who isn’t their parent*, to hold on to a light when it is especially dark...so that you don’t get hit. Or, at least, walk with someone who is holding a light.

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Professor Samuel Cruz from Union Theological Seminary says this:

“Those who began this tradition of All Saints” (sidebar – which began to be celebrated, depending on which source you check, sometime in the 4th century) “understood that doing so would provide an opportunity to acknowledge that we stand upon the shoulders of those who lived and died before us.” He goes on: “In a society that glorifies individualism, providing such opportunities and taking the time to reflect upon the contributions of our ancestors [and all who have come before us] reminds us that what we have accomplished in life is due [in no small part] to the saints that preceded us.”

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It’s not any of the assigned readings for today...In fact, I’m not sure if it *ever* appears in our lectionary at all. But I *love* it.

I am sure that I knew the story – sure that I had heard it in Sunday school or VBS or seminary, but until it “resonated” with me, I guess I just never really gave it much mind.

But, for some reason, it seems appropriate for today.

Somebody reminded me of it at a time that was challenging for me. Truly, that’s all I remember.

I don’t remember whether it was challenging personally or if a congregation I was serving was going through an especially challenging season.

For that matter, this person (who has been rostered a longer than me and who is a dear friend)...For that matter, this person may have reminded me of this story *preemptively*...knowing my hesitation at letting others know when I am struggling, but also knowing that struggling is real and inevitable – really that part is a blur.

In any case, it was offered as an “invitation” (actually more of a warning), to not try to go it alone.

It’s the story of how – while Moses was standing on a hill and holding his staff in the air (the staff that turned into a serpent before Pharoah and parted the Red Sea and with which he struck the rock and water flowed)...It is the story of how while he was holding that *same* staff in the air to bring Joshua and the Israelites victory over the Amalekites –

And so long as he kept the staff raised in the air, the battle went in the Israelites favor, but whenever he lowered his arms, the battle went poorly – so he had to keep his arms up...

It’s the story of how, when he got tired and his arms fell, Moses enlisted the help of Aaron and Hur (Actually, it doesn’t say whether he enlisted their help – or whether they just stepped in and he, maybe too exhausted to refuse – accepted their help.) and together they got through.

It’s the story of how he couldn’t do it alone.

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That’s the role of saints...

to hold up our arms when we are too tired and the battle before us is too much to face – whether we enlist their help, or rather they just jump in.

It happens all the time – most of the time we probably don’t even realize it. Most of the time, we go through our days and weeks and years unaware of how the work of others *before* and *beside* us has paved the way for our journey. Most of the time, we take all of that for granted... at least those of us who have the privilege to do so, take it for granted. Completely oblivious to the way our arms have been supported along the way.

That’s the role of saints to come along side and support.

To sit with us in the darkness and lend a hint of light.

That’s the role of saints...to join us in our weeping until we can see the possibility of new things.

“Jesus wept,” the gospel lesson says.

Alongside and among those who were weeping. Not because he did not know that Lazarus would be raised, but because he stays with us in our sorrow, deep into the darkness that is death – never leaving us, rather joining us...often in the form of friends and family and strangers who stay close – even when we are unaware of their presence. And those saints come into our lives without ceasing not because we have somehow or another earned the right to have our arms held up or our very dark paths somehow made a bit lighter, but because the God of all creation refuses to leave us alone but chooses, instead, to accompany us and even carry us, so that we will not be overcome, by weeping and weariness and darkness rather will know the persistent presence of the one who insists on bringing new life... equipping us to be *persistently present* and to point to new life...as we equip others to be *persistently present* and to point to new life...and on and on and on in a never-ending procession of the saints.

This All Saints’ I am especially thankful for all of those saints who *have* and who *do* hold a light for me

when things feel dangerously dark, and the time change hasn't happened yet.

This All Saints' I am especially thankful for those who hold me up when I am so weary.

This All Saints' I am especially thankful for those who weep with me and whose presence brings hope.

This All Saints I am especially thankful for *you* as you participate in the persistent presence of Christ and take your place in the procession of the saints.