

FATHER ANTON'S WORDS OF WISDOM: The Sunday after Pentecost is dedicated to "All Saints". Too often we think of the saints as only those who have been canonized by the Pope, or those whose lives appear so pious on the exterior that we are afraid to approach them. These are not the saints that we refer to on this day. One of the most profound lines that is found in the Nicene Creed that we pray at every Divine Liturgy is "I believe in the communion of saints." In other words; I believe that we are all united, those who



have gone before me, those still in the world with me; we all make up this "communion of saints." The saints of the New Testament were the everyday people who accepted the good news of Jesus and put into practice all that they had learned. The saints are those who today live their lives not for themselves, but rather in service of others. They are the ones who love no matter what; who are quick to offer forgiveness to another, and who are quick to forgive themselves.

They are those who help those less fortunate; those who share the pain and suffering of the world - who are not indifferent; they are those who can turn anger into something positive before opening their mouths; they are those who have come to understand that mistakes are only lessons that help them to grow into the best human being they can be. They are those who are willing to go out on a limb for another; who will break from the status quo when there is injustice; they are those who know Christ not from words, but rather through the experience of his love in their lives. They are those who have allowed themselves to experience the divine in their humanity. Finally they are those who know that they are never alone. I don't know about you; but I see Christ in others most profoundly when they are interacting. When people laugh together, cry together, support one another, encourage one another, forgive each other and love each other regardless of any situation - they are saints. These are the saints that have touched and transformed my life every day and continue to do so. These are the saints of the New Testament and in our modern world. You don't have to look far to find them; just look and be aware of their presence.

Let us pray: Loving Lord, in your love you have allowed each of us to be at the same time, saint and sinner. Even in our weakness we can still proclaim Your love through our example. Give me wisdom to see Your face in everyone – to realize that we are Your saints – myself included. Help me to better witness to You in our world through word and action – but most of all in love and compassion. Amen.