



+ Cross-generational Session

All Saints, All Souls

Here is an intergenerational session for all members of the congregation exploring the feasts of All Saints Day (Nov 1) and All Souls Day (Nov 2). This session is designed to be conducted in about 90 minutes, and can be adapted for a shorter or longer timeframe.

Introduction

Friends and family members who have gone before us form a cloud of saints that surrounds us. Our memories of them continue to remind us of God's love. What does it mean to be a saint? Why pay attention to a particular saint? Learn some answers to these questions and choose your favorite saint to honor and emulate for a day.

I. Gather

To begin the session, use the following adaptation of the Vibrant Faith @ Home activity called Cloud of Saints.

Prepare in Advance:

- Preview the following video clip: <http://skitguys.com/videos/item/evermore>. Decide if you want to use it or not.
- Need the following items: Bible, rocks large enough to write a name on or 3" x 5" index cards, permanent marker (1 or 2 per person), bowl
- Mark your Bible to Hebrews 12: 1

Activity Plan

1. Gather all participants into one large group. Begin by asking someone to pray aloud:

Awesome God, today we remember the many family members and friends who have gone before us. We honor their memory and thank you for surrounding us with the strength of their faith and love. Help us to know we are never alone and to trust in you to give us strength. Amen.

2. If you think it's appropriate, show the following video clip: <http://skitguys.com/videos/item/evermore>
3. Ask someone to read aloud Hebrews 12:1 from your Bible (or see the text below). Invite each family member to describe how he or she imagines this "great cloud of witnesses."

Hebrews 12:1

Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight, and sin which clings so closely, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us.

4. Ask participants to form family groups, or small groups of no more than six persons. Ask people to recall one or two loved ones (friends or relatives) who have died and to write each name on a rock or an index card.
5. After all have written the name(s), invite each person to show his or her rock or index card and tell about the person named on it. You might prompt discussion by asking: What is your favorite memory of this person? What did you like best about this person? How has this person influenced the way you live?
6. After the stories about these individuals have been told, place the rocks or index cards in a large bowl at the center of your gathering space. Comment on how this bowl is a reminder of the cloud of saints and faithful witnesses in our lives, and how it can be a comfort to remember good things about these individuals when you are missing them.
7. After the session, place the bowl in a prominent place in your worship center, to help celebrate All Saints and All Souls days.

II. Grow

Use the following adaptation of the Vibrant Faith @ Home activity called Remembering Those Who Have Died.

Needed

- Bible – one for each family/small group
- What I Miss Most worksheet - one for each person
- Pens or pencils
- YouTube music video Live Like You are Dying by Tim McGraw, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9TShIMkQnc>.

Activity Plan

1. Ask participants to gather again in their family or small groups. When groups are settled, read aloud for all to hear:

Psalm 147:3 He heals the brokenhearted and binds up their wounds.

Matthew 5:4 Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted.

Then voice this short prayer:

God, we remember those who have died and who meant so much to us. Be with us as we recall how their lives touched ours and celebrate the relationships we had with them. Amen.

2. Give each person a copy of the What I Miss Most worksheet and a pen or pencil. Play some reflective music as everyone works individually to complete their worksheets. Young children may need some assistance.
3. Ask family/group members to take turns telling about what they wrote on the worksheet. Ask follow-up questions, like:
 - How often do you think about this person?
 - What reminds you of this person?
 - How do you feel about this person now? Do you feel sad? Grateful? Another feeling?

Note: Be sensitive to each person's memory. Family members may have different experiences of the same person. Honor what each one remembers, and celebrate his or her relationship with the person. Also, depending on how recently the person died, this activity may uncover intense feelings. This is normal and okay. Don't rush someone's grieving process.

4. Encourage family/small groups to discuss how to commemorate each person that was remembered and written about on the worksheet. Give some examples such as, you might have a picture of the person at your dinner table All Saints Day, or light a candle in his or her memory. If there's a gravestone marker, you may want to visit it. Do what each person would find most meaningful.
5. Offer some concluding comments that reiterate that death is a part of life, congratulate them on "going there" with this topic, and remember that God is always with us and with those who have died.

Play the YouTube music video Live Like You are Dying by Tim McGraw, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9TShIMkQnc>.

III. Go Forth

To conclude this session use the following adaptation of the Vibrant Faith @ Home activity called Claim a Saint.

Needed

- Handout on Saints (one copy for each group). Create a list of saints with a bit of information about each one. List at least 20 saints on your handout. These resources will help:
 - [American Catholic Saint of the Day](#)
 - [Catholic Online - Saints and Angels](#)
- Index card - one for each person,
- Pens or pencils
- Litany of Saints video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7Xh8oXmyvQ>

Activity Plan

1. Explain the following about saints:

Saints are not God! Saints are flesh and blood human beings who walked the same earth we do, had jobs, and knew the trials and tribulations of daily life. To expand the notion of saint, Martin Luther taught that each baptized Christian is fully saint and fully sinner at the same time. We humans sometimes can identify more closely with a person of faith of our own age, gender, or type of work, and use this person as a model for living and a prompt to prayer. Offer this prayer:

God of all time and being, many of your people have sought to do your will on earth and live close to you. May their lives inspire us to guide our own journeys ever closer to your will and your way. Amen.

2. Now say the following:

Not all Christian denominations officially recognize saints, but all of Jesus' followers honor the many holy human beings who have lived for Christ. Some of these holy human beings may be friends or relatives who are still alive. We recognize God's presence in their generosity, their self-sacrifice, their humility, their kindness, or their courage.

3. Ask each person to pick one saint to emulate for a day. Explain that they can choose from:
 - Handout on Saints

- Consider people of faith from history or your family whom you feel led lives worthy of emulation.
 - Think of people of faith who are alive today whom you admire.
4. Once you have chosen your saint, write that saint's name on your index card and list his or her Christ-like qualities. You can read about famous saints online. Choose one of these characteristic virtues to practice during the next twenty-four hours. You might even let other members in your family know what you are doing and ask them to call you by that saint's name for the day. This can be a reminder to you, but it also can be a practice in humility as you bear the lighthearted ridicule of your family members.
 5. As your twenty-four hours ends, reflect on what was easy or hard about practicing the character of the saint you chose for the day.
 6. Conclude the intergenerational session with a traditional prayer of Litany of the Saints. Show this video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7Xh8oXmynvQ>. Invite people to sing the chorus lines and enter into the prayer.

What I Miss Most

1. Take a moment to recall family members, neighbors, or friends who have died. Which person do you miss the most today? Why?
2. In what ways did this person touch your life? What did he or she do or say that meant a lot to you?
3. What do you remember most clearly about this person? (Was it something he or she wore, the way he or she talked, or something this person did?)
4. What did you learn from this person?
5. If you could have another conversation with this person, what would you like to say?

Cloud of Saints

By Audrey Cox



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Friends and family members who have gone before us form a cloud of saints that surrounds us. Our memories of them continue to remind us of God's love.

For

Teen Family

Season

Fall, best around All Saint and All Souls Days (Nov. 1-2)

Needed

Bible, rocks large enough to write a name on or 3" x 5" index cards, permanent marker, bowl

Prepare in Advance

Mark Hebrews 12:1 in your Bible.

Activity Plan

1. Begin by asking someone to pray aloud:

Awesome God, today we remember the many family members and friends who have gone before us. We honor their memory and thank you for surrounding us with the strength of their faith and love. Help us to know we are never alone and to trust in you to give us strength. Amen.

2. Ask someone to read aloud Hebrews 12:1 from your Bible (or see the text below). Invite each family member to describe how he or she imagines this "great cloud of witnesses."

Hebrews 12:1

Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight, and sin which clings so closely, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us.

3. Ask family members to recall one or two loved ones (friends or relatives) who have died and to write each name on a rock or an index card. After all have written the name(s), invite each person to show his or her rock or index card and tell about the person named on it. You might prompt discussion by asking: What is your favorite memory of this person? What did you like best about this person? How has this person influenced the way you live?

After the stories about these individuals have been told, place the rocks or index cards in a bowl and place it on your dining table or other place where it will be seen often. Comment on how this bowl is a reminder of the cloud of saints and faithful witnesses in your lives, and how it can be a comfort to remember good things about these individuals when you are missing them.

Remembering Those Who Have Died

By Jolene Roehlkepartain

November 1 is All Saints Day. Take time to remember people you care about who have died.

For

Teen Family

Season

Fall

Needed

Bible, What I Miss Most worksheet, pens or pencils



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Prepare in Advance

Mark your Bible to Psalm 147:3 and Matthew 5:4.

Make a copy of the What I Miss Most worksheet for each family member.

Activity Plan

1. Say this prayer aloud to begin:

God, we remember those who have died and who meant so much to us. Be with us as we recall how their lives touched ours and celebrate the relationships we had with them. Amen.

2. Ask someone to read aloud Psalm 147:3 from your Bible (or see the text below). Then have another person read aloud Matthew 5:4. Discuss: When have you felt brokenhearted? How did God work through other people to “bind up your wounds” or comfort you?

Psalm 147:3 He heals the brokenhearted and binds up their wounds.

Matthew 5:4 Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted.

3. Give each person a copy of the What I Miss Most worksheet and a pen or pencil. Play some music you all like as you work individually to complete your worksheets.
4. Ask family members to take turns telling about what they wrote on the worksheet. Ask follow-up questions, like:
 - How often do you think about this person?
 - What reminds you of this person?
 - How do you feel about this person now? Do you feel sad? Grateful? Another feeling?

Note: Be sensitive to each person’s memory. Family members may have different experiences of the same person. Honor what each one remembers, and celebrate his or her relationship with the person. Also, depending on how recently the person died, this activity may uncover intense feelings. This is normal and okay. Don’t rush someone’s grieving process.

5. Talk with each person about how to commemorate the person he or she wrote about on the worksheet. For example, you might have a picture of the person at your dinner table on All Saints Day or light a candle in his or her memory. If there’s a gravestone marker, you may want to visit it. Do what each person would find most meaningful.
6. If you’re looking for rituals to celebrate the lives of your loved ones, consider checking out the book [*Remembering Well: Rituals for Celebrating Life and Mourning Death*](#) by Sarah York.

What I Miss Most

1. Take a moment to recall family members, neighbors, or friends who have died. Which person do you miss the most today? Why?
2. In what ways did this person touch your life? What did he or she do or say that meant a lot to you?
3. What do you remember most clearly about this person? (Was it something he or she wore, the way he or she talked, or something this person did?)
4. What did you learn from this person?
5. If you could have another conversation with this person, what would you like to say?

Claim a Saint

By Susan Vogt



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November 1 is All Saints' Day. What does it mean to be a saint? Why pay attention to a particular saint? Learn some answers to these questions and choose your favorite saint to honor today.

For

Adult, Couple

Season

Fall

Needed

Internet access

Activity Plan

1. Saints are not God! Saints are flesh and blood human beings who walked the same earth we do, had jobs, and knew the trials and tribulations of daily life. To expand the notion of saint, Martin Luther taught that each baptized Christian is fully saint and fully sinner at the same time. We humans sometimes can identify more closely with a person of faith of our own age, gender, or type of work, and use this person as a model for living and a prompt to prayer. Begin with prayer:

God of all time and being, many of your people have sought to do your will on earth and live close to you. May their lives inspire us to guide our own journeys ever closer to your will and your way. Amen.

2. Not all Christian denominations officially recognize saints, but all of Jesus' followers honor the many holy human beings who have lived for Christ. Some of these holy human beings may be friends or relatives who are still alive. We recognize God's presence in their generosity, their self-sacrifice, their humility, their kindness, or their courage. Pick one saint to emulate for a day. Some resources to help you:
 - [American Catholic Saint of the Day](#)
 - [Catholic Online - Saints and Angels](#)
 - Consider people of faith from history or your family whom you feel led lives worthy of emulation.
 - Think of people of faith who are alive today whom you admire.
3. Once you have chosen your saint, list his or her Christ-like qualities. You can read about famous saints online. Choose one of these characteristic virtues to practice during the next twenty-four hours. You might even let other members in your family know what you are doing and ask them to call you by that saint's name for the day. This can be a reminder to you, but it also can be a practice in humility as you bear the lighthearted ridicule of your family members.
4. As your twenty-four hours ends, reflect on what was easy or hard about practicing the character of the saint you chose for the day.