



HOMILY by Father Robbie Low

The Solemnity of All Saints

Celebrate the Saints, not the underworld

Readings: Apocalypse 7: 2-4, 9-14, Ps 23, 1 John 3: 1-3, Matthew 5: 1-12

I went into my favourite old folks' home this week as usual to offer Mass with the little Catholic group there. I was met at the door by the secretary dressed as a witch. The nurse was made up to look as if she was covered in cobwebs, the regular floral display was replaced by pumpkin lights and the cleaner was done up to look like one of the more alluring denizens of the underworld. What the residents with dementia made of it all I dread to think.

What used to be the exclusive territory of Satanists is now mainstream.

The bizarre hobby of pagans with a fetish for running naked through a nippy late October night is now big business for the High Street. Children and adults alike celebrate, unwittingly, the power of the dark. One can only imagine the brouhaha that would greet the suggestion that this week might be given over to a celebration of the Light of the World and those in whom He most brightly shone.

That, after all, is what All Saints tide is about. It is the triumph of Christ and His followers over the powers of Hell, the shadow of death and the tyranny

of the dark. Instead of dressing up as necromancers, spell casters, monsters and servants of the enemy, it would be cheering if People came to Church. If so inclined, spent the day dressed up as their favourite saint. Had a party for their children in saints costume.

The culture is now so far adrift of its Christian roots that such ambitions seem almost fanciful. That is why what we do and say around this time is an important witness. We are the people who keep the light of the Faith burning. We are those who understand, however dimly, the connection between Heaven and Earth. We are the travellers who keep company with the saints on the pilgrim road. We are the little lanterns of this present age in whom the light must continue to shine.

When the priest prays the Canon of the Mass we hear the beginning of the roll call of the blessed. When we sing the Sanctus we are joining our song of adoration with the glory of the angels and the choir of the saints in light. When we kneel before the Lamb of God we are on the front row of Earth and the back row of Heaven.

Today is a great feast of the triumph - Man welcomed home in Christ. Today we, the Church militant on Earth, sing the song of victory with that great family of Faith, the Church Triumphant in Heaven. However much the enemy may rage, he has already been defeated by the Cross of Jesus.

We do not fight unaided but surrounded by the prayers of the great warriors of God, the Saints in light.