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According to *Holy Women, Holy Men*, in the tenth century, it became customary to recognize on a single day “that vast body of the faithful who, though no less members of the company of the redeemed, are unknown in the wider fellowship of the Church” (*Holy Women, Holy Men*, 664). Over time, the day became associated with special remembrances of an individual’s family and friends.

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Because of the day's association with the remembrance for the dead, many churches publish a necrology. This reading of the names of the congregation's faithful departed may include prayers on their behalf. Such prayers are appropriate, as the Catechism reminds us, "because we still hold [our departed] in our love, and because we trust that in God's presence those who have chosen to serve him will grow in his love, until they see him as he is" (BCP, 862).

The day is often characterized by joyful hymns, including such favorites as "For All the Saints," "Who Are These Like Stars Appearing," and "I Sing a Song of the Saints of God." These hymns share motifs of rest, fellowship, and continued, joyful service to God—salient indeed on this day, as we remember "those of dazzling brightness, those in God's own truth arrayed, clad in robes of purest whiteness, robes whose luster ne'er shall fade"!



### **Collect for All Saints' Day**

Almighty God, you have knit together your elect in one communion and fellowship in the mystical body of your Son Christ our Lord: Give us grace so to follow your blessed saints in all virtuous and godly living, that we may come to those ineffable joys that you have prepared for those who truly love you; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who with you and the Holy Spirit lives and reigns, one God, in glory everlasting. Amen.

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