

For All the Saints
 November 2, 2025
 Grace, Mt Clemens
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May the God who creates us, redeems us, and sustains us, be with us this day, and remain with us always. Good Morning!

For all the Saints...For all the Saints. As I was beginning to write this sermon, I learned that Cate Waynick died the night before. Cate, Bishop Waynick was not a close friend, but she was someone whom I admired. She was one of the very early women who became a diocesan bishop. She may have been the second woman elected to in charge of a diocese. At that point the women who were being called were largely being elected as bishop suffragans. Cate was elected while she served as the rector of All Saints' in Pontiac.

I first met Cate at one of the Province V and VI clergy women conferences. She was a bit older, super competent, and she intimidated me. But I watched her to see what I could learn. In 2000 she and I wound up serving on the same General Convention committee, a special committee focused on human sexuality. Which meant all of the resolutions about LGBTQ issues would be dealt with in the midst this committee.

I was the youngest person on the group and the only person who was gay. I came out to the group. It was all very fraught. What I remember is that Cate Waynick, invited me to be the other chaplain for the group. She quietly and fiercely supported me.

And when it came time to deal with the revolutionary idea of same sex blessings, Bishop Cate was the one who graciously and adroitly moved the matter forward in a way that changed the conversation. She said, as I remember, that there were people in our church who were living in monogamous committed relationships who desired and deserved the church's pastoral care. And while a blessing of a same-sex union was not a sacrament, it was certainly sacramental. That is, in the midst of these committed relationships, God's grace was clearly present and offering a blessing was outwardly acknowledging God's inward grace. Those words changed and shifted everything.

Cate Waynick in a grounded prayerful manner, quietly moved the LGBTQ quest for full inclusion forward. Cate Waynick, a child of God, a bishop of the church, as the prayerbook says,

“a sheep of your own fold, a lamb of your own flock, a sinner of your own redeeming. Receive her into the arms of your mercy, into the blessed rest of everlasting peace, and into the glorious company of the saints in light.” (p 499 Book of Common Prayer)

Who for you are the ones, who have touched your soul and altered the course of your life? Who are you remembering this morning with both fondness and fierceness, sadness and sorrow? This weekend, of All Hallows Eve, All Saints' Day, and All Souls day is a blessed triduum where we might, stop, pause, cease to be absorbed in our lives as they are and instead for a moment, lift our heads, breathe deeply, and remember people, loved ones, friends, and even people we have never

met, who have in ways great and small, shifted our individual journeys and propelled our world closer to God's hope.

I'm thinking of people I did not know personally, but ones who were and continue to be companions for me as I write my sermons: Walter Brueggemann, biblical theologian extraordinaire, James Cone and Rosemary Radfer Ruether, whose books reshaped my sense of theology. Frederick Bueckner, whose writings, altered my understanding of how preaching could change a priest's life, and maybe the lives of the people who are listening.

These are some of my heroes. I know you have ones as well.

Who are they?

Take a moment.

Search your life.

Name them.

(pause)

Who are the ones, intimate ones, who have died? Whose passing has seared a hole in your heart that feels as if it may never be filled?

Take a moment.

Search your heart.

Name them.

(pause)

Who are the ones, whose death, left an unfinished story for you? A story that may have been holy or troubling, but now with their death, it feels incomplete?

Take a moment.

Search your heart.

Offer their names to God and carry the weight of an unfinished relationship no longer.

(pause)

Ours is a rich world, an amazing gift, peopled with fellow travelers, who have made us and changed us. Stop, listen, offer their lives to our Lord. Then ask, pray that we might be ones who risk connecting, take the time to be caring, so that we may offer to others, a vision of God's hope and longing for them and our world.

On this weekend of All Hallows Eve, All Saints Day and All Souls Day let us remember all who touched our lives, formed our souls, and offered us a vision of what it means to be beloved children of God.

Rest eternal grant unto them o Lord.

Let light perpetual shine upon them.

*May their souls and the souls of all the departed,
through the mercy of God rest in Peace.*

Amen.