

Monday, November 1, 2021

All Saints: *a great multitude that no one could count*

by Pr. Tim for St. Laika's

And so, at the turn of the month, Saint Laika's celebrates the festival of All Saints. Faithful and famous, or simply faithful, a great multitude that no one could count, precedes us through death into the light of eternity and into God's reign.

People have sought language to explain the bond between the followers of Jesus who are alive and those who have died. Some like to use the terms: the Church Militant and the Church Triumphant, but let's just use the words "the communion of saints," for the purpose of this devotion.

Christian beliefs vary about the role of the saints in the life of the Church. Some believers offer prayers to the saints, asking for their help. Others see the saints as examples of holy living, intended to spur us on to greater devotion. Some think of the great saints of history, others think of a parent, spouse, a pastor or a Sunday school teacher who made Christ come alive in their life.

Saint Paul, in numerous places in his letters, makes it clear that you do not have to be dead to be a saint. He regularly addressed believers as saints. We are saints because God has claimed us as family, children of the heavenly Father, as one old Swedish hymn puts it. There is an "otherness" in the lives of the saints, living or dead, an otherness that comes from our refusal to believe that life, as we experience it, is all that there is. In the name of Jesus we care for others and strive to help those who have been treated unfairly in the world. We lift up the idea of a kingdom where every tear will be wiped dry, and mourning, weeping and pain will be no more.

Take some time to consider all this today. Bless God for the faith you have, and perhaps for the faith your own ancestors had. Ask for the strength to fight the good fight in the present and to enter the nearer joy of the Lord, when our life on earth is done.

Scripture In the ninth chapter of "Revelation," at verses nine and ten, we read:

"There was a great multitude that no one could count, from every nation, from all tribes and peoples and languages, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, robed in white, with palm branches in their hands.

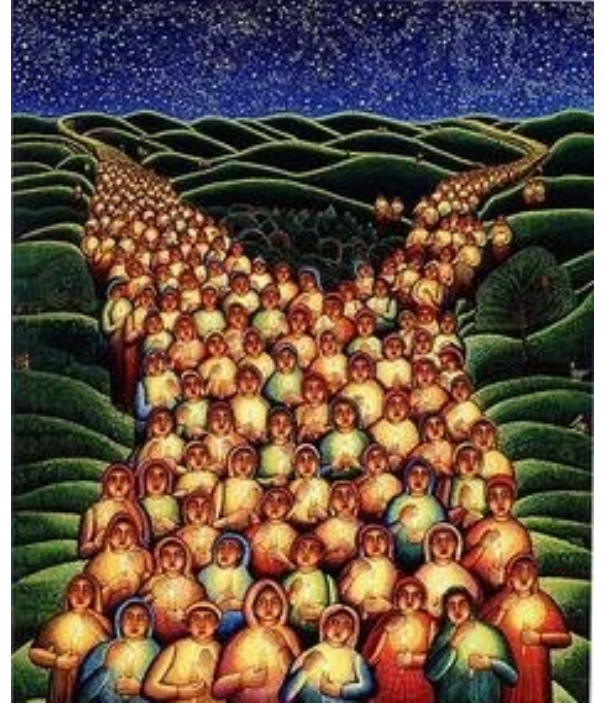
"They cried out in a loud voice, saying, 'Salvation belongs to our God who is seated on the throne, and to the Lamb!'"

Prayer Lord God, you have surrounded us with so great a cloud of witnesses. Grant that we may persevere in the course that is set before us and at the end share in your eternal joy with all the saints in light; through Jesus Christ, our savior and lord.

Amen, Pr. Tim. May we persevere and share in God's eternal joy! All Saints is such a joyful feast, as we remember those who handed the faith on to us in one way or another. Grandparents, Sunday School teachers, pastors, friends, and those we've read and heard about but haven't met (yet)...we praise God for each and for all. Their witness encourages us in a way nothing else can. As Paul VI said, "Modern man listens more willingly to witnesses than to teachers, and if he does listen to teachers, it is because they are witnesses." Feasts like today's encourage us to be encouraged by the witnesses, the saints, around us, and in turn, to bear witness to Jesus alive in our own lives. In this way we can encourage each other, especially in difficult times.

There are many events coming up this winter which didn't happen last year. This too is encouraging! The next page offers two such returning events, and more are being added to our local calendars all the time. Thank you, Lord!

Suellen



by John August Swanson

Ice at Canalside returning this season

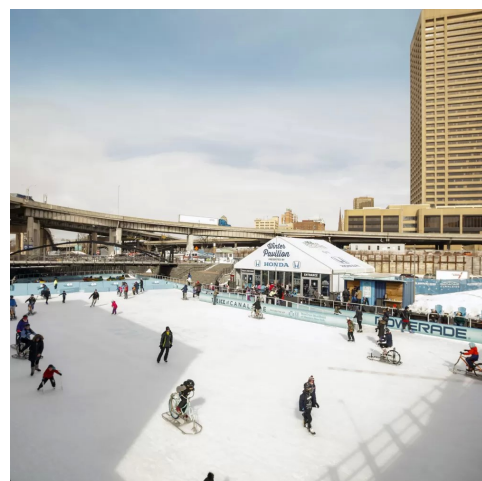
Activities to include skating, curling, ice bikes and ice bumper cars
from WGRZ.com

After taking last year off due to the pandemic, the Ice at Canalside is returning for another season of family fun. Be Our Guest, Ltd. announced the rink will open at 3 PM on Friday, November 26. Activities include skating, curling, ice bikes and ice bumper cars, in addition to the popular igloo rentals.

A [season opening party](#) will take place from 5-10 PM. There will be a DJ, and special visit from Santa from 5-9 PM and a fireworks show at 7:15 PM. A new menu will debut this season at the Nosh and Nibble Snack Shack. The Low Bridge Cafe will be open for skaters to warm up and grab a bite inside the Explore and More Children's Museum.

“After a year away from the Ice at Canalside, we are more excited than ever to be able to host skaters and families at the rink again,” said Kevin Parkinson, VP of Finance and Operations Be Our Guest. “Our opening celebration will be a great kickoff to the 2021 holiday season in Buffalo.”

The Honda Winter Pavilion will serve as the main entrance for both rink admission and skate rentals. Guests will be required to complete a waiver before taking part in any of the activities. You can complete the survey online. Curling and igloos will be available for pre-reservation and walk-up sales as they are available. New and returning events and programs are still to be announced. The Ice at Canalside is scheduled to be open through February 27, 2022.



Fairgrounds Festival of Lights to return in December

from amherstbee.com

Almost everyone has heard Nat King Cole crooning that “a turkey and some mistletoe help to make the season bright,” but Hamburg’s fairgrounds will have a bright season in a more literal way.

The Fairgrounds Festival of Lights drive-thru will return this December with new displays along the route, including more than 70 variations of LED light displays, arches and light tunnels. Additionally, the Field twins, winners of the Great Christmas Light Fight, will incorporate their masterpieces into the festival. The event is produced by the Erie County Agricultural Society (ECAS).

Last year, families decorated their vehicles, brought their pets along for the ride and brought dinner and snacks to enjoy while driving through the lights. The event will be open from 5 to 9 p.m. every night in December, except Dec. 24 and 25. Ticket sales begin at 9 a.m. Monday, Nov. 1, online at [www.fairgroundsholiday.com](#) where more information may be found. Admission is \$20 per vehicle plus fees. A limited number of tickets are available for each night and guests must select the night they would like to visit.

