SERMON ALL SAINTS 1st NOVEMBER 2026.

My friends for the past 5 weeks I have been preaching on the parish vision or ambition statement that has been produced in the parish, by our evangelisation group. It is our vision, or our ambition for our parish community, what we would ideally like it to be. I have shared with you all the vision of a parish that is truly hospitable, welcoming and inclusive, where there is a profound spirit of prayer, individually and as a community, where our worship, our Sunday mass is joyful and reverent, in which everyone truly participates. I have talked about greater links between the school and our parish, using the school to reach out to the many families who no longer practice the faith. And finally a parish where we look beyond our own boundraies, where we work in our local community and with other Churches, to come to the aid of those in need and being active in the areas of protection of life and the climate, where we engage in social action.

It is quite a vision, it is quite a challenge that we are setting for ourselves. We are not starting from nothing though off course, so much of our vision is already in place or has started, but I think there is much more we need to do. For me one word is important, that of "Fellowship", or our "community life. ". Every day, when I say my morning prayers, I pray that our fellowship will grow and deepen, that we will not just be a group of individuals who share this space for one hour on a Sunday, but that we are a 7 day a week parish, living out all those parts of our vision statement every day. That through the week we exercise fellowship through our prayer, coming to weekday mass, in our school and in the many events that take place in our parish and groups that meet on weekdays or online and then celebrate all this in our Sunday worship, which is the most important thing we do. We bring all we have done to church here on Sunday, and celebrate it, celebrate our fellowship, our community life and then are strengthened to go out into the next week to continue to build that fellowship.

I think we can take inspiration from todays feast of All Saints and also this month of the Holy Souls.

The solemnity of All Saints has been in the Churches history one of the great feasts of the Year, When we ***honour all the holy men and women down through the ages who the Church has declared to be saintly, remembering the wonderful stories about their lives. But also this feast of All saints also reminds us of an important part of our faith, part of our baptismal promises says "we believe in the communion of Saints." This is one of the great teachings of our faith, that we believe in the communion of saints meaning that we believe that the Church is made up of both the living and the dead, us here on earth, those in purgatory and those saints in heaven, This is the fellowship of the Church, our fellowship is not just about us here on earth, but about the Church in heaven as well, who we are in communion with, who we are linked to, and also the Church in purgatory. Most especially that vision St. John had of heaven, our 1st reading today.***

"A huge number of people, from every nation, race, tribe and language, they were standing in front of the throne and of the lamb."

. So we celebrate today all the generations of the Church who have worshipped God, all those good holy men and women who gave witness to the faith in their lives and whose souls are now in the presence of God. We especially believe that those saints around Gods throne can pray for us, and that because they are saints God listens especially to their prayers -so we believe their prayers can

benefit us. So perhaps today we can rededicate ourselves to our parish patron St's, Our Lady and St, Muchael, commending ourselves to their protection, and asking every day for their intercession and prayers for us, as they are gathered around Gods throne with all those other holy souls in heaven. Also such Saints as St. Joseph, and especially our own local Saint, St. David Lewis, and remembering all those Holy Martyrs of England and Wales. But perhaps more than anything else dedicating ourselves to Our Lady, most especially through the prayer of the Holy Rosary. Taking heed of the message of Our Lady in Fatima, asking us to pray the rosary for the church, the world and the souls in purgatory. May the example of the Saints of old, inspire us in our fellowship and community life, inspiring us in our lives of prayer, worship, hospitality and outreach, all those parts of our vision or ambition statement.

Devotion to the Saints is one of those characteristic marks of our catholic faith, that great tradition going back to the earliest days of the Church, that the prayers of the saints can truly benefit us and their example inspire us as we strive to build our Christian fellowship in this place. And off course in this now month of November we ourselves pray for those souls in purgatory, we believe that for those not yet in heaven our prayers can benefit them-as seen in this month of November, and especially on All Souls day-tomorrow, the month of special prayer for the dead, with All Souls day, and especially with our lovely tradition of the November lists.