

## **All Saints Day 2019: All the Sights and Sounds**

The Reverend Paul D. Allick, The Church of the Advent, November 1, 2019

I was raised in a family where talk of the supernatural was commonplace. This was particularly true among my Cree relatives. So, it's always been curious to me how so many mainline Christians never talk about such things. It's as if religion were rational.

For instance, when I went through the discernment process for ordination, I knew better than to reveal all that I was experiencing. The dreams, the visits from ancestors and Saints, the signs in my waking life connected to those dreams and visits, were not going to fly.

It was made clear to me both subtly and plainly that this was a logical and professional process we were undertaking. We would open with prayer and use religious language but at the end of the day it was those psychological and academic reports that would matter the most.

Newsflash: Christianity deals in the Supernatural? Without dreams, signs, and visions there are no Scriptures!

There is not much rational going on here unless we strip it of all mystery and compartmentalize and sanitize it into meaninglessness. Maybe that's why the pews emptied out!

What does this have to do with the Feast of All Saints? Everything. This is the time of the Church year when we focus on being in being in full communion with all Christians, the living and the dead. That thin veil between heaven and earth becomes ever more transparent.

At this time of year, we remember that there is so much going on around us that we never notice. And forget about just supernatural stuff. There are plenty of natural things as well.

One of my favorite natural occurrences that you and I cannot share in is the sound of mice singing. Mice are singing but we cannot hear them. The high-frequency sounds are undetectable to human ears. Apparently male mice are serenading the females. Researchers have known for decades that male mice produce these sounds but now have discovered just how complex they are. These vocalizations are not random twittering but songs. They have a pattern to them much like birdsongs. (Star Tribune, November 1, 2005, Mpls. MN)

If mice are singing, and I can't hear it, what else is going on that I am not detecting through my senses.

There is a whole other world around us; a mystical body of saints and angels worshipping with us right now. Our departed loved ones are here as well but we cannot apprehend them with the normal use of our senses.

Through our baptism we are all knit together in one communion, "the whole family of God, the living and the dead, those whom we love and those whom we hurt, bound together in Christ by sacrament, prayer and praise."  
(BCP, p.862).

Like those mice singing, there is a choir singing right now that none of us can hear. There are myriads of myriads: angels, living creatures, elders and the souls of the righteous from every nation and tongue.

We can't hear them with our ears but we can with our hearts. We can't see them with our eyes but we can sense them in our prayers.

As we look behind that veil through prayer and worship, we see the blessed life we now enjoy. We do not have to wait to taste the glory of God. We do not have to wait to employ the power of our own sainthood. We are part it now.

When this life gets rough, when all we are focusing on is the here and now, we have to remember our destiny. We have to remember that in Christ the poor will inherit the kingdom, the hungry will be fed, those who weep will laugh and those who suffer for proclaiming the truth of the Gospel will find a reward in heaven.

We are all Saints. When we forget that we are in that elect fellowship we give into despair. We live only for what we can see and touch. We lose sight of the mission of reconciliation each of us has been given.

I invite us on this Feast of All Saints to renew our commitment to Christ's mission; to acknowledge our privilege and responsibility as saints of God; to reengage our spiritual senses; to renew our sense of awe at all that our Lord Jesus has won for us.