



iversity (GVSU), in Allendale, celebrated the feast of Saint Luke. On campus, nearly 250 students led by Bishop Hurley and Fr. Donald Andrie, CSP, campus minister and associate pastor at Saint the weekly post-Mass reception.

As I visit parishes and especially when I join in celebrating anniversaries of the establishment of parishes, my thoughts often turn to those who labored to make these parishes a reality and planted the seeds of faith in communities. I think of the missionary priests who traveled all over the Diocese of Grand Rapids when travel was long and difficult so that small groups of parishioners (often a few families) would be able to have Mass once a month or even a few times a year. I think of those early people of faith—ordinary people doing extraordinary things. I also think of those whose lives have been touched by people of faith: children are brought to be baptized; marriages are celebrated; the dead are commended to the love and mercy of God and other sacraments are celebrated.

My thoughts often turn to the men and women who came, and who still come, to our churches to pray for their sons and daughters serving in the military, the family praying for family members who seem to have wandered off the right path. I think of those living in difficult circumstances. I think of my own parents, grandparents and other family members. They were not perfect but they tried to do what God called them to do. There are saints among us and the feast of All Saints is a reminder that if they can do it, so can we, even if the times and circumstances of our lives are different.

On Sunday, November 29, we begin the celebration of the season of Advent which marks the beginning of the church year. In our liturgies during the year we celebrate the great mysteries of our faith, the Incarnation and our Redemption through the saving mysteries of the death and resurrection of the Lord. With Advent we begin, again, to remind ourselves and proclaim, the mysteries of faith. Advent is a time of watching and waiting. It is a time of anticipation: we recall how God's people prepared for and anticipated the coming of the Redeemer. While we prepare for the feast of the birth of the Lord we also prepare, watch and wait, for our final union with God when He calls us to Himself to join the communion of saints. The readings of the Advent season help us to reflect on these realities. During this holy season we pray "Thy Kingdom Come".

God's blessings to all of you as we look to begin the season of Advent!

Bishop Walter A. Hurley

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y dear friends,

The feast of All Saints and All Souls remind us that we are all called to holiness as we remember those who have gone before us to the Lord. These feasts help us recall that holiness consists in responding to the call of the Lord and living in union with Him in the ordinary circumstances of our daily lives. We are all certainly familiar with the canonized saints including some who have recently been canonized: Saint Damian who worked with the lepers in Hawaii and Saint Jeanne Jugan who founded the Little Sisters of the Poor as well as other recently canonized saints. These canonized saints are an important part of the life of the church and are honored for their heroic virtues. Equally important are the thousands of people, including those who were part of our lives, who followed Christ with all their human weaknesses and by God's grace and mercy now share eternal life with Him.