



ST ANN'S CATHOLIC CHURCH

Kingston Hill · London KT2 7LX

All Saints Sunday

My dear brothers and sisters,

In Lourdes this week, where young Bernadette encountered Our Lady, I saw something of what it means to be a saint.

During the candlelight procession, I noticed a husband with his wife, who was seriously ill. He was trying to cheer her, but she could hardly smile. Life had become very heavy.

Then he kissed her.

Before the warmth of the candle touched her face, the warmth of his kiss reached her. It seemed to say, "You are still my beloved. Whatever happens, I am here."

The following morning, I saw them again near the grotto. He accompanied her, helped her, and gently touched her with Lourdes water.

He could not remove every uncertainty. But he could remain beside her. Together, they were entrusting their suffering to God through Our Lady's intercession.

"Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted" (Matthew 5:4).

At the grotto, I also noticed a volunteer. He had been asked to maintain silence. Sometimes, in their excitement, pilgrims began talking. He was gentle with them.

Some had left their written prayers here and there. He picked them up, and instead of putting them in the bin, he placed them in the intention box.

That small gesture touched me. Those pieces of paper carried somebody's sorrow, somebody's hope, somebody's prayer for a person they loved. He took care of them.

His care went beyond keeping order. He was looking after the people who had come to pray.

"Blessed are the merciful" (Matthew 5:7).

My dear friends, these two encounters stayed with me. The husband caring for his wife. The volunteer gathering the prayers. Such simple things, done with such humanity.



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This is where holiness grows in our own lives.

Through such people, the Church continues to make God's love felt.

At home, we know the people who need our patience. We know when someone is finding it difficult to smile. Sometimes we cannot change what they are going through. But we can sit beside them, listen, or gently take their hand.

Even when caring asks much of us, love reminds us how precious the other person is. We are sharing a journey, and we keep learning how to walk together.

And on that journey, how much we need faith.

Watching that couple, I thought about how uncertain life can become. We make plans, and suddenly we find ourselves facing something we never imagined. We seek help, we do everything we can, and still we cannot control what comes next.

There is a familiar saying: "For those who believe, no explanation is necessary."

We still have our questions. But faith gives us someone to turn to while we carry them. That husband was bringing his beloved wife before Our Lady, entrusting her to God.

Today, we celebrate the saints who have completed this journey of love. The same grace is at work among us.

"Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God" (Matthew 5:8).

As our children dress as saints, may we help them grow with that same tenderness of heart.

May Our Lady accompany us, and may God help us keep caring, keep trusting and keep walking together in love.

Amen.