

Homily for the Feast of All Saints

He had a drinking problem. He was addicted to gambling and a bit of a womanizer. And he did it.

She was a woman of the world – a lady of the streets. Everyone knew what she was like. And she did it.

He was a near atheist, an agnostic. He enjoyed the good life as he traversed the world. And he did it.

Their names were Camillus DeLellis, Mary of Magdala and Thomas Merton. And what did they do? Very simply, they took God seriously and that made all the difference in their lives.

Camillus became a priest; Mary Magdalene a faithful follower of Christ – one of the few that stayed with him at Calvary; and Thomas Merton became a monk.

On this Feast when we celebrate all those known and unknown to us whom we call saints, we honor a group of people – countless in number – who at some point in their lives took God seriously. And their taking God seriously resulted not in a prize or a reward as much as a completion of their lives. For in God they found the answer to their living here on earth and in eternal life they found God as the fulfillment of all their desires.

These saints – known and unknown to us – ask us but one simple question – How seriously do we take God? How much does God's existence, his living word proclaimed in our midst and his Body and Blood poured out in love for us make a difference in our lives? Or does it make a difference at all?

Saints are not extraordinary human beings. Saints are ordinary people who took God's very seriously. Today they invite us to do the same and let God make all the difference in our lives as he has done in theirs.