

All Saints Day: Interlude and Vision of Comfort [Revelation 7: 1-17]

Saint John takes an interlude to introduce the church

- The sealed 144,000 are the church militant
- The great crowd in heaven that no one can number - church triumphant

FIRST MESSAGE - MERCY: Four angels stand astride the whole earth holding back the four winds

SECOND MESSAGE - GRACE: A fifth angel comes from the rising of the sun with the seal of the living God

- In 2 Timothy 2:19 – Paul says *the firm foundation of God stands bearing this seal; the Lord knows who are his.*
- *We are sealed by the Holy Spirit as the pledge and guarantee of our inheritance*
The 144,000: Twelve Tribes of Israel or the whole church on earth?
- John uses Old Testament language – the twelve tribes - to describe the

144,000 – symbolic or literal number?

- John is consistent with tradition in describing the 144,000 as a symbolic number

What about the identity of the twelve tribes – symbolic or literal?

- The twelve tribes are redefined to recognize a faithful lineage of Christ

The countless saints in heaven are at rest and peace

- Romans 8: 18 has come true – *the sufferings of this present time cannot be compared to the glory that shall be revealed to us*

The saints all belong to the angel's choir and sing hymns of praise - Te Deum [tē 'dēəm]

What a choir – what lyrics – what content!

The saints in heaven are alive and well celebrating the presence of our living Lord

Berthold Von Schenk – a Lutheran pastor on the saints and Holy Communion

The altar is the trysting place where we meet our beloved Lord. It is also the trysting place where we meet our loved ones – for they are with the Lord. The nearer I come to my Lord in Holy Communion, the nearer I come to the Saints – to my own loved ones.

How appropriate to place flowers on the altar in memory of the saints!

No worry; the saints live in eternal communion with God and family

- As we commune at the table of the Lamb and sing His praise, we join the saints
- Rest today knowing the saints pray for us – they are waiting for us – and I believe they know who is coming next