By canonizing some of the faithful, i.e., by solemnly proclaiming that they practiced heroic virtue and lived in fidelity to God’s grace, the Church recognizes the power of the Spirit of holiness within her and sustains the hope of believers by proposing the saints to them as models and intercessors.

*Catechism of the Catholic Church, 828*

**SAINTS AMONG US**

*in the Archdiocese of Washington*

VENERABLE FR. ALOYSIUS SCHWARTZ

“I Am Reaping Better than I Sowed”

Aloysius Schwartz was born in Washington, DC in 1930. He received the sacraments of Baptism, Eucharist and Confirmation at Holy Name Parish in Washington. From an early age he dreamed of being a missionary priest. Shortly after he was ordained in Washington he left for Korea where he chose to serve the poorest poor for the remainder of his life. He believed that it was important to provide not only food, but education, housing, job training for orphans and street children. To assist him in this work he founded the Sisters of Mary, and later the Brothers of Christ.

When he was 59 years old, he was diagnosed with Lou Gehrig’s disease. He continued to celebrate Mass and serve the poor until his death at the age of 61. Before he died he told a writer that he wanted to be remembered as someone who: “tried his best for Jesus.”

For more on Fr. Al:
fatheralsainthood.org

**SERVANT OF GOD**

MARY VIRGINIA MERRICK

“To See a Need and to Fill It”

Mary Virginia Merrick was born in Washington, DC on November 2, 1866. Even as a young girl Mary had a heart for the poor and suffering and often visited the homes of the poor with her mother. When she was 14 years old she suffered a fall which left her paralyzed for the remainder of her life.

Though she was in pain and could not sit up without help, she continued to dedicate her life to the poor and persuaded friends to help her to assist her in this work. Her deep love for the Christ Child led her to establish the Christ Child Society to serve needy children. She became known simply as “Miss Mary” to her friends and to the thousands of children she helped in her lifetime.

For more on Mary Virginia Merrick:
maryvirginiamerrick.org
So often, we are tempted to think that holiness is granted only to those who have the opportunity to break away from the ordinary tasks, to devote themselves to prayer. But it is not so!

Some people think that holiness is closing your eyes and putting on a pious face... No! That is not holiness! Holiness is something greater, more profound that God gifts us.

Indeed, it is by living with love and offering Christian witness in our daily tasks that we are called to become saints. And everyone in the particular condition and state of life in which they find themselves. ...“But, father, I work in a factory ... I work as an accountant, always with the numbers, I cannot be a saint there...” - “Yes, you can! There, where you work you can become a saint. God gives you the grace to become a saint. God communicates with you.”

Always and everywhere you can become a saint, that is, by being receptive to the grace that is working in us and leads us to holiness... Be holy by becoming a visible sign of God’s love and His presence beside us. This is it: every state of life leads to holiness, always!

At home, on the streets, at work, at church, in the moment and with the state of life that you have, a door is opened on the road to sainthood. Do not be discouraged to travel this road. God gives you the grace to do so.

Excerpted from the Papal Audience, Nov. 20, 2014