

PRAYERS IN THE PEW™ MONTHLY

FAITH IN ACTION CALENDAR / HIGHLIGHTS

TUE NOV 1	All Saints
WED NOV 2	All Souls
SUN NOV 27	FIRST SUNDAY OF ADVENT

Faith Formation Companion to Prayers in the Pew™

→ MONTHLY SYNOPSIS ←

November 2022 – Catholics believe in the reality of purification after death, which we call Purgatory. We take it as a serious obligation to pray for the deceased who have gone before us. This is the Church's liturgical focus in November. We live with confident hope that those who die in Christ will one day experience the grace of the Resurrection, which is our hope too!

PRAYER FOR THE DECEASED

Following the feast of All Saints on November 1st each year, we celebrate All Souls' Day on November 2nd, where we pray for those whom the Church calls the "holy souls". In this, we recognize that the souls of the deceased *have already been saved*. They are "holy souls" in the sense that they belong to Christ and are assured of the promise of Heaven.



We might ask: Why pray for souls at all if they are assured of Heaven? Do they need our prayers if they already have a guarantee of their reward? Our prayers for the dead, however, are for souls who are still going through the final cleansing *of their sins that they repented of* during their lifetimes.

The Catholic belief in Purgatory is an ancient doctrine that has its roots in the Jewish *Haggadah*, the mourning prayers for the dead. Based on the Second Book of Maccabees (Chapter 12), the Jews believe that it is possible to atone for sin after death, and that the faithful can

assist the deceased with their prayers. Catholics too believe this scriptural teaching.

Since the Middle Ages, All Souls' Day has been a universal practice of the Church and is the only day on which a priest may celebrate three Masses without need for special permission. On All Souls' Day, priests offer Masses for all the souls in Purgatory. In many traditionally Catholic societies, the faithful also make visits to cemeteries to visit the graves of their deceased loved ones on this day.

Prayers for our dearly departed are not reserved to the Mass, though. We may – and should – pray regularly for all souls who have died and are still undergoing purification in Purgatory. For this reason, the Church has given us a beautiful prayer to remember the souls in Purgatory and to assist them in obtaining the light of Heaven.

This prayer is often prayed before or after evening meals, although it can be prayed at any time by the faithful:

*Eternal rest grant unto them, O Lord,
and let perpetual light shine upon them.
May the souls of the faithful departed,
through the mercy of God, rest in peace. Amen.*

As we pray this prayer, it would be good to remember that someday we too will meet our final end, and we will want our loved ones and the whole Church praying for us!

SPIRITUAL CHALLENGE

Our challenge in November is to pray for all of our deceased loved ones and their ultimate reunion with God in heaven. Let us also remember those who have died in tragedies and natural disasters around the world. An even greater challenge than these is to pray for the souls of those who were our enemies.

- CA State Chaplain, Father John P. Grace, OSA



2 Maccabees 12:43-46 “[Judas Maccabeus] then took up a collection among all his soldiers, amounting to two thousand silver drachmas, which he sent to Jerusalem to provide for an expiatory sacrifice. In doing this he acted in a very excellent and noble way, inasmuch as he had the resurrection in mind; for if he were not expecting the fallen to rise again, it would have been superfluous and foolish to pray for the dead. ... Thus he made atonement for the dead that they might be absolved from their sin.”

Matthew 12:32 “And whoever says a word against the Son of man will be forgiven; but whoever speaks against the Holy Spirit will not be forgiven, either in this age or in the age to come.”

FAITH FUNDAMENTALS



The Doctrine of Purgatory

One of the most misunderstood teachings of the Church – even among Catholics – is the doctrine of Purgatory. But let’s be sure not to complicate matters which the Church explains very simply.

There are only three short paragraphs in the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* needed to explain the core teaching of the Church on this subject. They can be summarized in three short points:

1. That most souls, except the holiest, must undergo some form of spiritual purification after death;
2. That this purification is painful but also full of the hope of Heaven; and
3. That the prayers, sacrifices and supplications of the living assist those who are being purified in Purgatory.

This is the whole of the teaching, which reminds us how important it is to pray for those who have gone before us.

CATECHISM CONNECTION



1030 – All who die in God’s grace, but still imperfectly purified, are indeed assured of their eternal salvation; but after death they undergo purification, so as to achieve the holiness necessary to enter the joy of heaven.

1031 – The Church gives the name Purgatory to this final purification of the elect, which is entirely different from the punishment of the damned. The tradition of the Church, by reference to certain texts of Scripture, speaks of a cleansing fire: As for certain lesser faults, we must believe that, before the Final Judgment, there is a purifying fire.

1032 – From the beginning the Church has honored the memory of the dead and offered prayers in suffrage for them, above all the Eucharistic sacrifice, so that, thus purified, they may attain the beatific vision of God. The Church also commends almsgiving, indulgences, and works of penance undertaken on behalf of the dead.

CALENDAR OF FAITH | NOVEMBER

NOV 1 Tue	SOLEMNITY OF ALL SAINTS
NOV 2 Wed	All Souls Day
NOV 3 Thu	St. Martin de Porres, Religious
NOV 4 Fri	St. Charles Borromeo, Bishop
NOV 9 Wed	Dedication of St. John Lateran Church
NOV 10 Thu	St. Leo the Great, Pope
NOV 11 Fri	St. Martin of Tours, Bishop
NOV 12 Sat	St. Josaphat, Bishop and Martyr
NOV 13 Sun	St. Francis Xavier Cabrini, Virgin
NOV 15 Tue	St. Albert the Great, Bishop and Doctor
NOV 16 Wed	St. Margaret of Scotland
NOV 17 Thu	St. Elizabeth of Hungary, Religious
NOV 18 Fri	St. Rose Philippine Duchesne, Virgin
NOV 20 Sun	SOLEMNITY OF CHRIST THE KING
NOV 21 Mon	Presentation of Mary
NOV 22 Tue	St. Cecilia, Virgin and Martyr
NOV 23 Wed	Blessed Miguel Augustin Pro, Priest and Martyr
NOV 24 Thu	Sts. Andrew Dung-Lac and companions, the Vietnamese Martyrs
NOV 25 Fri	St. Catherine of Alexandria, Virgin and Martyr
NOV 27 Sun	FIRST SUNDAY OF ADVENT
NOV 30 Wed	St. Andrew, Apostle

THE SCHOOL OF SAINTS



“If it were but known how great is the power of the good souls in Purgatory with the Heart of God, and if we knew all the graces we can obtain through their intercession, they would not be so much forgotten. We must, therefore, pray much for them, that they may pray much for us.” ~ St. John Vianney

“Suffering is a great grace; through suffering the soul becomes like the Savior; in suffering love becomes crystallized; the greater the suffering, the purer the love.” ~ St. Margaret Mary Alcoque

– FAITH IN ACTION –

FEATURED PROGRAM

“KEEP CHRIST IN CHRISTMAS”

The Knights of Columbus’s “Keep Christ in Christmas” Program reminds people that Christmas isn’t some commercialized holiday but is rather about the spirit of giving and the coming of our Lord, Jesus Christ. Reenacting the Nativity of Christ. We are all challenged to spread the light of Christ at Christmas time. The K of C programs are centered on the example of the Holy Family and the Nativity of Our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ – Journey to the Inn, Spread the Light of Christ, Crèche or Advent Wreath Blessing, and the Christmas Poster Contest – and all are encouraged to engage with their local councils to participate.