

From the Pastor's Office

All Souls' Day

We don't often get to celebrate All Souls' Day on a Sunday. In the Church the month of November is reserved for the memory of the dead. We are allowed to mourn and be sad for a few weeks. The first lesson from the Book of Wisdom tells us, "The souls of the just are in the hand of God and no torment shall touch them. They are in peace." When we come to the Church to mourn our dead, we want to hear something like that. I want to know that God has taken my loved one to be with Him in heaven. Sometimes that is the only thing that keeps me going. I will never forget Fr. Dan O'Neill, a priest of my Order. I was sharing about the death of my Dad and how it made me feel. Suddenly Fr. Dan interrupted my words. He butted in and he was crying. Normally a quiet private kind of man, Fr. Dan just kind of poured out. He told us that he worked for many years in the missions of Africa. At the end, when his mother was dying, Fr. Dan decided to wait until he heard the news of his mother's death before coming home. This was Fr. Dan being the good saintly priest. He told us that it broke his heart when he was told on her deathbed that his mother cried out for him. Fr. Dan said it is only his faith in heaven that keeps him going. The thought that he would be with his mother again meant everything to him. We never get over the death of a loved one. We find a thousand ways of living with the pain, but you can press the right button in our hearts, and the grief just pours out of us. I love the many traditions we have around the celebration of death. I love that we have our table with all the photos of our dead loved ones. Every Sunday I love just to look and remember. This is the basis of what the Church calls "The Communion of Saints." There is a heavenly place where our deceased loved ones reside. They pray for us up there. We pray for them down here. We never forget them and they never forget us. The love relationship carries on even after death.



With love,

Fr. Pat