

What is Purgatory, and Where is it in the Bible?

Many Catholics no longer believe in Purgatory, yet the Church has never changed her teaching on it. Many of our loved ones are in purgatory now – and many of us will experience it one day. November is the month dedicated to prayer and sacrifice on behalf of the souls in purgatory.

What is Purgatory?

✓ **One body, many parts**

The Church reaches beyond what we visibly see on earth. Membership in the mystical Body of Christ actually exists in three “states.”

- ✓ Those of us on earth are members of the **Church Militant**, pilgrims fighting for holiness against the darkness of this world.
- ✓ Then of course, we have the **Church Triumphant**, who have won the battle and now enjoy the fullness of heaven.
- ✓ But what about people who won't go to hell, but also aren't quite ready to go straight to heaven at the moment of their death? The **Church Suffering** or the **Church Penitent** consists of those in **purgatory** who died in the friendship of God but still needed cleansing of the temporal effects of sin.

Purgatory is a place between Heaven and Hell where souls go when they have died *with God's forgiveness, but they still have penance to pay for their sins before entering Heaven.* Before entering Heaven, every trace of attachment to earthly goods must be eliminated, every imperfection of the soul corrected. Souls in Purgatory know they will eventually end up in Heaven, but first purified.

Catechism of the Catholic Church 1030 – 1031: “All who die in God's grace and friendship, 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. The Church gives the name Purgatory to this final purification of the elect, which is entirely different from the punishment of the damned.”

The souls of the dead are as much our brothers and sisters as the people around us today. And when one part of the body suffers, “all the parts suffer with it; if one part is honored, all the parts share its joy” (1 Cor 12:26). The souls in purgatory can no longer help themselves; they have no more opportunities for penances and good works to atone for their sins. And much like here on Earth, the process of being separated from sin will prove challenging and painful.

Souls in Purgatory can't pray for themselves. WE MUST DO IT FOR THEM!

C.S. Lewis on Purgatory

"Our souls demand Purgatory, don't they? Would it not break the heart if God said to us, 'It is true, my son, that your breath smells and your rags drip with mud and slime, but we are charitable here and no one will upbraid you with these things, nor draw away from you. Enter into the joy'? Should we not reply, 'With submission, sir, and if there is no objection, I'd rather be cleaned first.' 'It may hurt, you know' - 'Even so, sir.'"

See *Letters To Malcolm: Chiefly on Prayer*,
chapter 20, paragraphs 7-10, pages 108-109



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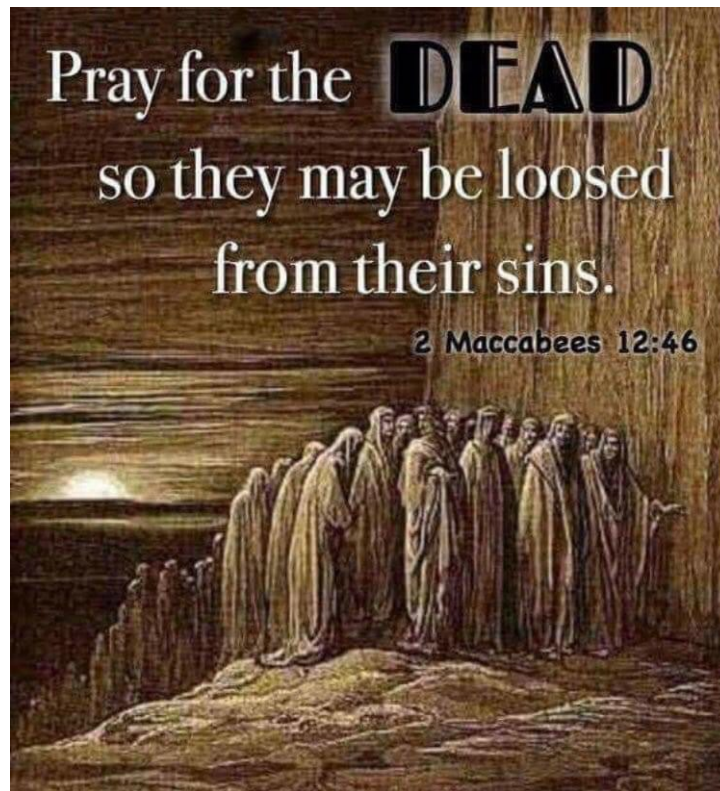
Where is Purgatory in the Bible?

2 Maccabees 12:38 – 46

For over 1,000 years, Second Maccabees, Chapter 12 was in all Christian doctrines and Bibles. Here is the summary: Judas Maccabee led a battle at the city of Adullam and many Jews died. They kept the Sabbath, and the next day went to collect the bodies of the dead. They found on many of the dead bodies, amulets. These amulets were offered up to other gods or idols, so it was obvious to Judas that this is why they died. So, what does he do? Judas takes up a collection and tells the remaining men that they're going to pray for these men. They collect over 2,000 drachmas of silver to provide for a sin offering. They are praying for those that have already died, because he is taking into account their resurrection. **If you were not expecting that those who had fallen would rise again, then it would have been foolish to pray and take up a collection on their behalf.** This indicates a long-held belief in the merit of praying for the dead.

2 Timothy 1:18 – **St. Paul prays for Onesiphorus, who has died.** This simple prayer of Paul supports the idea of praying for the dead.

Matthew 5:24 – 26 – leave your gift there at the altar, go first and be reconciled with your brother, and then come and offer your gift. Settle with your opponent quickly while on the way to court with him. Otherwise your opponent will hand you over to the judge, and the judge will hand you over to the guard, and you will be thrown into prison. Amen, I say to you, **you will not be released until you have paid the last penny.**



1 Corinthians 3: 11 – 15 – for no one can lay a foundation other than the one that is there, namely, Jesus Christ. If anyone builds on this foundation with gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, or straw, the work of each will come to light, for the Day will disclose it. **It will be revealed with fire, and the fire [itself] will test the quality of each one's work.** If the work stands that someone built upon the foundation, that person will receive a wage. **But if someone's work is burned up, that one will suffer loss; the person will be saved, but only as through fire.**

Jesus says our works will go through “fire”, metaphorically speaking. In Scripture, “fire” is used figuratively in two ways: as a purifying agent (Malachi 3:2 – 3; Matthew 3:11 & Mark 9:49) or one which consumes (Matthew 3:12 & 2 Thessalonians 1:7 – 8).

Why Should Anyone Be in Purgatory?

Some answers lie in the Old Testament. Remember, only those without sin could enter the Holiest of Holy. Scripture is very clear when it says, “But nothing unclean shall enter (heaven)”. (**Revelation 21:27**). **Habakkuk 1:13** – Your eyes are too pure to look upon wickedness, and the sight of evil you cannot endure. Why, then, do you gaze on the faithless in silence while the wicked devour those more just than themselves?

What do the Saints Say about Purgatory?

“As for certain lesser faults, we must believe that, before the Final Judgement, there is a purifying fire. He who is truth says that whoever utters blasphemy against the Holy Spirit will be pardoned neither in this age nor in the age to come. From this sentence, we understand that certain offenses can be forgiven in this age, but certain others in the age to come” (**St. Gregory the Great**).

Matthew 12:32 – And whoever speaks 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.

Our LORD to St. Gertrude: “By the prayers of thy loving soul, I am induced to free a prisoner from purgatory as often as thou dost move thy tongue to utter a word of prayer!”

James 1:19 – 22 – Know this, my dear brothers: everyone should be quick to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath, for the wrath of a man does not accomplish the righteousness of God. Therefore, **put away all filth and evil excess and humbly welcome the word that has been planted in you and is able to save your souls**.

Be doers of the word and not hearers only, deluding yourselves.

James supports the need for active participation in the work of Christ’s redemption. We all have a part to play...

St. John Chrysostom (347-407) – “If Job’s sons were purified by their father’s sacrifice (Job 1:5), why would we doubt that our offerings for the dead bring them some consolation? Let us not hesitate to help those who have died and to offer our prayers for them”.

St. Augustine (354-430) – “But by the prayers of the Holy Church and by the salvific sacrifice and by the alms which are given for their spirits, there is no doubt that the dead are aided, that the Lord might deal more mercifully with them than their sins would deserve. The whole Church observes this practice which was handed down by the Fathers.”

St. Maria Faustina Kowalska – “I saw my guardian angel, who ordered me to follow him. In a moment I was in a misty place full of fire in which there was a great crowd of suffering souls. They were praying fervently, but to no avail, for themselves; only we can come to their aid. I asked these souls what their greatest suffering was. They answered me in one voice that their greatest torment was longing for God.”

St. Pio of Pietrelcina – “We must empty Purgatory with our prayers!”

Our Blessed Lady to Saint Bridget – “I am the Mother of all the Poor Souls, for my prayers serve to mitigate their sufferings every single hour that they remain there (purgatory)”.

St. Alphonsus Maria de Liguori – “The blessed souls in purgatory are the Lord’s eternal spouses, and most grateful are they to those who obtain their deliverance from prison, or even a mitigation of their torments. When, therefore, they arrive in Heaven, they will be sure to remember all who have prayed for them.”

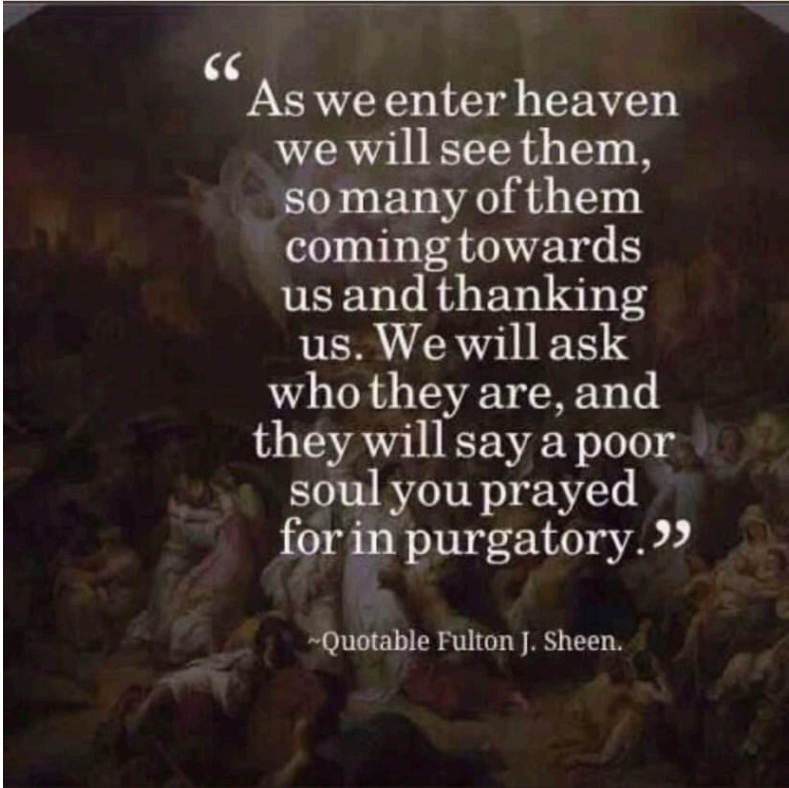
St. Pope John Paul II – “Praying for the souls in purgatory is the highest act of supernatural charity.”

Saint John Vianney – “Consider then... the magnitude of these sufferings which the souls in Purgatory endure; and the means which we have of mitigating them our prayers, our good works, and, above all, the holy sacrifice of the Mass.”



Saints Who Saw Purgatory

Several saints were allowed by God to see the suffering souls in purgatory through visions. St. Faustina Kowalska said that the greatest torment of the souls she saw was the longing for God. St. Mary Magdalene de Pazzi saw how souls are released from purgatory. St. Frances of Rome saw that purgatory is divided into three parts and are occupied by souls in different orders. St. Gertrude the great saw a soul in purgatory which has a brilliant halo but looks sad and ashamed to stand before God.



“As we enter heaven
we will see them,
so many of them
coming towards
us and thanking
us. We will ask
who they are, and
they will say a poor
soul you prayed
for in purgatory.”

~Quotable Fulton J. Sheen.

“I know when you pray for me,
and it is the same with all of
the other souls here in
Purgatory. Very few of us here
get any prayers; the majority of
us are totally abandoned, with
no thought or prayers offered
for us from those on earth”

~ Message from a soul in Purgatory





3 THINGS YOU MAY NOT KNOW ABOUT PURGATORY



IT MAKES US IMAGES OF CHRIST

It isn't a punishment. Rather, it's a state of purification to make us "perfect images of Christ".



WE NEED TO PRAY FOR THE SOULS IN PURGATORY

This process of purification can be long and painful, so we need to pray for them - always.



THE SOULS IN PURGATORY CAN PRAY FOR US

Though they can't pray for themselves, as members of the body of Christ, can pray for us.

PRAYER FOR THE SOULS OF THE DEPARTED

V. Eternal rest grant unto them, O Lord.

R. And let the perpetual light shine upon them.

And may the souls of all the faithful departed, through the mercy of God, rest in peace. Amen.

PRAYER FOR THE SOULS OF OUR PARENTS

**O God,
Who hast commanded us
to honour our father and mother,
look in the tenderness of Your mercy
upon the souls
of my father and mother
and forgive them their sins
and grant unto me
the joy of seeing them again
in the glorious light of everlasting life.
Through Christ our Lord.
Amen.**

Anast Paul



MANY WHO PLAN
TO SEEK GOD
AT THE
ELEVENTH HOUR
DIE AT 10:30

BUMPER STICKER

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IF YOU TRULY FOLLOW JESUS

THE WORLD WILL

- HATE YOU
- BLOCK YOU
- UNFOLLOW YOU
- TALK BEHIND YOUR BACK
- LAUGH AT YOU
- REJECT YOU
- MAKE FALSE CLAIMS ABOUT YOU
- TEST YOU
- TRY TO DESTROY YOUR FAITH
- TRY TO MAKE YOU LOOK CRAZY

TRY TO MAKE YOU THE CAUSE OF ALL
PROBLEMS.



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catholicconnect When Wanda Poltawska, the Polish Catholic woman who was used as a guinea pig for medical experiments by the Nazi concentration camp, was struggling with cancer, Pope John Paul II asked Padre Pio to pray for her. Within few days she was completely healed! Wanda celebrates her 101th birthday today, pray for Wanda. 🙏🕊️📖

