

## **All Souls Day**

Today we celebrate All Souls Day. It is good for us to have this celebration. It is good for our soul to think about death from time-to-time. In Latin this is called *memento mori*, to remember our death and mortality.

There is an ossuary crypt in a Franciscan church in Rome that I've visited that I remember every year on All Souls Day. There are a few crypt chapels decorated with bones and skulls. There's a plaque that reads as a word of warning from the dead to the living and it says, "What you are now, we once were; what we are now, you will be." It is good for our soul to remember our mortality.

On All Souls Day we first think of our loved ones who have gone before us. Among others I remember my grandparents today and my father. We think of them today. We should especially pray for them and their soul. Praying for the living and the dead is a spiritual work of mercy. We should always pray for the dead, that they be received into Heaven.

The only souls we know where they are after death are the canonized saints. Everyone else who has died we cannot say for certainty where they are. We can only hope where they are. So the prudent, wise, and merciful action towards the dead is to pray for them often.

We also think of our own mortality today. All of us here will die one day. We do not know the day nor the hour. We should not assume where we'll be after our death either. That is the sin of presumption, to presume our salvation, to presume

we will go to Heaven. The Holy Spirit told us through St. Paul in the New Testament that we should work out our salvation in fear and trembling. This implies that we need to cooperate with God's grace, do the Catholic things, not just when we have time or when we're older, but do this now so that we're ready for death whenever it comes our way.

At our death we are judged by Jesus Christ, and judged according to the state of our soul at our death. Our life isn't sort of measured, the good weighed against the bad. That's not what happens at our death. Jesus judges our soul, which can be distilled into one question: Are we in the state of grace or not? In other words, do we have mortal sin on our soul or not?

The following is straight up from the Catechism of the Catholic Church: "To die in mortal sin without repenting and accepting God's merciful love means remaining separated from him for ever by our own free choice. This state of definitive self-exclusion from communion with God and the blessed is called 'hell.'" (CCC 1033) There are three conditions for mortal sin: 1) grave matter, 2) full knowledge, and 3) full consent. We look to the 10 Commandments as a guide for what is grave matter.

How do we make sure we are in the state of grace so that when Jesus comes at our death we will be found worthy to enter Heaven? Do the Catholic things: pray daily, do what is morally right according to the Catholic Church, stay close to the sacraments especially Confession and Eucharist, go to Sunday Mass weekly.

There are many reasons why regular Sunday Mass is important. We fulfill the 3rd Commandment. We pray together. Come in contact with the Eucharist. It is also the celebration of Jesus' victory on the Cross. On the Cross Jesus defeated three things: 1) sin, 2) death, and 3) satan. The Mass is the antidote for everything that is wrong with the world. Sin, death, and satan have messed up the world. In the Cross and the Mass Jesus has reversed these things. As Catholics, we cannot get to Heaven without the Mass.

At every Mass the entire Church is present, visible and invisible. We represent the visible Church. Who makes up the invisible Church? The angels and saints in Heaven (celebrated on All Saints Day), also the souls in purgatory. So we are no closer to our loved ones who have passed then when we're at Mass. Right here in this church in Marrero, LA the angels and saints are here, Our Lady is here, also our deceased loved ones in purgatory are here.

May this comfort us at this Mass. May it help motivate us to run to Mass as often as we can to be close to our beloved dead. With their prayers, us praying for them, and remaining close to the Eucharist and Confession, this is how we follow Jesus Christ through the grave and into Paradise for eternity.