



Sunday 2nd November 2026

All Souls Day

Gospel Reading

John 6.37-40

Everything that the Father gives me will come to me, and anyone who comes to me I will never drive away; for I have come down from heaven, not to do my own will, but the will of him who sent me.

And this is the will of him who sent me, that I should lose nothing of all that he has given me, but raise it up on the last day. This is indeed the will of my Father, that all who see the Son and believe in him may have eternal life; and I will raise them up on the last day.'

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

All Praise to you, O Christ.

Other readings:

Wisdom 3:1-9

Psalm 27:1-6

1 Peter 1:3-9

Homily

"My Father's will is that everyone who looks to the Son and believes in him shall have eternal life, and I will raise them up at the last day."

This is the heart of the Christian message – because of Jesus, there is hope, not just in this life but also for what comes next. We have this hope for ourselves, and we have it also for those whom we love. Our Christian hope is that death does not separate us from each other for ever. Because Jesus has won a great victory over death, we believe that we will be reunited in heaven, never to be parted again.

All Souls' Day is an occasion when we gather to focus our prayers on those loved ones who have died. To our prayers we bring a great many different things:

- *the pain of grief;*
- *the love that continues, even when the loved one is no longer there;*
- *the regret for things we wish we'd said or done while we still had the chance;*
- *the guilt for things that we wish we hadn't;*

- *the nagging sense that some part of ourselves is now missing.*

These and many other feelings are present in our prayers, and they belong in our prayers.

We may also bring to our prayers a great many different ideas about what happens to people when they die. For some, praying for those who have died is a central part of their Christian faith, and feels entirely natural and necessary. Although they may not have a very clear idea of why, they sincerely believe that these prayers help. For others, it might all feel rather strange, something that they associate with medieval ideas that jar with today's context. Perhaps for most of us it is simply a spiritual practice from which we derive comfort and peace, even if we may struggle to explain exactly why.

Jesus doesn't spell out a detailed itinerary for the journey from this life to heaven. He simply encourages us to trust – trust Him, and trust the Father.

That's why on this All Souls' Day it is perhaps less important to worry about why we pray for those who have died, and more important to do so honestly, sincerely, and trusting in God's promises. Grief and loss are experiences that change us in profound and baffling ways – so, too, is prayer. When we pray the reality of our grief and express to God the truth of how we feel about our loss, we discover a comfort and peace that defies understanding.

God has given us hope, hope that this present suffering is temporary while love is eternal. Today we bring the complicated emotions that surround the loss of our loved ones to that same God, the God whom Jesus called Father, and who promises us, and those for whom we pray, a share in His own eternal life.

May God give us all his comfort and his peace.

Conversation Questions

1. Is there anything else from the passage not already discussed that speaks to you?
What is it?
2. What will you do this week in your Monday-to-Saturday ministry in response to what you have heard today? #everydayfaith

Prayer

Spend some time in prayer, responding to what you have heard today and listening to what God might be saying to you.

Collect of the day

*Eternal God, our maker and redeemer,
grant us, with all the faithful departed,
the sure benefits of your Son's saving passion
and glorious resurrection
that, in the last day,*

*when you gather up all things in Christ,
we may with them enjoy the fullness of your promises;
through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord,
who is alive and reigns with you,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever.*

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