

The Commemoration of All the Faithful Departed (All Souls)

November 2, 2003

Readings

There are many choices today:

First Reading: Wisdom 3:1-9 or Wisdom 4:7-15 or Isaiah 25:6-9

Second reading: Romans 5:5-11 or Romans 5:17-21 or Romans 6:3-9 or Romans 8:14-23 or Romans 8:31b-35, 37-39 or Romans 14:7-9, 10c-12 or 1 Corinthians 15:20-28 or 1 Corinthians 15:51-57 or 2 Corinthians 4:14-5:1 or 2 Corinthians 5:1, 6-10 or Philippians 3:20-21 or 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18 or 2 Timothy 2:8-13

Gospel: Matthew 5:1-12a or Matthew 11:25-30 or Matthew 25:31-46 or Luke 7:11-17 or Luke 23:44-46, 50, 52-53; 24:1-6a or Luke 24:13-16, 28-35 or John 5:24-29 or John 6:37-40 or John 6:51-59 or John 11:17-27 or John 11:32-45 or John 14:1-6

Calendar

November 1: All Saints Day

November 2: All Souls Day

November 4: Election Day in the United States

Quotes

The Cross stands before us in these days as an eloquent symbol of God's love for humanity. ... In his Passion, Death and Resurrection, we are shown that the last word in human existence is not death but God's victory over death. Divine love, manifested in its fullness in the paschal mystery, overcomes death and sin, which is its cause (cf. Rom 5: 12).

John Paul II, General Audience, April 19, 2000

[Each of us] has the right to life, to bodily integrity, and to the means which are suitable for the proper development of life; these are primarily food, clothing, shelter, rest, medical care, and, finally, the necessary social services.

Pope John XXIII, Pacem in Terris, 11

A spirituality of communion means, finally, to know how to "make room" for our brothers and sisters, bearing "each other's burdens" (Gal 6:2) and resisting the selfish temptations which constantly beset us and provoke competition, careerism, distrust and jealousy.

John Paul II, Novo Millennio Ineunte

Catholics may feel politically disenfranchised, sensing that no party and too few candidates fully share the Church's comprehensive commitment to the life and dignity of every human being from conception to natural death. Yet this is not a time for retreat or discouragement; rather, it is a time for renewed engagement.

Forming Consciences for Faithful Citizenship: A Call to Political Responsibility from the Catholic Bishops of the United States, 16

All the life issues are connected, for erosion of respect for the life of any individual or group in society necessarily diminishes respect for all life.

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Let us go forward in hope!

John Paul II, Novo Millennio Ineunte

Thoughts for your consideration

With the Feast of All Souls on a Sunday, we have a wide choice of readings. Some of them stand out in how they relate to Catholic Social Teaching. The prophecy of Isaiah 25:6, 7-9 reminds us of God's desire to bring together and liberate all men and women. The story of the last judgment in Matthew 25:31-46 offers us the possibility to reflect on Catholic Social Teaching in a very explicit way. God will judge us according to how we live – according to how we treat the hungry, the thirsty, the homeless, the naked, the sick, and those in prison.

In any case, no matter which readings are used, as we remember those who have died, we may want to include not just people from our personal circle of friends and family, but all those who have died this past year. We may want to remember the millions of children who die each year from malnutrition or lack of good medical care. We may want to remember all those who have been killed in the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan on all sides – civilians and military personal, Americans, Iraqis and people of Afghanistan and all the nations involved. We may want to remember those who have died in acts of terrorism and other violence anywhere in the world. We may want to remember women, men and children who have died in cases of domestic violence. We may want to remember died in the natural disasters of the last year, like the huge earthquake in China. We may want to remember those who have died of diseases like cancer or heart problems or AIDS. We may want to remember those who have died from the side effects of environmental destruction and abuse. Catholic Social Teaching reminds us to make sure that our perspective is wider than our own little circle of family and friends and nation.

On both the feast of All Saints and the feast of All Souls, we are reminded that we believe in the communion of saints. We believe that we are all united in a profound solidarity. This solidarity is central to our social teaching.

Questions for Reflection in your Faith Sharing Group

Who are the groups of people who have died as victims of social injustice that you would especially like to remember on this day?

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Every life is a gift of God. We are called to use our lives for the good of all – for the common good. Who is an example of a person you know who has used their life well for the good of others?

Actions – Links

As we remember those who have died, we might want to look at a summary of the **Wars, Massacres and Atrocities of the Twentieth Century** at: <http://users.erols.com/mwhite28/war-1900.htm>. For a look at the **30 Worst Atrocities of the 20th Century** go to: <http://users.erols.com/mwhite28/atrox.htm> .

There are various groups who have tried to keep a total of those killed in the **war in Iraq**. One summary of info can be found at <http://www.antiwar.com/casualties/> . Another count of civilian deaths can be found at <http://www.iraqbodycount.org/> .

Tuesday is Election Day. Center of Concern materials to help one prepare for the common election can be found at: <http://www.coc.org/election2008> .

“Crazy Facts”

Avert, an AIDS charity, estimates that more than 25 million people have died of AIDS since 1981 and that Africa has 11.6 million AIDS orphans.

Prayers of Intercession

Response: God of resurrection, lead us to new life.

For our relatives and friends who have died this past year, we pray....

For all the people of our world who have died violently, we pray.....

For those who have died in the wars in Iraq, Afghanistan and elsewhere, we pray....

For those who have died in situations of domestic and family violence, we pray....

For those who have died because of hunger and an unhealthy diet, we pray....

For all who have died of treatable diseases, we pray....

For all children who have died this past year, we pray.....

For those who have died because of our abuse of the environment, we pray....

For our planet and its various living species who seem to be threatened by our abuse and over use, we pray.....

Prayer - Meditation

Prayer for Those Affected by Physical, Sexual, Political or Emotional Violence

by The Rev. Patricia Sandra Horton, Birmingham, Alabama, USA

http://1stholistic.com/Spl_prayers/prayer_for-those-affected-by-violence.htm

We pray for those who have died violently because of hatred, mistrust or wanton destruction: Heal the violence that may also have battered our souls.