



1ST SATURDAY DEVOTION NEWSLETTER

NOVEMBER 2020

WHY PRAY FOR THE DEAD?

By Elise Italiano Ureneck | Catholic News Service

During the month of November, the Catholic Church asks the faithful to spend 30 days praying for the dead.

Pope Francis has underscored this directive: "Church tradition has always urged prayer for the dead, in particular by offering the celebration of the Eucharist for them: It is the best spiritual help that we can give to their souls, particularly to the most abandoned ones."

I've always felt drawn to this practice. Maybe it's my more melancholic nature, or the fact that as a Northeasterner, the bleak November sky and bare trees create the quintessential backdrop to reflect on life's ultimate questions. (My mother always warned me, "Never make any big decisions during November or February." It's been good advice).

I've been wondering, though, whether this practice is still widely embraced, and what we lose if we give it up.

The language used at Catholic funerals — outside of the words of the rite — is often quick to place the deceased in heaven. This is not to say that it's always inaccurate: We do believe that some people die in perfect friendship with God, including those who are not canonized.

But we also believe in a final purification, more commonly known as purgatory. The Catechism of the Catholic Church states, "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."

I've always been curious about (and if I'm being honest, a bit afraid of) this prospect.

While studying the history of Christian spirituality in graduate school, that curiosity got the better of me. I decided to take up the question of purgative suffering for my master's thesis. Ninety-eight pages later, I better understood this from Pope Benedict XVI: "Purgatory basically means that God can put the pieces back together again."

So what will it be like? As when speaking about anything divine, we have to rely on image, analogy and metaphor.

According to St. Catherine of Genoa, a mystic known for her vision of purgatory, it will be a type of fire, though not like that used to describe the experience of hell.

"Rust which is sin, covers souls, and ... is burnt away by fire, the more it is consumed, the more the soul responds to God. ... As the rust lessens and the soul is opened to the divine rays, happiness grows," she wrote.

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FEASTS FOR NOVEMBER

The feasts on the General Roman Calendar celebrated during the month of November are:

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|--------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1 All Saints, Solemnity | 22 Our Lord Jesus Christ, King of the Universe, Solemnity |
| 2 Commemoration of All the Faithful Departed, Feast | 23 Clement I; Columban; Bl. Miguel Agustín Pro (USA), Opt. Mem. |
| 3 Martin de Porres, Opt. Mem. | 24 Andrew Dung-Lac and Companions, Memorial |
| 4 Charles Borromeo, Memorial | 25 Catherine of Alexandria, Opt. Mem. |
| 8 Thirty-Second Sunday in Ordinary Time, Sunday | 29 First Sunday of Advent, Sunday |
| 9 Lateran Basilica, Feast | 30 Andrew, Feast |
| 10 Leo the Great, Memorial | |
| 11 Martin of Tours; Veterans Day (USA), Memorial | |
| 12 Josaphat, Memorial | |
| 13 Frances Xavier Cabrini, Memorial | |
| 15 Thirty-Third Sunday in Ordinary Time, Sunday | |
| 16 Margaret of Scotland; Gertrude, Opt. Mem. | |
| 17 Elizabeth of Hungary, Memorial | |
| 18 Churches of Peter and Paul; Rose Philippine Duchesne (USA), Opt. Mem. | |
| 21 Presentation of Mary, Memorial | |

The feasts of St. Albert the Great (November 15) and St. Cecilia (November 22) are superseded by the Sunday Liturgy.

The national holiday (USA) of Thanksgiving falls on the last Thursday of November. There is a special liturgy which may be used on this day. ☐

THANK YOU

... a small and simple phrase that comes from a grateful heart!

Psalm 106:2

A Thanksgiving Day Prayer

"Lord God Almighty we thank you for all the blessings, graces you have bestowed on us. Let this be the day of love and gratitude for all the provisions you have given for our families, friends and all the individuals around us. Also, for the Good health that strengthens our body, mind and spirit. And most of all our FAITH that bind us as one glorifying YOU OUR ALMIGHTY GOD in Jesus' name we pray, AMEN."

Jesus of Nazareth, Your loving God
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OUR CENACLE CORNER

Seeking a deeper relationship with God
through meditation of passages from Holy Scriptures

Purgatory :
A State of Condition or A Place

GOD TOUCHED ME

*Publish his glorious deeds among the nations.
Tell everyone about the amazing things he does. — 1 Chronicles 16:24*

GOD'S BLESSING: PROTECTION OF THE SAINTS

By Ines Carrington, a Las Vegas Devotee

When he took it, the four living creatures and the twenty-four elders fell down before the Lamb. Each of the elders held a harp and gold bowls filled with incense, which are the prayers of the holy ones.

Rev. 5:8

A few years ago, we were advised to put the prayers cards of St. Michael the Archangel and St. Benedict on our windows and doors. We followed suit and placed the prayer cards facing outside in each and every window and door, while asking them for intercession to protect us.

In 2019, a priest blessed our whole house again. And then, on Thanksgiving Day 2019, Victor prayed and the Lord anointed the whole house.

In 2020, during this pandemic situation, no one in our house got COVID 19, in spite of our nephew and his wife working in the medical field and are highly exposed to the disease.

This past Labor Day weekend, the whole family went to Utah for camping and stayed overnight. The next day, we went to Bryce Canyon and at around 4:00 PM, while we were on our way to Mount Zion, our ADT service called and told us we have been burglarized. We arrived the house at around 10:00 PM. Our front door was ajar so we immediately checked the whole house if anything was missing. By God's Divine protection through St. Benedict and St. Michael, nothing was missing. The house was not even a

mess. Speculations by other family members were about the strong winds the night before that may have caused the door to be open. However, our front door is a double door which is quite heavy and it is always closed and locked because we rarely use it. We always go out through the door leading to the garage.

My sister Guada and I firmly believe that it was through the protection of St. Michael and St. Benedict, and because of our daily prayers. We feel that this is an awesome manifestation of how the intercession of saints work. As Fr. Mitch Pacwa wrote: "Because the saints are so close to the fire of God's love and because they stand immediately before him, they can set our prayers on fire with their love and release the power of our prayers."

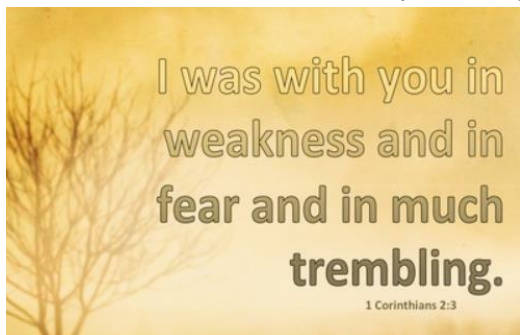
We know that God has been protecting us and we are very thankful for the saints' intercession and protection, as we continue to praise God and all His mighty deeds! ☐

SPIRITUAL ENRICHMENT RECOMMENDED

THE FEAR THAT COMES FROM THE UNKNOWN

BY VICTOR ARANETA

Anxiety brings human misery and trouble to one's self and to people around him or her. The Bible says if worry or anxiety extends life even for a minute then WORRY A LOT!



When one worries and succumbs to depression, the person puts forth an action contrary to God's plan of peace and serenity to all. Remember Jesus'

greeting to His disciples when He rose from the dead, "PEACE BE WITH YOU," four words that mean a lot in our spirituality. It means the yoke of brokenness is already defeated by His passion, crucifixion and resurrection; the final blow on the slavery of Satan that started in the garden of Eden and culminated in Golgotha!

When we think of tomorrow and get anxious of what it will bring to you, open your mind and your heart that tonight must pass with calmness and assurance; that tomorrow will be another day of peace. Tomorrow will not come unless tonight occurs. In the meantime, shower yourself with the living water of God that promises peace and tranquility! THE LORD IS MY SHEPHERD WHOM SHALL I WANT!

Prayer: Lord God Almighty, listen to the plea of my heart and mind that hungers in the innermost being of my soul. Give me peace that I long for. Remove any guilt or anger that cause my anxiety. Replace this with joy and a promise of peace and serenity, in Jesus name I pray, Amen.

Upcoming Events

MARK YOUR CALENDARS!

1ST SUNDAY DEVOTION

NOVEMBER 1, 2020

STATIONS OF THE CROSS GARDENS
THE MONASTERY OF THE ANGELS
LOS ANGELES, CA

DEVOTIONAL PRAYERS BEGIN
AT 12:30 PM FOLLOWED BY
MASS AT 1:30 PM
PLEASE RSVP TO

ALICE.A@SPIRITUALARMYOFGOD.ORG

ST. SHARBEL CATHOLIC CHURCH
10325 RANCHO DESTINO RD
LAS VEGAS, NV 89183

MASS AT 9:30 AM FOLLOWED BY
DEVOTIONAL PRAYERS AT THE CHAPEL

1ST SATURDAY DEVOTION

NOVEMBER 7, 2020

IN LOS ANGELES VIA ZOOM

IN LAS VEGAS VIRTUAL

800 OUR FATHER DEVOTION

NOVEMBER 21, 2020

IN LOS ANGELES VIA ZOOM

IN LAS VEGAS VIRTUAL

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WHY PRAY FOR THE DEAD

Fire has a lot of effects: light, heat, warmth and destruction. But when a precious metal is placed in its midst, it's purified and perfected.

Purgatory is a letting go of habits, vices and ways of thinking or knowing that prevented us from loving as we ought during our lifetime.

The poet Dante likened the soul's experience in purgatory to climbing a mountain, the summit being paradise. The climber might have to shed things that are bogging him down on the ascent. That process, of course, can be grueling, but with every step, one moves closer to the goal.

If the souls in purgatory are on their way to heaven, why do we pray for them? In his encyclical on hope, "Spe Salvi," Pope Benedict XVI gives us more answers:

"If 'purgatory' is simply purification through fire in the encounter with the Lord, Judge and Savior, how can a third person intervene ...? ... No one lives alone. No one sins alone. No one is saved alone. The lives of others continually spill over into mine: in what I think, say, do and achieve. ...

"And for that there is no need to convert earthly time into God's time: In the communion of souls simple terrestrial time is superseded. It is never too late to touch the heart of another, nor is it ever in vain. ... As Christians we should never limit ourselves to asking: How can I save myself? We should also ask: What can I do in order that others may be saved and that for them too the star of hope may rise?"

I think the most comforting line at a Catholic funeral is this: "Life is changed, not ended."

For those missing loved ones this month, be assured that the change is for the better and the veil between us is very thin.

Ureneck, associate director of the Center for the Church in the 21st Century at Boston College, writes the "Finding God in All Things" column for Catholic News Service.
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“ . . . I am your Mother Mary. Do your part my children to release yourself from the bondage of evil. Angels of God will help you, and the whole country will see the blessings of the Lord our God. Now you can see the words of God before your very eyes, their lies and deceits.

Mary, Your Lady of Peace

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MOTHER MARY'S CROWNING

Mother Mary's crowning is traditionally done in May to honor her as the Queen of heaven and earth. She is crowned with flowers and the gold crown to thank her for her cooperation in God's plan that changed the destiny of the world. However, because of the present pandemic situation which started in March 2020, the church was not yet allowing liturgical celebrations nor any services in the month of March through May to avoid close contact with people. So this year, Mother Mary's Crowning was held on September 5, 2020 in Las Vegas, NV and on October 4, 2020 in Los Angeles, CA.

In Los Angeles, the celebration started with a procession of the Spiritual Army's Our Lady of Fatima statue in her special carriage bedecked with blooming white roses in a beautiful round arrangement crafted with love by Ruth Mercado. Devotees each took turns offering their flowers and petitions to the Blessed Mother, as they sang "Bring Flowers of the Rarest" and other Marian songs. The flower offering was followed by a Holy Mass celebrated by Fr. Xavier. The climax of the celebration was the moment when Alice Ng and April Araneta, placed a crown of flowers and a crown on Mother Mary's head, as devotees sang the familiar song, "O Mary we crown thee with blossoms today".

Las Vegas devotees also celebrated Mother Mary's Crowning virtually by following the Rites of Crowning and floral offering (Short Form). Mother Mary was crowned by Maria Sheets and Evelyn Pua. The First Saturday Devotional prayers followed. It was indeed a beautiful ceremony with everyone pouring out their love for Mother Mary with offerings, songs and prayers. ☐

