



November 17, 2024

Written by
THE
FAITHFUL
DISCIPLE

Thirty-third Sunday in Ordinary Time

Dn 12:1-3 | Heb 10:11-14, 18 | Mk 13:24-32

GROW AS A DISCIPLE | PRAY, STUDY, ENGAGE, SERVE

My brother-in-law inherited his father's company. Although he studied business in college, he knew years before receiving his degree that, provided he was faithful to his studies, he would have a comfortable job waiting for him after graduation. We may not all inherit the same economic opportunities as my brother-in-law, but, as Christians, we are heirs of infinitely greater spiritual ones. *You are my inheritance, O Lord*, the psalmist says. This phrase reveals the tremendous goodness of God who not only created us but who, in baptism, extended to us an invitation and a promise: provided we are faithful to him, we are heirs of eternal life. Nothing short of eternity will be sufficient to express our thanksgiving to him for this gift.

GO EVANGELIZE

PRAYER, INVITATION, WITNESS, ACCOMPANIMENT

Daniel's words in today's first reading remind us not only of the gratitude we owe to God but also of our responsibility to help souls who have gone astray from following him. *Some shall live forever*, the prophet says, but *others shall be an everlasting horror and disgrace*. The reality is that eternal life is not guaranteed us – not because God does not offer it freely, but because we are free to reject his offer. My brother-in-law, if he had neglected his studies in college, would never have equipped himself to run the family business. His father may have wholeheartedly desired to give the company to him, but doing so would have been irresponsible if his son did not want to take the helm. Likewise, God's mercy is abundant; but we can nevertheless say “no” to God by choosing not to follow him. As Christians seeking (although imperfectly) to follow the Lord, we have the dignity of cooperating with God in order to draw the souls who have gone astray back to him. By word, example, prayer, and sacrifice, we can help others experience the joy of knowing God in this life and of living forever with him in the next.

PRAY The Church especially devotes the month of November to praying for the souls in Purgatory. These individuals died in a state of friendship with God but are still in need of purification. God is indeed their *inheritance*, but they experience pain because they do not possess him yet. One way to remember to pray for the Holy Souls is to conclude grace before meals in this way: “Bless us, O Lord ... May the souls of the faithful departed, through the mercy of God, rest in peace.”