

October 27–28, 2018

Dear Parishioners,

“Eternal rest grant unto them, O Lord, and let perpetual light shine upon them.” This lovely prayer, drawn from *4 Esdras* (2:34–35), a work containing the visions of Ezra, the priest and scribe of the Old Testament, expresses the theme of November: praying for the dead, which is Spiritual Work of Mercy.

November begins with consecutive feast days: the Solemnity of All Saints (All Saints Day), on November 1; and the Commemoration of All the Faithful Departed (All Souls’ Day), on November 2.

Please remember to attend Mass on All Saints Day, which is a Holy Day of Obligation (October 31 at 5:30pm [vigil]; November 1 at 8:30am and 7:00pm). The focus of this day, as its name suggests, is on all of the saints, not only those who have been canonized (that is, officially recognized by the Church). We remember on All Saints Day that holiness is a universal calling and heaven is our destiny.

Even though All Souls’ Day is not a Holy Day of Obligation, I encourage you to attend Mass (November 2 at 7:00pm). All Souls’ Day could be considered the “Feast of Purgatory,” as the Church’s prayer for the dead presupposes our belief that those who die in God’s friendship, but still needing to be cleansed of sin, undergo a purging (hence the term “Purgatory”) after death.

To emphasize the importance of praying for the dead, I would like to call attention to several items:

1. The *Book of the Names of the Dead* has been placed in the Saint Joseph chapel. This book, which includes the names of deceased relatives and friends, calls to mind the scriptural image of the Book of Life, which refers to our heavenly destiny: “Only those will enter whose names are written in the Lamb’s book of life” (Revelation 21:27).
2. We will recite a Prayer for the Souls in Purgatory (based on *4 Esdras* 2:34–35) before Mass begins. Please arrive early in order to offer this prayer. It is also worth remembering that the Eucharistic Prayer for Mass includes a petition for the dead. Here, we also intercede for our beloved dead and for who have been forgotten.
3. Saint Joseph is the patron of a happy death (the grace of being prepared to meet God at the end of life). Accordingly, there is a prayer to Saint Joseph for this intention has been placed in the chapel dedicated to him.
4. A Mass for Miscarried Children will be celebrated on November 8 (7:00pm). A special book will be available to inscribe the names of these children.
5. The parish will conduct a pilgrimage to Mount Calvary Cemetery on November 10 (10:00am – 2:00pm). Please RVSP to Ida (iolcary@saintbenedictparish.org) for the Cemetery Walk by November 1.

As the liturgical year draws to a close, the biblical readings at Mass focus on the end of time. November is traditionally the month when the Church focuses on the Last Things: heaven, hell, Purgatory, and judgment.

Let us pray for those who have gone before us, confident that they will pray for us.

Sincerely,
Fr. Tony Marques