

Reflection of the Month

November- Month of The Faithful Departed

As we quickly come to the end of this Liturgical Year of 2014, and anticipate 2015 with the upcoming Advent Season, it is good for us to be reminded that this month of November has been set aside for us to remember the Faithful Departed. The Church has a rich tradition in remembering those who have gone before us and continues to challenge us to remain faithful in fulfilling the Corporal and Spiritual Works of Mercy.

Two of the works of mercy should ring true for us during this month of November. As in regard to a "spiritual" work of mercy, we are to pray for our dead brothers and sisters. We do this by praying traditional prayers for the Poor Souls in Purgatory. Yes, the Church still teaches the Doctrine of Purgatory. Of course, beyond our personal prayers, including the Rosary, the perfect prayer that can be offered by the Church for the living and for those who have died, is the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass.

In regard to the "corporal" work of mercy for our deceased brothers and sisters, there is the duty to give the faithful departed a dignified Christian burial. To offer a proper and reverent Vigil Service, Mass of Christian Burial and Committal Service is an obligation and responsibility of the Catholic Community.

As we approach the end of this Church Year, it also brings to mind the end of this world as we know it with the promised Second Coming of the Lord. Be it the coming of the Lord at the of our earthly life, or the Return of The Lord at the end of time, we are a people called to be prepared for "the hour that we do not know" when Our Merciful and Just Lord will come to fulfill all his promises which will be culminated in his Second Coming.

It is an interesting realization that what we focus upon during the month of November, the commemoration of the faithful departed, finds a place and purpose throughout the whole Liturgical Year of the Church. Really, praying for the Faithful Departed should not be confined to a specific month. It naturally moves within the church year in the midst of its grace filled seasons of Advent, Christmas, Lent, Easter and Ordinary Time. Let us remember that throughout the entire year the dynamic of "dying and rising" is ever present among us and praying for the Faithful Departed is a constant call to charity out of love for them.

As we remember those who have died, let us continue to place our hope in our future "rising", our "resurrection", when Jesus will fulfill his promise to us: eternal life with him - forever! As Body of Christ, let us always remember to faithfully pray for our deceased brothers and sisters and may we remain vigilant at the Coming of Our Lord.

Eternal rest grant unto them O Lord. May they rest in peace. Amen!

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