



NOVEMBER MONTH OF THE HOLY SOULS IN PURGATORY

“Why do Catholics pray for the dead?” is a question frequently asked by our non-Catholic friends. Since the practice of praying for the Souls of the deceased is based upon the doctrine of Purgatory, which was abandoned by the Protestant Reformation in the 16th Century, naturally our Protestant friends are at a loss to understand the Catholic custom of praying for their departed brothers. The Church keeps this Devotion before the eyes of her children by setting aside November 2nd as All Souls Day, permitting Her Priests to celebrate three Masses on that day for the Souls of the departed and by designating the entire month of November as the month of special Devotion for the Souls in Purgatory. Here, at St. Gianna Beretta Molla Parish we will be remembering all those Holy Souls that are listed on the envelopes at all the Masses celebrated here during the month of November.

IN THE BIBLE: The Bible encourages us to pray not only for one another on earth, but to pray for the Souls of our departed as well. In the Second Book of Macabees of the Old Testament, it is narrated that after Judas Macabees defeated Gorgias, he came with his Company to bury the Jews slain in battle. *“Taking a collection, he sent 12,000 drachmas of silver to Jerusalem for sacrifice to be offered for the sins of the dead.”* He did not regard their sins to be grievous *“because he considered that they who had fallen asleep with Godliness had great grace laid up for them.”* The Sacred Scripture writer then expresses the Doctrine involved herein: *“It is, therefore, a Holy and wholesome thought to pray for the dead, that they may be loosed from their sins”* MC 12: 43-46. While our brethren do not acknowledge the Book of Macabees to be inspired, they must at least admit them to be Faithful, historical records that bear witness to the Jewish Faith centuries before Christ. As a matter of fact, they rest upon the same authority as Isaiah, St. John and all the other Books in the Bible – the infallible teaching authority of the Church, which has declared all the books of the Bible to be inspired.

IN THE EARLY CHURCH HISTORY: Praying for the dead is the unanimous interpretation for the Fathers of the early Church and the continuing Tradition of the intervening centuries. There are numerous inscriptions on the tombs of the Martyrs, the tombs in the catacombs: *“In your prayers remember us who have gone before you.”* *“May you have eternal light in Christ”* was the answering prayer of those who remained behind.

IN THE EARLY CHURCH WRITES: Tertullian (160-240) writes – *“We make on one day every year oblations for the dead as for their birthdays.”* St. Ambrose – *“Give perfect rest to thy servant Theodosius, that rest which you have proposed for your Saints...”* One of the most touching incidents which have come down to us from the writings of the Fathers upon this subject is from the pen of St. Augustine, who lived in the beginning of the 5th Century. St. Augustine related that when his mother was dying, she made this last request of him: *“Lay this body anywhere. This only I request of you – that you would remember me at the Altar of the Lord, wherever you be.”* We, Catholics, have kept the practice of prayer for the Souls in Purgatory from the very beginning even until now because it is the teaching of the Church who speaks for Christ.

All Souls

NOVEMBER 2



ALL SOULS ENROLLMENT

Please return your ALL Souls envelope with the names of your dearly departed to be enrolled in the Novena for All Souls. You may place the envelope in the Collection Basket or drop it off at the Parish office. The envelopes will then be placed on the Altar and remain there the entire month of November.

Masses at: 8:30-9:00-9:30-10:00-10:30-11:00 AM



On **Sunday, November 10, 2019** at **11:00 AM** we will be having a special Mass of Remembrance for all those who were buried from St. Gianna this past year. Everyone is invited to attend this special Mass.

