

LOOKING TO SUNDAY®

Sunday, November 2, 2025

The Commemoration of All the Faithful Departed

This email, entitled Looking to Sunday®, focuses on one or more of the scripture readings for the coming Sunday. It prepares readers to hear God's Word at Mass and it offers a point of reflection to consider in the days leading to Sunday. Looking to Sunday is written by Father Tom Iwanowski.

Looking to Sunday has been published for more than sixteen years.

MORE THAN REMEMBERING

All of us remember the people we have lost to death. Even atheists, who have no belief in God or in eternal life, recall the dead who were part of their lives and whose absence touches their hearts.

As Catholics, we do more than just remember our deceased relatives, friends, neighbors, parishioners, and others who enriched our lives. We pray for them.

This Sunday, "The Commemoration of All the Faithful Departed," also known as "All Souls Day," is a day particularly set aside in the Church's calendar to pray for our deceased loved ones and for all the dead who were part of our Church family down through the ages.

We pray for the dead since we believe they are more than just a fleeting memory. We believe they are alive with the Lord in a new dimension of existence that we call eternal life.

That belief is not wishful thinking meant to ease the pain of loss. It is based on the Resurrection of Jesus and on the very Word of God who is Truth itself.

In the Book of Wisdom, we are told, "The souls of the just are in the hand of God, and no torment shall touch them. They seemed, in the view of the foolish, to be dead, and their passing away from us, utter destruction. But they are in peace" (Wisdom 3:1-9).

In his letter to the Thessalonians, St. Paul tells us, "We do not want you to be unaware, brothers and sisters, about those who have fallen asleep, so that you might not grieve like the rest, who have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose so too will God through Jesus bring with him those who have fallen asleep" (1 Thessalonians 4:13-18).

In the Gospel, Jesus himself declares, "For this is the will of my Father, that everyone who sees the Son and believes in him may have eternal life, and I shall raise him on the last day" (John 6:37-40).

As a Church we proclaim that same belief at every Sunday Mass when during the Creed we profess, "I look forward to the resurrection of the dead and the life of the world to come."

As we pray for the dead this Sunday, we pray that the deceased who are enjoying the fullness of eternal life may see our prayers as a sign of our continuing love and affection for them.

And we pray that the dead whose lives were marred by personal sins and failings may be helped by our prayers and sacrifices as they undergo a process of purification to prepare them to enter the holy presence of God.

As we celebrate "The Commemoration of All the Faithful Departed," we are also reminded that our relationships with our loved ones continue because life continues. As we are told in the

Church's funeral ritual, "We believe that all the ties of friendship and affection which knit us as one throughout our lives do not unravel with death" (The Order of Christian Funerals #71).

This All Souls Day, we gather for more than just sentimental reasons, and we do more than just recall memories of our beloved dead. We gather to proclaim our belief in eternal life, and by our prayers we tell our loved ones who have died that we have not forgotten them, that we love them, we miss them, and one day we will be together again in the loving embrace of God.

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***Please note that other readings may be used this Sunday, November 2,
The Commemoration of All the Faithful Departed.***