

Would anyone go to the Tomb of the Unknown Soldiers and want it informal, more casual, suggest to the Old Guard to be more folksy, less serious, it's okay to be a little unkept? That's absurd; consider what we do here, should rituals of man be more reverent than rituals of God? The Scripture is filled with rituals, of holiness, we know how Jesus worshipped. You see the point, why things here.

I don't know anyone goes to Arlington National Cemetery (even up the road at Leavenworth National Cemetery) not struck by awe. Row after row after row of graves. Names, dates of those who lay there who gave so much for the freedoms we now enjoy. White stones mark service, duty, sacrifice. Reverent awe at the tomb of the unknowns, the precision of the guards. Great care goes into maintaining that place because of what it means -a place of honor, respect. An important place to remember those who laid down their lives for our nation.

But it's a place never meant to be. God created the world; He didn't create cemeteries, He created a garden, created us to live, not die. The earth was never meant to contain bodies of man.

Our Lord comes to address this. Jesus didn't just come to give life. Even more, He came to take your sin, your death. His duty, sacrifice, lay down His life -takes all of our life-stealing sin upon Himself. All of it. For you -hurting you, sinful you - Jesus came and entered sin and death and cemeteries of our creation.

All Saints day, a day to celebrate –those unknown or insignificant to the world, those not-so-famous or only remembered by you or forgotten. Saints, holy ones, made so by the blood of Jesus. We remember saints of Risen Savior: Diane, Ken, Gage, Edna, Robert, Betty Lou, Loretta, Cliff, Bob, Dorothy, Betty, Edna, Richard, Bud, Mira, John, Russell, Eugene, Grace, Pat, Bill, Alan, Gertrude, Raymond, Lydia, Evelyn, Willie, Louis, Walter, Marvin, Elda, Carolyn, Jim, Norma, Margorie, Ruth, Clara, Alice, Lillian, Victoria, Eugene, Larry, Howard, William, Lloyd, Linda, Cathy, Collene, Michael, Maurice, Jeanette, Nancy, Brandy, Esther, Pat, Mary Ann, Chris, Alex, Reagan, Darrell, and Sharon and also a number of little saints who died, miscarried in their mother's womb. Oh how He loves all of them. Loves you.

The hurt, pain of loss is still there. Whether it's been months or years since your loved one died, you never "get over" grief. You get on, you get by, you adapt to the loss of their presence. But you never quite get over their death, nor should you. Your heart still aches. For some, hardly a day goes by you think of your dear loved one. Find all your comfort in the Lord Himself. That is enough.

Salvation belongs to the Lamb, He brings life from a cemetery! Defeated death, dies for us, how then can His children die? Yet, we miss their physical presence bitterly. We mourn, weep. But we do not mourn as the world, we do not mourn as those without hope. Our separation is only temporary. We have not lost them; they will be put into your arms; you will realize you have them for eternity.

When I visit the sick, the dying, I always tell them when I leave, you should say it as well, "I will see you again". That's not a promise I can keep. But that's a promise our Lord keeps. I will see them again, here or in paradise with our Lord.

When I give Holy Communion to people on their death beds. So far, it hasn't restored any to health. Many tears, comforted by Christ. It was the medicine they most needed. Medicine of immortality. It prepared them for paradise with the saints, united them in the risen Body and Blood of Jesus and forgives their sins.

Salvation belongs to the Lamb. Yet He gives it away to the likes of us. St. John sees, multitudes of nations, people, yes, even some Germans. He has relieved them of all burdens, bestows His own inheritance. And of all their joys, here is the greatest: Jesus is in their midst. That's what "blessed" means, to be with Jesus, united to Him, His kingdom.

Blessed. Do you realize what Jesus means in those beatitudes of the gospel? Beatitudes are taught by most as "if-then" statements, if you do this, then you're blessed, it's God's spiritual rules, virtues you must do to be blessed. Not true! Wrong. Those beatitudes are of sweetest gospel, God's work for you. Jesus is telling you who you really are in Him. Every time St. Matthew uses blessed, Makarios in Greek, it deals with salvation –present and eternal. Blessed is forgiven, saved. Blessed is receiving His kingdom, all Jesus has to give. His obedience, passion. His death. His resurrection. His life. Blessed is to be with Jesus So is your life each day, amid so many of your failures and yearnings, amid so many scars and brokenness, your mourning and joys.

Dear Saints, be certain this day of what's yours. Know 3 things well. First, You are His saints. Not that you've earned it or deserve it, you aren't good enough, a wretched sinner til your last breathe, but He made you holy. A Saint, forgiven, His. Who you are. Blessed in Him.

Second, rejoice in the blessed death of those before us, their bodies sleep the ground while they, their soul waits for you in heaven. What joys are theirs, never to hurt again. In perfect bliss. And third, be ready for a blessed reunion when your Lord calls you home. From conception in the womb, we protect life God creates. We fight like crazy against death, until it's time, pray, **Lord let Your servant depart in peace.** And **amen, come Lord Jesus.** Finally. We confess with St. Paul, **To live is Christ, to die, is gain.** We confess with Thomas, to touch nail-scarred hands, all at His feet and cry, **My Lord and my God.**

Until then. The church in heaven and earth come together here as in no other way, we celebrate the feast with them. **Therefore with the angels, archangels, all the company of heaven,** that's your mom, dad, grandma, grandpa, your child, your spouse, your loved ones! gathered around the Lamb, His throne.

The Lamb who was slain, lives. Our cemeteries are temporary. He will bring you home. You as unknown, unimportant, insignificant to this world, even those before us -uniquely loved, significant, known to our Lord. What matters! What endures! Never forgotten. And you will not miss out in anything this life has to offer, or time with loved ones; you will have all things in heaven, with Christ, your loved ones, eternity is yours today, dear blessed.