

Homily Summary – All Souls' Day (Commemoration of all the Faithful Departed) - 2025

Overview: This weekend's homily focuses on the *Commemoration of All the Faithful Departed* - commonly called *All Souls' Day* - and ties in the themes of *All Saints' Day*, the month of November, our new Bishop Joseph Dabrowski, the Blue Jays, and the importance of retreats. November is a time to remember those who have gone before us, to renew our hope in eternal life, and to deepen our trust in God's mercy.

Main Points

1. All Saints' Day – Our Heavenly Family

- Celebrated on November 1st, this solemnity honours *all the saints*—those known and unknown—who now live in the glory of Heaven.
- It reminds us that holiness is possible for everyone, and we're all called to become saints by living lives of love and virtue.
- Bible Verse: *"Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven"* (Matthew 5:12).
- The saints intercede for us and encourage us on our journey to Heaven.

2. All Souls' Day – Praying for the Departed

- On November 2nd, the Church prays for all the faithful departed who are being purified before entering Heaven.
- We offer Masses, prayers, and indulgences for souls in purgatory—acts of love that assist them on their way to eternal joy.
- Bible Verse: *"It is a holy and pious thought to pray for the dead, that they may be loosed from their sins"* (2 Maccabees 12:45).
- Catechism Reference: CCC 1030 - 1032 - teaches about purgatory and the importance of praying for the dead.

3. November – The Month of the Holy Souls

- The Church dedicates November to remembering and praying for the deceased.
- Visiting cemeteries, lighting candles, and offering Masses are concrete ways to live out our belief in the Communion of Saints - that spiritual bond between the living and the dead.
- Catechism Reference: CCC 958 - "Our prayer for them is capable not only of helping them, but also of making their intercession for us effective."

4. A New Shepherd for the Diocese

- As of this week, Bishop Joseph Dabrowski becomes the new Bishop of Hamilton.
- A bishop is a successor of the apostles, charged with teaching, sanctifying, and governing the local Church.
- We pray that Bishop Dabrowski will be filled with wisdom, courage, and joy in leading our diocese.
- Bible Verse: *"I will give you shepherds after my own heart"* (Jeremiah 3:15).

5. Retreats: Making more time to be with God

- A retreat is often a time of silence, rest, and renewal in God's presence.
- Retreats remind us that we can't give what we don't have; we need to pause and reconnect with the Lord to serve others well.
- Bible Verse: *"Come away by yourselves to a deserted place and rest a while"* (Mark 6:31).

6. Praying for the Toronto Blue Jays

- Even in small things, we can bring our hopes and joys before God - He cares about every part of our lives.
- Though the Blue Jays didn't win, we can be grateful for the progress they made and entrust them to God – everyone needs prayers!
- As Scripture says, *"In everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God"* (Philippians 4:6).

Reflection Questions

1. Do I pray regularly for the souls of loved ones who have died?
2. How often do I think about Heaven - and how it shapes the way I live now?
3. What might God be asking me to "let go of" so I can grow closer to Him in humility and trust?
4. How can I make November a month of deeper prayer, gratitude, and hope in eternal life?
5. When was the last time I took a spiritual "retreat" - even a short time away to be alone with God?

Rhyme summary: We remember the saints and all who have died. Many in Heaven await our arrival, even some of those for whom we have cried. In November we pray for the dead, to help them on their way. We remember that we also hope to join them again someday. To our Diocese of Hamilton, Bishop Joseph Dabrowski is new, and bishops help lead the Diocese, as they seek to serve you. The Blue Jays have made it to the world series – wow - and each of us can ask God if He wants us to go on a retreat somehow!

Some Scriptural reasons to come to Mass each weekend

Exodus 20:8 - "Remember the sabbath day, and keep it holy."

Acts 2:42 - "They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers."

Hebrews 10:24-25 - "And let us consider how to provoke one another to love and good deeds, not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day approaching."

Luke 22:19 - "Then he took a loaf of bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it and gave it to them, saying, 'This is my body, which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me.'"

John 6:53-54 - "So Jesus said to them, 'Very truly, I tell you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, you have no life in you. Those who eat my flesh and drink my blood have eternal life, and I will raise them up on the last day.'"

Matthew 18:20 - "For where two or three are gathered in my name, I am there among them."

Psalms 122:1 - "I was glad when they said to me, 'Let us go to the house of the Lord!'"

Colossians 3:16 - "Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly; teach and admonish one another in all wisdom; and with gratitude in your hearts sing psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs to God."

Additional resources to learn more about God and the Catholic faith

- Check out the resource list available on www.frmerkley.com
- Catholic Answers: <https://www.catholic.com/>
- Word on Fire: <https://www.wordonfire.org/>
- Formed: <https://formed.org/>
- The Coming Home Network: <https://chnetwork.org/>
- Catholic Exchange: <https://catholicexchange.com/>
- Dynamic Catholic: <https://dynamiccatholic.com/>
- The Augustine Institute: <https://augustineinstitute.org/>
- Ascension Press: <https://ascensionpress.com/>
- EWTN: <https://www.ewtn.com/>
- The Catholic Company: <https://www.catholiccompany.com/>
- Busted Halo: <https://bustedhalo.com/>
- CatholicCulture.org: <https://www.catholicculture.org/>
- The Thomistic Institute: <https://thomisticinstitute.org/>
- Ignatius Press: <https://www.ignatius.com/>
- Catholic Education Resource Center (CERC): <https://www.catholiceducation.org/>