November is the month that we remember in a special way those who have gone before us. We pray for the dead in the hopes that they will be with God in His kingdom. Because of this, I thought that this would be an appropriate time to bring up the subject of Purgatory. Purgatory is not always very well understood, but I assure you there are reasons for why we believe what we believe, and the reasons are as follows:

A fundamental truth of the Christian faith is that we will not sin when we are in heaven. In fact, not only will we not sin when we are in heaven, we cannot even have the stain of sin upon us when entering God’s kingdom because nothing unclean can enter the kingdom of God. If God’s kingdom is perfect, then it necessarily follows that we need to be made perfect before we can enter His kingdom. But of course, the reality is that very few, if any of us are perfect when we leave this world. Therefore, between the sinfulness of this life, and the glorification that we will experience in heaven, we must be made pure. Between death and glory there is a purification. This is no way implies that Jesus’ suffering and death wasn’t good enough. Without the suffering, death and resurrection of Jesus, we could not enter into heaven no matter what. A soul in purgatory is guaranteed of making it into heaven, thanks to the suffering, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

The Catechism of the Catholic Church states: “All who die in God’s grace and friendship, but still imperfectly purified, are indeed assured of their eternal salvation; but after death they undergo purification, so as to achieve the holiness necessary to enter the joy of heaven. The Church gives the name Purgatory to this final purification of the elect, which is entirely different from the punishment of the damned” (CCC 1030-1).

The concept of a purification after death from sin and the consequences of sin can also be found in New Testament passages such as 1 Corinthians 3:11-15, and Matthew 5:25-26.

The doctrine of purgatory, or final purification, is not something that is relatively new. It has been a part of the true faith since even before the time of Christ. The Jews already believed it by the time Jesus came as evidenced by the Old Testament passage found in 2 Maccabees 12:41-46, as well as other pre-Christian Jewish works.

“Orthodox Jews to this day believe in the final purification, and for eleven months after the death of a loved one they pray a prayer called the Mourner’s Kaddish for their loved one’s purification. Jews, Catholics, and Eastern Orthodox have always historically proclaimed the reality of the final purification. It was not until the Protestant Reformers came in the 1500s that anyone denied this doctrine” (Catholic Answers, Inc. 1996).

If you think about it, it wouldn’t make sense to pray for someone who died if there is no purgatory. Because if there is no purgatory, then that means that the person is definitely either in heaven or in hell. Either way, the prayer isn’t going to do the person much good.

Some people think that the Catholic Church has this elaborate doctrine of purgatory worked out, but the truth of the matter is that there are only three things that are essential components of the doctrine: 1) that a purification after death exists, 2) that it involves some kind of pain or suffering, and 3) that the purification can be assisted by the prayers and offerings of the living to God. Other ideas, such that purgatory is a particular place in the afterlife or that it takes time to accomplish, are speculations rather than doctrines” (Catholic Answers, Inc. 1996). With these components of the doctrine of purgatory in mind, it necessarily follows that to pray for those who have died is very important. This is why we always pray for the dead at every Mass. Let us then remember all those who have gone before us and pray that they may be with God in His kingdom.

God Bless,

Fr. Paul Ballien
Vicar - Northwest Wayne Vicariate
**VETERAN’S DAY CELEBRATION**
All Saints Catholic School
48735 Warren Rd, Canton, MI 48187

We are excited to extend a heartfelt welcome to all veterans for our second annual Veterans’ Day celebration on **Monday, November 11, 2019**. We would be honored to have all parents, grandparents, aunts, uncles, special family friends, alumni, and community members who have served or currently serve our Armed Forces to take part in this special prayer service and recognition event. A light breakfast, donated by Leo’s Coney Island of Canton and Luca Pastry, will be served to veterans and those in the Armed Forces starting at 8:00 a.m., before the school-wide program starts at 9:00 a.m. The teachers and staff of All Saints Catholic School have planned a special prayer service and program that will acknowledge and recognize:

- the history of Armistice Day and the yellow ribbon
- the United States military branches
- those who have served and are actively serving our nation.


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**WOMEN’S ADVENT RETREAT**
St. Michael Parish
11441 Hubbard, Livonia, MI 48150

St. Michael Parish is hosting popular writer and speaker, Bonnie Engstrom for a Women’s Advent Retreat on Saturday, December 7th from 9a-2p. The cost is $20. As one of her talks, Bonnie will share the story of her son’s miracle approved for the beatification of Venerable Fulton Sheen. To register contact Patty Breen at pbreen@livoniastmichael.org or 734-237-5563.

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**CATHOLIC WOMEN’S SOFTBALL LEAGUE**
Ladies, looking for a women’s slow-pitch softball league to have fun with during the summer? Over 50 Softball, a Catholic League since 1983 is seeking additional women teams. We play on Wednesday evenings, May-July with players ranging from 30 to 50+ years. Look us up on www.ovcs50softball.com or call Patty Soter: 734-765-4777 or email: psoter@umich.edu. If you are ready for camaraderie, fellowship and friendly competition, seek us out by Feb. 1st.

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**TRANSFORMATIVE TUESDAYS** - Resurrection Parish
48765 Warren Rd, Canton, MI 48187

**Nov. 5th** - "**How to Keep Your Kids Catholic**" with John lawnkowski. John has been at Resurrection twice before. Once as St. Peter, explaining the Crucifixion and another time as St. Peter with St. Mary Magdalene. We all want our children to share our values and beliefs. This session will focus on concrete ways we can pass on our faith.

**Nov. 12th** - "**The Bread of Catholic Social Teaching**" with Maureen O’Reilly & Lelia Abass. Jesus message was always, always, always about how we treat one another. Maureen & Lelia will give us an in-depth look at how we should live our lives according to Jesus and Church Teaching.

**Nov. 19th** - "**Advent Family Activities**". This is a Generations of Faith Event for the Whole Family! It will have 10 stations throughout the Church for families to experience.

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Note: the December NWW Vicariate Issue will mainly feature the Advent Reconciliation Schedule for the vicariate parishes along with the vicar’s letter. Kindly, submit article requests for the January issue by December 15, 2019. All newsletter articles requests are subject to approval by the Vicar’s Office prior to publication.