

*Praying for the dead is a spiritual work of mercy...
to aid them in the mercy of God's final purification.*

All Souls Day, 2019

Dear Brothers and Sisters:

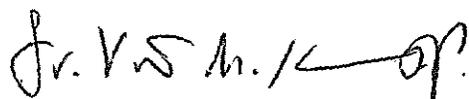
Upon my death, please remember me in prayer! In saying this, I am well aware that I have brought up two of the most unwelcome subjects of modern times: death and prayer for the dead.

Death is a forbidden topic in today's world. Yet, death is the moment that we, as Christians, prepare for our entire lives. This is not a morbid thought; but instead we see death as the longed-for moment of birth from this world into the Heavenly Jerusalem. We are born into that life for which we are truly created and for which we have been redeemed in the Blood of Christ. In the Holy Mass we pray: "[In heaven] we hope to enjoy forever the fullness of your glory, when you will wipe away every tear from our eyes. For seeing you, our God, as you are, we shall be like you for all the ages and praise you without end. (Eucharistic Prayer III, Masses for the Dead)" Through the Death of Christ, death itself is put to death on the cross and aids us along the way to our own resurrection from the dead.

That said, I do hope that I will be remembered in prayer after my death. This is because, while the Lord does call us to eternal life, if I am honest, I recognize that I may not be predisposed to receive that summons. Today, it is very common to canonize those who pass away and make All Souls Day simply an extension of All Saints Day. It is not. Rather, prayer for the dead as a spiritual work of mercy is an ancient tradition of the Church. The Holy Souls need our prayers to aid them in the mercy of God's final purgation and purification after death.

Let us join together to pray for our deceased loved ones who are counting on our prayers on their behalf. At the Shrine, we will pray for your family, friends, and loved ones throughout the month of November, the month of the dead. Please send the names of your loved ones so that we can place them on the altar of the Shrine for remembrance throughout the entire month. Let us pray for the Church being purified in purgatory, that they might become the Church triumphant in heaven, our destiny!

In Christ our Lord,



Very Rev. Vincent M. Kelber O.P.
Director