



# Campus Ministry Online

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## Celebrate Saints, Pray for Souls

Almighty and  
Everlasting God,  
who dost enkindle the  
flame of Thy love in  
the hearts of the  
saints,  
grant unto us the  
same faith and power  
of love;  
that, as we rejoice in  
their triumphs  
we may profit by their  
examples, through  
Jesus Christ our Lord.

*Eternal rest grant  
unto them, O  
Lord.*

*And let perpetual  
light shine upon  
them.*

*May they rest in  
peace. Amen.*

All Saints Day, the day on which Catholics celebrate all the saints, known and unknown, is a surprisingly old feast. It arose out of the Christian tradition of celebrating the martyrdom of saints on the anniversary of their martyrdom. When martyrdoms increased during the persecutions of the late Roman Empire, local dioceses instituted a common feast day in order to ensure that all martyrs, known and unknown, were properly honored.

The current date of November 1 was instituted by Pope Gregory III (731-741), when he consecrated a chapel to all the martyrs in St. Peter's Basilica in Rome and ordered an annual celebration. This celebration was originally confined to the diocese of Rome, but Pope Gregory IV (827-844) extended the feast to the entire Church and ordered it to be celebrated on November 1.

All Souls Day follows All Saints Day, and commemorates the faithful departed, i.e. those who die with God's grace and friendship. Catholics believe that not all those who die in God's grace are immediately ready for the Beatific vision, i.e. the reality and goodness of God and heaven, so they must be purified of "lesser faults," and the temporal effects of sin. The Catholic Church calls this purification of the elect, "purgatory." The Catholic teaching on Purgatory essentially requires belief in two realities: 1. that there will be a purification of believers prior to entering heaven and 2. that the prayers and masses of the faithful in some way benefit those in the state of purification.

As to the duration, place, and exact nature of this purification, the Church has no official dogma, although Saint Augustine and others used fire as a way to explain the nature of the purification. Many faithful Catholics, including Pope Benedict XVI, grant that Purgatory may be best thought of as an existential state, as opposed to a temporal place. In other words, because Purgatory is outside the confines of created time and space, it is not necessarily accurate to speak of a location or duration of Purgatory. Nonetheless, the prayers and Masses of the faithful do have an impact on the purification that the faithful are undergoing in Purgatory. As a more everyday explanation, many liken Purgatory to a place or state where one gets "cleaned up" before entering into the presence of Almighty God.

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## Know Your Faith

### **Communion of Saints:**

The unity in Christ of all the redeemed, those on earth and those who have died. The communion of saints is professed in the Apostles' Creed, where it has also been interpreted to refer to unity in the "holy things" *communio sanctorum*, especially the unity of faith and charity achieved through participation in the Eucharist.

### **Descent into Hell:**

An article in the Apostles' Creed referring to the victory over death and sin which Christ won by being "raised from the dead." Jesus, like all people, experienced death and in his soul joined the others in the realm of the dead, where he descended as savior, proclaiming the gospel to the spirits imprisoned there in order to free the just ones who had gone before him.

Help Me  
Thanksgiving Day Prayer

O God, when I have food,  
help me to remember the  
hungry;  
When I have work,  
help me to remember the  
jobless;  
When I have a home,  
help me to remember  
those who have no home  
at all;  
When I am without pain,  
help me to remember  
those who suffer,  
And remembering,  
help me to destroy my  
complacency;  
bestir my compassion,  
and be concerned enough  
to help;  
By word and deed,  
those who cry out for  
what we take for granted.  
Amen.

*These newsletters are a  
service of Mater Dei  
Campus Ministry in an  
attempt to:*

1. *Share information about  
our Catholic faith to  
keep our community  
aware of some of the  
teachings of our  
tradition.*
2. *Update our community  
of changes in  
understandings and  
rituals*
3. *Assist parents with the  
faith formation of their  
youth.*
4. *Provide links to sites  
with helpful information  
on faith and parenting.*

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## Give thanks

Soon, we Americans will once again gather around tables of food with family and friends to recall the bountiful blessings that God has freely bestowed on us and our country. *"Give thanks to the Lord, for He is good; for His loving kindness is everlasting"* (Psalm 118:1).

Thanksgiving Day in America commemorates the celebratory meal of thanksgiving that the early 17th century settlers enjoyed with the Americans who were native to the region that became known as Plymouth, Massachusetts.

Although mature Christians know that every day of their lives is a gift from God, Who is worthy of thanks, and that each passing day provides them with the opportunity to thank Him with grateful hearts, this coming Thanksgiving celebration can be an opportunity for Christians everywhere to offer God a special *"sacrifice of thanksgiving"* (Psalm 116:17). They can best accomplish this by concentrating on the things for which they have to be thankful.

*"In everything give thanks; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus"* (1 Thessalonians 5:18). These could include families; health and well being; jobs and other sources of income; interests; and avocations that keep Christians spiritually and mentally alive; roofs over their heads, and the food on their tables.

In addition, all people who claim residency in America—whether permanent or temporary—need to be thankful that they live in this country. This is a country where when in the aftermath of a devastating terrorist attack upon our security and free democratic way of life, God's comfort and guidance was sought, as our nation pulled together and turned to Him.

Most Christians readily admit that their focus this holiday should be on giving thanks for their many blessings, for remembering time-honored customs and traditions, and for enjoying the fruits of the earth.

Try something different this Thanksgiving. Begin by praising God for His blessings first—before television, football, relatives, or turkey. Then after God has received His praise and honor, the remainder of the day can be set aside for family, fellowship, and fun with His blessings. In so doing, His peace will be upon the celebration from the beginning.

In essence, praising Him and giving Him thanks should be a natural part of our faith, not just an annual celebration—and not so much an action as it is an attitude brought about by the continual awareness that all of life is a gift from God.

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## Retreat Opportunities

The next Quest retreat will be held at St. Teresa in Belleville on November 5 & 6. Applications are available in Campus Ministry.

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## Helpful Websites

U.S.Conference of Catholic Bishops	<a href="http://www.usccb.org">www.usccb.org</a>
Center for Parent/Youth Understanding	<a href="http://www.cpyu.org">www.cpyu.org</a>
Diocese of Belleville	<a href="http://www.diobelle.org">www.diobelle.org</a>
TEC Retreats	<a href="mailto:chairperson@bellevilletec.com">chairperson@bellevilletec.com</a>
Quest Retreats	washed_up_dj@yahoo.com

