

Praying for the Dead

The Tradition of the Church

From our earliest days, Christians have prayed for their dead. It is a tradition which stretches back into the Old Testament:

- ✦ Therefore, Judas Maccabeus made atonement for the dead, that they might be delivered from their sin. [2 Macc. 12 : 46]

Today, Church teaching encourages the practice of honouring and praying for the dead.

- ✦ And so, from the beginning, the Church has honoured the memory of the dead and offered prayers in intercession for them, above all in the Eucharistic sacrifice. [Catechism of the Catholic Church]

November is the month when the Church particularly encourages this practice, beginning, as it does, with the Feast of All Saints and the Commemoration of the Faithful Departed [All Souls].

Parish Practice

It has become our custom and practice, in the parish of Our Lady & St. Joseph, to remember, honour and pray for our dead in several ways.

- ✦ Late in October each year, people are asked for the names of anyone they know who has died and whom they would like to be prayed for.
- ✦ From these names [and adding them to names gathered over the years], a Book of Remembrance is compiled and this book is placed before the altar in church so that all those named are remembered, honoured and prayed for.
- ✦ From our records of funerals and from back-copies of the parish newsletter for the past year, a list is also compiled of those who have died in the last twelve months. These people will have a special place in the prayers of the parish during November and, in particular, at our **Liturgy of Prayerful Remembrance held annually on Remembrance Sunday at 3.30 p.m. in Our Lady & St. Joseph's church.**

Liturgy of Prayerful Remembrance

This is an opportunity for the **whole parish community** to come together to remember, honour and pray for **all those who have died**. It is an occasion when we remember, honour and pray especially for those who have died in the preceding twelve months. On this occasion, they will be remembered by name. It is also an occasion when the parish community invites those who have been bereaved in the last twelve months to join us in praying for their loved ones.