

Fr. Martin's Reflection – October 30, 2022

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

The month of November has always been traditionally the month we remember all our departed loved ones. I know from speaking to many of you who have been bereaved that you think of your loved one every day, but in November, the whole Church joins you in your grief and surrounds you with a blanket of prayer, love, and support. Grief comes in many shapes and forms, it can be very obvious at times, especially in the early days of bereavement. But as the days run into weeks and months, we become more conscious of how others seemingly have moved on and we feel the need to suppress our grief or hide it. This can cause stress and anxiety which can lead to depression and physical ill health. The emotion we feel during bereavement is the body's way of letting us know that something is wrong, our body is hurting, and that hurt needs healing. The pain of bereavement should not be ignored or suppressed. Often the best medicine for the pain of bereavement is talking. Find a friend that you can visit often and talk about your loved one, someone who is a willing listener, someone who encourages you to tell your story over and over again until you begin to smile more and cry less through the memories. You may feel finding someone like this is difficult, and it can be, but there is one who is always willing to listen, even if you are angry at him, Jesus.

Jesus has no problem with anger, he faced it from Martha and Mary when their brother died, "If you had of been here my brother would not have died." Jesus let Martha and Mary say what they needed to say, and then comforted them, reassuring them that he was the resurrection. Go to Jesus, tell him how you are feeling, not just once, but every day. Jesus always wants to hear from us and is always waiting for us, because Jesus simply loves us. Our first reading from the book of Wisdom tells us, "For you love all things that are and loathe nothing that you have made." You were made by God, and so was the one you grieve for – they are with God, and so shall we be, all we need to do is believe in the promise Jesus made to us, "I am the resurrection and the life; whoever believes in me, even if they die, will live, and everyone who lives and believes in me will never die. (Jn 11:25-26)

November 1 - The Solemnity of All Saints.

This is a Holy Day of obligation. It is an opportunity for us to stop and pause and think of the ordinary people, like ourselves, who became saints. Some were martyred for their faith, some lived their faith by caring for others, some helped bring others to the faith, but the most important factor in all this was they were ordinary human beings like you and me, and if they can live saintly lives so can we.

November 2 All Souls Day

Today is not a holy day of obligation, but we should attend mass and remember all our departed loved ones. If we don't have the opportunity to attend mass, we should come to the church for private prayer. The Chapel of Saints at St. Mary Church, Bordentown is open from 6:30am – 7pm every day. Let us remember all our loved ones.

Listen kindly to our prayers, O Lord, and, as our faith in your Son, raised from the dead, is deepened, so may our hope of resurrection for your departed servants also find new strength. Amen

Fr. Martin