

ALL SOULS' DAY 2015
HOMILY – SAINT JOSEPH PARISH
FATHER CRAIG LOONEY
1 THESSALONIANS 4.13 ST JOHN 14.1



All Saints' Day and All Souls' Day are inextricably linked. Yesterday we celebrated the Feast of All Saints. We acknowledged the Communion of Saints...known and unknown...living and deceased...to which we are intimately connected.

The Saints of God who lived long ago worked and fought and lived and died for the Lord they loved and knew. And we who are the Saints of God who live today want to be like them too...and learn by their lives and work.

In the Prayer for the Church said at every Mass we acknowledge in a general way the role all of the Saints of God who have died believing in Jesus have had on our lives. We ask God that they may continue to grow in his love and service, and that we will be given his grace to follow their examples.

Tonight we personalize that prayer by remembering and thanking God for the lives of our parents, husbands, wives, brothers, sisters, aunts, uncles, cousins, teachers, doctors, nurses, priests, nuns and friends who were so much a part of our lives and have helped shape us into who we are.

We thank God for all of those people who have impacted our lives. And we remember the powerful words of Saint Paul in his Letter to the Thessalonians...our sadness at the deaths of our family and friends is tempered by the hope we have...death does not mean extinction...we know the truth about those who have died believing in Jesus...we are people of hope.

All Souls' Day is a time for remembering our loved ones. In Mexico it is a National Holiday. *El Día de los Muertos...The Day of the Dead...*is celebrated at the cemetery with food and song. People travel great distances to visit the graves of their relatives...to reminisce...and to make certain their children learn from their traditions...and not forget the love our friends and relatives who have died transcends death and remains alive in our hearts.

All Souls' Day reminds us that death does not separate us from God's love or those we love, because we are forever connected in the

mystical fellowship called the Communion of Saints. It is fitting and proper we set a day aside to give thanks to God for all of the Faithful Departed...known and unknown. We pray that they may Rest in Peace.

Jesus tells us not to be worried or upset about those who have died. He tells us he has gone to make room in his Father's house for all who have died believing in him. This is our hope and our strength, and it is Jesus' explicit promise...he has gone to make room for us too.

Tonight we remember all of the Faithful Departed...especially our own friends and family...(NN)...

...May the Angels lead them into Paradise; and the Martyrs receive them at your coming and bring them into the holy city Jerusalem. May the choirs of Angels receive them, and may they, with Lazarus once poor, have eternal rest.

