

**All Souls Day
November 2, 2019**

“For this is the will of my Father, that everyone who sees the Son and believes in him may have eternal life, and I shall raise him on the last day.” These words of our Lord Jesus Christ are a pretty good summary of our faith. We put our hope in the Lord who came to save us. But there is something else here that is so important as we celebrate this Commemoration of All Souls. Today is about family.

It is Jesus, the Son, who received from God, the Father, his mission to “not lose anything of what he gave him”. We have been entrusted by the Father to the Son. This is our cause for hope! And as St. Paul said: “Hope does not disappoint, because the love of God has been poured out into our hearts through the Holy Spirit that has been given to us” (Rom). So here we are, dear brothers and sisters, people called by the Father, by the mission of the Son, and in the loving power of the Holy Spirit, to come home. We are called to come to the house of the Father. In Christ Jesus, by the power and working of the Holy Spirit, we are family.

This is why our hope is so strong on this All Souls Day. Our loved ones who have gone before us are “in the hand of God” (Wis). They are also his family, and God remains faithful to his family. He “will not reject anyone who comes to him” (John). We commemorate the lives of the faithful departed, with faith and hope in the Lord who has made us all his own family.

May we turn to the words of our Holy Father, Pope Francis, for further insight to our commemoration. Last year on this day he said: “Today is a day to commemorate the past, a day to remember those

who have walked before us, who have also accompanied us, have given us life. To remember, to commemorate. Remembrance is what makes a people strong, because it feels rooted in a journey, rooted in a history, rooted in a people. Remembrance helps us understand that we are not alone, we are a people: a people with a history, with a past, with a life. Remembering so many who have shared a journey with us... It is not easy to remember. We often struggle to turn our thoughts back to what has happened in my life, in my family, in my people.... But today is a day of remembrance, the remembrance that takes us to the roots: to my roots, to the roots of my people” (2 Nov 2018).

Our commemoration is not just nostalgia. We are here to celebrate our family’s story, our roots. Those memories you share with each other are important, as they speak to the mission of Christ alive in the heart of his people. May we remember with joy those moments in the lives of those who have passed through the gates of death, even if we mourn their loss.

We also know that not all memories are happy memories, and that no family is perfect. I ask you to take a moment to recall any pain that still separates your heart from someone in your life who has passed away. Today is a day to forgive, or to ask for forgiveness. Today is a day for reconciliation. Because we are family.

May God bless us all in our commemoration. Standing in communion with those here on earth, and all those who have gone before us, may we rejoice in the Lord in whom we put our hope. Out of his love for us, may all of us who believe in him be united as family in eternal life.