

November 2, 2025

Commemoration of All the Faithful Departed (Feast of All Souls)

John 6:37-40

Note: This feast does not have particular readings assigned to it. For pastoral reasons, any of the readings for Masses for the Dead may be chosen. Therefore, the gospel used in any particular situation may be different from this frequently-chosen selection.

Jesus said to the crowd: "Everything that the Father gives me will come to me, and I will not reject anyone who comes to me, because I came down from heaven not to do my own will but the will of the one who sent me. And this is the will of the one who sent me, that I should not lose anything of what he gave me, but that I should raise it on the last day. 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."

Background:

The Commemoration of the Faithful Departed on this Sunday takes the place of the Celebration of Mass for the 31st Sunday in Ordinary Time and those readings. The gospel for the 31st Sunday would have been Luke 19:1-10 that includes the story of Zacchaeus, the tax collector who climbs a tree to be able to see Jesus as he passes. While the gospel for the feast is appropriate for its celebration, it is very different from the text for the 31st Sunday.

In the gospel for the feast Jesus tells the crowd:

1. That the purpose of his coming is to do the will of the Father.
2. That the will of the Father is that He not lose anything of those given to him.
3. That the Father desire that anyone who sees and believes in him will have eternal life.

There is a sense here that the Father has given Jesus his relationship with his disciples, and that he will protect that relationship. In describing himself as the good shepherd, Jesus said, "My sheep hear my voice; I know them, and they follow me. I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish. No can take them out of my hands." (John 10:27-28) During Jesus' final prayer to the Father, Jesus prayed: "When I was with them I protected them in your name that you gave me, and I guarded them, and none of them was lost except the son of destruction, in order that the scripture might be fulfilled. (John 17:12) Jesus accepts the responsibility given him by the Father and is faithful to that responsibility to the very end of his life. Therefore, Paul can say in his letter to the Romans, "God proves his love for us in that while we were still sinners Christ died for us." In recognizing that we are sinners, the emphasis is not on us or our faith as disciples, but rather on God's goodness and desire.

Reflection Questions:

1. Does this feast have any special meaning for you this year?
2. Do the feast of All Saints and the feast of All Souls have different significances for you?
3. How does the sense that the Father has given to Jesus the care of the disciples speak to you?
4. How does the sense that part of Jesus' mission on earth is to care for those the Father has entrusted to Him speak to you?
5. What does this gospel suggest to you about your desire to be in relationship to God?
6. Do you have a sense that God is protecting you? How do you experience that? How are you responding?
7. Do you as disciple also live with a sense of responsibility to protect others?
8. In the gospel text Jesus says, "And this is the will of the one who sent me, that I should not lose anything of what he gave me..." Please take some time to talk with Jesus about this desire of his, or anywhere else you have touched by this gospel and/or its feast.

The gospel background and reflection questions are written by Fr. Paul Gallagher, OFM. They are edited by Sister Anne Marie Lom, OSF and Joe Thiel. The excerpts from the Sunday readings are prepared by Joe Thiel. To be added to the distribution list, send your name and email address to annemarie.lom@gmail.com

Our Gospel Reflections are hosted by the Franciscan Sisters of Christian Charity. Their homepage is <https://fscs-calledtobe.org/>. One link there is labeled Franciscan Gospel Reflections. A click on the icon will take you to the Gospel reflections for the upcoming Sunday. By following this link, you will be able to blog or comment on the reflection questions. The material will be posted on Fridays and will be available until the following Friday when the new material is posted.

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Excerpts from the Readings for November 2, 2025, Commemoration of All the Faithful Departed (All Souls) A selection of the readings that may be chosen for this day.

The souls of the just are in the hand of God, and no torment shall touch them.
They seemed, in the view of the foolish, to be dead; and their passing away was thought an affliction and their going forth from us, utter destruction. But they are in peace.
For if before men, indeed, they be punished, yet is their hope full of immortality; chastised a little, they shall be greatly blessed, because God tried them and found them worthy of himself.
As gold in the furnace, he proved them, and as sacrificial offerings he took them to himself.
In the time of their visitation they shall shine, and shall dart about as sparks through stubble;
they shall judge nations and rule over peoples, and the Lord shall be their King forever.
Those who trust in him shall understand truth, and the faithful shall abide with him in love:
because grace and mercy are with his holy ones, and his care is with his elect.

The Lord is my shepherd; there is nothing I shall want.
In verdant pastures he gives me repose; beside restful waters he leads me; he refreshes my soul.
He guides me in right paths for his name's sake. Even though I walk in the dark valley
I fear no evil; for you are at my side with your rod and your staff that give me courage.
You spread the table before me in the sight of my foes; You anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows.
Only goodness and kindness follow me all the days of my life;
and I shall dwell in the house of the Lord for years to come.

Brothers and sisters: Hope does not disappoint, because the love of God has been poured out into our hearts through the Holy Spirit who has been given to us.
For Christ, while we were still helpless, died at the appointed time for the ungodly.
Indeed, only with difficulty does one die for a just person, though perhaps for a good person one might even find courage to die. But God proves his love for us in that while we were still sinners Christ died for us. How much more then, since we are now justified by his Blood, will we be saved through him from the wrath.
Indeed, if, while we were enemies, we were reconciled to God through the death of his Son, how much more, once reconciled, will we be saved by his life. Not only that, but we also boast of God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received reconciliation.

Or:

Brothers and sisters: Are you unaware that we who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? We were indeed buried with him through baptism into death, so that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might live in newness of life. For if we have grown into union with him through a death like his, we shall also be united with him in the resurrection.

We know that our old self was crucified with him, so that our sinful body might be done away with, that we might no longer be in slavery to sin. For a dead person has been absolved from sin.

If, then, we have died with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with him.

We know that Christ, raised from the dead, dies no more; death no longer has power over him.

Jesus said to the crowds: "Everything that the Father gives me will come to me, and I will not reject anyone who comes to me, because I came down from heaven not to do my own will but the will of the one who sent me. And this is the will of the one who sent me, that I should not lose anything of what he gave me, but that I should raise it on the last day. 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."

Excerpts from Wisdom 3:1-9; Psalm 23:1-6; Romans 5:5-11; Romans 6:3-9; and John 6:37-40

Friends,

Here are the gospel background and reflection questions for November 2nd, the commemoration of the Faithful Departed (All Souls), as prepared by Franciscan spiritual director Fr. Paul Gallagher. On this feast, there are multiple options for each of the readings. Representative options that are frequently used are selected here for this week's commentary. In one gospel option from John, Jesus says to the crowds, "Everything the Father gives me will come to me, and I will not reject anyone who comes to me. I came not to do my own will but the will of the one who sent me. And this is the will of my Father, that I should not lose anything of what he gave me, but that everyone who sees the Son and believes in him may have eternal life, and I shall raise him on the last day."

The other readings also have references to souls being in the hands of God, how good it is in his presence, and death leading to new life. In the first reading from Wisdom, "The souls of the just are in the hand of God, and no torment shall touch them; they are in peace. They shall be greatly blessed, because God found them worthy of himself. The faithful shall abide with him in love." Psalm 23 proclaims, "The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want. Beside restful waters he leads me; he refreshes my soul. Goodness and kindness follow me all the days of my life; I shall dwell in the house of the Lord for years to come." In the second reading, Paul writes to the Romans, "God proves his love for us in that while we were still sinners Christ died for us. We are saved through him. Just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might live in newness of life. If we have died with Christ, we shall also live with him."

In an alternative set of readings, the gospel can be from Luke, chapter 7, in this year C in the liturgical cycle, which focuses on Luke. In this gospel, Jesus approaches the city of Nain, where a man who has died, the only son of a widow, is being carried out. Jesus has pity for the woman, touches the coffin, and says, "Young man, arise." The dead man sits up. and Jesus returns him to his mother. An alternative first reading is from Isaiah 25, where "On this mountain the Lord of hosts will provide for all peoples a feast of rich food and choice wines. He will destroy death forever, and will wipe away the tears from all faces." Alternative Psalm 25 proclaims, "To you, O Lord, I lift up my soul. Put an end to my affliction and suffering, and take away all my sins. Preserve my soul and rescue me." In the alternative second reading, Paul writes to the Romans in chapter 8, "You who are led by the Spirit of God are children of God. You received a spirit of adoption. The Spirit itself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God, and joint heirs with Christ, if only we suffer with him. The sufferings of this present time are as nothing compared with the glory to be revealed for us. Creation awaits with eager expectation the revelation of the children of God."

Joe
> i < May the Word light your way each day!