



DIOCESE OF STOCKTON

Message from Bishop Myron Cotta

November 2018

My Dear People of God,

Beginning with the first day of November, our attention is drawn to our relationship with the Church Triumphant, the Saints. Every time we proclaim our faith at Mass, as we pray the Creed, we proclaim our belief in the “communion of saints.” The lives of the Saints serve as models for us. Their example of a Christ-centered life can assist us in the sanctification of our daily lives here on earth. We are reminded that November 1 is a special day in the liturgical calendar of the Church. For all of us, it is a Holy Day of Obligation. It is a day for us to attend Mass and ask special intercession of our patron saints.

This month offers a great opportunity for us to be better acquainted with the lives of the Saints. Reading about the life of the Saints makes for good spiritual reading during the month of November. It offers an opportunity to reflect upon those who lived faithful lives committed to Christ and the Church. Throughout the history of the Church, many of these “holy ones” gave up their lives as they were martyred, “witnessed,” to Jesus and his Gospel. Over the centuries the blood of the martyrs-saints has strengthened the Church to continue to be the “sanctuary of salvation”. During this month, let us pray for a greater awareness of the need for ongoing conversion and personal sanctification in our lives.

On November 2, we remember and pray for all those who have died in the state of grace and friendship with God. They, “the faithful departed,” are those who await the “embrace of Heaven” through the purification of Christ’s Divine Mercy. The Church refers to this state, in regard to the “poor souls,” as Purgatory.

We are called in a special way, during the month of November, to offer prayers for the Souls in Purgatory. During this time many people visit the local cemeteries to pray at the graves of their loved ones as they come to remember and honor them.

Another popular tradition is to have the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass offered for those who have died. It is truly the most precious of all spiritual works of mercy that can be offered for the faithful departed.

As we reflect upon our preparation for Heaven, let us commit ourselves, during this month, to grow in holiness and to pray for the poor souls that have gone before us, may they soon be with God in Heaven. May the Blessed Virgin Mary, Queen of Saints and Mother of all the Faithful Departed, intercede for us.

Eternal Rest grant unto them O Lord. May their souls and the souls of all the faithful departed, through the mercy of God, Rest In Peace.

In the Peace of Christ,
Bishop Cotta