

ALL SOUL'S DAY

All Soul's Day, sometimes called the Day of the Dead, occurs this Friday. It is always on Nov. 2, unless that day is a Sunday, when it would be held on Nov. 3. It is a day of remembrance for friends and loved ones who have passed away. It is associated with the three days of Allhallowtide, including All Saints' Day (1 November) and its vigil, Halloween (31 October).

It derives from the Pagan belief that the souls of the dead would return for a meal with the family. Candles in the window would guide the souls home and another place setting was set at the table. Children would come through the village asking for food to be symbolically offered to the dead, and it would then be donated to feed the hungry.

The day follows All Saints' Day to shift the focus from those already in heaven to those who are still in purgatory. The living pray on behalf of those who are members of the Church waiting to be cleansed of their sins so that their souls may be received in heaven.

The traditions of the feast of All Souls began independently of the Feast of All Saints. The feast of All Souls owes its beginning to the 7th century monks who decided to offer the Mass on the day after Pentecost for their deceased community members. In the late 10th century, the Benedictine Monastery in Cluny chose to move their Mass for the dead to Nov. 2 after the Feast of all Saints. The custom spread and in the 13th century, Rome added the feast to the calendar for the entire Church.

Judy Pearson

All Souls' Day November 2

*J*esus, dear Savior,
on this day we prayerfully remember
all our loved ones who have died.
Please give them comfort and hope
and may they be at peace,
knowing that they will
rest in God's arms eternally.
Thank You for our memories of them
and for the good times we shared.
We ask You, please,
through their intercession,
to deepen our faith,
strengthen our hope
and increase our love
that we, too, may someday
stand before You,
ready to enter Your
Holy Kingdom.

Amen.

