

November and Remember

As the earth around us goes dormant at this time of year {in the northern hemisphere}, the prayer of the Church turns in a special way to those members of our community of faith who have died. Beginning with our celebration of those whom we believe to be in heaven on All Saints Day, November 1, and those we believe are still somehow “on their way” to heaven on All Souls Day, November 2, throughout the month of November we particularly remember those who have gone before us in faith. From the earliest days of the Church, Christians have prayed for the dead, both for whatever blessing and prayer support they may still need from us, and in gratitude for the gift and blessing they were – and remain – for us. Our prayer for the dead is also an expression of our belief in the Communion of the Saints, the community and unity of all who live and believe in Jesus Christ. In St. Paul’s Letter to the Romans he writes of this where he says: *None of us lives for oneself, and no one dies for oneself. For if we live, we live for the Lord, and if we die, we die for the Lord; so then, whether we live or die, we are the Lord's. Christ died and came to life, that he might be Lord of both the dead and the living. {14:8}* A common misunderstanding about our Catholic practice of praying for the dead is that we somehow pray *to* them, rather than *for* or *about* them. All Christian prayer is directed to God alone, in the name of Jesus Christ, through the Holy Spirit, never to anyone or anything else, even the saints. Just as we ask one another to pray for us, so too we can continue to ask the prayer support, the intercession, of our friends and family who have died.

Please let us know what else about our faith tradition you'd like to find out more about. Contact our Council for Catechesis at tkautza@saintmaryhc.org.