

# Family Faith Formation Opportunities

## All Saints Day and All Souls Day

With all hustle and bustle of October, it is easy to forget that Catholics celebrate All Saints' Day on November 1st followed by All Souls Day on November 2nd.

All Saints Day, also known as Hallowmas, Solemnity of All Saints, All Hallows Day or Feast of All Saints, is the day the Catholic Church honors all Christian Saints; those who are believed to have ascended to heaven. This is considered a Holy Day of Obligation which means that Catholics attend church on that day, similar to when they go to Sunday mass. The November 1 date was established when Pope Gregory III dedicated a chapel in St. Peter's Basilica in Rome to all the Saints.



At St. Peter's School, All Saints Day is not only celebrated with a school wide mass but also a very important tradition. That's because as part of our 4th grade curriculum, each student is asked to choose a saint to research. Then on All Saints Day, the students are asked to dress in a costume to represent their saint and lead the school into Mass. Following the mass, the 4th grade students go to parish hall and create a Living Saints Museum where visitors are welcome to listen to various information/highlights of the saints life.

Following All Saints Day is All Souls Day, a day set aside for honoring all those who have died and are "being purified on their way to heaven". All Souls Day is usually a day of prayer for deceased souls. Many visit cemeteries where their loved ones are buried or offer candles. Churches remember the deceased members of their community. Around the world, different cultures celebrate this day in different ways:

- Spain - many celebrate by not only visiting graves of their loved ones, but also bringing a special traditional pastry called Huesos de Santo (Bones of the Holy).
- Poland - this day is celebrated as a quiet and solemn day by lighting thousands of candles across towns and cities.
- Mexico - known for their celebrations for El Dia de los Muertos or Day of the Dead. Mexicans visit their loved ones and relatives, make wreaths, crosses of real or paper flowers to place on the graves. This two-day celebration is full of parades and lots of food and drinks, especially the favorites of their loved ones.

So as we celebrate All Saints Day on November 1, come join the school community at the 8:30am mass. Then take a moment to celebrate the lives of saints by learning about them. Then, on November 2 (All Souls Day), make time to pray for your family and friends who have passed away.

*"Eternal Rest, grant unto them O Lord, and let perpetual light shine upon them. May the souls of the faithful departed, through the mercy of God, rest in peace. Amen"*