

All Souls Day Celebration

All Souls Day is not a Holy Day of Obligation. However, “if you aren’t in the habit of hanging out in cemeteries and praying for the dead with your kids, well, you’re missing out. And so are your kids. And so are the dead” (Tierney 301).

If you live close to the cemetery where family and friends are buried, then plan to visit them on November 2. Bring flowers to lay on their graves, and offer a prayer in remembrance of them.

If your home is far from where departed family and friends have been laid to rest, you can still visit a local cemetery. Bring flowers and lay one on each grave that you pass. Then say the prayer for eternal rest.

Eternal rest grant to 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.

Wherever you live, you can still honor family members and friends who have passed on in an at home celebration. Place photos of these people on your prayer table, or if pictures are not available, write their names decoratively on small slips of paper instead. Alternatively, use a permanent marker to write their names on a large glass votive candle. Consider leaving this votive, or any candle, lit at the prayer table as long as you are at home and awake. Pray especially for these loved ones on this day, and remember them in story. This helps children who may not have had the opportunity to know these people in life to still know of their lives. It is a precious gift for children to understand who and where they came from, and these stories will be treasured for years to come.

After All Souls Day, place the photos in an album. You might even label who is in each photo. Children can continue to look at the pictures the rest of the year, remember the people, and pray for them.

Tierney, Kendra. *The Catholic All Year Compendium Liturgical Living for Real Life*. Ignatius Press, 2018.