



OCTOBER 28, 2012 – TWENTY-SECOND SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

ALL SAINTS' DAY / ALL FAITHFUL DEPARTED

Each year on November 1, the Episcopal Church celebrates All Saints' Day. On the following day, November 2, the church celebrates the Commemoration of All Faithful Departed.

What is the difference between these two observances?

“In the New Testament, the word ‘saints’ is used to describe the entire membership of the Christian community,” explains *Holy Women, Holy Men* (Church Publishing, 2010). “From very early times, however, the word ‘saint’ came to be applied primarily to persons of heroic sanctity.”

So, technically, All Saints' Day, November 1, includes all deceased Christians; however, historically, there has been a strong inclination to remember and honor our personal loved ones on a separate day.

In the Catholic Church this remembrance on the day after All Saints' Day is called All Souls' Day, when the bereaved have the opportunity to offer prayers and masses for loved ones who have died. However, this practice was rejected by many Protestant reformers because the theology behind the observance was associated with the medieval doctrine of Purgatory along with the practice of paying for masses to be said for the dead to assist their souls into heaven.

At the time of the English Reformation in the mid 16th century, All Souls' Day was integrated into the celebration of All Saints' Day in the Church of England. But by the 19th century, some parishes influenced by the Anglo Catholic Revival reinstated the observance of All Souls' Day on November 2. The 1979 Book of Common Prayer officially restored the observance in the Episcopal Church, renaming it the Commemoration of All Faithful Departed.



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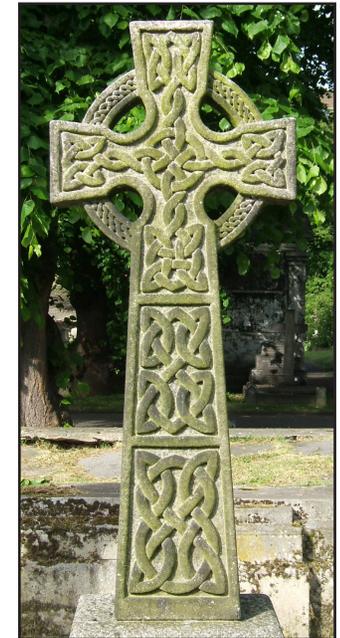
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As *Holy Women, Holy Men* notes, although the observance had been eliminated for hundreds of years, “a renewed understanding of its meaning has led to a widespread acceptance of this commemoration among Anglicans, and to its inclusion as an optional observance in the calendar of the Episcopal Church.”

Collect for All Saint’s Day (November 1)

Almighty God, you have knit together your elect in one communion and fellowship in the mystical body of your Son Christ our Lord: Give us grace so to follow your blessed saints in all virtuous and godly living, that we may come to those ineffable joys that you have prepared for those who truly love you; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who with you and the Holy Spirit lives and reigns, one God, in glory everlasting. Amen.

(Book of Common Prayer, p. 245)

Collect for All Faithful Departed (November 2)

O God, the Maker and Redeemer of all believers: Grant to the faithful departed the unsearchable benefits of the passion of your Son; that on the day of his appearing they may be manifested as your children; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, One God, now and for ever. Amen.

(*Holy Women, Holy Men*, p. 665)



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