November 2nd: The Commemoration of All the Faithful Departed

Gospel text (*Lk* 23:33.39-43): When they came to the place called the Skull, they crucified him and the criminals there, one on his right, the other on his left. Now one of the criminals hanging there reviled Jesus, saying, “Are you not the Messiah? Save yourself and us.” The other, however, rebuking him, said in reply, “Have you no fear of God, for you are subject to the same condemnation? (...) Then he said, “Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom.” He replied to him, “Amen, I say to you, today you will be with me in Paradise.”

Commemoration of All Souls

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(Città del Vaticano, Vatican)

Today, in order that the white garment received in Baptism may be purified of every speck and every stain, the community of believers offers the Eucharistic Sacrifice and other prayers of suffrage for those whose death has called to pass from time to eternity. Praying for the dead is a noble practice that implies belief in the resurrection of the dead in accordance with what has been revealed to us by Sacred Scripture.

The month of November draws its special spiritual tone from the two days with which it opens: yesterday, the Solemnity of All Saints, and today, the Commemoration of all the faithful departed. The mystery of the Communion of Saints illuminates this month and the whole of the last part of the liturgical year in particular directing our meditation to the earthly destiny of man in the light of Christ’s Passover.

—The great family of the Church finds in these days a time of grace, which we live by gathering closely around the Lord and offering His redeeming Sacrifice for the repose of the deceased faithful.