

FERIA DAYS

THE COMPLETE GUIDE

Keeping Hallowtide

The three days of Hallowtide: what the Church does on each of them, and what can be kept at home.

01 † ALL HALLOWS' EVE

02 † ALL SAINTS

03 † ALL SOULS

MODERN ANIMAL × BEZAL STUDIO



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Three one-page feast planners come with this guide as separate sheets. Print them, fill them in, and keep them at hand on the day.

THE FOUR LAST THINGS

Death. That it is certain, and that the hour is not disclosed.

Judgment. That an account is given, and given by each person alone.

Heaven. That it is the ordinary end of a Christian life.

Hell. That it is real, and that nobody arrives there by accident.

THE THREE DAYS

01 † All Hallows' Eve. Laugh at death.

02 † All Saints. Ask the saints.

03 † All Souls. Pray for the souls.

Introduction

Death, judgment, heaven, hell. The Church sets the four last things in front of her people once a year, at the end of October, and she does it by handing them three days to keep. The thirty-first takes up damnation, and the fact that the devil has already been beaten. The first of November takes up heaven, and how ordinary it is to end there. The second takes up the souls who are on their way and can do nothing at all for themselves.

Almost everything the world still does on the first of those days was made by Catholics for that purpose. The lantern in the window began as a turnip carrying a coal, cut for a man the story says heaven and hell both refused. The costume came out of the Danse Macabre, painted along charnel-house walls after the Black Death and acted in the street by people who had watched a third of Europe die. The knock at the door, and the sweets handed over at it, began with the poor going house to house and offering prayers for a household's dead in exchange for a cake. Each was made to say something exact about dying, and each outlasted the saying of it.

None of it is decoration. The faith is incarnational — God took flesh, and grace has come through matter ever since, in water, bread, wine, oil and wax — and the customs of a Catholic year work on that principle at a lower level. Nobody claims a soul cake confers grace. What a kept custom does is form the person keeping it, through the senses, over years, which is how most people have learned most of what stayed with them.

The direction of prayer turns twice across the three days, and the turns carry the teaching. On the thirty-first the mockery is aimed at the devil and at death, both of them already defeated, and never at the dead. On the first you ask the saints to pray for you, which they are able to do. On the second you pray for the holy souls, because they are not: a soul being purified cannot act on its own behalf and cannot ask, and everything that reaches it comes from the living.

What follows is one chapter for each day — what the Church does and what she offers, what to cook and what to pour, what to read aloud, what to do with the people in the house, what to pray, and what the week's indulgences require of the person who wants to gain them. The material is old. A good deal of it takes ten minutes, and none of it asks for a different household than the one already standing in the kitchen.

How to use this

READ AHEAD

Each chapter is written to be read before its day rather than on it, because most of what it asks for has to be arranged in advance: a Mass time, a confession, a loaf that wants two days on the counter, a name written down while the person who remembers it is still in the room. Read all three before the thirty-first, then use the planners to settle what is actually being done.

PRINT IT

This is made to be printed and it is meant to end up in a kitchen with something spilled on it. The three feast planners are one page each and are the part to keep at hand on the day itself.

THE RECIPES

One to a chapter, given in full, and each proper to its own feast rather than a seasonal dish borrowed for it. The menus around them are lists and not instructions.

THE INDULGENCES

Set out in the second and third chapters with their conditions stated plainly, because the conditions decide whether what was done counts as it was meant to. Nothing available across these days can be kept for oneself. All of it is for the dead.

Feria Days makes apparel and objects for the liturgical year, built out of one season at a time. *Days of the Dead* is the first collection, for the three days this guide is about.



CHAPTER ONE

All Hallows' Eve

OCTOBER 31

BERNT NOTKE † TOTENTANZ

The Dance of Death of the Marienkirche, Lübeck, about 1463. Death takes the pope first, then the emperor, then the empress. The order of the line is the argument.

FEAST ESSENTIALS

- ✦ Go to confession this week, so the indulgences of the coming days are available to you.
- ✦ Attend First Vespers of All Saints, or pray it at home before the door starts knocking.
- ✦ Carve the lantern, and tell the Stingy Jack legend before the candle goes in.
- ✦ Fill the bowl by the door, and give to everyone who knocks.
- ✦ Say the names of your own dead out loud before bed.

The Church appears today in the garb of penance, confessing that she is still an exile.

DOM PROSPER GUÉRANGER † *The Liturgical Year*

The thirty-first of October is the eve of All Saints' Day, and the Church has kept it as a vigil since Gregory IV fixed the feast to the first of November in 844. A vigil is not a countdown. It is the beginning of the feast, kept the evening before in fasting and penance, so that the feast itself arrives at a soul already made ready for it.

Almost everything the world now does on this night came out of that vigil. Children going door to door for treats began as the poor going door to door for soul cakes, given in exchange for prayers for a household's dead. The lantern in the window began as a turnip with a coal in it, carried by a man the story says heaven and hell both refused. The costumes came out of the Danse Macabre, painted on charnel-house walls after the Black Death and acted in the street by people who had watched a third of Europe die.

WHY VIOLET?

Where the vigil Mass is still offered it is offered in violet, the colour of penance, on the evening before a feast offered in white.

Guéranger describes the Church on this day as appearing “in the garb of penance, confessing that she is still an exile,” and tomorrow as overflowing.

The change of colour from one evening to the next is the clearest sign that the thirty-first belongs to the first, and is not a separate holiday that happens to sit beside it.

IF A CHILD IS FRIGHTENED

The night deals in real things, and a child who has just been told that hell exists may take it seriously enough to be frightened. That is not a failure of the evening.

The answer is the ordinary one. Holy water at the bedroom door, a crucifix over the bed, the prayer to the Guardian Angel, and the plain fact said out loud — that the devil is a defeated creature who cannot take anything from you that you do not hand him.

Each of these is about death, and each was made by Catholics who had a specific answer to it. That answer is the reason the night is funny. Death has been beaten, so it can be mocked. The devil has already lost, so he can be made ridiculous. What follows is how to keep the evening in a way that says so.

Liturgy

FIRST VESPERS, AND THE VIGIL FAST

Every major feast in the Roman rite carries two Vespers, one on either side of the day, and the first of them is sung the evening before. So All Saints begins at sundown on the thirty-first — not at midnight, and not at the parish Mass the next morning. Where a parish keeps the traditional calendar there is also a vigil Mass, offered in violet with its own proper prayers, and the day itself was kept as a fast and a day of abstinence until the discipline was relaxed in the twentieth century.

None of this is required of you. Most of it is available if you ask in time: a call to the parish office in the third week of October is usually enough, and pastors are more willing than most people assume. If nothing is offered nearby, First Vespers can be prayed at home from a breviary or an app.

THE COLLECT OF THE VIGIL

The shortest statement of what the evening is for.

Domine Deus noster, multiplica super nos gratiam tuam: et, quorum prevenimus gloriosa solemnia, tribue subsequi in sancta professione letitiam.

O Lord our God, multiply thy grace upon us; and grant us in our holy profession to follow the joy of those whose glorious solemnity we anticipate.

COLLECT † VIGIL OF ALL SAINTS

THE FAST

The other half, and the part most easily recovered. Eat plainly on the thirty-first. The feast is tomorrow.

Food and drink



BÁIRÍN BREAC — “speckled loaf.” The one dish genuinely proper to the thirty-first, with the fortunes baked into it.

Feast menu

ALL HALLOWS' EVE † OCTOBER 31

STARTER

Roasted pumpkin seeds and salted nuts

What comes out of the lantern, salted and roasted while the carving is still going on.

DESSERT

Irish barmbrack

A sultana and peel bread carrying the same fortunes. Recipe overleaf.

MAIN

Colcannon

Potatoes, kale and a great deal of butter, with a ring, a coin and a thimble hidden in the pot.

BEVERAGE

Widow's Kiss, and mulled cider

An 1890s cocktail of apple brandy, Yellow Chartreuse and Bénédictine. Cider by the fire for everyone else.

THE WIDOW'S KISS

Apple brandy or Calvados, 1½ oz † Yellow Chartreuse, ¾ oz † Bénédictine, ¾ oz † two dashes Angostura. Stir with ice and strain into a chilled coupe. It dates to the 1890s and was not invented for this night, which is most of its appeal — the apple brandy carries the harvest, and the Chartreuse is still made by Carthusians.

THE FORTUNES

A ring — married within the year.

A coin — wealth.

A thimble — never marries.

A button — a bachelor.

A scrap of cloth — poverty.

A dried pea — no marriage this year.

IF YOU WOULD RATHER NOT

Bake the loaf plain and put the fortunes beside it in a bowl, drawn by hand before the first slice is cut. The game survives; nobody bites a ring.

Irish barmbrack

A yeasted fruit bread, eaten on the thirty-first with the fortunes baked into it. Makes one 8-inch round.

FOR THE LOAF

- 1 lb (450 g) strong white bread flour
- 1 tsp salt
- 1 tsp mixed spice
- 2 oz (55 g) butter, softened
- 2 oz (55 g) caster sugar
- 1 sachet (7 g) fast-action dried yeast
- 1 egg, beaten
- 10 fl oz (300 ml) warm milk
- 8 oz (225 g) sultanas and raisins
- 2 oz (55 g) mixed candied peel

FOR THE GLAZE

- 1 tbsp sugar dissolved in 1 tbsp boiling water

METHOD

- 01 Rub the butter into the flour, salt and spice until it looks like breadcrumbs. Stir in the sugar and the yeast.
- 02 Beat the egg into the warm milk, pour it into the dry ingredients, and mix to a soft dough.
- 03 Knead ten minutes on a floured surface until smooth and elastic, then work in the dried fruit and peel.
- 04 Cover and leave somewhere warm until doubled, about an hour.
- 05 Knock back. Wrap each fortune in a square of greaseproof paper and work them in. Shape into a round and set it in a greased 8-inch tin.
- 06 Cover and prove a second time, thirty to forty minutes, until risen and springy.
- 07 Bake at 350°F (180°C) for forty-five to fifty minutes, until the loaf sounds hollow tapped underneath. Cover with foil if it colours too fast.
- 08 Brush with the sugar glaze while hot and cool on a rack. Serve thickly sliced with butter, at room temperature.

Before anyone eats it, say out loud what is in the loaf. Every fortune goes in wrapped, and the youngest person at the table gets told twice.

HOW TO SHARE

Set the scene. Turn the lights down and light the lantern first. Both stories are meant to be told in the dark with one flame in the room.

Tell the story. Stingy Jack while the turnip is being carved, before the candle goes in. The Danse Macabre for the older ones, told from the picture.

Discuss the lessons. Why couldn't hell take Jack? Who is first in the line, and why does that matter? What is the joke in dressing as a skeleton, and who is it on?

Connect to tradition. The lantern, the costumes and the knock at the door all come out of these two stories. Say so at the end rather than the beginning, so the story gets to be a story first.

Stories

STINGY JACK AND THE EMBER

Jack was a drunkard and a cheat, and the devil came for him. Jack asked for one last drink first, and the devil agreed, and when the bill came Jack had no money — so he talked the devil into turning himself into a coin to pay it. The devil did. Jack put the coin in his pocket beside a silver cross, and the devil could not change back.

He let him out on terms: ten years' grace, and no claim on Jack's soul. When the ten years were up the devil found him on a road, and Jack asked for an apple from a tree before they went. The devil climbed for it. Jack cut a cross into the bark, the devil was stuck a second time, and this time Jack made the terms permanent. No claim on his soul, ever.

Then Jack died. Heaven would not have him, because of the life he had led. Hell could not take him, because of the bargain. The devil, who kept his word on this one point, gave him a burning coal out of the fire and sent him off into the dark. Jack hollowed out a turnip, put the coal inside it, and has been walking ever since — Jack of the Lantern.

The story is not about a clever devil. It is about a man who beat him twice and still ended up outside, because he never once thought about where he was going to end up. Damnation here is not a punishment imposed on Jack from outside. It is the shape of a life he chose, made permanent. That is the argument the lantern in the window is making, and it is why the carving is worth doing slowly.



HANS HOLBEIN — *The Dance of Death*, 1538. The skeleton keeps the time, and nobody in the picture is dancing willingly.

THE DANSE MACABRE

In 1347 a ship came into Messina with dead men at the oars, and within five years somewhere between a third and half of Europe was dead. There was no medicine for it and no explanation. What there was, within living memory of it, was a picture.

The Danse Macabre appears in the early fifteenth century and spreads for the next two hundred years — painted along the walls of charnel houses and cemetery cloisters, cut into woodblocks, and acted out in the street. The composition hardly varies. A skeleton, or a file of them, leads the living away in a line: the pope first, then the emperor, the cardinal, the king, the bishop, the knight, the merchant, the labourer, and at the end a child. Each is taken in the middle of his business. None of them argues, because there is no argument to make.

The point is the order of the line. Death takes the pope before the ploughman and treats neither one differently, which in a century extremely careful about rank was a radical thing to paint on a public wall. It is also the plainest form of the doctrine: you will die, you do not know when, and your station will not be consulted.

People performed it in costume — as skeletons, as the dead, nervously and comedically, to laugh in the face of death while death was in the village. That is where the costume comes from. Not from a fear of the dark, and not from an attempt to hide among the demons, but from Christians making a joke at the expense of the one thing everybody was afraid of, on the grounds that Christ had already beaten it.

The mockery is aimed at the devil, who has already lost, and at death, which has already been beaten. It is never aimed at the dead. They are prayed for, two days from now, and a soul being purified cannot ask for anything on its own behalf.

SYMBOLIC MEANING

- 01 **The lantern.** A soul who beat the devil twice and still ended up outside, carrying a light handed to him by the one who damned him.
- 02 **The costume.** A joke at death's expense, available because Christ has already beaten it.
- 03 **The soul cake.** A prayer, paid for with food. The oldest form of the knock at the door.
- 04 **The apple.** The harvest, and nothing more than that. Late October is when they come in, which is the whole reason they are in every game played on this night.

Activities

SOULING, AND WHAT GOES IN THE BOWL

For centuries the poor and the children went from door to door across Hallowtide, and at each house they sang or said a verse offering prayers for that household's dead. In return they were given a soul cake — a small spiced bun or shortbread, often marked with a cross. The English verses that survive are direct about the transaction: *a soul cake, an apple, a pear, a plum or a cherry, any good thing to make us all merry.* One cake, one soul prayed for. In Ireland and Scotland the same begging ran from the thirty-first, and that is the branch that crossed the Atlantic and became trick-or-treating.

This is not a coincidence the Church later baptised. It is the practice itself, still running, with the prayer taken out of it. The bowl by your door has been almsgiving the whole time.

So put something good in it, and give to everyone who knocks, including the teenagers who came without costumes. If you want the older form back, bake soul cakes and hand them out alongside the candy, or drop a holy card in the bowl.



SOUL CAKES — marked with a cross, and given in exchange for prayers.

THE LANTERN

Turnips first. Pumpkins only because America had them and they are far easier to cut. If you want the original, a large swede or rutabaga is what the Irish actually used, and it is genuinely hard work — which is part of the point, since Jack has been carrying his since he died. Cut a face that is grotesque rather than cute. It is a damned soul, and the story only works if it looks like one.



THE LANTERN — one for every soul the story will not place. Cut the face grotesque; it is not decoration.

FIRES AND BELLS

Fires were lit on the hills and bells were rung in the towers, both for the souls in purgatory, all night in parishes that could pay the ringers. Both were suppressed in England at the Reformation, precisely because of what they were for. If you have a fire pit, light it after dark and pray a decade at it for your own dead. If you do not, a blessed candle in the window does the same work, and indoors it was always the more common practice.

GAMES

Apples, in every case, because the harvest and the vigil land in the same week and apples were what there was. Bob for them in a tub of water with hands behind the back. Cut an initial into the skin of each one first, and whoever surfaces with it has drawn a name. Or peel one in a single unbroken strip, throw the strip over your left shoulder, and read the letter it makes on the floor.

These are fortune-telling games and were played as such, which is worth saying out loud. They are a joke. They are not divination, and the difference matters on a night when the same household is being taught that the occult is real and to be left alone. Play them as games. If a child asks whether it works, the answer is no.



DANIEL MACLISE — *Snap-Apple Night*, 1833. Painted after a Halloween party in Blarney: the apple on the string, the tub on the floor, the fire, and the fortune-telling in the corner.

THE NAMES

When everyone comes back in, still in costume, say the names of your own dead out loud before bed. Grandparents, a godparent, whoever the family has lost most recently. It takes a minute.

Somebody has to be the first one to do this, and for a year or two it feels like work nobody asked for. Then a child who stood in that room grows up and does it himself, with his own children saying the same names, and by then nobody remembers it was ever started on purpose.

FEAST DAY INDULGENCES

Nothing is attached to the thirty-first itself. The indulgences of this week begin tomorrow, and they are treated in the next chapter.

Tonight is when you become eligible for them. A plenary indulgence requires sacramental confession, Holy Communion, prayer for the Holy Father's intentions, and freedom from all attachment to sin, venial sin included.

Confession may be made several days before or after the work itself, and one confession will serve for several indulgences. Communion and the prayer for the Holy Father are required for each one.

Where the conditions fall short, the act gains a partial indulgence instead. That is what most people who believe they have gained a plenary one have gained.

Spiritual reading

TOBIT 12

Raphael has travelled the length of the book with Tobias in disguise. Here he says who he is, and what the family should do about it. Three verses carry the whole argument under the knock at the door.

It is good to hide the secret of a king: but honourable to reveal and confess the works of God. Prayer is good with fasting and alms, more than to lay up treasures of gold: for alms delivereth from death, and the same is that which purgeth away sins, and maketh to find mercy and life everlasting.

TOBIT 12:7-9 † Douay-Rheims

Almsgiving is an act and not a sentiment, and the passage says plainly what the act does: it delivers from death. Aquinas puts the same point in a sentence — charity, by reason of its act, excludes every motive for sinning. Give to whoever knocks, and evil has no power over the house.

Prayers and devotions

THE ALL SAINTS NOVENA † NINTH DAY

The novena runs from the twenty-third of October to the thirty-first, so tonight is the last of the nine. If you have not been praying it, begin it next year. If you have, the ninth day is prayed like the other eight, and the feast arrives in the morning.

THE LITANY OF THE SAINTS

The vigil's obvious prayer, and the one that names the company tomorrow's feast is about. It is long. Cut it to the sections you know and let it be answered aloud by a room with no books in it — the response is two words and nobody needs to learn it.

Sancte Michael, ora pro nobis.

Sancte Gabriel, ora pro nobis.

Sancte Raphael, ora pro nobis.

BEFORE BED

Compline, if you pray it. Then the prayer to St. Michael, which belongs to this night more than to most.

Saint Michael the Archangel, defend us in battle. Be our protection against the wickedness and snares of the devil. May God rebuke him, we humbly pray; and do thou, O Prince of the heavenly host, by the power of God, cast into hell Satan and all the evil spirits who prowl about the world seeking the ruin of souls. Amen.



CHAPTER TWO

All Saints

NOVEMBER 1

JAN VAN EYCK † THE GHENT
ALTARPIECE

The Adoration of the Mystic Lamb, completed 1432. Confessors, martyrs, virgins and the just of every nation, assembled in one meadow. The feast is that picture kept as a day.

FEAST ESSENTIALS

- ✦ Go to Mass. It is a holy day of obligation.
- ✦ Visit a cemetery and pray for the dead. A plenary indulgence is attached, each day for the next eight.
- ✦ Light a blessed candle at dusk and pray a Rosary for your own dead.
- ✦ Find out who your patrons are, if you do not already know.
- ✦ Give something away to someone who cannot return it.

Let us all rejoice in the Lord, celebrating a feast day in honour of all the Saints, at whose solemnity the Angels rejoice and praise the Son of God.

INTROIT † *The Mass of All Saints*

All Saints' Day is a feast of the people who made it. Not the few hundred with days of their own, which are scattered through the rest of the year, but everyone else. The Church has never counted them and does not try. Today she venerates the whole number at once, on the grounds that there are more of them than there are days in the calendar, and that leaving any of them out would be a kind of negligence.

So this is the day the Church states plainly what the rest of the year only implies. Heaven is populated. It is populated by people. And the ordinary end of a Christian life is to be one of them.

A HOLY DAY OF OBLIGATION

The obligation binds the way a Sunday's does. Attendance at Mass is required, and the evening Mass of the day before satisfies it, which is why the vigil matters.

Where the feast falls on a Saturday or a Monday, some bishops' conferences lift the obligation for that year. It is worth checking your diocese rather than assuming either way.

THREE HUNDRED AND SIXTY-FIVE

There are more days in the year than there are places to put a saint, and far more saints than there are days.

Every calendar the Church has ever published has been a selection. This feast is the one day that admits it.

The saints with feast days are the ones somebody wrote down. The rest are a great multitude which no man could number, and it is made up of farmers, tradesmen, mothers, soldiers and children who were never canonised because nobody was watching.

Liturgy

THE MASS OF THE DAY

First class, white vestments, with a Gloria and a Creed. The Introit is *Gaudeamus* — let us all rejoice — the same entrance the Church uses for Our Lady's feasts, and it sets the register for everything after it. The Epistle is the vision from the Apocalypse of the multitude in white robes with palms in their hands. The Gospel is the Beatitudes, which answers the question the Epistle raises: that is who they are, and this is how they arrived.

There is a Preface, a Communion antiphon drawn from the same Beatitudes, and the *Te Deum* at Matins. Where a parish offers Second Vespers in the evening, the feast closes the way it opened.

WHY THE FIRST OF NOVEMBER

The feast is older than its date and older than the West. The Eastern Church kept a commemoration of all the martyrs on the Sunday after Pentecost, and St. John Chrysostom preached on it every year.

In the West it begins with a building. In about the year 609 the Emperor Phocas handed the Pantheon — Rome's temple to all the gods, and the best-preserved building in the city — to Pope Boniface IV, who dedicated it to Our Lady and all the martyrs on the thirteenth of May. That is the first All Saints' Day.

Gregory III widened it from the martyrs to everyone, describing the feast as honouring “apostles, martyrs, confessors, and all the just and perfect servants of God.” Gregory IV fixed it to the first of November in 844.

The reason for the move is worth having, because the alternative explanation is the one you will be handed. It was not to bury a pagan festival. It was a question of food. The feast drew enormous crowds to Rome, and Rome in May could not feed them. November came after the harvest, when there was grain in the city and roads that could still be travelled. The Church moved the feast to where the bread was.

Sixtus IV later gave it a vigil and an octave — a day in front and eight days behind. That is why the thirty-first is a vigil at all, and why the indulgence for visiting a cemetery runs through the eighth of November rather than stopping tomorrow night.

WHAT THE OCTAVE IS FOR

An octave holds a feast open for eight days instead of one, on the reasoning that a solemnity of this size cannot be finished in an afternoon. The practical consequence is the part most people never learn: the whole of the first week of November belongs to this feast, and the cemetery indulgence runs the length of it.

So there is no single day on which you have to do everything. If the first is impossible, the fourth will do.

Food and drink



PANE COI SANTI — bread with the saints. The saints are the walnuts, and the pepper is what makes it strange.

Feast menu

ALL SAINTS † NOVEMBER 1

MORNING

Heiligenstriezel

The braided All Saints bread of Austria and Bavaria, studded with raisins and almonds and finished with coarse sugar. Godparents give it to their godchildren.

FOR THE CHILDREN

Rame di Napoli

Chocolate and spice cookies from Naples and Sicily, iced and scattered with pistachio, given to children as though from the family's dead.

THE TABLE

Whatever you would cook for a birthday

The sources give All Saints no dish of its own. It is a solemnity, so the food that belongs to it is the food already kept for good days.

TO POUR

Brut Champagne, or the Communion of Saints

Pane coi santi, the Sienese bread scored with a cross, has the recipe overleaf.



RAME DI NAPOLI — given to children on this day, as though they had come from the family's dead.

What to pour

Halloween was apples, herbs and dark spirits, drunk outdoors in the cold. Today should not taste like that. All Saints is white, gold and effervescent: grape, pear, honey, and the aromatic herbal liqueurs that come out of monasteries.

Brut Champagne needs no adaptation. It is gold, it is celebratory, and it comes from a corner of France that was Catholic long before it was famous. **A Belgian Trappist tripel** is the most fitting beer of the three days, because it belongs to a living Catholic brewing tradition rather than to Catholic-themed branding. Serve it in the chalice-shaped glass it is made for, with dinner.

The Communion of Saints — $\frac{3}{4}$ oz Yellow Chartreuse † $\frac{1}{2}$ oz pear eau-de-vie † $\frac{1}{4}$ oz lemon † 1 tsp honey syrup † 3 oz Brut Champagne. Shake the first four briefly with ice, strain into a coupe, top with the Champagne. A thin slice of pear, or nothing. Yellow Chartreuse is the right liqueur for the day: golden, aromatic, restrained, and still made by Carthusians.

The Golden Legend, where Champagne is too light — $1\frac{1}{2}$ oz Cognac † $\frac{1}{2}$ oz Yellow Chartreuse † $\frac{1}{4}$ oz honey syrup † 2 dashes orange bitters. Stir, strain over one large cube, express an orange peel over it. Named for the medieval collection of saints' lives, and built on the Champs-Élysées.

WHY TWO DAYS

The raisins want a night in wine and the starter wants a night on the counter. Neither can be hurried, and both are why the bread tastes older than its ingredients.

Pane coi santi

A Sienese bread of walnuts, raisins and black pepper. Two days. Makes two round loaves.

DAY ONE, IN THE EVENING

Soak 9 oz (250 g) raisins in 7 fl oz (200 ml) red wine, Vin Santo if you have it. Cover and leave overnight. In a second bowl mix a starter: 5 oz (150 g) strong white flour, 3½ fl oz (100 ml) warm water and a scant ½ tsp (2 g) dried yeast. Cover and leave at room temperature overnight.

DAY TWO, FOR THE WALNUTS

- 9 oz (250 g) walnut halves
- 1½ tsp black peppercorns, coarsely ground
- 3 tbsp olive oil

FOR THE DOUGH

- the starter from last night
- 1½ tsp salt
- 1 lb (450 g) strong white flour
- about 7 fl oz (200 ml) warm water
- 3 oz (80 g) caster sugar
- the drained raisins, wine reserved
- 1 sachet (7 g) fast-action dried yeast

METHOD

- 01** Toast the walnuts in a dry pan until they smell of themselves, five or six minutes, then chop coarsely.
- 02** Warm the olive oil with the ground pepper, add the walnuts, and turn them over the heat for two minutes. Set aside to cool.
- 03** Combine the starter with the flour, sugar, yeast and salt, then the water a little at a time, until it comes together as a soft dough.
- 04** Knead ten minutes. Work in the raisins, then the walnuts with all their oil. The dough will look wrong and will come back together.
- 05** Cover and rise until doubled, about two hours.
- 06** Divide in two, shape into rounds, and set them well apart on a lined tray. Score a cross in the top of each.
- 07** Prove one hour.
- 08** Bake at 400°F (200°C) for ten minutes, then at 350°F (180°C) for thirty to thirty-five minutes, until dark and hollow underneath.
- 09** Reduce the reserved wine with a spoonful of honey until syrupy, and brush the loaves while hot.

Do not leave out the pepper. It is what makes this bread strange, and the strangeness is the reason it survived.



GIOVANNI PAOLO PANINI —
The Interior of the Pantheon, about 1734. The dome, the oculus and the floor are the ones Agrippa's builders left.

Stories

THE TEMPLE OF ALL THE GODS

Marcus Agrippa built it and Hadrian rebuilt it, and for five hundred years it was the Pantheon — the temple of all the gods, which is what the name says. It carries the largest unreinforced concrete dome ever poured, with a hole at the top open to the sky, and it is the best-preserved building in Rome because of what happened next.

In about 609 the Emperor Phocas gave it to the pope. Boniface IV consecrated it as a Christian church, dedicated it to Our Lady and all the martyrs — *Sancta Maria ad Martyres* — and the tradition holds that he had twenty-eight cartloads of bones carried up from the catacombs outside the walls and buried beneath the altar.

The building did not change. The dome is the same dome, the hole is the same hole, and the rain still comes through it onto the floor. What changed is who it is for. A house built for all the gods became a house for all the saints, and the feast being kept today is the anniversary of that afternoon.

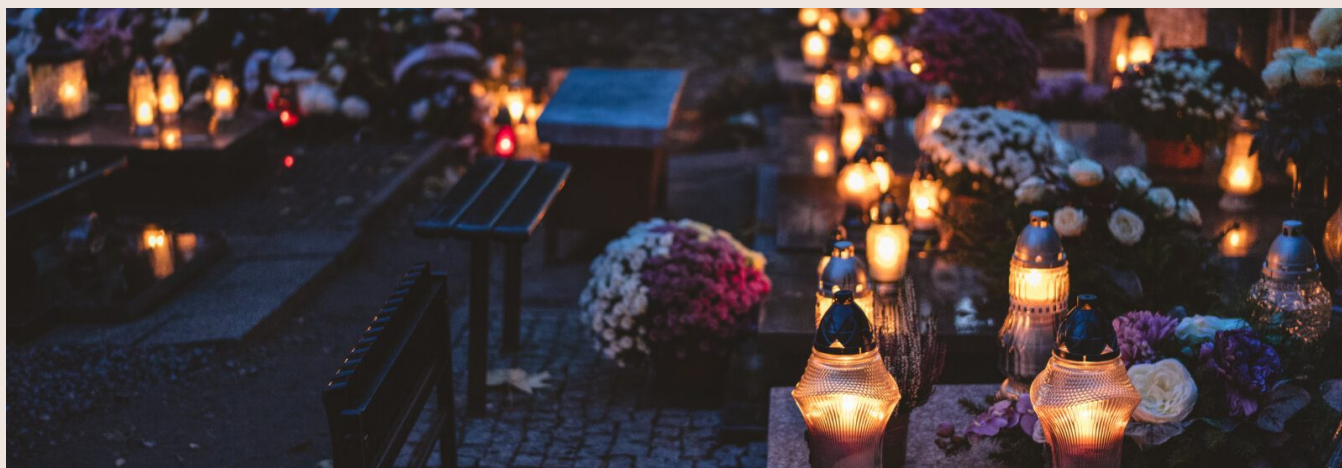
It is also where we get our name, FERIA Days. In the Church's calendar a *feria* is a weekday with no feast on it, and the Latin *feriae* meant the opposite — the festival days, the holy days, the ones work stopped for. Early Christians took that word and spent it on the plainest days of the week, in place of the old Roman names for the Sun and the Moon and Mars. Neither the temple nor the word was destroyed. Both were kept, and given something else to carry.

Activities

VISIT A CEMETERY

The day's first work, and the one with an indulgence attached. Go to any cemetery, walk in, and pray for the dead — even silently, even briefly. It is worth a plenary indulgence today and on each of the seven days after it, and none of it can be kept for yourself.

Take flowers. Chrysanthemums and marigolds are what most of Catholic Europe brings, and in Mexico the marigolds are what the dead are meant to follow home. If your own family is buried somewhere you cannot reach, choose a grave nobody has visited.



THE FIRST OF NOVEMBER — in much of central Europe the whole cemetery is lit by nightfall, one lantern to a grave, and the families stay until the candles are the only light left.



FOR THE CHILDREN —

costumes again, and this is the day the practice makes the most sense.

DRESSING AS THE SAINTS

A brown blanket makes a habit, a length of cord a cincture, a cardboard sword a martyr.

Have each child tell the others one thing their saint actually did. Not a virtue — a thing that happened.

BELLS, AND THE TURN TOWARD TOMORROW

In central Europe the church bells ring at dusk on All Saints, and that is the signal. Families come indoors, light a blessed candle, and pray the Rosary for their own dead. In rural Brittany the men toll the bells and chant through the village: *Christians, awake, pray to God for the souls of the dead.*

This is the hinge of the three days, and it happens tonight rather than tomorrow morning. All day you have been keeping company with people who are already home. At dusk the direction of prayer reverses, and for the whole of November you are praying for people who cannot do anything for themselves.

GIVE SOMETHING AWAY

Hungarian families invited orphan children to the table on All Saints and sent them home in new clothes. In the Austrian Alps children went from house to house singing hymns and were given soul bread. It is the same shape as the knock at the door two nights ago, with the same reasoning underneath it.

Choose something that costs you and cannot be returned.

FIND OUT WHO YOUR SAINTS ARE

Most people can name one. There are at least four: a baptismal patron, a confirmation patron, the parish's and the diocese's. Add a country and a trade and it is usually six.

Look them up today and read a paragraph on each. The point of the feast is that the multitude is not anonymous — it only looks that way from here — and the quickest way to feel that is to find out who has been assigned to you.

THE FOUR CONDITIONS

- 01 **The work itself.** The cemetery visit, or the church visit with an Our Father and the Creed.
- 02 **Sacramental confession.** Several days either side will do, and one confession serves for several indulgences.
- 03 **Holy Communion.** Required for each indulgence, not once for all of them.
- 04 **Prayer for the Holy Father's intentions.** Also required for each. An Our Father and a Hail Mary suffice.

Available indulgences

Two, and both of them can only be given away.

THE CEMETERY

From the first of November to the eighth, a plenary indulgence is granted each day to anyone who devoutly visits a cemetery and prays for the dead, even mentally. Applicable only to the holy souls. On any other day of the year the same visit gains a partial indulgence.

THE CHURCH

A plenary indulgence is granted for devoutly visiting a church or oratory and reciting an Our Father and the Creed. It belongs to All Souls' Day, and in many places the bishop extends it to today or to the Sunday on either side. Also applicable only to the holy souls.

THE CONDITION PEOPLE MISS

Not one of the four in the margin. The fourth requirement is freedom from all attachment to sin, **including venial sin**, and it is a disposition rather than an act. Where it is absent the indulgence is partial rather than plenary — which is why most people who believe they have gained a plenary indulgence have gained a partial one. A partial indulgence still reaches the souls it is offered for.

THE OLDER PRACTICE

You will read, in good places, that between noon today and midnight tomorrow a plenary indulgence may be gained *every time* you enter a church, the Church having suspended her own rule that one may be gained in a day.

That was the discipline for centuries, and it is still kept in some places and much loved. It is not the law now. Indulgences were rewritten in 1967, and under the norms in force a plenary indulgence may be gained once a day, with a single exception at the moment of death. The repeatable privilege was not carried across.

Both are worth knowing. The older form tells you how seriously these two days were once taken, and the current one tells you what to count on.

Spiritual reading

APOCALYPSE 7

The Epistle of today's Mass, and the reason the feast has the shape it has. John has just watched a hundred and forty-four thousand of Israel sealed, a number that can in principle be counted. Then he looks up.

After this I saw a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and tribes, and peoples, and tongues, standing before the throne, and in sight of the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands: and they cried with a loud voice, saying: Salvation to our God, who sitteth upon the throne, and to the Lamb.

APOCALYPSE 7:9-10 † Douay-Rheims

The uncountable multitude is the point of the day. A feast for the named saints already exists, three hundred and sixty-five times over. This one is for everybody else, and the Church made it because the list ran out before the saints did.

Prayers and devotions

THE COLLECT OF THE FEAST

Omnipotens sempiterne Deus, qui nos omnium Sanctorum tuorum merita sub una tribuisti celebritate venerari: quaesumus, ut desideratam nobis tuae propitiationis abundantiam, multiplicatis intercessoribus, largiaris.

Almighty, everlasting God, who hast granted us to venerate in one solemnity the merits of all thy Saints: we beseech thee that, our intercessors being multiplied, thou wouldst bestow on us the abundance of thy mercy for which we long.

COLLECT † THE MASS OF ALL SAINTS

Multiplicatis intercessoribus — the intercessors having been multiplied. The argument of the prayer is arithmetic. There are more of them than can be named, they are all on your side, and the petition is made on the strength of the number.

THE TE DEUM, AND THE FIFTY-FOUR DAY ROSARY NOVENA

The *Te Deum* is sung at Matins today and is the obvious thing to say at the table before anyone eats. The line to listen for is the one that names the company: the glorious choir of the Apostles, the admirable company of the Prophets, the white-robed army of Martyrs.

Some begin the fifty-four day Rosary novena today — twenty-seven days of petition and twenty-seven of thanksgiving, which started this morning ends on Christmas Eve. It is a long commitment made on the feast of people who finished.



CHAPTER THREE

All Souls

NOVEMBER 2

THE CATAFALQUE

An empty coffin, draped and canded, set before the altar after the Requiem. Nobody is inside it. It stands in for everyone the parish has buried and everyone it never knew.

FEAST ESSENTIALS

- ✦ Go to Mass. A priest may offer three today, and all three are for the dead.
- ✦ Visit a grave. Bring a candle, flowers and holy water.
- ✦ Write down the names of your dead and read them out loud.
- ✦ Put the photographs on the table and fill in what you know of the family tree.
- ✦ Pray the *De Profundis* before bed, and the *Eternal Rest* after every Rosary this month.

It is therefore a holy and wholesome thought to pray for the dead, that they may be loosed from sins.

II MACHABEES 12:46 † Douay-Rheims

A soul in purgatory can do nothing for itself. It cannot pray for its own release, cannot shorten its own purification, and cannot ask anyone for help. Everything that reaches it comes from the living. That is the whole reason this day exists, and it is why All Souls is kept rather than celebrated.

Yesterday was spent in the company of people who are already home and who can pray for you. Today the direction of prayer reverses. You are praying for people who have no way of asking, on the understanding that the prayer arrives.

WHY BLACK

Violet is penance and white is glory. Black is mourning, and it is the one colour the Church uses for nothing else.

It is not despair. The Requiem asks for light — *et lux perpetua luceat eis* — and expects to be answered. The black says that someone has died and that the loss is real, which is the honest place to pray from.

Where a parish uses violet today it is following the later books, and the prayers are the same.

WHERE THE DAY COMES FROM

One monastery. St. Odilo, abbot of Cluny from 994 until his death in 1049, ordered the second of November kept for all the faithful departed throughout his order, with bells tolled and the Office of the Dead recited. The traditional date is 998, though the sources disagree and it may have been thirty years later.

Cluny had hundreds of dependent houses. The Benedictines carried it, the Carthusians took it up, and by the fourteenth century the diocesan clergy were keeping it everywhere. It has never been decreed for the universal Church. It spread.

There is a Mexican proverb that a person dies three times: once when the body stops, once when the body is buried out of sight, and once when the last person who remembers them says their name for the last time. The first two cannot be prevented. The third is the one this day was built against.

Liturgy

THREE MASSES

A priest may offer Mass once a day. On this day he may offer three, and all three are for the dead. The privilege belonged to Spain and Portugal alone until Benedict XV extended it to the whole Church in 1915, by the constitution *Incrumentum Altaris sacrificium* — written in the middle of a war that was filling Europe's cemeteries faster than anyone could pray for them.

The first Mass is for the intention of the priest, the second for all the faithful departed, the third for the intentions of the Holy Father. Where a parish offers all three, the second is the one to be at.

BLACK, AND THE REQUIEM

The vestments are black. The Mass has no Gloria, no Alleluia and no blessing at the end, and it opens with the line that gives the Requiem its name: *Requiem æternam dona eis, Domine* — eternal rest grant unto them, O Lord.

What is missing is as deliberate as what is there. The Church is not rejoicing today. She is petitioning, and she takes off the things that belong to rejoicing in order to do it.

THE REQUIEMS

Mozart left his unfinished at his own death. Verdi wrote one for Manzoni that is closer to opera than to a church. Fauré took the *Dies iræ* out of his almost entirely and was criticised for it.

Berlioz, Liszt, Dvořák, Duruflé. The *Requiem* is the one liturgical form composers keep returning to, and none of them were setting an abstraction.

THE FOUR NOTES

The opening phrase of the chant has been quoted in film scores for a century, usually to signal that something is about to go badly.

It is worth hearing the whole sequence once, sung in its place, so that the four notes stop being shorthand.

THE DIES IRAE

Between the Epistle and the Gospel comes the sequence, ninety lines of rhymed Latin traditionally ascribed to Thomas of Celano, the first biographer of St. Francis.



DIES IRAE — the sequence set with its chant, the initial carrying Death on horseback. *Dies iræ, dies illa, solvet sæclum in favilla*: that day of wrath, that dreadful day, shall the whole world in ashes lay.

It is the most famous piece of music the Church ever produced, and the only sequence most people could hum without knowing what it is.

THE ABSOLUTION AT THE CATAFALQUE

After the Mass, in parishes that keep it, an empty coffin draped in black is set before the altar and surrounded with candles. The priest walks round it, incenses it and sprinkles it with holy water, and prays over it as though a body were inside.

Nobody is in the catafalque. That is the point of it. It stands in for every person the parish has buried and everyone it never knew, and the rite is performed over all of them at once.



PAN DE MUERTO — the bones laid in a cross over the loaf, and a skeleton hidden somewhere inside it.

Food and drink

Feast menu

ALL SOULS † NOVEMBER 2

THE POOR'S DISH

Split pea soup

Beans, peas and lentils are the soul food of western Europe, cooked on this day and given away. Split peas with an onion, garlic, carrots and a ham bone, cooked until the peas give up entirely.

THE BREAD

Pan de muerto

Sweet and orange-scented, with bones laid across the top in a cross and a toy skeleton hidden inside. Recipe overleaf.

THE BONES

Ossi di morto, fave dei morti

Almond cookies from Italy, named bones of the dead and beans of the dead. The first are dry and crack like a knuckle; the second are soft and shaped like fava beans.

TO POUR

Tawny Port, or the De Profundis

With walnuts, roasted chestnuts, dried figs and dark chocolate.

SOUL BREAD, AND WHO IT IS FOR

Across central Europe the bread baked today was not eaten by the household that baked it. *Seelenbrot* went to the children and the poor, and in the Austrian Alps children went house to house singing for it. Spain has *huesos de santo*, Catalonia its *panellets*, and Sicily leaves hidden sweets and sugar figures for children to find and tells them the dead left them there.

The pattern is the same everywhere and worth noticing. On the day set aside for the dead, the food goes to the living who have least. Almsgiving is one of the four things that reaches a soul in purgatory, and the whole of Catholic Europe arranged its baking around that fact.

What to pour

Not Halloween again. All Souls is candlelight and a small glass: Port, Cognac, bitter herbs, nuts, dried fruit, coffee and dark chocolate. Concentrated rather than lavish.

The simplest answer is the best one. Tawny or Late Bottled Vintage Port after dinner, with walnuts, roasted chestnuts, dried figs, dark chocolate or a hard cheese. Nothing about it needs inventing. Portugal supplies the Catholic culture, the fortified wine suits a November evening, and the soul cake beside it supplies the tradition.

De Profundis — 1½ oz Cognac † ¾ oz ruby or LBV Port † ¼ oz Green Chartreuse † 1 dash Angostura. Stir with ice, strain into a small coupe, express an orange peel over it and discard the peel. A Cognac Manhattan by construction, with an older precedent: the nineteenth-century Coffee Cocktail and the Porto Flip both married Cognac to Port. This takes that pairing, removes the egg and the sugar, and lets the Chartreuse bring the bitterness. Keep it small.

Requiem — ¾ oz gin † ¾ oz Green Chartreuse † ¾ oz Maraschino † ½ oz lime † ¼ oz ruby Port. Shake, fine-strain into a small coupe, no garnish. The Last Word was invented at the Detroit Athletic Club and built on Green Chartreuse, which is still made by Carthusians; displacing a little of the lime with Port darkens it and keeps the shape.



OSSI DI MORTO — bones of the dead. Meant to be dry, and to crack.

THE TWO COOKIES

Ossi di morto. Flour, almonds, sugar, pine nuts, butter, a spoon of grappa, lemon zest, cinnamon and an egg. Baked low, around 330°F, for twenty minutes.

Fave dei morti. Blanched almonds toasted, pine nuts, flour, cinnamon, icing sugar, egg, lemon zest and grappa, shaped into fava beans and baked at 350°F for ten minutes. Soft, chewy, gone in a day.

The fava bean has meant the dead in Italy since long before there were Christians there to say so.

Pan de muerto

One large loaf. An enriched dough, so give it time.

FOR THE DOUGH

- 1 lb 2 oz (500 g) strong white flour
- 3½ oz (100 g) caster sugar
- 1½ tsp salt
- 1 sachet (7 g) fast-action dried yeast
- 4 oz (115 g) butter, softened
- 4 eggs
- 4 fl oz (120 ml) milk, warm
- 2 tsp orange blossom water
- grated zest of 1 orange
- ½ tsp ground anise seed

FOR THE FINISH

- 2 oz (55 g) butter, melted, and caster sugar for rolling
- *or* 4 fl oz (120 ml) orange juice reduced with 2 oz (55 g) sugar

METHOD

- 01 Warm the milk, stir in a spoonful of the sugar and the yeast, and leave ten minutes until it foams.
- 02 Beat the eggs with the orange blossom water and the zest.
- 03 Combine the flour, remaining sugar, salt and anise. Add the yeast mixture and the eggs and bring together.
- 04 Work in the softened butter a little at a time. Knead fifteen minutes. This dough is slack and sticky and stays that way; resist adding flour.
- 05 Cover and rise until doubled, about two hours.
- 06 Knock back and set aside a quarter of the dough. Shape the rest into a round and put it on a lined tray.
- 07 From the reserve, roll four ropes. Press along each with the side of your fingers to raise knuckles, and lay them over the loaf in a cross. Roll a small ball and set it in the centre.
- 08 Prove one hour.
- 09 Bake at 350°F (180°C) for thirty-five to forty minutes, until deep gold and hollow underneath.
- 10 Brush with melted butter while warm and roll in sugar, or brush with the reduced orange syrup.

The skeleton. A small toy skeleton goes in before the final shaping, and whoever finds it has good fortune for the year. Wrap it in greaseproof paper, and say what is in the loaf before it is cut.

THE GOLDEN LEGEND

Compiled about 1260 by Jacobus de Voragine, a Dominican who became Archbishop of Genoa. Lives of the saints, arranged through the liturgical year, told as stories.

It was the most widely read book in Europe after the Bible for two hundred years, and it taught more theology than most catechisms, because people remember a story and forget a definition.

Both of these are from it. Neither is a historical record and neither was offered as one.

Stories

THE BLOCK OF ICE

A bishop's fishermen brought up a block of ice in their nets instead of a catch, and the bishop was glad of it, having gout, and kept it to cool his feet.

Then he heard a voice from inside it. The voice said it was a soul in torment, and that if thirty Masses were sung for it on thirty consecutive days it would be delivered.

The bishop began. On the fifteenth day, as he was vesting, the whole town seemed to be at war outside and everyone ran to the doors, and the Mass was not said. He began the count again. The second time, on the day before the last, his own house appeared to be on fire, and again nothing was sung. He began a third time, and ordered that whatever happened and whoever came, nothing was to stop him.

On the thirtieth day the ice was gone.

The tale is transparent about what it is teaching. The interruptions come from the enemy, they come at the end, and the only thing that defeats them is a person who will not be moved off the schedule.

THE MINER

A man was buried alive in a mine collapse. His wife was told he was dead and did what a wife did: she had Masses offered for his soul, day after day, for as long as she could pay for them.

When they finally broke through to him he was alive. He said that every day a piece of bread, a cup of wine and a lit candle had appeared beside him, and that he had no idea where they came from. They came on the days the Masses were said. On the days she could not pay for one, nothing came.

A story, not a record, and the *Golden Legend* is not a history book. But it is a precise picture of what the Church claims about the Mass: that it is not a memorial service, that it goes somewhere, and that it arrives whether or not the person offering it can see where.

This is also the reason the Church asks for Masses rather than only for prayers. Anyone can pray for the dead and everyone should. The Mass is the one offering the Church makes that is not hers to improve on, and it is the heaviest thing a living person can put behind a name.



MARIGOLDS — in Mexico their colour and their scent are what the dead are meant to follow home.

Activities

THE GRAVE

Go, and take three things.

Holy water, sprinkled on the grave. **A candle** in a glass lantern, which in German-speaking countries is called a light of the holy souls and is left burning after everyone has gone home. **Flowers** — chrysanthemums through most of Catholic Europe, marigolds in Mexico.

Tidy the stone while you are there. In the Philippines families arrive days ahead to clean and repaint the tombs, and then spend the night beside them. In Brittany the farmers used to pour milk on the grave.

Then pray. The *De Profundis* if you know it, a decade of the Rosary if you do not, and the *Eternal Rest* either way.

THE OPEN DOOR, AND THE EMPTY PLACE

In Poland the doors and windows were left open at midnight so the souls could come to the parish church. In Italy families set an extra place at supper, or left food out overnight. In Austria they said the souls were in the forests, waiting to be released.

These are customs and not doctrine, and the Church has never taught that the dead return on this night. What they express is true even where the picture is not: that the dead are not gone, and that something is owed them. Keep them if you like them; they are beautiful and they are old.

THE PHOTOGRAPHS

Put them on the table. All of them, out of the boxes and the albums and off the phone, and spread out where people can lean over them.



ALL SOULS — everything out of the box at once, so that the people who remember are looking at the same picture as the people who do not.

Then fill in the family tree as far as anyone present can get. Somebody will know a name nobody has said in twenty years, and somebody will discover they are named after a person they know nothing about. Write it down while the person who remembers is still in the room.

Read Ecclesiasticus 44 over them before you put them away.

Let us now praise men of renown, and our fathers in their generation... And there are some, of whom there is no memorial: who are perished, as if they had never been... But these were men of mercy, whose godly deeds have not failed... Their bodies are buried in peace, and their name liveth unto generation and generation.

ECCLESIASTICUS 44 † Douay-Rheims

EVERYONE THERE IS GOING TO HEAVEN

Purgatory is not a sentence and not a lesser hell. It is the last part of the journey, and every soul in it is saved already and knows it.

What is being burned away is attachment, not the person. The suffering is real and so is the certainty, which is why the Church has always spoken of the holy souls rather than the condemned, and why this day is solemn rather than grim.

WHAT ACTUALLY REACHES THEM

Four things, and the list is short and settled: the Mass, prayer, almsgiving, and indulgences offered on their behalf.

Those four, and nothing else the living can arrange.

THE NAMES, WRITTEN DOWN

Polish parishes keep *wypominki*. Through the first days of November the parishioners write the names of their dead on slips of paper, and the names are read aloud at the evening devotions, one after another, for as long as it takes.

Do it at home. Everyone writes their own list. One person reads all of them out, slowly, and after each name the room answers *eternal rest grant unto them, O Lord*. It takes ten minutes, and it is the single most useful thing in this chapter, because it is the one practice aimed directly at the third death.

Keep the paper. Read the same list next year and add to it.

GIVE THE FOOD AWAY

Whatever came out of the oven this morning, some of it should leave the house. That is what *Seelenbrot* was and what the split pea soup was for, and almsgiving is on the short list of things that reach a soul.

It does not have to be bread. It has to cost you something and go to someone who cannot return it.

THE CONDITIONS

Unchanged from the previous chapter: the work itself, sacramental confession, Holy Communion, and prayer for the Holy Father's intentions.

One confession serves for several indulgences. Communion and the prayer for the Holy Father are needed for each.

The fourth requirement is a disposition and not an act: freedom from all attachment to sin, venial sin included. Where it is absent the indulgence is partial instead of plenary, and a partial indulgence still reaches the soul it is offered for.

Available indulgences

THE CHURCH VISIT, PROPER TO TODAY

A plenary indulgence is granted for devoutly visiting a church or oratory today and reciting an Our Father and the Creed. It is applicable only to the holy souls. It cannot be kept and cannot be redirected to anyone living, including yourself.

THE CEMETERY, STILL RUNNING

The indulgence for visiting a cemetery and praying for the dead is plenary every day from the first of November to the eighth, so today is the second of eight. Also applicable only to the holy souls.

ONE PRACTICAL NOTE

A plenary indulgence can be gained once a day and applied to one soul. Across the octave that is eight souls, one each day.

Write the eight names down before the first of them. That is the difference between doing this and meaning to.

Spiritual reading

II MACHABEES 12

The passage the whole practice rests on, and the reason praying for the dead is not a medieval invention. Judas Machabeus, having found forbidden objects on the bodies of his own fallen soldiers, takes up a collection and sends it to Jerusalem for a sacrifice on their behalf.

And making a gathering, he sent twelve thousand drachms of silver to Jerusalem for sacrifice to be offered for the sins of the dead, thinking well and religiously concerning the resurrection. (For if he had not hoped that they that were slain should rise again, it would have seemed superfluous and vain to pray for the dead,) And because he considered that they who had fallen asleep with godliness, had great grace laid up for them. It is therefore a holy and wholesome thought to pray for the dead, that they may be loosed from sins.

II MACHABEES 12:43-46 † Douay-Rheims

The argument is in the parenthesis. Praying for the dead only makes sense if the dead are going to rise, which means that every prayer said today is an argument about the resurrection, whether or not the person saying it is thinking about that.

R.I.P. IS A PRAYER

It is cut into headstones in every Catholic country and almost nobody reads it as what it is.

R.I.P. is not a sign-off. It is *Requiescant in Pace* — may they rest in peace — and it is the plural, so the stone is asking for all of them and not only for the person underneath it.

Written with the periods, and prayed rather than typed.

Prayers and devotions

ETERNAL REST

Four lines, and the one prayer to know by heart. Said after every Rosary through November in place of the Fatima prayer, said at a graveside, and said when someone tells you a person has died.

Eternal rest grant unto them, O Lord,
and let perpetual light shine upon them.
May they rest in peace. Amen.

*Requiem æternam dona eis, Domine,
et lux perpetua luceat eis.
Requiescant in pace. Amen.*

THE DE PROFUNDIS

Psalm 129, the sixth penitential psalm, and the psalm of the dead in the Western Church.

Out of the depths I have cried to thee, O Lord: Lord, hear my voice. Let thy ears be attentive to the voice of my supplication. If thou, O Lord, wilt mark iniquities: Lord, who shall stand it. For with thee there is merciful forgiveness... Because with the Lord there is mercy: and with him plentiful redemption. And he shall redeem Israel from all his iniquities.

PSALM 129 † Douay-Rheims

It is a prayer for a sinner that has been used for the dead for a thousand years, on the reasoning that the dead are sinners too and can no longer say it for themselves.

THE REST OF NOVEMBER

Today is the beginning and not the end. The whole month belongs to the holy souls, and the ordinary way to keep it is a decade a day for your own dead, with the *Eternal Rest* where the Fatima prayer usually goes.