

Solemnity of All Souls - 11-02-2025

The whole purpose of life is to love the Lord our God with all our heart, soul, mind and strength and our neighbor as Jesus loved us, so that we can be with him for all eternity when this life is complete.

But who can really do that? Most of our hearts are torn between the love of so many different people and things. "More torturous than all things is the human heart. Who can save us?"

Only Jesus Christ!

Jesus, the Second Person of the Most Holy Trinity, God and the Son of God, suffered and died for us so that we could live.

And for Christians, to truly live is to become a gift to others and for the whole world. That means pouring ourselves out like Jesus on the cross for the salvation of souls.

On our own our death would just be one of many – a sad statistic that only a few people would mourn. But in union with Jesus we participate in the salvation and sanctification of the whole world and our death becomes a historical event that echoes into eternity.

As we heard in the first reading, “Chastised a little, they shall be greatly blessed, because God tried them and found them worthy of himself. As gold in the furnace, he proved them, and as sacrificial offerings he took them to himself.”

Worthy of himself...worthy of Jesus...As gold in the furnace, we are proved...as sacrificial offerings Jesus takes us to himself.

And then in the second reading we heard, “For if we have grown into union with him through a death like his, we shall also be united with him in the resurrection. We know that our old self was crucified with him, so that our sinful body might be done away with, that we might no longer be in slavery to sin.”

This is the purpose and goal of this life – to be completely detached from everything – good and bad – even our very selves.

But what happens if we don’t fulfill this purpose? What happens if we don’t reach this goal?

Well, according to Catholic teaching, as gold in the furnace, we will be proved, in this life or the next, and then eventually taken to Jesus because according to Sacred Scripture nothing impure will enter into the presence of God.

So this is actually very good news. If life were ultimately an either or scenario very few of us would go directly to heaven that means we would go in the other direction.

Purgatory is actually one of the Church's most beautiful teachings and, yes, it is based on the Bible.

Regardless, while it will be a place of great trial and suffering it is actually the second most joyous place in existence – second only to heaven – because from purgatory the only place to go is Heaven.

In other words, all the poor souls in purgatory will eventually go to heaven and become saints.

In purgatory our salvation will be secure.

Anyway, let's pray for the poor souls in purgatory, especially today, because one day they will return the favor and pray for us.

Fr. Benedict Groeschel, of EWTN fame, once said, "When I die, don't canonize me. Give me the benefit of the doubt that I'm not in hell but don't assume I'm in heaven. Pray for me!"

Finally, let's shoot for heaven. Let's strive to become the saints we are called to be confidently remembering that, "The souls of the just are in the hands of God."