



**WELCOMING
CHILDREN
in WORSHIP**

**THE CATHOLIC
UNIVERSITY
OF AMERICA**



All Souls' Day

November

Adaptive Activities for Children



**National Catholic
Partnership on Disability**

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Introduction

Welcome and thank you for your ministry that serves the liturgical formation of children for their participation in the Eucharist, the “source and summit of the Christian life.” This resource is provided by the Committee on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities of the National Catholic Partnership on Disability (NCPD). It aims to offer an adaptive catechetical opportunity for all who have a heart for disability ministry to reflect on the liturgical year. We welcome you to this virtual community and hope you find this resource beneficial.

Here you will find reflections to guide children with intellectual and developmental disabilities, or diverse learners, through the current liturgical season with adaptive catechesis to help them to participate fully. Each offering includes prayer, Scripture, activities and more that incorporate the senses and take into consideration the needs of all learners. We invite you to gather children around the table of the home or the table of the classroom as preparation for their participation at the sacred table of the Eucharist.

Each monthly edition incorporates the following:

- 1. Prayer**
- 2. Sacred Scripture**
- 3. Reflection**
- 4. Faith in Action**
- 5. Activities**
- 6. Saint**
- 7. Resources/Bibliography**

Prayer

Leader: When someone we love dies it is normal to feel sad. Something that is beautiful and special is that we believe in heaven, and we know that we will be with our loved ones again with Jesus!

Today we are learning about All Souls' Day, a day set aside to pray for and remember persons who have died. We are going to say a special prayer for persons who we love who have died and are on their way to be with Jesus in heaven. First, I will pray the traditional "Eternal Rest" prayer that adults pray. It has a beautiful rhythm but is hard to understand so then we will pray a similar prayer together. Before we start, let's name persons we want to pray for: (have kids share names)

Begin with the Sign of the Cross.

Leader: Eternal rest, grant them, O Lord; and let perpetual light shine upon them. May their souls and all the souls of the faithful departed, through the mercy of God, rest in peace. Amen.

Now repeat after me:

(Optional hand motions are in parentheses)

Leader: Jesus, today we pray for our friends and family. (prayer hands)

All: **Jesus, today we pray for our friends and family.**

Leader: Who are coming to be with you in heaven. (point upwards towards the sky)

All: **Who are coming to be with you in heaven.**

Leader: Help them find peace. (make peace sign)

All: **Help them find peace.**

Leader: Please give them a big hug for us. (hug yourself)

All: **Please give them a big hug for us.**

Leader: And tell them we love and miss them. (hand heart)

All: **And tell them we love and miss them.**

Leader: We pray all this and more for our friends and family who are with Jesus, through Christ, our Lord, Amen!

Close with the Sign of the Cross.

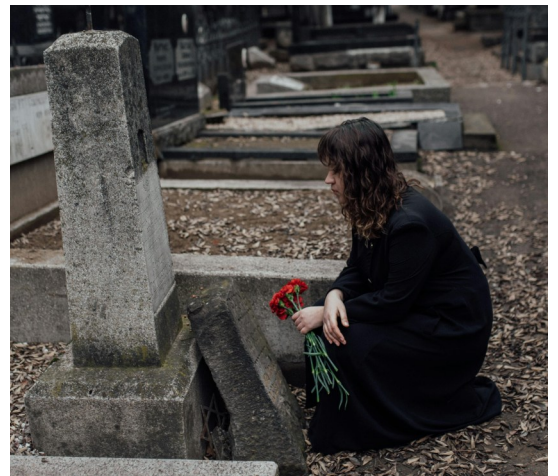


Photo by Arina Krasnikova at Pexels

Reading of Sacred Scripture

John 6:37-40

Jesus said to the crowds:

“Everything that the Father gives me will come to me,
and I will not reject anyone who comes to me,
because I came down from heaven not to do my own will
but the will of the one who sent me.

And this is the will of the one who sent me,
that I should not lose anything of what he gave me,
but that I should raise it on the last day.

For this is the will of my Father,
that everyone who sees the Son and believes in him
may have eternal life,
and I shall raise him on the last day.”

The Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.



Bonifazio di Pitati, Christ Addressing the People, n.d.
Smithsonian American Art Museum, Bequest of Mabel
Johnson Langhorne, 1956.11.12

Gospel Reflection

Jesus tells us that he welcomes everyone who comes to him. He is inviting us to always turn to him in the good and in the bad. Not only does he promise to be there for us, but we are invited to always turn to him every day. Even if you have had a challenging day, you can still make the choice to be close to Jesus.

We all know of someone or have had a loved one who has died. You might have also attended funerals or perhaps a day of celebration of life for a loved one. Jesus knew that his friends were going to be sad after he died and he cried with them. Jesus recognizes the sadness and then he reminds us that our stories do not end with death. They end sitting next to Jesus in heaven. We pray for our loved ones



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who are no longer here with us that they may be at peace and reach Jesus' side. There is a particular day designated to remember our loved ones who are no longer here on earth.

That day is known as All Souls' Day and we celebrate it on November 2 each year. On All Souls' Day some parishes ask families to bring in a picture of their loved ones who have died to display. Some families light a candle at home near pictures of their loved ones. Others visit cemeteries where their loved one's grave is or offer a Mass in remembrance of them. Pray for persons who have died on this special day but also remember to pray for them any time.

Now, the wonderful insight that Jesus reveals for us in John's Gospel is that he also promises to come back at the end of time. This means that on the last day he will come back for us and therefore we have to be prepared everyday by following him. Listening to his word and really acting on his way of reaching him in eternity. Many of the saints also serve as great examples of how they chose to follow Jesus. Many saints had to go through many struggles and hard challenges in their lifetimes. They are great reminders that we are also called to be saints during our lifetime.

So let's make the decision today to remember our loved ones who are no longer here with us by praying to Jesus for them. And also make the decision to follow Jesus in our everyday lives, just like the saints did.



Photo by cottonbro studio at Pexels

Faith in Action

Honoring All Souls' Day & Remembering Loved Ones

All Souls' Day is a special time for Catholic families to remember and pray for loved ones who have died. It's also a chance to talk about God's promise of eternal life and the hope we have in Jesus, the Word made flesh, who is always with us. In John 10:10, Jesus promises us:

"I came so that they might have life and have it more abundantly."

This promise reminds us that God's love is stronger than death, and that life with him forever in heaven is full of hope and joy. When we remember our loved ones on All Souls' Day, we are not just thinking about the past. We are trusting Jesus, who gives us life and hope. On this special day, we:

- ◇ Remember persons we love who are with God in heaven.
- ◇ Feel comfort from Jesus, who wants us to have a full and happy life (John 10:10).
- ◇ Grow closer to God, who fills our hearts with love and peace.

All Souls' Day is a time to let God's love grow in our hearts and to remember that life with him lasts forever. Let's find simple ways to remember and celebrate together!



Léon Frédéric, Public domain, via Wikimedia Commons
Top portion of *All things die, but all will be resurrected through God's love.*

Memory Connection Activity: Hearing Jesus Speak of Hope

- ◇ During Mass or family prayer, listen for a word or phrase that brings you comfort or hope (e.g., peace, life, love, forever).
- ◇ Afterward, each family member can share their word or phrase and say why it helps them remember loved ones.
- ◇ Connect this to how Jesus, the living Word, comforts us and promises us life in heaven forever.

Adaptations: Children who cannot share verbally can point to a picture, gesture, or hold up a card with a symbol of hope (e.g., heart, candle, cross).

Family “Remembering in Love” Project: Bringing Memories to Life

- ◇ Choose a comforting verse (e.g., John 14:27 “Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you”) or a favorite prayer for the departed.
- ◇ Write, decorate, or create tactile art with the verse or prayer. Display it in your home.
- ◇ As a family, share a story or memory of a loved one and talk about how you can honor them this week (e.g., lighting a candle, doing an act of kindness).

Adaptations: Use large print, tactile letters, or symbols (candle, heart, cross). Children can draw or use textured materials.



Photo by RDNE Stock project at Pexels

Sacred Memory Space: Making Remembrance Visible

- ◇ Create a small prayer space at home with a Bible, candle, cross, and photos or symbols of loved ones.
- ◇ Each family member can place a word, symbol, or object in the space that reminds them of God's love and the person they are remembering.
- ◇ Return to this space during the week to pray for the souls of loved ones who died and remember Jesus' promise of eternal life.

Adaptations: Use textured symbols or objects (wooden cross, smooth stone, soft fabric) for sensory engagement.

Cultural Learning: An ofrenda is a special table or space made for Día de los Muertos (Day of the Dead). Families put pictures, favorite foods, flowers, candles, and small gifts on the ofrenda to remember and honor loved ones who have died. It is a way to show love, share memories, and celebrate their lives. The ofrenda helps us feel close to persons we miss and reminds us that they are always in our hearts.



Photo by Alberto Lara at Pexels

Family Prayer Card: Carrying Hope Home

- ◇ Make a prayer card with a comforting verse or prayer for All Souls' Day (e.g., "Eternal rest grant unto them, O Lord").
- ◇ Bring it to Mass and hold it during the prayers for the dead.
- ◇ At home, place it somewhere visible (kitchen table, child's room, or by the door) as a reminder of God's love and the hope of heaven.

Adaptations: Use bold print, tactile decorations, or audio recordings of the prayer for children with visual or reading challenges.

Activities with Children

Let's Talk: Talk with your child about what All Souls' Day is and why it is important.

- ◇ What is it: All Souls' Day is a day of remembrance for the souls of the dead, particularly souls in purgatory. It is a special day to honor and pray for loved ones who have died, helping them reach heaven. Families often visit cemeteries, light candles, and attend Mass to remember their loved ones and find comfort.
- ◇ Why is this important: The day is a remembrance of all the faithful who have died, praying for all souls who are being purified in purgatory before they can enter heaven. Our prayers can help them get to heaven.

◇ Talking points:

- ◆ Talk about the difference between All Saints' Day and All Souls' Day.
- ◆ Discuss the concept of purgatory. Purgatory is a temporary stop between earth and heaven. It is full of hope and preparation for joining God. This is a time when our souls have to be cleansed, so we are ready to enter heaven. Paintings of purgatory often show fire cleansing the souls. Praying for persons in purgatory helps them get to God sooner.



Haylli, CC BY-SA 4.0, via Wikimedia Commons

Let's Read: This month, we can read about how God will love us even after death.

- ◇ Wisdom 3:1-9: This reading assures that the souls of persons who love God are in God's hands and are at peace.
- ◇ Isaiah 25:6-9: Speaks of God preparing a feast and overcoming death forever, leading to rejoicing and a renewed vision of God.

◇ Psalm 23:1-3a, 3b-4, 5, 6: Known as "The Lord is my shepherd," this psalm provides comfort in the face of death.

◇ John 6:37-40: Jesus promises that persons the Father gives him will be raised up on the last day.

Let's Pray: Have your child draw or write names of loved ones that they are praying for and then place them into a book. This can be of friends or family members who have died or someone who needs extra prayers at this time. You can read the book during your nightly prayers or when you pray during the day.

Saints Show and Tell: Have all the family members in your family research a saint and talk about them. You can do this once a week for the four weeks in November and learn about new saints. You can then pray to the new saints during the following week.



Photo by Nicola Barts at Pexels

Let's Make it: Use a template found online, paper bags, or socks to create saint puppets. You can use the puppets in prayer time during the month. Families can teach about saints using the homemade puppets!

Sensory Bin: Sensory bins can help children with hands-on learning. This month, read Scripture for November 2, All Souls' Day, and create a sensory bin based on words and objects mentioned and the different traditions for honoring the dead. Potential objects include:

◇ A peace symbol, something gold, something shiny, a roll of lifesaver candy, key words written on notecards, a flower, a candle, plastic food.

Saint for November

St. Albert the Great

Feast Day November 15

Albert was born around 1200 in what is now called Germany. His family was wealthy and important, which gave Albert the opportunity to receive a lot of education, including going to college. Albert had a great love for learning, teaching, and philosophy. Philosophy asks big “why” questions, trying to get to truths about life. At the time many philosophers thought you could either believe in science or believe in God. Albert formed observations about nature that incorporated God and put God as the absolute ruler. Albert was both a theologian and a scientist studying and writing about God and nature.

Even after Albert became a Dominican friar he continued to study and began to teach. His knowledge was so great that he was called “Doctor Universalis” and “the teacher of everything there is to know.” One of his students became St. Thomas Aquinas, a man whose writings had and continue to have a great impact on the Catholic Church.

In the last few years of his life, Albert experienced memory loss. This fulfilled an apparition of the Blessed Mother Mary he had when he was young telling him that if he was faithful, he would have great intellectual graces but lose them near the end of his life. Albert died on November 15, 1280. In 1931 St. Albert the Great was canonized and proclaimed a Doctor of the Church.



Tommaso da Modena, Public domain, via Wikimedia Commons

St. Albert is a prime example of desiring everything for God’s glory. Meaning that we should do everything and see God in everything to ultimately glorify him. He is the patron saint for natural scientists and many others including persons with memory loss.

Memory loss is not uncommon as persons age. Some activities that help persons with memory loss are games, conversations, or just having fun with family. In honor of St. Albert the Great visit or call an older person in your life. If no one comes to mind, consider a family visit to a nearby nursing home. Bring a simple game, short books for kids to read out loud, and listening ears.

Activity: Dress up as St. Albert the Great for a day. Though St. Albert spent most of his time teaching, he served as a bishop for two years. Dress up like St. Albert and pretend you are a bishop for the day. Pretend to bless your family with smiles and laughter. Have fun and enjoy!

Here are the supplies you'll need to create your costume:

White cardstock or construction paper, legal size 8.5 x 14 (or 11 x 17) - 2 pieces

Ruler and pencil

Stapler & staples

Gold marker or crayon

Robe

Red scarf or blanket

Bible



Directions:

1. With the two pieces of cardstock stacked, use the ruler and pencil to make a mark at the center of the short side and 5 inches from that end on each long side. Cut from each side to the center mark to make a point at what will be the top of your hat.
2. Staple the long sides of the cardstock, so the two stacked pieces open to a round hat.
3. Decorate the hat with a golden cross.
4. Wear the robe to resemble a cassock, put the scarf around your shoulders like a stole, carry your Bible, and preach the good news!

November Resources

Lacy. *Holy ghost soul cakes for All Souls' Day*. Catholic Icing. <https://www.catholicicing.com/holy-ghost-soul-cakes/>

Lacy. *Praying for the dead with kids*. Catholic Icing. <https://www.catholicicing.com/praying-for-the-dead-with-kids/>

Jessica. *The Catholic child and the souls in purgatory*. Shower of Roses. <https://showerofrosesblog.com/2019/all-souls/>

Tierney, K. *Memento Mori for kids: Other people died and you will, too. Or a very Catholic Hallowtide*. Catholic All Year. <https://catholicallyear.com/blog/memento-mori-for-kids-other-people-died-and-you-will-too-or-a-very-catholic-hallowtide/>

Twinkl Teaching Resources. "All Souls' Day for Kids." <https://youtu.be/h1O9U6QrI70?si=ejojKKQYFjaseZzx>