

October 28, 2018: Solemnity of All Saints, and All Souls Day

Dear Parishioners,

As you read this I will be walking somewhere between Florence and Assisi, Italy. I am praying for our Holy Rosary Parish as I walk.

I have really enjoyed teaching the Koinonia class on the Sacred Liturgy. It has been good to review the Vatican II document on the Liturgy which became the guiding document for the reformation of the Liturgy after the Council. One of the important elements of the Liturgy from ancient times is that as the Church prays or worships, so she believes (*Lex Orandi, Lex Credendi*). The Liturgy is the great teacher of our Catholic Faith.

This teaching element is significant in the month of November. Nov. 1st is the Solemnity of All Saints. This feast is a reminder that we are made for heaven and that we are all called to be saints, to live a life of virtue and become the best versions of ourselves. St. Therese of Lisieux reminds us that holiness is not in great and showy things, but in doing little things well, out of love for God, and befriending our frailty and failure. Therese says this does go against our grain. Confidence in God alone is where Therese found her center of gravity. Therese's confidence extended to weakness and failure which does not make excuses but accepts them. She would have been at odds with an 'I'm okay' culture; rather, she would be the first to admit, 'I'm not okay' and add joyfully, 'but that's okay!'

Another liturgy that teaches is All Souls Day, the Commemoration of All the Faithful Departed. This means we pray for the dead, for those who journey still in the process of purification that we call purgatory. Purgatory is something positive; it is an expression of God's love and mercy that he wants to purify souls to ready them to take their place at the heavenly banquet. The belief in Purgatory is an ancient and longstanding belief of the Catholic Church. If we listen to the prayers at the Liturgies at All Souls Masses and funerals we see that the prayers are invoking God's mercy and forgiveness on the souls of the dead, that they may soon enjoy the joys of heaven. It is indeed an act of charity to pray for the souls of the dead, especially our family and friends. "Eternal rest grant unto them, O Lord; and let light perpetual shine upon them. May the souls of all the faithful departed, through the mercy of God, rest in peace."

In Christ,

Father Vincent