

From Fr. Fleming's Desk



It's November, the month for remembering and praying those who have gone before us, the Month of All Souls...

O Lord,
November wraps its dampened shroud
'round nature's shrugging shoulders:
our souls know well the chill
of summer gone and winter oh-so-near...

Bare limbs scratch against gray skies,
and snatch the mourner's veil
from hearts laid bare in shivering loss,
alone, exposed in grief...

November, Lord: no other month
could better claim the name All Souls
or set the scene for praying, weeping,
grieving those before us gone
marked with the sign of faith...

So this November morning, Lord,
I offer you my loved ones:
created from your hand, claimed by grace
and held now in the arms of your embrace...

I offer you from my heart's depths
the ones I can't let go...

I offer from my hands to yours
the ones whose hands held mine...

I offer you a prayer of tears
for those whose absence haunts my days...

I offer from my selfish heart
the ones I bruised and hurt:
I pray you heal the wounds I caused,
and in your mercy, pardon me...

I offer you a prayer, O Lord,
for those with none to pray for them:
brothers, sisters never met,
sisters, brothers mine,
for all are one in you...

I offer you all souls who wait
your final purifying touch
to ready them for heaven,
for life with you forever,
for peace that has no end...

I offer you my grief, O Lord,
refresh me in your tender care:
help me trust I'll see again
the ones I've lost to death, when
gathered in your kingdom's joy,
your mercy brings us home...

Beneath November's canopy
walk others, Lord, who know as well as I
the depths of this month's memories
and All the Souls for whom we pray:
make us gentle with each other, Lord,
mindful of what binds us in your love...

Accept my mourning offering
on this dark November day until it dies
and wakes again, a new day born,
a promise of what's yet to come,
that day that has no end...

*(Take a few moments to remember,
to write down or speak aloud,
the names of those who've died,
for whom you pray in November,
the month of All Souls)*

May these and all souls of the faithful departed,
through the mercy of God,
rest in peace...

Amen.

