

Christ Church, Dalbeattie & St. Ninian's Castle, Douglas
SC010918 & SC011079

Feast of All Souls, 2nd November, 2022

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Dear friends in Christ,



*It is my Father's will, says the Lord,
that I should lose nothing of all he
has given to me, John 6:39*

The month of November marks
our entrance into the Churches
season of Remembrance.

Memories in life are important.

They are our life's Cairns and chart our journey to God's heavenly kingdom. God willing, most of our memories will be of good times though in the early days of November we recall those who have been called into the closer presence of God. The great Feast of All Saints is when we recall the courageous people of Faith who do not have a personal feast day. It gives us the opportunity to recall the saints we have met during our life's journey. The influence they have had on us and the way they have guided our lives. All Souls Day is when we recall the Faithful Departed. This is a respectful day when we recall those we have loved, who have become One in Christ. The loss of such loved ones can be crucifying for us, but as Jesus' disciples we have the Hope that we will be reunited at the end of our life's pilgrimage. This great Hope, that is ours, is reinforced by the All Souls, gospel acclamation:

*It is my Father's will, says the Lord,
that I should lose nothing of all he has given to me, John 6:39*

The 'Cloud of Unknowing' tells us that we should "Yield your body and soul to God's Spirit". The Cloud is advising us that we should be living God's Way of Love. What does this mean? Firstly, we must learn to love ourselves. Acceptance is all here. If we cannot accept our own humanity, how can we accept that of others? In making time to be with God we learn the gift of acceptance. Scripture and Sacrament lead us into the 'path of life'. They help us to cope with life's joys and difficulties.

Dealing with loss is perhaps one of the hardest things we have to cope with. Loss can be dealing with failure, but in this season of Remembrance, we particularly remember the departed. Sadly, for some of us the death of a loved partner can be the moment our lives stop. It marks the beginning of a new cycle, perhaps a new beginning we never dreamt of. Faith gives us Hope, and teaches us that death is not the end of life – it marks a 'new beginning! I came across this, hopefully, helpful quotation:

"The boundary to what we can accept is the boundary to our freedom."
Tara Brach



Could your life be like these rocks: a hard place? It looks so much greener on the other side. Yet, here amongst the rocks there is life! The rocks bear the scars of time and change. Yet, they have their own beauty. To be open to God's Holy Spirit is the way to let everything become your teacher. Particularly if you find something hard or impossible to deal with.

The second element is prayer. If we pray scripture we can come to understand the nature of God. This is particularly the case in the Letter to the Ephesians chapter 3:

14 For this reason I bow my knees before the Father, 15 from whom every family in heaven and on earth takes its name. 16 I pray that, according to

the riches of his glory, he may grant that you may be strengthened in your inner being with power through his Spirit, ¹⁷and that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith, as you are being rooted and grounded in love. ¹⁸I pray that you may have the power to comprehend, with all the saints, what is the breadth and length and height and depth, ¹⁹and to know the love of Christ that surpasses knowledge, so that you may be filled with all the fullness of God.

20 Now to him who by the power at work within us is able to accomplish abundantly far more than all we can ask or imagine, ²¹to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus to all generations, for ever and ever. Amen.

We can see how important it is to be open to God's Holy Spirit. Our willingness to accept helps us to rest in God and to live our lives to the full. Only then will we not live in the shadow of fear and loss.

Here is a quote that you may find helpful:

“Perhaps the biggest tragedy of our lives is that freedom is possible, yet we can pass our years trapped in the same old patterns...We may want to love other people without holding back, to feel authentic, to breathe in the beauty around us, to dance and sing. Yet each day we listen to inner voices that keep our life small.”

Tara Brach

May God set you free from the patterns of the past and present through His great Love and the free flowing of the Holy Spirit.

Yours in Christ

Christopher
Rector