

November is the month of All Souls. We pray particularly for family members, friends and parishioners who have died during the past year. We have the names of those buried from St. Hedwig's on the banner. While knowing they have died, we believe they are alive. They have taken on a new form and are invisible among us. This is our faith.

Our 1<sup>st</sup> Reading and Gospel reflect the mystery of life, death, and transformed life.

In the Book of Maccabees, we are witnesses of remarkable faith in the midst of cruelty and torture. One brother, shortly prior to his death, proclaims: "The King of the world will raise us up to live again forever." Another brother, near death, expresses "hope God gives of being raised up." In the viewpoint and belief of the Maccabees death is not the end. There is more life awaiting us. A gift from God.

In the Gospel, Jesus is confronted with an exaggerated situation of a woman married to 7 brothers over the course of her life. Whose wife will she be at the resurrection? Jesus responds at a different level than the question being asked. Jesus replies that on this side of death, people marry and re-marry. After death in the new life God gives us, we are like angels who neither marry or are given in marriage. We are spirits. The question has no bearing or consequence after death.

In our Catholic Tradition, we believe that 2 activities continue in the life following death. Those 2 activities are knowing and loving. We will continue to know more and more, especially in relation to the goodness of God. We will continue to love with greater capacity than we had while on earth. We will grow in gratitude for the awesome love of God. We will love as God loves. We will love those among us in the spirit world. We will love those who remain on earth in human form: our family, friends, neighbors, and community members to mention some.

The Maccabees believed in life beyond death. Jesus taught of the resurrected life. As we continue journeying through this month of November, call to mind the memories of any we know who have died. Pray for them. Lift them up to God from the love in our hearts.

At the same time, be mindful that those who are with God in heaven, are knowing us and loving us. They are assisting and supporting us in our daily living. We can thank God for this special gift.

My sisters and brothers: Life is precious. Life is sacred. Life continues and never ends. In death, we change form. How is this possible? God so loves us and wants us to live forever. What a God! Wouldn't you agree?