

Practices and Devotions

Remembering the Holy Souls all yearlong
Mark the seasons with devotions for the Holy Souls in Purgatory.

by Susan Tassone

The souls in purgatory are silent voices that beg and implore our help. They suffer day and night 24/7, 365 days a year, without any relief. They are forever crying out to the living, "Have mercy on us, for we are lonely and poor."

We urgently need "Apostles of Purgatory" or, if you will, "Purgatory Busters" to speak of them, pray for them, and plead their cause. Be their liberators! We have a unique opportunity to be their voices and echo their cries. If we could see the power of our sacrifices and the Masses offered for the Holy Souls, we would devote ourselves with such earnestness that the whole world would raise their eyes and take notice and would believe.

What have we learned from the saints? We know there is a profound communion between the living and the dead. We know there are no borders between us and those who have gone before us. We know the power and great efficacy of our intercessory prayers. We know the path. Are we ready to begin the journey?

The saints' journeys are tied together to assist us with a devotion full of fervor and zeal for the Holy Souls in Purgatory — a fervor to be passed on to all future generations, to fulfill our duty as Christians, to honor the memory of the dead, to offer prayers and suffrages for them, and to become holy as the saints are holy.

Special devotional prayers and practices for the various seasons of the year will give you the opportunity to imitate the saints and the charity of God. Reflecting on the deceased every day as a perpetual remembrance brings relief for those beloved souls in purgatory. The fruit of purgatory is purification. The remembrance of purgatorial souls will spur us to avoid sin at all costs; and we will bring glory to God, for heaven will be opened to a multitude of souls.

So it is from us alone that the Holy Souls in Purgatory expect relief, help, and the termination of their sufferings. We are their only resource. We alone are their deliverers, for we alone can suffer with merit and release them. Heaven encourages them; we deliver them.

Our purgatory mission has just begun. The great Pope John Paul II emphasized that the laity will be "missionaries" because contemporary man hears witnesses more easily than teachers. He exclaimed, "You will be able to set the world on fire! The hour of the laity has struck!" (Nov. 26, 2000, Jubilee of the Apostolate of the Laity).

Choose a number of prayers and devotions, Time is of the essence. Use them.

Winter devotions and practices

- Mark your calendar throughout the year for special dates as a reminder to pray for your dearly departed loved ones.
- Offer Masses year-round for living and deceased family members and friends.
- Create a family tree and offer Gregorian Masses (30 Masses for a departed soul) for your parents, grandparents, etc., to the fourth generation. This is very potent and brings many graces.

- Pray for 15 minutes before and after Mass in thanksgiving to Jesus and for all your ancestors who have gone before you. We would not be here if it were not for the sacrifices they made for us.
- Fast on Fridays in honor of our Lord's Passion. Implement different kinds of fasting such as "fasting" from gossiping, giving in to idle curiosity, complaining, criticizing, watching TV, drinking alcohol, smoking, or other activities that give one pleasure.

Spring devotions and practices

- Offer the gift of your indulgence for the Holy Souls at Divine Mercy Sunday (Second Sunday of Easter). Become a "Divine Mercy Apostle" by distributing prayer cards and literature inviting all to take advantage of the extraordinary Divine Mercy graces.
- Pray The Divine Mercy Novena (especially the one beginning on Good Friday) and the Chaplet of Mercy daily.
- At weddings, include your deceased loved ones at the petitions of the Mass.
- Plant a "prayer garden" in your yard in remembrance of the Holy Souls.
- Recite Psalm 130, the official prayer of the Church for the Holy Souls.
- When praying the Rosary in May, add an extra decade for the Holy Souls. (Saint Bernadette encouraged this style of Rosary!)

Summer devotions and practices

- Go on your own "purgatory pilgrimage" by visiting local parishes and designated shrines within your diocese. At each, pray for the Holy Souls.
- Take a "prayer stroll" through your local cemetery to pray for all those buried there. Bring holy water to sprinkle on the graves. (It is one of the first sacramentals of the Church. Holy Water refreshes the Holy Souls.)
- Visit the graves of your loved ones and clean sites in a spirit of prayer and penance.
- Pray the Eternal Rest Prayer on your rosary beads. (Eternal rest grant unto 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.)
- Pray the Seven Penitential Psalms (seven psalms that express sorrow for one's sins: 6, 32, 38, 51, 102, 130, and 143).

Fall devotions and practices

- An indulgence is granted the Christian faithful who devoutly visit a cemetery and pray, even if only mentally, for the dead. This indulgence is applicable only to the souls in purgatory. This indulgence is a plenary one from Nov. 1 through Nov. 8 and can be gained on each one of these days.
- Double up on prayers and sacrifices for departed loved ones and friends during this powerful season of the dead (the November remembrance).
- Visit cemeteries with your children. Teach youth to pray the Eternal Rest Prayer. Again, sprinkle holy water on the graves in the cemetery.
- Light blessed candles. The burning of a candle is a sign of our prayer, a bright, silent intercessor for the Holy Souls.

Excerpted from *Praying with the Saints for the Holy Souls in Purgatory*.

To order, call 1-800-462-7426 and ask for product code B6-HSPBK or visit PrayForSouls.org.
The price is \$12.95 plus shipping and handling.



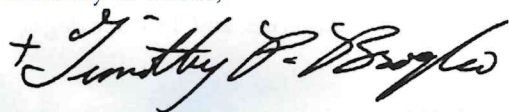
Serving those who Serve

Dear Friend in Christ,
On behalf of the Archdiocese for the Military Services, USA (AMS), thank you and your parish for participating in the National Collection for the AMS. The ministries offered by the AMS benefit those who serve in all six branches of the U.S. Armed Forces, are enrolled in U.S. Military Academies, undergoing treatment at any of the 153 Department of Veterans Affairs Medical Centers, working in civilian jobs for the federal government beyond U.S. borders - and their families. It is the mission of this Archdiocese that they be able to seek sacramental preparation for baptism, confirmation, first Communion, penance, and marriage; to benefit from consultation with a priest, and to receive the sacrament of penance as they defend our rights of freedom, speech, and face constant transition and uncertainty.

If in a position to do so, I ask you to prayerfully consider a donation to help me minister to the 1.8 million faithful throughout the U.S. and around the globe who serve to protect. They are the Catholic military men and women, Veterans, and their families, who are part of this global Archdiocese – *parishioners and families from your own parish.*

With sentiments of unwavering gratitude, I am

Sincerely in Christ,



(The Most Reverend) Timothy P. Broglio, J.C.D.
Archbishop for the Military Services, USA



**Triennial National
Collection for the
ARCHDIOCESE FOR THE
MILITARY SERVICES, USA**

Prayer of the Archdiocese for the Military Services, USA

Almighty God and Father, look with love upon our men and women in uniform and protect them in their time of need. Give them health and stability and allow them to return to their loved ones whole and unshaken. Be with their families and sustain them in these uncertain times.

Grant strength and peace of mind to the Veterans who have given their best for the country they love. Support them in infirmity and in the fragility of old age. Teach us to remember their sacrifices and to express our gratitude.

Manifest your tender care to those in the Military Academies who prepare for future service and to those who serve our Nation far from home. Teach us to remember the sacrifices of those whose efforts contribute to ensuring our way of life.

Bless and multiply the priests who minister to the faithful of the Archdiocese for the Military Services. Reward their generosity and keep them faithful.

Hear us as we present our prayers to You through Christ our Lord.

– Archbishop Timothy P. Broglio

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Did You Know?

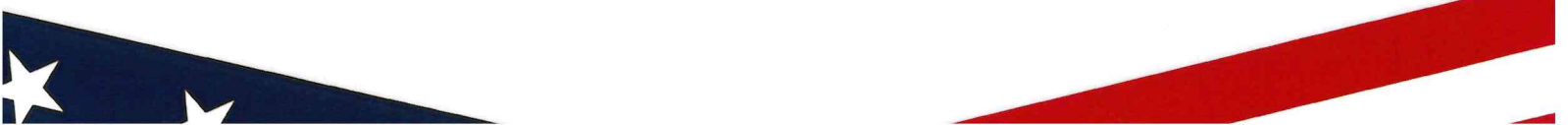
- Without the AMS there would be no Catholic chaplains. The AMS is the only Catholic diocese in the United States responsible for endorsing priests to serve as military chaplains and for the Department of Veterans Affairs Medical Centers.
- AMS faithful are the men and women serving in the United States Armed Forces, enrolled in U.S. Military Academies, undergoing treatment at a Department of Veterans Affairs Medical Center, working in civilian jobs for the federal government beyond U.S. borders - and their families.
- Programs and services readily available in other U.S. diocese, and vital to the men, women, and children served by this Archdiocese, include *Evangelization and Catechesis, Sacramental Records, Tribunal, Vocations, and the pastoral care of Veterans.*
- The AMS is the Archdiocese for the Military Services, not of the Military Services. This is an important distinction, as it receives no funding from the U.S. Government or U.S. Military and has no parishes from which to receive a weekly assessment. Instead, it must rely on the generosity of individuals, foundations, and organizations whose values and priorities align with its mission, programs and services.
- The AMS Co-Sponsored Seminarian Program is the only U.S. Vocations Program that provides priests to serve as military chaplains, and also to serve in parishes and dioceses across the country that struggle with their own critical shortage of ministers.
- In 2021, the number of sacraments celebrated for AMS faithful included 1,428 baptisms, 975 confirmations, 1,070 first Holy Communions, and 192 marriages.

AMS Coat of Arms

The coat of arms of the Archdiocese for the Military Services, USA is divided into three sections, one in red, one in silver or white, and one in blue – the traditional colors of the United States. In the uppermost portion, there is an American Bald Eagle holding in each claw the universal symbol of peace, a green olive branch. In the middle portion, there is a silver cross on the outline meridians of the earth.



In the lowest, the red portion of these arms, are the gold and silver crossed keys of Saint Peter. The composition of the arms conveys the message and mission of the Archdiocese for the Military Services – to be Americans bearing peace; to proclaim Christ all over the world; and to carry out the mission of the Church to offer healing through the forgiveness of sins.



Election Year Statement from the Catholic Bishops of Minnesota



Catholics are called to be faithful citizens and to infuse public life with the values necessary to protect human dignity, combat injustice, and promote the common good. Because of this duty, it is necessary that we, your pastors, reflect with you on the state of our public life and the choices Minnesotans face as we go to the polls in a year in which all state legislative and executive officers are up for election.

Right relationships

The task of politics is to foster justice and the common good. Despite our many differences, pursuing justice is a cornerstone political value shared by almost all Americans. In Catholic social doctrine, working for justice requires establishing right relationships between persons, where each is given his or her due. Justice requires that all parties embrace certain responsibilities toward each other. Paraphrasing Pope St. Paul VI, if we want peace, we must work for justice.

There are different types of justice. Commutative justice requires justice in commercial exchange. Distributive justice requires, among other things, that each person and family have access to the material resources they need not just to survive, but also to flourish. Economic justice means building an economic order on right relationships that foster both distributive and commutative justice. Social justice requires creating those conditions for all social actors, including schools, faith communities, and the government, to fulfill their social responsibilities.

Criminal justice should be built on criminals taking responsibility for the injustice perpetrated on victims, and society working through the penal system to rehabilitate and then restore offenders to the community. Other types of justice include racial justice, environmental justice, and legal justice.

When there is injustice in society, that is, when society fails to establish right relationships, the state can step in to help right what is wrong and to repair, in some measure, what is broken. That is a task of prudence, which is why it is important to carefully choose our elected leaders who, often at great sacrifice, take on the responsibility of making those decisions. They should be wise and virtuous. And voters, informed by Catholic social doctrine, should consider how candidates will work for the various types of justice across a spectrum of issues, including education, public safety, tax policy, migration, creation stewardship, and healthcare.

This year, in a special way, we call on Catholics to consider how a candidate will work for prenatal justice as a pre-eminent consideration in his or her voting calculus. Prenatal justice is not simply being anti-abortion, though that is the foundation of the pro-life witness. Prenatal justice means establishing right relationships between the mother and the unborn child in her womb, between society and the unborn child, and between society and the mother and father of the unborn child. As life begins in the womb, so must justice. As we discuss below, there are responsibilities entailed by each set of relationships and good public policies that follow.

Fostering prenatal justice

The recent Dobbs decision by the U.S. Supreme Court, declaring that there is no right to an abortion protected by the U.S. Constitution, has returned the matter of abortion to the political process for deliberation.

Will states allow the continued killing of innocent human life? What are our responsibilities to the child and the mother? How do we foster right relationships between them and the broader society for the common good? These are questions elected officials must answer as they work to foster prenatal justice.

It would be a dereliction of duty for us as bishops to pretend as though the abortion question was not a focus of Minnesota's election discourse this year, especially as Dobbs has changed the abortion landscape in this nation. And as Pope Francis teaches, we cannot stay silent when nearly a million unborn lives are being cast aside in our country year after year through abortion.[1]

Right now in Minnesota, the situation is troubling: in spite of the fact that scientific inquiry has definitively determined that human life begins at conception[2], a woman can procure an abortion for almost any reason at any stage of pregnancy up till birth. To put this in perspective, in 2021 there were 222 abortions involving babies older than 20 weeks. Almost half of all abortions are paid for with taxpayer funds. Our laws allow an 11-year-old girl to get an abortion without even one parent knowing. There is no requirement in force that a licensed physician perform an abortion. And abortion proponents, including elected officials, are working proactively to shut down pregnancy resource centers.

Fostering right relationships requires that we determine what we, as a society, owe the unborn child in the womb. At minimum, that is the right an innocent human being has to life, as well as the protection of the law from being killed. It also requires welcoming the child into the world.

Part of that welcome is establishing right relationships between mother, father, and child. We must encourage marriage and family stability, and clarify that abortion is not about bodily autonomy and freedom, but about the life of another human being for whom the father and mother are responsible.[3]

It follows that if we are intent on protecting innocent children from abortion, and ensuring that parents meet their obligations, then, as a society, we must step in to ensure that mothers and fathers are supported when necessary due to economic hardship.[4] This means, among other things, policies that fund: nutritional supports for expectant mothers; adequate healthcare coverage during and after pregnancy for both mother and child; childcare assistance; housing supports; early learning assistance programs; and parenting education. Enacting paid family and caregiver leave laws would help people retain work and care for their newborns. Reconsidering whether our adoption policies are unreasonably burdened by excessive costs or barriers to participation is an imperative. We also need to continue to support pregnancy resource centers through programs such as the Positive Alternatives grants that help them walk with women in need during crisis pregnancies.

Even beyond the pregnancy and years of early childhood development, we have a social duty to remove barriers to marriage, having children, and being able to raise them well. In short, we need to make family economic security the principal consideration in budget and tax policy discussions. By raising the family to the top of our state's policy priorities, we can help restore the family to its proper position as the foundational building block of society and the place where children can flourish.[5] In doing so, Minnesota can become the best place to bring children into the world.[6] And even if our state maintains a permissive abortion policy, putting families first will hopefully weaken demand for abortions.

In sum, working for prenatal justice transcends the false binary of pitting mother against child. Our public policy can foster right relationships and support the work of fulfilling our responsibilities to each other. It is in the fulfillment of our duties, even in difficult situations, that we grow in virtue and character and realize the best chance of true happiness.

Faithful citizenship

We encourage Catholics and other advocates for human life to step proactively into the political debate both winsomely and charitably, and to use creatively all peaceable levers of political power to prudently, and incrementally, transform our cities and our state into places that respect the human rights of the unborn by welcoming them in life and protecting them by law.

Part of that work is voting. A representative democracy such as ours requires that the citizenry elect good people into office and continue to inform their elected representatives of their views on important issues.

Unfortunately, many candidates are openly advocating for Minnesota to become an abortion sanctuary state with taxpayer-funded abortion on demand, as well as pledging to deregulate the abortion industry by removing safeguards put in place to protect women from medical malpractice or to protect teenage girls from ill-considered abortions. Far too many others, moreover, although professing to be pro-life on paper, are going out of their way to avoid talking about Minnesota's future as a potential abortion sanctuary or what should be done to limit abortion, preferring to avoid the subject altogether.

In this situation, it is incumbent on the Catholic laity to be especially proactive in speaking to candidates about prenatal justice and supporting legislative and judicial efforts to limit abortion. The effect of proactive engagement with candidates, not just in this election cycle but also during their term of office, will give courage and political will to those who support pro-life policies in principle, and moderate the pro-abortion extremism of other candidates and elected officials. Catholics cannot expect just laws will be enacted without their faithful citizenship and building relationships with legislators. That is what faithful citizenship is all about.

Combating abortion is a pre-eminent concern in public life

As Archbishop José Gomez, president of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, has noted, calling abortion a pre-eminent concern does not mean it is the only concern.[7] Ensuring that every human life is welcomed in life and respected by law does not end at birth. As discussed above, we believe that our Catholic faith leads us to promote an eco-system of public policy that promotes human flourishing for mother and child from conception to natural death.

What we seek to emphasize here is that, just as the bishops of the United States have identified the ending of abortion as a pre-eminent policy priority[8], so too should Catholic voters make protecting innocent human life and stopping abortion extremism a pre-eminent consideration in our voting calculus.[9]



[1] "[R]egarding abortion, the point when human life begins is not a religious belief but a scientific fact -- a fact on which there is clear agreement even among leading abortion advocates. Second, the sanctity of human life is not merely Catholic doctrine but part of humanity's global ethical heritage, and our nation's founding principle." (USCCB, "Living the Gospel of Life," 23).

[2] Mark Pattison, "Pope Francis 'has our backs' on pro-life cause, says archbishop," Catholic News Service, Jan. 24, 2020, available at <https://catholicnews.com/pope-francis-has-our-backs-on-pro-life-cause-says-archbishop/>.

[3] We understand that sometimes pregnancy can be the result of sexual coercion and rape. These are difficult situations that require care and sensitivity. We do not condone abortion in these instances, but we recognize that fostering justice may mean society has a special responsibility to care for the mother and child, including economic supports or facilitating adoption. Our parishes will help women in these difficult situations.

[4] Though the overwhelming majority of abortions are procured because the mother does not wish to have a child, almost one in five are reportedly procured specifically due to economic hardship.

[5] See the Minnesota Catholic Conference "Families First Project" (familiesfirstproject.com). Policies such as a permanent state child tax credit are the cornerstone of this initiative.

[6] It should be emphasized that working for policies that promote human flourishing does not absolve anyone from the responsibility of working for an end to the state-sanctioned killing of innocent human life. "[B]eing 'right' in such matters can never excuse a wrong choice regarding direct attacks on innocent human life. Indeed, the failure to protect and defend life in its most vulnerable stages renders suspect any claims to the 'rightness' of positions in other matters affecting the poorest and least powerful of the human community." (USCCB, "Living the Gospel of Life," 22).

[7] "A political commitment to a single isolated aspect of the Church's social doctrine does not exhaust one's responsibility towards the common good." (Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, Doctrinal Note on Some Questions Pertaining to the Participation of Catholics in Political Life, 4, 2002).

[8] "Pope speaks to U.S. bishops about pro-life issues, transgender ideology," Catholic News Service, Jan. 16, 2020, available at <https://www.osvnews.com/2020/01/16/pope-speaks-to-u-s-bishops-about-pro-life-issues-transgender-ideology/>. (Note Pope Francis's agreement with U.S. bishops that abortion is a pre-eminent social and political concern).

[9] "[A] well-formed Christian conscience does not permit one to vote for a political program or an individual law which contradicts the fundamental contents of faith and morals." (Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, Doctrinal Note on Some Questions Pertaining to the Participation of Catholics in Political Life, 4, 2002).

