

MARGARETTA

www.saintmargaretmary.org

St. Margaret Mary Parish
111 S. Hubbard St
Algonquin, IL 60102
847-658-7625
church@saintmargaretmary.org



Ways of celebrating November as a month of remembrance of All Souls.

We already live thinking about Thanksgiving and Christmas. I would like to invite you to step back to the beginning of the month as we still continue to remember those who already are with God. All Souls solemnity on November 1 and All Souls Day on November 2 reminded us that we are not alone on earth. There is a communion of saints in heaven, those who are suffering in purgatory and all of us who desire to be saved.

We can pray to God through the intercession of saints and in this way keep them alive in our memory. We can also pray for all deceased who are in purgatory. Those who suffer before entering to heaven expect our help because they don't have anyone else to pray for them. We lost many members of our families and our friends and every day we can find someone to pray for. What can we do then?

First of all we can pray and offer our sufferings for the deceased. It is very valuable to suffer on earth because in purgatory we need to suffer much more to receive the same goal = heaven. We can offer suffering to make purgatory easier for us or we can offer it for those who are already there. The other way to help is to offer a Mass. Never can we underestimate the value of Eucharist and Jesus' death on the cross given to the dead. There is also another way to give someone a fast way to heaven. We call it a plenary indulgence. If we are able to get one and offer it for a soul in purgatory that person goes immediately to heaven and then expresses gratitude praying for us for good life and good death and reunion in heaven.

Many of us struggle with grief after losing a loved one. I would like to present an experience of one of our parishioners that can help us to accept death. Steve Jobs mentioned that death is the biggest invention of life. Why? Without death there is no salvation. Eternity on earth would be a damnation as it is in hell. Only eternity in heaven is salvation.

Fr. Darek (frdarek@saintmargaretmary.org)

You Know Neither the Day, Nor the Hour

Nine years ago, one of my best friends and her brother were killed in a terrible car accident. While I sat at the cemetery last year on the heartrending anniversary, I reminisced about September 19, 2002—the few days before, the blurry days after—and the years that have since passed. What if I had known on Wednesday that Thursday would be Danielle and Kevin's last day on Earth? Would I have stayed with them every waking minute of their final twenty-four hours? Would I have told them how much they meant to me and how they positively influenced my life? Would I have apologized for anything?

Why is it that only after we lose a loved one, do we wish we had passed more time in that person's company, told that person how much we actually loved him or her, or said we were sorry for any wrongdoings? We often regret not sparing one extra minute, forgetting to say those three small but significant words, or failing to humbly ask for forgiveness.

Danielle and I had a perfect friendship, but she died before I had a chance to laugh with her one more time, give her another hug, or spend an additional hour talking to her on the phone. She died without knowing that I looked up to her, admired her positive attitude and trusted her with almost anything. Danielle made me a better person, and ironically, her untimely death taught me about the preciousness of life.

While it's unfortunate for someone, like Danielle, to die without knowing the impact he or she had on others, it's arguable even more tragic for a person to live without knowing just how much he or she is loved and appreciated. Instead of agonizing over shoulda, woulda, coulda's of those who have gone before us, we need to focus on making a difference in the lives of those still in this world. It's so cliché, but it really is the little things that count—a friendly smile, a listening ear, a patient expression, an "I'm sorry," or a "thanks for being you". We need to cherish the people that God has strategically placed in our lives.

What if you knew today was your last day? With whom would you spend your final twenty-four hours? Who needs to know how much he or she means to you and how he or she has positively influenced your life? To whom do you owe an apology?

Why wait until the end of someone's life, or your life, to make a person feel treasured or to ask for forgiveness? Make more time for others today; say those unspoken words. Regard every encounter as your last interaction, "for you know neither the day, nor the hour." (Matthew 25:13)

Michelle Wuensch is a freelance writer in the Chicagoland area who enjoys running and spending time with her family.

The Bible - Audio version of the New Testament

When you reach to take the Bible the devil has a headache, when you open it - a breakdown, when you begin to read it - passes out, when you begin to live it - escapes.

I discovered recently an audio bible that I love to listen to as I drive the car. I hate boring stuff, believe me and I am still excited to use this one. Why? The Bible was granted an imprimatur from The Vatican and includes a foreword by Pope Benedict XVI. There are more than 70 actors, many world-renowned, featured in this audio Bible, along with an original music score and movie quality sound effects. When I hear how Jesus went with Mary to the wedding in Kana I actually am with them there, I can hear everything, I almost smell the wine.

Last November Cardinal George received a copy and here is his Endorsement:

The Truth and Life Dramatized Audio Bible – Catholic Edition makes it possible for people today to encounter the words of Sacred Scripture as the inspired Word of God proclaimed by persons of faith. Hearing both well-known and less familiar passages of the Bible read by professional actors and actresses gives them a new freshness, vitality and impact that will attract and engage those who might not have the time, desire or ability to read the printed text. Most importantly, this compelling recording of the Word of God invites an encounter with the living Lord whose Spirit inspired the sacred authors and who, as much today as ever before, wants to bring us into a relationship with Him in His Church.

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The Actors:

Neal McDonough as "Jesus," Julia Ormond as "Mary, Mother of God," Blair Underwood as "Mark," Stacy Keach as "John," Michael York as "Luke," Brian Cox as the "Voice of God," Sean Astin as "Matthew," Kristen Bell as "Mary Magdalene," Malcolm McDowell as "Caiaphas," and John Rhys-Davies as the Narrator.

I presented this Audio Bible to the parish staff and we decided to show it to you. You can order using this form: