



Stronica Proboszcza



The Pastor's Page

October 28th, MMXVIII

Thirtieth Sunday in Ordinary Time

Month of the Holy Rosary

Rev. Mark A. Borkowski

FmarkB@aol.com

Niech będzie pochwalony Jezus Chrystus!
Praised be Jesus Christ!

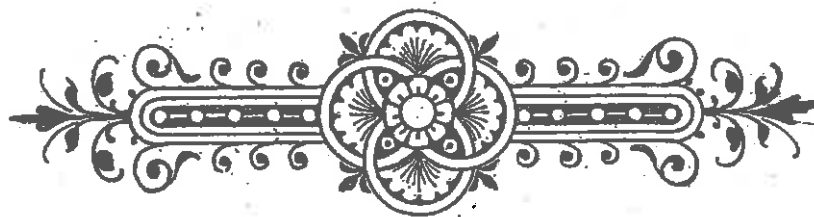
Sunday, October 28th – the Feast of Saints Simon & Jude, Apostles

The scriptures say very little about either Simon or Jude. In the Gospel of Luke, Simon is called a zealot. The zealots were a Jewish sect which represented an extreme of Jewish nationalism. For them, the messianic promise of the Old Testament meant that the Jews were to be a free and independent nation. God alone was their king, and any payment of taxes to the Romans, and the very domination of the Romans, was a blasphemy against God. No doubt some of the Zealots were the spiritual heirs of the Maccabees, carrying on their ideals of religion and independence. But many were the counterparts of modern terrorists. They raided and killed, attacking both foreigners and “collaborating” Jews. They were chiefly responsible for the rebellion against Rome which ended in the destruction of Jerusalem in 70 A.D. However, in Simon’s case the word zealot may simply have meant that he took the Jewish law very seriously. According to legends, Simon the Zealot spread the gospel in Egypt.

In the gospels of Matthew and Mark, Jude is called Thaddeus. Luke refers to him as Jude. We call him Jude to distinguish him from Judas Iscariot, who betrayed Jesus. He is called the patron saint of hopeless cases.

It is believed that Jude and Simon each traveled to Persia, where they were martyred. The type of martyrdom they endured is disputed. Some say they were crucified while there is also a belief that St. Jude was beaten to death with a club. After their deaths their bodies were carried to Rome for burial in St. Peter’s Basilica.

In our church the statue of St. Jude has recently been cleaned and moved to the front of the church. His statue stands just above the picture of St. John Paul II in the south transept of the church on the east wall. The statue depicts St. Jude holding a big club which may have been the weapon used to bring about his martyrdom.



Thursday, November 1st – the Solemnity of All Saints – a Holy Day of Obligation

All faithful Catholics are expected to participate in the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass this day. It is in fact a privilege for us to do so. Masses will be offered at 8:00 AM, 12 noon and at 7:00 PM.

Thursday and Friday of this week we observe two of the most important Catholic Holy Days. Thursday, November 1st, is the Solemnity of All Saints. Friday, November 2nd, is All Souls Day. This is definitely an important Holy day for Catholics even though it carries no obligation to attend Mass. It is the day we remember our beloved deceased in prayer and with the celebration of the Mass in their specific intention. Masses on All Souls' Day will take place at 6:30 AM, 8:00 AM and 7:00 PM. Please consider attending and offer to God, our Father, the most pleasing of all prayers for the people you love who have died.

The theological importance of these two Holy days is that they remind us liturgically of our belief in the Communion of the Saints. Whenever we recite the Apostle's Creed we claim to believe in the communion of the saints. Hopefully we have some idea of the meaning of this concept. The Church teaches that ALL of God's children have a special bond that unites them to Him and to each other wherever they may be. Because all of God's children are called by God to love each other their actions of love have a definite effect on each other. The effect is not limited to this life but extends into the next world of eternal life. Prayer is the source of these good effects and of course, Christian love is the motivation of all prayer.

It works like this. The saints are those persons who loved God and their neighbors so well in this life that they are now in heaven. We know the names of a few of them and we honor them with the title of saint and make them the patrons of things and name churches, hospitals and Catholic schools after them. Everyone else who made it into heaven is also a saint, but we have no official list of their names. It suffices that God knows who's who!

Those saints in heaven "look down" on us. They are interested in our lives as is God. Since they are with Him, they do what He does and as the song says, "God is watching us!" So are the saints! Like God they want only the best for us and because they love us they keep asking God for just that. This is praying for us and it does help us!

What are our responsibilities in this relationship? Well, we must pray to them and ask for their help. This kind of praying is an act of humility because by doing it we realize we need other's help. We cannot do everything on our own. We're only human! But we have even greater responsibilities!

Not everyone who leaves this world is ready to see God face to face. Every deed we do in this life has consequences. God's perfect justice requires that we atone or make up for sins we commit here in this world. If we do not atone for them sufficiently in this world or if we leave this world not completely focused on God and His love for us and others, then we will still have work to do in the next world. The Church teaches that we cannot see God face to face until we are completely ready. How do we get ready? Well, you cannot prepare yourself after you are dead so, do it now, in this life. Pray, receive the Sacraments with devotion, be kind and charitable to those around you. Love others now and show it in your actions!

Because this is a real challenge, many folks take a long time to get ready for God. They

must continue the prep in the next world in Purgatory. We can help them! We can pray for them. We can offer our Holy Communion for them. We can lovingly accept penances in their name. These means are very effective and important as they are unable to help themselves in Purgatory. They wait for us to remember and help them. If you really loved them in life you will not abandon them in death! I urge you! This All Souls' Day come to Mass out of pure love of God and of the Holy Souls! Do something totally unselfish for the dead. And be very certain that you live your life in a way that others will truly love you and pray you, have Masses said for you when you are gone from this world.

The Communion of the Saints then is this wonderful inter-connectedness of the family of God. It is the brothers and sisters already in the Kingdom reaching out to help those struggling to be good in this world, and also those making the final preparations for the Kingdom in Purgatory. It is those of us in this world recognizing our responsibility to turn to the saints in heaven for help, responding to our call to become saints ourselves, and using the human power we have to reach out to our deceased brothers and sisters and help them too. What a blessing it is to be a Catholic!

We loved them in life, we shall not abandon them in death!

Halloween All Saints All Souls

Each year, just as the harvest is finished in much of the world, Christians keep their own harvest feast – God's harvest, the harvest of the saints – on the first day of November. We begin this day on the holy vigil of All Saints, *Halloween*. We continue the harvest feast on the day to remember the dead – November 2nd, All Souls – and on through November, when the earth itself seems to fall asleep.

Now the nights are long and growing longer. The cold sets in. Autumn's glory is fading fast. We welcome the winter, the season that heralds the end of our days. To comfort ourselves and bring us cheer, we rally our Easter faith and keep a homecoming festival in God's holy city, Jerusalem. In that blessed place, our true home, our motherland, winter will pass over into eternal spring.

The marvelous customs of Halloween are also All Saints' and All Souls' customs. Don't end the fun too soon! Let us keep November 1st and 2nd with as much energy as October 31st.

On a holiday eve it's been customary to go outside in search of the first star to appear. Then we light a candle to keep brightly burning throughout the festival. On Halloween we light jack-o'-lanterns to keep burning from sundown on October 31st through All Souls, November 2nd. We have three nights of holy light.

Jack-o'-lanterns are also called "death's heads." There's serious business here! We set one by our doorway to guide home all the wayward children of God. As the winter comes, we make a place in our hearts and memories for the dead. We even dare to think how we're on our way to the grave, which for us is the doorway to God's holy city, Jerusalem. In Christ, the face of death now shines with the light of eternal life. The Lord Jesus has trampled down death by his own death – trampled it like a rotting pumpkin!

On Halloween, All Saints and All Souls, we decorate our homes with spooky images, with black cats and owls and bats. We tell stories of ghouls and ghosts and long-legged beasts. We shall have the last laugh, after all. In Christ, we have nothing to fear.

Trick or treat is another name for open-door hospitality – a hallmark of every Christian holiday. The demands of hospitality sometimes are an interruption and a nuisance. When we open our doors to strangers, we're never sure who will enter. Who knows? Perhaps it might even be Christ.

What does masquerading as ragtag wanderers, or as the most wicked of sinners, have to do with All Saints Day? The beatitudes tell us about who will enter the kingdom of heaven. Those least likely to have made much of themselves in this world – the poor and the meek, the peacemakers and the pure in heart – will become the saints of God. In the merciful justice of Christ, heaven will be opened to sinners such as ourselves.

Like trick or treaters at the end of Halloween night, one day we will remove our masks and lay aside our soiled clothes. And we will see ourselves as we truly are, the children of God arrayed like the saints in bright glory at the supper of the Lamb.

*All Saints and All Souls are a foretaste of the fullness of time,
when God will "harvest" all creation into heaven.*

Dzień Zaduszny – drugiego listopada **All Souls' Day – November Second**

In our Polish tradition the second day of the month of November is the one day of the year that carries with it an intense obligation to visit the graves of beloved deceased family members wherever they may lie. It is comparable to our American Memorial Day, but always has a deeply religious connotation. When we return to the final resting place of our loved ones, we not only call to mind many loving memories of their lives with us in this world, we are also reminded of our own mortality and our need to live each day in a way that is pleasing to God. A visit to the family cemetery might also help us to value more dearly the family and friends that still surround us and to repair any damage that may have been done in these most important relationships.

It is a beautiful sight to see in village cemeteries all over Poland this evening, hundreds of candles burning on the graves of the deceased, lighting the night with their flickering flames. The many lights on these graves remind us that even though a person may have left this world the soul lives on forever! I urge all parishioners to make an honest effort this Thursday, All Souls Day, to attend Mass, receive Holy Communion and visit the graves of your loved ones. It might also be an opportune moment to visit Mount Carmel Cemetery and to remember our pioneer founders in prayer.

As we watch the natural world die all around us during these last days of Fall, it is only fitting that our thoughts should turn to the end of human life and our preparation for it by ordering our life properly. It is helpful to all, to hear the words of Ash Wednesday at other times of the year than just Lent. *"Remember that you are dust, and unto dust you shall return."*

*Dobry Jezu, a nasz Panie!
Daj im wiecznie spoczywanie!*

*Good Jesus, Our Lord!
Grant them eternal rest!*

The Polish All Souls/Dzień Zaduszny Procession (part I)

During the month of November, our Holy Mother the Church, encourages all her children to make special intercession for our brothers and sisters who have been called from this life and now stand before God in great need of His mercy. Certainly we do this on the second day of the month of November, when many Masses are offered for the dead. Every priest has a special permission to say three Masses this day. The norm for a priest is at most two Masses a day.

In our Polish tradition we have the custom of the wypominki before the Masses. This is the reading aloud of the names submitted by the parishioners before offering the sacrifice of the Mass. Hearing their names spoken aloud again in the church can be very comforting to us no matter how long ago they departed this world! The human memory is a powerful thing!

Another beautiful Polish custom that is not frequently practiced here in the United States is the All Souls Day Procession. This procession usually goes from the church, where candles and fire to light the candles are blessed, to the parish cemetery. Church cemeteries, at least in small towns and villages are usually within walking distance of the church. These lit candles will be placed on the graves of loved ones.

Upon arriving in the cemetery the priest conducts a ceremony there that in some ways is similar to the outdoor Corpus Christi Procession in springtime. Four stations are set up in the cemetery and the procession moves from station to station while hymns are sung and prayers offered.

The first station is set up in that part of the cemetery where priests are buried. Here are some of the prayers that are offered at that station:

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ, we stand at the graves of priests. From more than one of them we have received our baptism and other sacraments. These priests proclaimed to us the Word of God and not only once counseled us and even admonished us, in an attempt to direct us to our salvation. Let us now bring our fervent prayer for them to Jesus Christ, the Eternal High Priest, who called them to their sacred vows, to proclaim the Gospel, to guide God's people and to the administration of the sacraments.

Those gathered are asked to pray for deceased popes, bishops, priests and deacons especially those that worked in their diocese and for seminarians, and religious sisters and brothers who have died. Deceased priests who served in the parish church are especially remembered.

"O God, eternal Shepherd and Ruler of the whole world, hear the prayers of your people and bring to eternal glory all, who have taken part in the holy ministry of the priesthood of your Son. Who with you lives and reigns for ever and ever."

During this month of the holy souls, please pray for the dead clergy.

Next week the second station will be presented.

Niech odpoczywają w pokoju. Amen. May they rest in peace. Amen.

October is Polish American Heritage Month! Be Proud to be Polish!

As we come to the end of this month of celebrating Polish American heritage it might be good to just ask ourselves what does it really mean to be a Polish American? Different people have some very different ideas about this. For some people being Polish means your last name ends in "ski" and very often it is a name that you find yourself spelling and pronouncing for others all the time. In fact you might be rather uncertain as to just how your name is supposed to be pronounced and have heard many different versions of it. For some people being Polish means that you like to dance the polka and enjoy this lively music that in fact was created in what is today the Czech Republic. Others identify being Polish with food. Kielbasa, pierogi and gołąbki are the most well known foods. They are in fact the home cooking of farmers and other very simple folk from the old country. Finally, many people connect being Polish with a strong enjoyment of beer drinking and strong vodkas and other hard drinks.

Friends, I want to remind you or perhaps inform you that there is so very much more to being a Polish American! Polish people are Catholic! They have been Catholic for 1047 years. They take the practice of their religion very seriously. In fact it has been their Catholic faith that has given them the strength and the courage to survive and even flourish as a nation through some very difficult and oppressive times in their history. Polish people are industrious and very hard working. They take good care of their property and whether well to do or poor, they see a great virtue in cleanliness and order. Polish people are creative and adventurous. The very thought of the majority of our ancestors setting out from rural Poland to the completely unknown of the United States and the many other countries of the world where they have migrated, proves that Poles are courageous people not afraid to take on the challenge of a new language, culture and environment! Polish people love culture and art. They appreciate history and love music. The Cathedrals, castles and palaces found in Poland and the churches and other impressive structures Polish people have built here in the United States are proof of this. Polish people are patriotic. When the first immigrants came to the United States they fell in love with this country and all it could offer them. They became good citizens committed to the common good of the nation and making personal sacrifices for that good. They prize their privilege to vote. They display both the American and Polish flags proudly. Finally Polish people love family. They recognize that it is in their family that they are closest to God, to Jesus and to Mary. And so they love each other dearly and live for those times when they can all gather around the family table whether it is to celebrate the great church holidays like Christmas or Easter or just the Sunday dinner or some other family event. Each member of the family is dearly loved and cared for and these feelings frequently spill over on any guests in a Polish home where hospitality reigns supreme! These are some of the lesser know attributes of a Polish American and we should appreciate them fully and celebrate them always not just during the month of October!

Good Advice for the Busy People of Today!

In the upcoming film "Beyond the Clouds," a story is told of an archaeologist who once hired some Inca tribesmen to lead him to an archaeological site deep in the mountains. After they had been walking for some time, the tribesmen stopped and insisted they would go no further. The archaeologist grew impatient and then angry. But no matter how much he cajoled the tribesmen they would not go any further.

Then all of a sudden the tribesmen changed their attitude. They picked up the gear and set off once more. When the bewildered archaeologist asked why they had stopped and refused to move for so long, the tribesmen answered, "We had been moving too fast and had to wait for our souls to catch up."