

The Commemoration of All the Faithful Departed
(All Soul's Day)
November 2, 2025

“O God, the Creator and Redeemer of all the faithful, grant to the souls of Thy servants and handmaids the remission of all their sins that they may obtain by loving prayers the forgiveness which they have always desired.”

(Collect for the Holy Mass of All Soul's Day, held on November 3 in the Traditional Latin Mass)

A typical feature in many new homes is a “mud room.” It is a designated place, usually located near an entrance, where people may remove dirty or wet clothing or shoes before proceeding into the main living area. The purpose of the mud room is quite simple. We are trying to limit the “outside” from being tracked into the “inside.” I would like you to consider this special space as an example of the state of Purgatory.

As Catholics, we live within a religious tradition first shaped by our Jewish ancestors. One will find, in the Old Testament book of Second Maccabees, an action performed by Judas and his army concerning those who had fallen in battle. *“He (Judas Maccabees) also took up a collection from all his men, totaling about four pounds of silver, (twelve thousand silver drachmas) and sent it to Jerusalem to provide for a sin offering. Judas did this noble thing because he believed in the resurrection of the dead. If he had not believed that the dead would be raised, it would have been foolish and useless to pray for them”* (2 Maccabees 12:42-44).

It may be said, by other non-Catholic Christians, this passage and book of the Old Testament is not found in their Bible. Therefore, they believe Purgatory does not exist or, at worse, to be a figment of an active Catholic imagination. Let us consider the words of Jesus in the New Testament to see if He sheds any light on the dilemma. In the Gospel of Saint Luke, Jesus said something which may seem odd: *“Why do you not judge for yourselves what is right? If you are to go with your opponent before a magistrate, make an effort to settle the matter on the way; otherwise your opponent will turn you over to the judge, and the judge hand you over to the constable, and the constable throw you into prison. I say to you, you will not be released until **you have paid the last penny**”* (Luke 12:57-59). In verse 59, Jesus plainly states you, meaning any of us, will not be released until we have paid the last penny. Notice, He does not say: *“until **I** have paid the last penny.”* Jesus is holding us accountable for a debt; one we, not Jesus, have contracted.

Jesus is quite clear; a debt is owed by us and must be paid by us. His words are understood once we consider the fact of Jesus being a good practicing religious Jewish man. He would have held the same beliefs as did Judas Maccabees roughly 100 years prior to His Incarnation. Although Purgatory is not mentioned by name in either the Old or New Testaments, we believe this revelation of God to be true and, guided by the Holy Spirit, has been fleshed out through our Catholic faith.

Some may still not accept this teaching of our Catholic faith; therefore, I conclude with one last plea to our reason. Our reason, enlightened by our faith, **must** hold the need for a state of Purgatory (a state of continued purification after death) because we realize not all will die entirely perfect, freed from all stain of sin. We may arrive at this conclusion through the words of Jesus who says: *“You, therefore, must be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect”* (Matthew 5:48). The Justice of the Father demands

all who enter into His Presence MUST be free from all taint of sin. Since this is the case, ask yourself, if you died tonight, would you be able to enter into His Presence (Heaven) based upon your being perfect as He is perfect? I, answering for all present, doubt seriously I would be allowed into His heavenly court. Therefore, His Mercy must provide for me, and those like myself, who will need assistance to free ourselves from any and all stains of sin and thus be perfect to enter into His abode. This Mercy of God is Purgatory. Purgatory is the state which, beginning during this life, must be present after death allowing for a soul to be completely, perfectly purified of any imperfection, due to sin or the temporal punishment for sins committed. These must be satisfied before one may enter into Heaven. For our part, we must pray and offer sacrifice for those, our holy departed loved ones, to assist them in this necessary process of cleansing. I think it would be a great pity for any present to realize, only after our own death, we had the opportunity to assist those we love enter into Heaven and neglected to do so. And, a further reflection, to realize those coming after us will not pray for us, who have died, for our perfection thus delaying our own entrance into Heaven.