

“The souls of the just are in the hand of God, and no torment shall touch them.”

These words from the Book of Wisdom are among the most consoling in all of Scripture. (Today), as we remember the faithful departed, the Church invites us to place not only their souls, but also our own, in those same divine hands. The truth of this day is simple yet profound: all souls are in the hand of God—those who walk the earth, those being purified for heaven, and those already shining in eternal glory.

It is a tender truth to remember when we grieve. Those we have loved and lost are not adrift in darkness. They are held. They rest in the hands of the One who created them and redeemed them. And even as we pray for them, God’s mercy continues to draw them toward the fullness of life. All Souls Day is therefore not a day of despair but a day of *hope*. It proclaims that love is stronger than death and that divine mercy does not let go of those who belong to Him.

St. Paul reminds us in the Letter to the Romans that “the love of God has been poured out into our hearts through the Holy Spirit who has been given to us.” The Greek verb Paul uses—ἐκχέω (ekcheō)—means more than a simple pouring of a substance. It expresses the abundant and enduring outpouring of God’s own life. This is not something symbolic or external; it is something inward and real. The love of God is poured into our hearts once for all and *remains there*, abiding within us through the Holy Spirit.[1]

What was once poured out in the Temple as a sacrificial offering is now poured into the human heart through the sacraments. In the old covenant, the life of the animal sacrifice, symbolized by its blood, was poured out upon the altar in the Temple, pointing forward to a greater offering yet to come. In the new covenant, that promise is fulfilled and ratified by the Blood of Christ poured out on the Cross — what we call the Paschal Mystery. And now, through the sacraments of the Church, that same Paschal Mystery is not merely remembered, or symbolized, or spoken of — it is made present. The sacrifice of Christ is made real for us: his saving grace touches us in a true and substantial way. The Temple worship of Israel foreshadowed it; the Cross accomplished it; and the sacraments now communicate it — truly, deeply, personally — into our very hearts.

Through the sacraments of the Church the Spirit continues to pour God's love into us, sustaining us as we make our pilgrimage toward heaven. God's hands do not merely hold us from afar; rather, through the power of the Holy Spirit in the sacraments, He dwells within us, animating our every act of faith, hope, and love.

In the Gospel, Jesus tells us: "This is the will of my Father, that everyone who sees the Son and believes in him may have eternal life." To see the Son means more than physical sight. It means to see *with understanding*, to perceive the truth of who Jesus is. It is a seeing of faith, a contemplative gaze that penetrates beyond appearances to the reality of divine love revealed in Christ.

The world around us often recognizes only what can be measured or touched. But faith gives us a deeper sight—the ability to behold the unseen. By faith, we see that the souls of our loved ones are not lost but live in God. By faith, we see that suffering and death become doorways to glory. By faith, we see that our prayers for the dead are not whispers into emptiness but acts of communion within the Body of Christ.

This is the mystery we profess every Sunday in the Creed: “I believe in the communion of saints.” We are united—mystically yet truly—with all who have gone before us, with the souls in purgatory who are being purified by love, and with the saints who already dwell in heaven. The bond of charity that unites us to them is stronger than the power of death.

To live in faith, then, is to entrust our souls—day by day—into those divine hands. Sometimes life feels like walking through what Psalm 23 calls “the valley of the shadow of death.” Yet even there, the Shepherd walks beside us. Our faith reminds us that God’s hands are not only strong but pierced hands that have suffered out of love. The Father’s love for us is what moved Him to send His Son, to pour out His Blood for our salvation, and then to pour out His Spirit into our hearts. We live because we are held in those wounded, merciful hands.

All Souls Day invites us to remember those who have gone before us, but also to renew our trust in the God who holds every soul in His keeping. His love surrounds the living and the dead alike. And one day, in His mercy, that love will

raise us up and reunite us with our loved ones in the light of His presence. Until that day, we continue to see—not with the eyes of the world, but with the eyes of faith—that in life and in death, we are in the hands of God.

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1. Johannes Behm, “ἐκχέω,” in *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, vol. 2, ed. Gerhard Kittel, trans. Geoffrey W. Bromiley (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1964; repr. 2006), 468. “In the NT the effusion of the gifts of salvation is thus viewed as the great divine act in which the promises of the OT are taken up and fulfilled.”