

“Our God is not the God of the dead, but of the living”

November is the month reserved for the prayer of the faithful departed. We are reminded that our life in this world has an end. There is death for everyone. The desire of people is to conquer and control. This is the reason why the world tries hard to avoid death. But death is inevitable. Since people cannot conquer and control death, they simply choose to ignore it. Remembering our departed loved ones also reminds us that despite death, life goes on. Death is not the end of life. Death is rather a passage or an entrance to eternal life. There is resurrection and there is eternal life.

In our today's Gospel, the situation presented to Jesus by the Sadducees, where a wife had several husbands is not incongruous even if the number of husbands (seven) is out of the ordinary and their sudden deaths too. We understand that this is a hypothetical case submitted to Jesus to trap him.

In fact, the Sadducees do not believe in the resurrection of the dead and in eternal life. Their adversaries, the Pharisees, believed in it based on texts like those of the first reading in which Job clearly expresses his faith in the resurrection. This will grow in the book of the Martyrs of Israel (The Maccabees) (2 Mac7:1-14) which recounts the death of the seven brothers arrested with their mother, by King Antiochus Epiphanes. This passage reveals the faith that each of these brothers proclaims in their own way. Indeed, the fourth brother about to expire declares: "The King of the world will raise us up for eternal life... Better to die by the hand of men, when we await the resurrection promised by God".

The Sadducees want to show that this belief is absurd. It is the purpose of their story which is intended to be a perfect illustration of this absurdity. "Whose wife will the woman be, since the seven had married her? they ask Jesus. They transpose into eternal life, without any adaptation, the life here below. It is clear that, asking the question that way does not

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announce a satisfactory answer. Indeed, Saint Luke puts in the mouth of Jesus an answer which expresses well the essence of the Christian faith: "those who are considered worthy of a place in that age and in the resurrection from the dead neither marry nor are given in marriage. Indeed they cannot die anymore, because they are like angels and are children of God, being children of the resurrection."

This answer puts before our eyes the reality of life after death from a perspective of faith based on the resurrection of Christ, which will lead Saint Paul to say: "If there is no resurrection of the dead, Christ neither is he risen". (I Corinthians 15, 13). And if Christ is not risen, our faith is vain. Resurrection is not an idea but a reality totally accomplished in the life of Jesus.— *Fr Bert*

SAINTS:

William Temple, Archbishop of Canterbury, 6 November. William Temple was born in 1881 and baptised on this day in Exeter Cathedral. His father was Bishop of Exeter and later Archbishop of Canterbury. William excelled in academic studies and developed into a philosopher and theologian of significance. After ordination, he quickly made a mark in the Church and at forty became a bishop. Within a decade he was Archbishop of York. He is especially remembered for his ecumenical efforts and also for his concern with social issues, contributing notably to the debate which led to the creation of state welfare provision after the Second World War. He died in 1944, two years after his translation to the See of Canterbury.

The Saints & Martyrs of England, 8 November. The date when Christianity first came to England is not known, but there were British bishops at the Council of Arles in the year 314, indicating a Church with order and worship. Since those days, Christians from England have shared the message of the good news at home and around the world. As the world-wide fellowship of the Anglican Communion developed, incorporating peoples of many nations and cultures, individual Christian men and women have shone as beacons, heroically bearing witness to their Lord, some through a simple life of holiness, others by giving their lives for the sake of Christ.

COMING UP:

- ◆ Nov. 13. **Remembrance Sunday**, 9:30 a.m.
- ◆ Nov. 17. Wedding, 2:00 p.m.
- ◆ Nov. 19. Wedding, 2:00 p.m.
- ◆ Nov. 20. *Santuario de San Antonio, Union Church of Manila & Holy Trinity Church*) **Joint Thanksgiving Service & Dinner, 6:30 p.m. Donations are requested. Please refer to the sign-up paper on the board by the parish office. Thank you.**
- ◆ Dec. 2. Wedding, 2:00 p.m.
- ◆ Dec. 17. Wedding, 2:30 p.m.
- ◆ Dec. 18. Wedding, 2:00 p.m.
- ◆ **Advent Lessons and Carols - TBA**