



Holy Souls  
Sodality

# For Heaven's Sake

www.PrayForSouls.org

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## Dear Members,

Let me first offer prayers for a grace-filled Lent for you and your family. We are only a couple of weeks into Lent, so there is still time for us to do something special out of love for God and others.

During this season of the Church Year, we are called to rededicate ourselves to God through deeper prayer, examination of conscience, and repentance from sin. By doing so, we prepare our hearts for the joy of Easter and the boundless graces available to us on Divine Mercy Sunday.

I encourage you to make more time in your busy schedule this Lent for the Sacraments, personal prayer, and acts of sacrifice. Especially participate in daily Mass as frequently as possible and make a good confession. And offer your prayers and sacrifices for the Holy Souls, especially your own departed loved ones and friends.

Remember that Lent is an ideal time for penance, fasting, almsgiving, and prayer. All of these can be done out of love for the Holy Souls in Purgatory.

**Penance:** Doing penance shows that we are truly sorry for the ways our sins have offended God. Such penance can



Lent is a time for focusing on the Passion of Christ, especially while praying the Stations of the Cross.

include acts of self-denial. It might mean giving up sweets or eating in between meals, or not watching Television. Whatever we do, we can offer up our penances for our suffering friends in purgatory.

**Fasting:** You can fast for the Holy Souls during Lent. As we remember Jesus' death on the Cross for our sins, Fridays during Lent is a particularly appropriate day for fasting. Remember that we abstain from eating meat on all

Fridays during Lent, and Good Friday is a day of both fasting and abstinence. When we fast, we seek to purify our hearts so we are more in tune with God's priorities and the sufferings of the hungry and the poor. In the case of the Holy Souls, we can pray for a keener sense of how they hunger to see the face of God.

**Almsgiving:** Consider what the Book of Tobit teaches us about the value of almsgiving: "For almsgiving delivers from death, and it will purge away every sin" (12:9). You can give alms for the poor and needy while offering up the sacrifice it entails for the Holy Souls. For example, you can eat simpler meals and give the money you save to a local soup kitchen. You might even eliminate all eating out during Lent as a way to increase your contribution to the needy. Such sacrifices through almsgiving can be one of the best ways to assist the Holy Souls, assuming it is done with their intention in mind.

**Prayer:** The Holy Sacrifice of the Mass is our greatest prayer. So let's participate in daily Mass as much as possible during Lent and remember the Holy Souls every time we do. Other powerful prayers during Lent include the Stations of the Cross, the

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Holy Rosary, and the Chaplet of The Divine Mercy. In fact, as is the case with fasting, Fridays during Lent are a particularly appropriate day on which to pray the Stations since we are devoutly recalling our Lord's Passion and death on the Cross. Further, when we devoutly pray the Stations, the Church grants a plenary indulgence, which we can apply to a soul suffering in purgatory. The usual conditions apply for such an indulgence: We must be completely detached from sin, go to confession eight days before or after, attend Mass and receive Holy Communion, and pray for the intentions of the Holy Father.

As we consider all these ways we can aid the souls in purgatory this Lent, I wanted to especially encourage you to remember recently departed loved ones and friends. In this light, I wanted to

share with you how one of our Marian seminarians, Brother Angelo Casimiro, MIC, recently dealt with the pain and suffering of losing his mother to cancer.

As he reflected on the final days with his mother, he says he gained a deeper appreciation of his call as a Marian to remember the Holy Souls:

"After Mom passed into eternal life, my family immediately began the Filipino tradition of praying for the repose of a soul of the deceased for 40 days. On that evening, we invited relatives and friends to come over to pray for the soul of my mom. I was asked to lead the prayers invoking God's mercy upon her soul. Our prayers ended with a recitation of the Chaplet of The Divine Mercy. As I lead the prayers, I felt the immense importance of praying for the Holy Souls in Purgatory, such as I had never felt before. I finally

understood the zeal of the Founder of the Marian Congregation, Blessed Stanislaus Papczynski, for praying for the repose of the Holy Souls. As such, I came to realize how all of these things summed up what it means to be a Marian of the Immaculate Conception: Mary, Mercy, and the Holy Souls."

May we, too, be filled with "zeal" in "praying for the repose of the Holy Souls" this Lent, especially as we remember our own recently departed loved ones. May our earnest prayer be that they would soon behold our crucified and risen Lord face to face in the glory of heaven.

Sincerely in The Divine Mercy and Mary Immaculate,

*Fr. Joseph, MIC*

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## *Lenten Tips*

• **Fasting:** In addition to fasting from food on Fridays during Lent, consider fasting from a leisure activity, such as watching your favorite TV program or enjoying a movie over the weekend. Spend the time you would ordinarily devote to your leisure activity praying for the Holy Souls.

• **Remembering departed loved ones:** Focus your Lenten prayer and sacrifices upon the soul of a particular departed loved one each of the remaining weeks of Lent. In your home, place a photo of the loved one in a prominent place as a reminder to pray for the person.

## *Departed family is remembered daily by Marians*



Sodality Member Francis Bourdon says that during Lent, he comes to Eden Hill in Stockbridge, Mass., every Sunday, lights a candle in Our Lady of Mercy Candle Shrine, and then goes into the adjoining chapel to pray for deceased family members.

"I joined the Holy Souls Sodality because life is so hectic, especially being part of the 'Sandwich Generation.' I'm so busy being involved with care for both my

parents and my grandchildren that I don't always remember to pray daily for the release of deceased family members. Being a member of the Holy Souls Sodality means that not one day goes by without the Marians praying, particularly in daily Mass, to remember the souls of my departed family members.

"During this Lenten season, my prayers are particularly focused on remembering my grandparents and my wife's brothers and her father."