



ARCHDIOCESE OF CACERES
OFFICE OF THE ARCHBISHOP
Archbishop's Residence
Naga City

CIRCULAR

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TO: ALL THE PRIESTS AND FAITHFUL IN THE ARCHDIOCESE OF CACERES
RE: SOLEMNITY OF ALL SAINTS AND COMMEMORATION OF ALL THE FAITHFUL DEPARTED

**“Eternal rest grant unto the souls of our departed brothers and sisters,
O Lord, and let your perpetual light shine upon them.”**

On November 1, the Church celebrates the Solemnity of All Saints, a Holy Day of Obligation, honoring all those faithful in heaven, the known and unknown saints. The feast begins the traditional Octave of All Saints from November 1 to 8. Then, November 2 is the Commemoration of All the Faithful Departed, also known as All Souls Day, a day set aside to pray for all the dead. All Souls Day shifts the Church’s focus on praying for the Faithful Departed throughout November.

It is during the month of November that being so the Church meditates on the Communion of Saints, which is the link with the faithful who have already reached heaven (*the Church Triumphant*), the faithful departed who are still expiating their sins in Purgatory (*the Church Suffering*) and of the pilgrim faithful still here on earth (*the Church Militant*). The **Catechism of the Catholic Church**, No. 962, states: “*We believe in the communion of all the faithful of Christ, those who are pilgrims on earth, the dead who are being purified, and the blessed in heaven, all together forming one Church; and we believe that in this communion, the merciful love of God and his saints is always [attentive] to our prayers*” (**Paul VI, CPG 30**).

The Church acknowledges the need and duty of prayer for the dead. It is recommended even in the Old Testament: “*It is therefore a holy and wholesome thought to pray for the dead, that they may be loosed from sins*” (2 Macc. 12:46). This duty is expressed in public and private prayers but especially in the offering of the Eucharistic Sacrifice for the repose of souls. Therefore, we encourage the faithful to offer masses for their departed loved ones during the *Triduum* or Novena Masses in their respective parishes. They can also visit the cemetery during the octave (*at least on November 5-8*) to avail of the plenary indulgences. Our beloved dead are in need of our prayers as they can no longer pray for themselves. But we can pray on their behalf so they may enter the joy of heaven.

In this way, we do not forget the essential practice of praying for the dead even if **Catholic cemeteries in the Archdiocese of Caceres will be temporarily closed from October 29 to November 4, 2020** to avoid large gathering of people in the burial ground while COVID-19 is still a threat. However, we advise the faithful to visit the tombs of their departed loved ones early or after the temporary closure when there are smaller number of people in the

cemetery. In doing so, health protocols of wearing the face masks, face shields, and social distancing shall be observed.

As we commemorate All Saints' Day and All Souls' Day, let us examine how our earthly lives can merit eternal life with God. Let us ask God to heal and transform us so at the time of our death, we may join Him forever.

This is also to inform Your Reverences that a concelebrated mass for all the souls of the departed bishops and priests of Caceres will be held at the Resurrection Garden Chapel of the Holy Rosary Major Seminary on **November 1, 2020 (Sunday)** at 9:00 in the morning.

I enjoin Your Reverences to come and once again affirm our collegiality in remembering our brother bishops and priests now joined with the Lord, the High Priest.

Given at our Chancery, Pilgrim City of Naga, Republic of the Philippines, this 7th day of October, Feast of the Most Holy Rosary, in the Year of our Lord, 2020.

In Christ,


✠ ROLANDO J. TRIAS TIRONA, O.C.D., D.D.
Archbishop of Caceres