

POOR SOULS A 2008

John 6: 37-40

This is the will of my Father,
that everyone who sees the Son and believes in him
may have eternal life.

MY WINTER COAT CAME OUT OF THE CLOSET ALREADY.

AND SO BEGINS THE LONG GRAY DAYS OF AUTUMN

LEADING TO WINTER.

THE BEAUTIFUL COLORED LEAVES OF OCTOBER

ARE NOW FALLING

READY FOR RAKING.

DAYLIGHT IS NOW PRECIOUS;

NIGHT FALLS EARLIER AND LASTS LONGER.

THE GRAYNESS OF WINTER HAS BEGUN TO TAKE HOLD

OF THE LANDSCAPE

AND OUR SPIRITS.

YET, I SAW SOME OF YOU,

THIS PAST WEEK,

DEFY THE PESSIMISM OF LATE AUTUMN

I SAW YOU PLANTING FLOWER BULBS.

IN THE COLD GRAY EARTH

YOU BURIED THESE BULBS OF PACKED ROOTS

IN THE CERTAIN HOPE OF APRIL RESSURECTION.

AS WE BUNDLE UP AGAINST THE FIRST WINDS OF WINTER,

WE DARE TO TRUST IN THE PROMISE OF THESE BULBS;

DAFFODILS AND TULIPS AND LILIES AND HYACINTHS

WILL COME –WE KNOW-

IN THE SPRING,

CONQUERING THE GRAY WINTER COLD.

WE GENTLY PLACE THEM IN THE GROUND

COVER THEM WITH EARTH

AND ENTRUST THEM TO GOD’S HANDS.

AND WE LIVE THE HOPE THAT WILL NOT DISAPPOINT.

TODAY WE REMEMBER THE SOULS OF OUR LOVED ONES,

THE ONES WE PLACE IN THE GROUND

COVER THEM WITH EARTH

AND ENTRUSTED THEM TO GOD.

OUR NOVEMBER-LIKE SADNESS AT THEIR PASSING

SHOULD FIND COMFORT IN CHRIST’S PROMISE TO US

THAT THEY WILL RISE AGAIN

COVERED IN GLORY AND LIVING IN PEACE.

THIS WEEKEND, THE FEASTS OF ALL SAINTS AND NOW THE POOR SOULS

TELLS US,

SHOUTS TO US

THAT THE PLACE THAT OUR LOVED ONES

HAD IN OUR LIFE,

WHICH IS NOW EMPTY

IS BEING HEALED BY OUR FAITH IN GOD’S PROMISE.

THE FAITH AND TRUST THAT ALLOWS US TO PLANT BULBS

IN THE HARD NOVEMBER GROUND

ENABLES US TO ALSO

TO BELIEVE THAT DEATH IS NOT AN ENDING

BUT A NEW BEGINNING.

OUR FAITH IN CHRIST'S RESSURECTION

AND IN OUR RESSURECTION

HAS BEEN PLANTED IN THE SADNESS OF OUR HEART

TO GIVE US COMFORT AND TO GIVE US PEACE.

WE COME HERE TODAY

TO REMEMBER

OUR DECEASED REALTIVES, PARISHIONERS AND FRIENDS

IN OUR PRAYERS AND SACRIFICES

AND TO COMMEND THEM AGAIN TO GOD,

THE GOD WHO UNFAILINGLY RAISES US FROM ETERNAL DEATH.

THIS IS WHY JESUS CAME –

TO SAVE US FROM OUR SINS AND ETERNAL DEATH

TO PAY THE PRICE THAT REDEEMS US AND SAVES US.

AND THIS IS WHY WE COME –

BECAUSE WE REMEMBER WHAT HE HAS DONE FOR US

AND FOR OUR LOVED ONES.

HE HAS SAVED US, REDEEMED US, GIVEN US ETERNAL LIFE

AND SO WE COME TO SAY THANK YOU.

THIS IS WHAT RELIGION IS IN ITS MOST SIMPLE TERMS.
WE BELIEVE WHAT GOD HAS DONE FOR US IN JESUS
AND WE HAVE THE DECENCY TO AT LEAST
SAY 'THANK YOU',
AND TO LIVE IN THIS TRUTH
EACH SUNDAY IS OUR CHANCE TO COME AND NOT FORGET
WHAT HE HAS DONE AND TO SAY THANK YOU.
OUR GOD KNOWS THE PAIN AND THE LOSS
THAT IS OURS AT THE DEATH OF OUR LOVED ONES
AND HE HAS PROMISED THEM AND US
THAT HE LOVES THEM AND CARES FOR THEM.
TODAY, WE HAVE OUR CHANCE TO LOVE THEM AND CARE FOR THEM
BY REMEMBERING THEM IN OUR PRAYERS
AND ASSISTING THEM WITH OUR SACRIFICES.
WE DO NOT KNOW WHAT THE PROCEEDURE IS BEYOND THE GRAVE
BUT AS PEOPLE WHO LOVE OUR DEPARTED
WE ARE GIVEN THE CHANCE TO HELP THEM
NOW, WITH OUR PRAYERS
IF THEY ARE IN NEED OF THEM.
IT IS OUR WAY TO CONTINUE TO REMEMBER AND LOVE THEM
EVEN IN DEATH.
ETERNAL REST GRANT TO THEM O LORD
AND LET PERPETUAL LIGHT SHINE UPON THEM

MAY THEIR SOULS

AND ALL THE SOULS OF THE FAITHFUL DEPARTED

REST IN PEACE. AMEN