



Immaculate Conception
Church

Homily for the Feast of All Souls

Year A 2014

The famous author, C.S. Lewis, was portrayed by Anthony Hopkins in the film, "Shadowlands." It is the true story of an episode in the life of this great Christian writer. Born in Ireland in 1898, C.S. Lewis became a Professor of Medieval and Renaissance Literature at Cambridge. He had a lasting influence on his students.

Late in life, he met a woman from America. In her he found the gift of love. His life blossomed. His face became radiant. It was obvious to everyone he knew that he was falling deeply in love. However, this woman was diagnosed with cancer, destined to die at a young age. He married her before she died.

His wife had a child from a previous marriage. The film ends with this dramatic scene. After the funeral the young boy of about ten years of age was alone in the attic. C.S. Lewis sat down next to him. All the boy could say was "I miss her," and both started to cry as they hugged each other.

We all understand that sense of "I miss her." For we have all experienced the loss of people in our lives whom we have loved so much. In their dying, they took a part of our hearts. They will live in our memory for the rest of our lives.

It is our faith in what happens to those who have gone before us that is the center and heart of today's Feast of All Souls. For we recall the profound mystery that God created each one of us to experience a life that never ends. Once again we remember that Christ rose from the dead in order to break the bonds of death for each one of us and for all of us. And the Church teaches us that in our birth to a new and eternal life we will be reunited with those we have loved so much and whom we miss so dearly.

But we also believe that the journey between our life here and the next life is one of being freed from all the burdens of life that only serve to weigh us down and hold us back from receiving the fullness of God's love. We are not perfect. To be human is always to be imperfect, inconsistent and incomplete. And so as we leave our earthly dwelling the wonder of God's healing grace continues to chip away at our imperfections so that our hearts might be free to be at home with God and all the saints for all time.

On this Feast of All Souls we pray for those whom we hold so dear in our hearts. We pray that their healing journey may pass quickly and that they might truly rest "in the hands of God" as they enter that "dwelling place" prepared for them from the beginning of time. For to die is to learn what is the true gift of faith: that Christ is the resurrection and the life and that in Him there is no death...only life eternal.