

Reflection Tuesday Week 31 All Souls 2021

In Jewish culture **Remembrance** always has a special meaning: *making present*. This is why Jesus said *Do this in remembrance of me* when handing out the consecrated bread and wine, his Body and Blood. Jesus is truly present in the Eucharist and is present here with us this morning. Every Eucharist renews the presence of Jesus in the world. A presence that is healing, comforting, forgiving; a presence that sets us free from all that holds us back from deeply loving him and each other.

In celebrating our loved ones who have died, we also make them present; their goodness, love and inspiration is renewed in the world and especially in the lives of you who love them and whom they love. When we tell stories about our departed loved ones, we not only relive the story but also the way we felt at the time and in the telling we feel their presence which is sometimes why we cry or laugh or feel a sense of joy, but most of all we feel their love. Later we will bless the graves of our loved ones and, in the process, they will bless us anew with a love made fresh in heaven.

*In these days when we look back
upon generations of the mercy of God,
brilliantly lit in those who came before us,
I like to think, too,
of the mercy that will stretch beyond us.
We have laid so many to rest
that our grief is ever present with us,
but so, likewise, are our loved ones—
the paths they walked, the prayers they prayed for us.
May we realize, too, that someday
we also will live on earth only in memory,
carried in the hearts of those who loved us.
In remembering our death, may we move through each day
with tenderness, with gentleness,
with love strong enough to stretch that thin veil
between heaven and earth into transparency.
May we light the candles that will brighten the lives
of those who will come after us.
And may we always recognize this truth:
That the goodness of God
is matched only by its might,
ever transcending both life and death. Amen.*

Eternal rest grant unto them