



## Spiritual Reflection for the Family

# All Saints/All Souls Remembering Our Heritage

### Materials Needed

Bible

### Preparation for the Family Leader

The feasts of All Saints and All Souls are a time for us to remember and reflect on our heritage as followers of Jesus and as members of the Church. As Christians, we hope in the resurrection and celebrate our belief that Jesus shows us the way to eternal life. As Catholics we celebrate and take comfort in the communion of saints—a community of faithful people who have gone before us in life and death. We have an awesome heritage of people who have shown us the way to Jesus by the way they have lived. Some of these people are our own family members.

### 1. Introduction to the Theme

Ask family members to reflect back on everything they know about All Saints and All Souls Day. Talk for a few minutes about what your experience of All Saints and All Souls Day has been both in your home and in your parish community.

Share in your own words:

*Our celebration of All Saints and All Souls Day has helped us remember some very important things about what we believe. These beliefs are a part of heritage as God's people.*

*We believe in a communion of saints.  
We believe that the saints are a part of*

*the people of God. They lived faithfully, they are still a part of our community today.*

*We believe that the saints who have gone before us continue to help and guide us. They are our friends in Jesus.*

*We remember the heritage they have left us—that of loving God faithfully and serving God and each other.*

*We believe and have hope that the members of our family who have died are part of this communion of saints. They are a part of God's story of life conquering death.*

*We believe that God assures eternal life to all who die in God's friendship. Some of these people might need a spiritual cleansing to get fully ready to greet God in the fullness of heaven. We pray for them and we remember how they desired to see God face to face.*

*Many of the people who have gone before us, who are now with God, were very ordinary people who believed, who loved, and who lived faithfully and touched the lives of their families, their loved ones and the communities they lived in and served. Such people are a part of this family's history. We remember them—those who are now with God and those waiting to be in God's presence in heaven.*

## 2. Time for Storytelling

Family members share stories about the people in the family who have died. (If you have pictures of family members displayed, gather around the photos as you remember your loved ones.

- ❖ What do we remember about them?
- ❖ How did they show us God?

## 3. Stories from Our Faith Tradition

Read Hebrews 11:1-42, 12:1-2.

## 4. What Our Family Can Do

- ◆ Paul's letter to the Hebrews is filled with stories about the faithfulness of God's people in the Hebrew Scriptures. These

stories are a part of our heritage. The Gospels, the lives of the saints, etc. are also a part of our heritage. If our family was going to write a letter expressing the faith of our family—history to the present—what and who would we tell about in that letter? What is our family heritage of faith?

- ◆ Set an extra place at the dinner table every night during the month of November for a family member who has died. Remember that person's presence, share stories about the life, the love, the faith that person shared with the family. (Note, include deceased family members who some family members may have never met. This is a wonderful way to keep their memories and stories alive as part of the family's history, and as part of the family's own faith story.)