



The Holy See

HOLY MASS IN COMMEMORATION OF THE FALLEN

HOMILY OF HIS HOLINESS POPE FRANCIS

*Laurentino Cemetery
Friday, 2 November 2018*

[[Multimedia](#)]

Today's liturgy is realistic; it is tangible. It shows us the three-dimensional framework of life, three dimensions that even children understand: the past, the future, the present.

Today is a day to *commemorate the past*, a day to remember those who have walked before us, who have also accompanied us, have given us life. To remember, to commemorate.

Remembrance is what makes a people strong, because it feels rooted in a journey, rooted in a history, rooted in a people. Remembrance helps us understand that we are not alone, we are a people: a people with a history, with a past, with a life. Remembering so many who have shared a journey with us, and they are here [*indicating the surrounding tombs*]. It is not easy to remember. We often struggle to turn our thoughts back to what has happened in my life, in my family, in my people.... But today is a day of remembrance, the remembrance that takes us to the roots: to my roots, to the roots of my people.

Today is also a day of *hope*: the second reading showed us what awaits us. A new heaven, a new earth, and the holy city, new Jerusalem. A beautiful image which it uses to help us understand what awaits us: "I saw the holy city ... coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband" (cf. Rev 21:2). Beauty awaits us.... Remembrance and hope, the hope of meeting each other, the hope of arriving where there is the Love that created us, where there is the Love that awaits us, a Father's love.

And between remembrance and hope there is the third dimension, that of the *path* that we must and do take. And how do we take the path without making mistakes? Which are *the lights* that will help me avoid taking the wrong path? What is the 'navigating system' that God himself gave us, so as not to take the wrong path? It is the Beatitudes that Jesus taught us in the Gospel. These Beatitudes — meekness, poverty of spirit, justice, mercy, purity of heart — are the lights that accompany us so as not to lose our way: this is our *present*.

Life's three dimensions are in this cemetery: remembrance, we can see it there [*indicating the tombs*]; hope, we will celebrate it now in faith, not in visions; and the lights to guide us on the journey so as not to lose our way. We have heard them in the Gospel: they are the Beatitudes.

Let us ask the Lord today to give us the grace to never lose remembrance, never suppress remembrance — remembrance of the person, remembrance of family, remembrance of people — and to give us the grace of hope because hope is one of his gifts: being able to hope, to look to the horizon, not to be closed before a wall. Always look to the horizon and to hope. And may he give us the grace to understand which are the lights that will accompany us on the path so as not to make mistakes, and thus to arrive where we are awaited with so much love.