

All Souls

On **All Souls Day** we commemorate the souls of all the faithful departed. We are very aware of those we miss, and we pray for them. We are aware of the love of God permeating all existence and connecting us even in death. We are reminded of the source of our hope, the risen Christ. As we reflect on the gift of eternal life, the significance of our earthly choices comes into clear view.

Together forever

Visiting and praying with someone on their death bed is a powerful experience. The important things come into focus with fresh clarity. The unimportant things which normally absorb so much attention seem so trivial. Visiting Eva was no exception. She was too frail to communicate, so I just sat with her and prayed quietly. As I did so I felt a strong awareness of Eva's husband, Len. Len had died six months earlier and I was aware how much Eva missed him. They had been together in sixty years of marriage. Now, as Eva lay dying, their love for each other began to influence my prayer...

'And may Len be close to you at this difficult time, and may the love you share, which overcomes even death, draw you close together so that you will not travel this journey alone, but that Len will be there with you... and soon you will be together forever...'

A single tear from Eva's eye told me that this had been the right prayer for this moment. Three hours later, she was with her beloved Len forever.

Connections

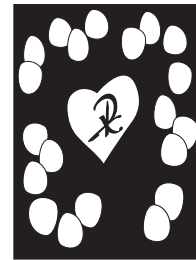
The whole family travelled interstate for Grandpa's funeral. Everyone was there – uncles, aunts, cousins I hadn't seen for years and would never have recognised. It was a great reunion as we celebrated the life of our grandfather... Grandpa, the last of his generation; Grandpa who had kept us informed about each other and had kept us in some way 'connected'. Many a parting comment was that 'we will have to stay in touch'.

As you might guess, not a lot has happened since. But there *are* glimmers of connection on the horizon: an unexpected visit to a sick aunt, a cousin joining us for holidays, a photo of a new baby at Christmas time. I am aware that these new shoots of family connections come from seeds sown by the witness of Grandpa. To nurture these new beginnings is to honour our grandfather and his continuing influence on our lives.
(Kerry)



Pray

For a stronger belief that God's love reaches beyond the grave... We pray to the Lord.



Reflection

- * Who in particular do you think about on All Souls Day?
- * Describe this person's life.
- * What did he/she mean to you then?
- * What does this person mean to you now?
- * What prayer do you most want to pray for him/her?
- * What do you want your children to know about this person? Tell the story...