

It Is Lonesome in Purgatory.

Have you ever felt lonesome in a crowd? You can, if you don't know anyone and for some reason your mind is concentrated on one person you can't have with you. Imagine yourself in this situation: It is Christmas; you are in a hospital in Soviet Russia; you are just coming out of ether after a bad operation; you can't speak Russian; you are in pain; you are suffering a great thirst and can't relieve it; you are in a ward with a swarm of bewhiskered patients who make funny noises; there is not even a nurse about. You think of home; you think of Notre Dame; you think of all your friends; even enemies you remember lovingly; the most disagreeable pest you ever knew would be a welcome bedside visitor. You are lonesome.

Imagine the lonesomeness of Purgatory. You can't take a friend with you on the journey; the surroundings are stranger than anything your imagination could picture; in pain and thirst (you learn for the first time what pain and thirst really are); you are among strangers who give no thought to you nor to anything but their own lonesomeness. And the terrible lonesomeness grows out of this fact: you know now that God is your last end, and you know now what He means to your soul; every other want is absorbed in this fixed idea that your mind cannot shake off--you WANT God! Shaken loose from the body that holds it to sordid things on earth, the soul yearns for its Maker, its only Comfort, its whole Delight, its All.

It Is Hot In Purgatory.

Although the pain of Purgatory is secondary to the lonesomeness, it is a greater pain than any possible pain, with the exception of the pain of Hell. Indeed some inspired saints tell us that it differs from the pain of Hell only in its duration. You burn--burn--burn--and you are not consumed. You are tortured, macerated, crushed--and you cannot die.

Heaven Must Be Earned.

If you don't learn this truth here you will learn it in Purgatory.

Help!

Perhaps no doctrine of the Church is more consoling than her teaching that we can help the Poor Souls in Purgatory--by our prayers, by our good works, and by the application of indulgences. Here are some of the things you can do during the month of November, which the Church dedicates to the Poor Souls:

1. Make visits today and tomorrow. For every visit to the Church from today noon till tomorrow evening a plenary indulgence, applicable to the Poor Souls, may be gained by those who have received the Sacraments either of these two days;

2. Offer Holy Communion, and the indulgences attached thereto, every day during November;

3. Say the beads for them daily during the month--the beads at the pamphlet rack are blessed with the Dominican, Apostolic, Crosier, and Brigantine Indulgences;

4. Be enrolled in the Miraculous Medal, which carries with it a plenary indulgence every time you say six Paters, Aves, and Glorias (the state of grace being supposed). There will be an enrollment in this medal at 12:30 every Monday, Wednesday, and Friday of November, in the Sorin chapel.