
All For One, One For All.

"I believe in the Communion of the Saints."

We've said that hundreds of times in the Creed, but do we know what it implies? It simply implies that, as Catholics, we profess to believe that we are not to live our lives as so many isolated units, but as members of the same living Thing.

What is the living Thing in which we are all closely united? It is the Church.

But is not the Church only a moral organization, a large religious society composed of many millions of people?

No, the Church, properly understood, is much more. It is the living Body of Christ; and as members of the Church we are all members of the Body of Christ.

That is why Christ said to Saul who persecuted the Church--"Why persecutest thou Me?" We live in Christ's life, and His life lives in us. That is why the good Catholic, Saint Paul, could say, after his conversion, "I live yet now not I, but Christ liveth in me."

To understand better, let us have an example. Each of our bodies is composed of countless cells. The cells live in our body and our body lives in its cells.

The cells don't live with their own separate, independent lives, but with the one life of our body. So also we live our supernatural lives, not independently, but in Christ, as the cells live in our body. Christ's life flows through us as the life of our body flows through the cells.

As Catholics we are all so many members of Christ's Body, and as such we are not only one with Christ but we are also one with one another.

One member of the Church can help another, just as members of our body can help one another, just as, when our foot is injured, our hand can tend to it. We can pray for one another, we can teach one another by word and example, we can sacrifice for one another.

And because the Souls in Purgatory are also members of Christ's Body, are members of the Church, we can pray for them, and they can pray for us.

And the souls in Heaven, because they are members of Christ's Body, can also pray for us.

Thus we see that natural death is no barrier to real union with other members of the Church; nor is it a barrier to union with Christ. Only mortal sin is a barrier.

Mortal sin makes us dead members of the Body, loathsome to the whole Body, dangerous to the other members of the Body.

Mortal sin makes us dead cells. While we are still in this world supernatural life from Christ can be set flowing again, but if at the moment of earthly death we are dead cells, we shall be cut off from the living Body that is Christ for all eternity.

Each hour we are in mortal sin we are supernaturally useless, as if we were dead.

And the more we multiply these dead hours, the more we multiply our chances of slipping for eternity into the living death that is Hell.