

DECREE

This year, due to present circumstances arising from the “covid-19” pandemic, the period during which Plenary Indulgences can be gained for the Faithful Departed is extended to the entire month of November, with an adaptation of the works and conditions so as to assure the safety of the faithful.

Not a few petitions have been sent by Sacred Pastors to the Apostolic Penitentiary to request that, this year, because of the “covid-19” epidemic, the good works to obtain Plenary Indulgences for the souls in Purgatory, as stipulated in the *Manual of Indulgences* (c. 29, § 1), should be modified. For that reason, the Apostolic Penitentiary, especially instructed by His Holiness Pope Francis, willingly establishes and determines that this year, to avoid gatherings where they are prohibited:

a. the Plenary Indulgence to be gained by those who visit a cemetery and pray – even if only mentally – for the deceased, established by norm for the individual days from 1 to the 8 November alone, may be transferred to other days of the same month right up to the end. Such days, freely chosen by each member of the faithful, do not have to be consecutive;

b. the Plenary Indulgence to be gained on 2 November, Commemoration of All the Faithful Departed, by those who reverently visit a church or oratory and recite there the “Our Father” and “Creed”, may be transferred, not only to the preceding or following Sunday or to the day of the Solemnity of All Saints, but also to another day of the month of November, freely chosen by each member of the faithful.

The elderly, the sick and all who for grave reasons are unable to leave their homes – due, for example, to restrictions imposed by competent authorities during the pandemic so as to avoid crowded gatherings in sacred places – can still gain the Plenary Indulgence if – united in spirit with all the other faithful, shunning sin completely and intending to fulfil the customary conditions (sacramental confession, Eucharistic communion and prayer for the intentions of the Holy Father) as soon as possible – they recite, before an image of Jesus or the Blessed Virgin Mary, prayers for the departed – for example, Lauds and Vespers of the Office for the Dead, the Holy Rosary, the Crown of Divine Mercy, other prayers for beloved deceased relatives – or spend time meditating on one of the Gospel passages proposed by the Liturgy of the Dead or perform a work of mercy, offering to God the pains and labours of their own lives.

To facilitate the attainment of divine grace through charitable pastoral care, this Penitentiary entreats all priests endowed with the appropriate faculties to lend

themselves generously to the celebration of the sacrament of Penance and distribute Holy Communion to the sick.

Nonetheless, as far as the spiritual requirements to obtain fully the Indulgence are concerned, it is advised that due account be taken of the indications set out by this Apostolic Penitentiary, on 19 March 2020, in the note “On the Sacrament of Penance in time of the present pandemic”.

Finally, so that the souls in Purgatory may be assisted by the intercessory petitions of the faithful, especially through the Sacrifice of the Altar pleasing to God (cfr. Conc. Tr. Sess. XXV, decr. De Purgatorio), all priests are earnestly invited to celebrate three Masses on the day of the Commemoration of All the Faithful Departed, in accordance with the Apostolic Constitution “Incruentum Altaris”, promulgated by Pope Benedict XV, of venerable memory, on 10 August 1915.

The present Decree is valid for the entire month of November, notwithstanding any disposition to the contrary.

Given in Rome, from the seat of the Apostolic Penitentiary, on 22 October 2020, memorial of St. John Paul II.

MAURUS CARD. PIACENZA

Paenitentiaris Maior

Christophorus Nykiel

Regens

L. + S.

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