

Archbishop Cordileone to Offer Mass for Homeless Faithful Departed

6:30 p.m., November 8, 2018

St. Patrick Church, 756 Mission Street, San Francisco

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SAN FRANCISCO, Nov. 7, 2018 -- When they die, who remembers the chronically homeless and often mentally ill and alcoholic or drug addicted men and women who wandered our streets? Often, no one. In many cases, no one around them even knew their real names.

But they are children of God.

Therefore, on Nov. 8 at 6:30 p.m., San Francisco Archbishop Salvatore J. Cordileone will offer a special Mass of the Dead for Our Homeless Brethren. Please join us at St. Patrick Church, 756 Mission near 4th Street, for this special event.

There are approximately 2,100 chronically homeless on our streets, according to the San Francisco Homeless Count & Survey 2017, a biennial survey. Exact numbers of homeless deaths are difficult to track although mortality is four to nine times higher among chronically homeless people than among the general population. Life expectancy is 25 years shorter. San Francisco averages 7,500 people categorized as homeless each night, including families and students living in vehicles, in tents, and in parks, while going to school and work each day.

"The Catholic Church believes one of the greatest acts of charity we can perform is to pray for the eternal salvation of those who have gone before. That is what we are doing," said organizer Martin Ford, social action coordinator for the Archdiocese of San Francisco's Office of Human Life and Dignity.

Religious sisters from St. Mother Teresa of Kolkata's order, the Missionaries of Charity, will sing the Mass, with contributions from the Benedict XVI Institute choir.

Catholic Charities Chief Executive Officer Jilma Meneses will read the first Scripture reading. Students from Catholic high schools including Archbishop Riordan High School, Sacred Heart Cathedral Preparatory, St. Ignatius College Preparatory and Immaculate Conception Academy will assist with reading intentions, distributing programs and holy cards.

The Order of Malta, known for bringing the desperately sick to Lourdes, will serve as ushers. The Archdiocesan Council of Catholic Women will serve cake after the Mass, with Catholic Relief Services representatives offering fair trade coffee to go with the cake. Duggan's Serra Mortuary printed special holy cards for the homeless who have died that will be distributed at the Mass.

A collection to support Catholic Charities homeless ministry will be taken up during Mass.

Join us for this special occasion of prayer on behalf of those who have died on our streets.

"Amen, I say to you, whatever you do for one of these least brothers of mine, you did for me." Gospel of Matthew 25:31-45 (New American Bible)