

Sunday Q&A

Your Faith in Focus



REMINDERS OF THE DEPARTED

Do Catholics believe in signs from the dead?

When we lose a loved one, we may look for signs—a bird, a butterfly, or anything that gives us hope that they are, in some way, still with us. Can the dead communicate with us? Fr. Mike Schmitz answers this question below, adapted from one of his videos.

When You Are Grieving

Sometimes people who are grieving the loss of a loved one tell me that certain things have happened after the individual has died, and they believe these are signs that their deceased loved one is okay.

Grief can be so overwhelming that you might say, “I would do anything. Just give me some kind of sign, some kind of indication that you’re okay.” This desire is normal. Seeking signs is a natural part of grief. We want that glimpse to know that the ones we love are okay.

But people cannot cause “signs” to happen—only God can work in nature in that way. Unexpected occurrences can remind us to pray for our loved ones and recall the gift of their lives. Things we may see as signs can help us keep people who have died in our hearts.

Is God okay with us looking for signs? To a certain degree, there is nothing wrong with seeing a kind of sign in something. A woman once told me that whenever she saw a certain number on the clock, it always reminded her of the child she lost. There is nothing wrong with that. It inspires us to be grateful and pray.

When your grief about a loved one who has died comes to the surface and you see something that reminds you of that person, let it console your heart. Perhaps you pray something like,

“That cardinal reminds me of Dad. I miss him so much. Let him rest in your loving arms, Lord.” If tears come, let them.

“God winks” happen because our God of the broken heart is with us. That is why I think there is nothing intrinsically wrong with associating something you see with a loved one who has departed. In our grief, God is there. God cares.

“When you are grieving over a loved one who has died, and you see a reminder of that person, let it console your heart. Then pray.”

Ponder and Pray

- How do I remember and pray for the loved ones I have lost?
- What are some things in my life that remind me of loved ones? Do I use them as reminders to pray?



Make It Your Own

You're invited to name, pray for, and remember loved ones who have died. Of course, pray for as many people as you wish. You may consider keeping this bulletin as a reminder to keep praying.

Eternal rest grant unto (names), O Lord,
and may perpetual light shine upon them.
May the souls of all the faithful departed,
through the mercy of God, rest in peace. Amen.

Names

Tip of the Week

Comforting the sorrowful is a spiritual work of mercy. This week, reach out in consolation to someone in your life who has lost a loved one. Offer prayers for the soul of the departed.

Dive Deeper

To watch Fr. Mike's full video on this topic, scan the code

or visit the URL: <https://media.ascensionpress.com/video/do-catholics-believe-in-signs-from-the-dead/>

