

## Cycle A B C

### The Commemoration of All the Faithful Departed ( All Soul's Day)

Lectionary #668

#### Reading I: Wisdom 3: 1-9

This passage from the Book of Wisdom offers profound **comfort** to all who have experienced the physical loss of someone they love and the grief that accompanies that loss. There are moments when we are “foolish” and we fall into doubt about where our loved ones have gone. This is because our humanity wishes to hold fast to the person. Doubt and grief are a natural part of life's experience when death enters in. However, we must recall that our faith clearly tells us that *life is changed , not ended*. Hope is what we hold fast to and it is this hope that brings us solace and **comfort**.

#### Reading 2: Romans 5: 5-11

Saint Paul speaks these words of **comfort** to the Church at Rome as the Roman Christians are experiencing persecution and martyrdom. Saint Paul reminds the Romans and us of the great love of God that we possess in the person and actions of Christ Jesus. Saint Paul reminds the reader that our greatest enemy is sin and death and that Jesus Christ has conquered sin and death, once and for all. God's love is the final word and it is in this that we take our ultimate **comfort**.

#### Gospel: John 6: 37-40

These words of **comfort** come from the very lips of Jesus and are intended to declare, in no uncertain terms, that everlasting life is God's desire for each and every person. Jesus' only agenda is to do the will of the Father and that is *to lose nothing of what He has given*. Resurrected life is God's intent but again we must recognize that although it is offered time and again, we have the free will to accept or reject the gift. True **comfort** comes when our will is aligned with the will of God.

build. plant. grow.  
*the word this week*



ordinary  
time



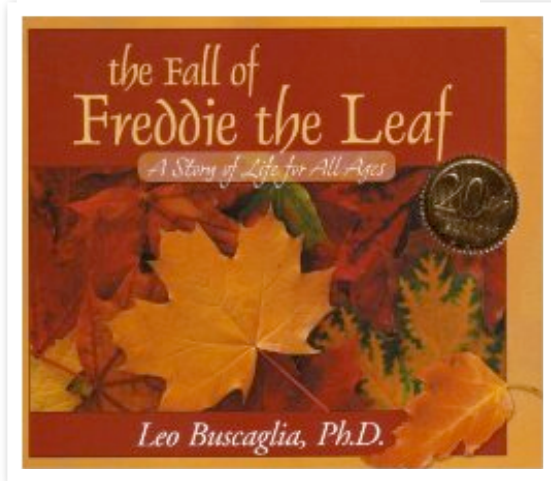
Comfort



lectionary  
reading



children's  
story



### *The Fall of Freddie the Leaf*

Written by Leo Buscaglia

Publication: 1982 SLACK Incorporated (20th anniversary edition)

ISBN-10: 0943432898

ISBN-13: 978-0943432892



character  
education  
activity

**Comfort is often defined as the easing or alleviation of a person's feelings of grief or distress.**

## *The Fall of Freddie the Leaf*

Freddie, a maple leaf, is born in spring, and grows to know his fellow leaves and surroundings. Although the other leaves appear to be the same, Freddie learns to appreciate the uniqueness of each leaf, including himself. Freddie is especially fond of a larger leaf, Daniel.

Daniel helps Freddie gain a deeper understanding of many things but most importantly how to view and understand death as a change and not an ending. The story helps the audience see and understand how each individual experiences and approaches death. The story also helps one see and appreciate the different phases of life. Each time Freddie the leaf changes with the seasons, it is puzzling to him but he learns of the value of change. This is truly a book that is invaluable for any library, most especially when seeking **comfort** over the physical loss of a loved one.

## *The Circle of Life*

Step One: Play Elton John's song from the *Lion King* called "The Circle of Life". Provide the lyrics for the students so that they can follow along and eventually sing along with the recording. This is an opportunity to add to the butterfly wings that are part of the All Saints Activity in the previous *Build Plant Grow*.

Step Two: If you have done the activity for All Saints you can have the children bring in pictures of their deceased relatives or friends to add to the Butterfly wings or make new butterflies especially for these pictures.

### **ADDITIONAL ACTIVITY:**

Build an altar for the students to place framed pictures of deceased relatives and decorate the altar with Christian symbols and a statue of Jesus and Mary and other saints to watch over the deceased relatives and friends. Have the children bring in flowers and other decorations to make a shrine for the month of November.

The Holy Spirit is often referred to as the Comforter, and ultimately it is God who brings comfort to us in life's difficulties.



case study

Look.  
Feel.  
Know.  
Act.

## What could you do today?

The Feast of All Souls is a wonderful opportunity to sit with your family and learn of family members and friends who are no longer on earth. Using a family photo album or other resource for collected family pictures, ask your elders to share stories of people in the photos. This actually could become a family tradition to celebrate the Feast of All Souls. In addition, if you live near the cemetery where family or friends have been laid to rest, ask your parents or other older members of the family if they would consider taking you to the cemetery to offer a prayer and place some flowers on the grave.

## Look Feel Know Act

Reflect on the song "The Circle of Life" and see that life moves and changes from season to season and recognize that there are seasons to everyone's life. Remembering deceased relatives and friends is so very important because the theology of our faith believes that we are forever linked to those we have loved and those who have loved us. In the Old Testament Book of the Song of Songs, we hear that *love is stronger than death*. And so, the love that we have for those who have gone before us can never be destroyed but it takes on a different form that is mysterious and beyond our understanding. It is kind of like the wind. We can feel it, but we cannot grab hold of it and contain it. The same thing is true for the spirit of one who has left this earth. We can remember and know but not contain. When we know how very sacred life is to us and how we have felt the physical loss of someone we love, we learn to extend sympathy and **comfort** to those who also have experienced the loss of a loved one. Doing something kind, sending a card or making a phone call is way of bringing **comfort**.

*Freddie the Fallen Leaf* is an excellent book for children and adults alike. It is rare to find a children's book that aligns itself so well with the Christian theology and understanding of physical death. The story is resurrectional and contains the essence of the Paschal Mystery. As such, it is especially meaningful to be read in the context of the Feast of All Souls.

The following is a common prayer among Catholic Christians for the Faithful Departed:

**Eternal rest grant unto them, O Lord, and let perpetual light shine upon them.**

**May the souls of the Faithful Departed, through the mercy of God, rest in peace. Amen.**



**closing  
tool**



**Santa Clara  
University**

Character Education at the Markkula Center for Applied Ethics  
ethics programs for communities that learn, live, pray, or work together

[www.scu.edu/character](http://www.scu.edu/character)