



Founded 1866

287 Ida B. Wells (S. 4<sup>th</sup>) Street, Memphis, TN 38126  
901•527•2542 [stpatsmemphis.org](http://stpatsmemphis.org)



Sunday Masses: 8:30am 11:00am 5:15pm  
Weekday Masses: Tuesday - Friday: 5:15pm



## ***First Sunday of Advent*** **December 1, 2024**

This Week: Jeremiah 33:14-16; Psalm 25; 1 Thessalonians 3:12-4:2; Luke 21:25-28, 34-36  
Next Week: Baruch 5:1-9; Psalm 126; Philippians 1:4-6, 8-11; Luke 3:4,6

### **MISSION STATEMENT**

*The Mission of St. Patrick Catholic Community is to proclaim and live the Gospel message of unconditional love, healing, and reconciliation, through prayer, celebration, and action on behalf of justice, as a sign of hope for all God's people.*

# PARISH NEWS

## Today's Psalm Response

*To you, O Lord, I lift my soul.  
(Psalm 25)*

## 11am MASS



Live streamed Every Sunday at  
[www.bit.ly/StPatrickFacebook](http://www.bit.ly/StPatrickFacebook)

Worship Aid Available  
Readings and Music  
[www.stpatsmemphis.org](http://www.stpatsmemphis.org)  
Click on Communications



Replayed on YouTube after 1:00 pm  
[www.bit.ly/StPatrickYouTube](http://www.bit.ly/StPatrickYouTube)

## Baptismal Preparation Class For Parents and Godparents



If you plan to participate in a Baptism in the next few months, please call the parish office 901-527-2542 so we can schedule a preparation class.

## Sacrament of Reconciliation



Sundays 7:50 am-8:10 am  
10:20 am-10:40 am  
4:40 pm-5:00 pm  
or by appointment  
901-527-2542

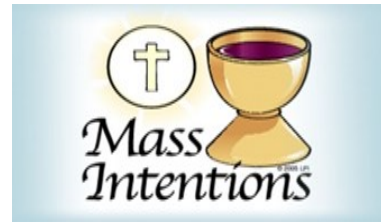
Can be done face-to-face or anonymously.

## JOURNEY TO CATHOLICISM

Are you interested in becoming Catholic? Have you been Catholic for a long time but don't remember what you learned in school? This is for you!

Our Journey to Catholicism sessions meet each Sunday, in the St. Brigid Room in the Rectory from 9:45am to 10:45am.

Please call or email Sally Greene (901) 483-3656 or [sbg1220@aol.com](mailto:sbg1220@aol.com) with questions.



Dec 1, 8:30 am, +Jerry Bettice for the 4th anniversary of his death December 4, by his family  
Dec 1, 11:00 am, +Beverly Skinner daLomba by Margretta daLomba Dobbs  
Dec 2, 5:15 pm, Special Intentions of our country

## WEEKLY CALENDAR Dec 1 - Dec 8

### Sunday, Dec 1

- 8:30 am, 11:00 am, 5:15pm Masses
- 2nd Collection: Outreach Center
- **NO Catechesis of the Good Shepherd**
- 9:45 am, Journey to Catholicism, St. Brigid Room
- 9:45 am, Sunday by Sunday Group, Braganza Rm
- 11:00 am Mass live streamed on Facebook
- 12:30 pm, Children's Choir Practice, St. Brigid Rm
- 12:15 pm, Youth Group, Youth Room, Center
- 1:00 pm, Soup Kitchen, Outreach Center

### Tuesday, Dec 3

- 5:15 pm, Mass, Chapel

### Wednesday, Dec 4

- NO 5:15 pm Mass
- 6:30 pm, Advent Penance Service, Church

### Thursday, Dec 5

- 5:15 pm, Mass, Chapel
- 5:45 pm, Holy Rosary, Chapel
- 5:30 pm, Creole Feast for Haiti. Outreach Center

### Friday, Dec 6

- 5:15 pm, Mass, Chapel
- 5:45 pm, First Friday Adoration, Chapel

### Sunday, Dec 8

- 8:30 am, 11:00 am, 5:15pm Masses
- 9:45 pm, Catechesis of the Good Shepherd, Atria
- 9:45 am, Journey to Catholicism, St. Brigid Room
- 9:45 am, Sunday by Sunday Group, Braganza Rm
- 11:00 am Mass live streamed on Facebook
- 12:30 pm, Children's Choir Practice, St. Brigid Rm
- 12:15 pm, Youth Group, Youth Room, Center
- 1:00 pm, Soup Kitchen, Outreach Center

## Worship Aids and Bulletins

[www.stpatsmemphis.org](http://www.stpatsmemphis.org) click Communications

# PARISH NEWS



## Annual Creole Feast Fundraiser to benefit St. Jules Elementary School in Petit Bourg du Borgne, Haiti



Thursday, December 5, 2024  
5:30 to 8:30 p.m.

Saint Patrick - Champion Outreach Center



**DINE-IN or TAKE OUT. Security and Parking will also be provided.**

Please RSVP at the link below by Sunday December 1, 2024. For more information, please contact M, Dell Stiner at [mdstiner@thewhartonlawfirm.com](mailto:mdstiner@thewhartonlawfirm.com).

Your tax deductible donation can be made payable to The Wharton Charitable Foundation C/O Banks Finley White, Accountants, 1450 Poplar Avenue, Memphis, TN 38104

## Hope for the Holidays

JOHN ANGOTTI  
& FRIENDS

IN CONCERT

DECEMBER 11, 2024

6:30 PM

ST. PATRICK'S  
MEMPHIS, TN

Free Will Donations Appreciated

Join us  
**Christmas  
Concert**

Jim Cornfoot (piano) and Bethann Easterly (flute) will perform beloved carols, holiday standards, and classical selections.

THURSDAY, DEC. 19  
6:30PM

FREEWILL DONATIONS  
APPRECIATED

# PARISH NEWS

***Please pray for the sick in our parish community, our friends and loved ones:***

Pete Alfonso, Mary Baldwin, Fran Barendse, Ray Barker, Rosemary Batorski, Ray Berthiaume, Jane Marie Blackham, Sydney Bowers (Pamela Higgins' granddaughter), Antonio Bradshaw, Dick Brereton, Ricky Burnett, Terri Burns (Mary Ann Burns' daughter-in-law), Andrew Carroll, David Carter



(Rena Taylor's nephew), Deacon Eugene Champion, Sam Cochran, Janice Craven (Tim Craven's daughter), Annabel Crowson, Peggy Cunningham, Mateo Duarte, Bryan Duffel Sue Ann Duffy, Dot Eubanks, Gloria Sangster

Fort, Jerry Foster, Sean Garlick, Senait Gebreab, Stephen Golanka (Mary Evans' son), Pat Gorney, Thelia Green, Bob Greene, Terry Greene Sr (Bob Greene's brother), Diane Griggs (Don Lawrence's daughter), Richard Grinder, Sr. Maureen Griner, Janis Habbaz, Travis Handwerker, Diane Harder, Jack Harkins (Scott's father), Patrick Harkins, Lisa Harris (Bob Greene's sister), Pamela Higgins, Maureen Hough, Brian Huebner, Juanita Huff, Florida Jackson, Roberta Kane (Mike Watermeier's sister-in-law), Jan Kidder, John Letchworth, Luca (Aletta Roebuck's two-year-old great-grandson), Evelyne Malone, Karen Mathis (Mac Mathis' daughter), Fenton McEvoy, Della Miles, Maureen Mischler, Bill Morman (Monica and Stephen Juma's uncle), Terry Nesmith, Nora O'Connell, Brad Patterson, Julian Prewitt (Linda Prewitt's husband), Deacon Eddie Ramsey, Rusty Ramsey, Earl Randle, John Clarence Simmons, Connie Simpson, Louise Slater (Mike Watermeier's daughter's mother-in-law), Samantha Smith, Tara Stebbins, Tracy Sweat, Shelby Terry (Ray and Louise Terry's daughter-in-law), John Trouy (Beth Trouy's brother), Mary and Melvin Tuggle (Chandra Tuggle's parents), Lynn Tune, Robert Tutson, Pam Watermeier, Nia Watkins, Jan Watson, Basil White, Cynthia Zawacki, Jan Zinselmeyer (Sr. Margaret Ann Zinselmeyer's sister-in-law)

**Notify Parish Office:** If you or someone you know is hospitalized or homebound and would like to be added to our prayer list, or if someone has recovered and should be removed from our list, please call the parish office at 901-527-2542.



Please follow us on social media!  
And check out our website:  
[www.stpatsmemphis.org](http://www.stpatsmemphis.org)  
Read recent Bulletins online



## Small Faith Sharing and Prayer Groups

**Sunday by Sunday  
Faith Sharing Group  
Braganza Room, Outreach Center  
Sunday, 9:45 a.m.**

Pat Papachristou [ppapachr@cbu.edu](mailto:ppapachr@cbu.edu)

**A Prayer Circle  
Monday – Friday  
9:00 a.m. for about 30 minutes**  
Jan Kidder [jan.kidder62@gmail.com](mailto:jan.kidder62@gmail.com)

**Sunday by Sunday  
Faith Sharing Group  
Fridays 10:30 am - Noon on Zoom**  
Louise Cayo 901-833-1506  
Donna McLellan 901-210-8321

**Say Their Names  
Wednesday mornings at 9:00 a.m.**  
Linda Opiel [lindaopiel@comcast.net](mailto:lindaopiel@comcast.net)  
Sandy Heiss [heisshouse@yahoo.com](mailto:heisshouse@yahoo.com)  
Jan Kidder [jan.kidder62@gmail.com](mailto:jan.kidder62@gmail.com)

**Sunday by Sunday  
Faith Sharing Group  
Thursday, 10:30 - noon**  
Judy Bettice  
Call 901-327-8068 or text 901-216-7208

## CATHOLIC MINISTRY WITH GAY & LESBIAN PERSONS

Please join us for our  
**First-Tuesday-of-the-Month Potluck**

6:30pm | Food, Fellowship, Prayer  
7:00pm | Speaker | Marian Hall  
Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception

**December 3, 2024:  
Dr. Bob Greene**

*The Rosary: A History and Guide*  
(Please bring your rosary beads and a spare to share!)

Bring a dish if you can, but come anyway if not!

**All are Welcome**

Gay, Straight, Family, Friends, and  
Allies of All Faiths & Cultures Welcome

Contact us for more info: [CMGLP@ic.cdom.org](mailto:CMGLP@ic.cdom.org)

# PARISH NEWS



## Advent Penance Service Thursday, December 4 6:30pm

Please join us for our parish Advent Penance Service as we celebrate the Sacrament of Reconciliation together as a special way of preparing for Christmas.

Individual confessions will be available. You may choose to sit behind the priest or facing the priest.

We hope that many of us will take advantage of this beautiful sacrament celebrating forgiveness and healing.



sign up here:  
[tinyurl.com/DilexitNosAdvent](http://tinyurl.com/DilexitNosAdvent)

Join us for our Advent Small group discussion of "Dilexit Nos" the new encyclical by Pope Francis concerning the Human & Divine Love of the Heart of Jesus Christ.



Aiden Williams	December 2	Genevieve Stockwell	December 16
Kristin Korneliussen	December 3	Angel Dono	December 17
Frances Ross	December 4	Owen O'Connell	December 17
Susan Van Dyck	December 4	Margaret Calicott	December 18
Geoff Maddox	December 5	Maria Hernandez	December 19
Joe Catrambone	December 6	Dan Rojcewicz	December 19
Peggy Cunningham	December 8	Sally Greene	December 20
Natalie Cooke	December 9	Terri Brown	December 22
Rozelle Greene	December 11	Marsha Smith	December 22
Theresa Gifford	December 12	Shannon Mason	December 24
Liam O'Connell	December 12	Marvine Walters	December 25
Charles Richards	December 12	Roy Repelin	December 26
Joyce Johnson	December 13	Patrick Shea	December 26
Karen Ferguson	December 14	Nia Zalamea	December 26
Jimmy Miller	December 14	Giovanna Hunter	December 27
James Newcomb	December 14	Barbara Moore	December 27
Sarita Calicott	December 15	Matt Ducklo	December 28
Jo Johnson	December 15	Eduardo Velasquez	December 29
Deepak Tharapel	December 15	Tom Carnesi	December 30
Rohan Zebrick	December 15	Thalia Repelin	December 30

# PARISH NEWS



Thank you for choosing to worship with us today! If you are passing through town, we wish you a safe and happy visit. If you are interested in joining the St. Patrick community or just looking for more information, please let us know. Feel free to approach a parishioner, call the office at 901-527-2542, complete a registration form (at the back of the church) or visit us on line on Facebook or at [www.stpatsmemphis.org](http://www.stpatsmemphis.org).

Please join us for donuts, juice, coffee and fellowship in the SPC Outreach Center after the morning Masses.



## St. Patrick - Champion Outreach Center 2<sup>nd</sup> Collection TODAY

**Food Ministries:** Food Pantry  
Sunday Lunch  
Sack Lunches  
Mobile Food Pantry

**Health Ministry:** Foot Care  
Health Screening

**Clothes Closet and Embers of Hope**

*Please pray for our  
St. Patrick community  
every day*



## Offertory Donations



Offertory	\$2,695
Parish Giving	3,130
Food Ministry	545
Other	
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$6,370</b>

*Thank you for your generosity!*



<http://bit.ly/StPatrickGiving>

You can set up your offerings to St. Patrick Church through Parish Giving. Your contributions will be automatically deducted from your checking or savings account or credit card and deposited directly to St. Patrick's bank account.

**You can now also donate to  
St. Vincent de Paul  
Tanzania Health Ministry  
Sr. Thea Bowman Montessori  
School**



## Parish Library

You are invited to visit our parish library in the Annex

**Monday - Friday 9am - 4pm  
or by Appointment**

## FR. DEXTER'S NOTE

Dear St. Patrick family,

The following are the days I will be *out of town* for the rest of the year:

**December 26<sup>th</sup>, - January 17<sup>th</sup>, 2025**

**Visit my family in the  
Philippines after almost 4 years**

# PARISH NEWS



OFFICE OF THE BISHOP  
DIOCESE OF MEMPHIS  
5825 SHELBY OAKS DRIVE  
MEMPHIS, TN 38134 901-373-1200

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

The Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary is usually celebrated on December 8<sup>th</sup>. This solemnity is also a holy day of obligation in the United States because the Blessed Virgin Mary, under her title of the Immaculate Conception, is the designated patroness of the United States of America. She is also the patroness of the Diocese of Memphis.

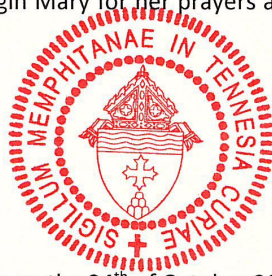
Because the Sundays of Advent are very important days in the Church's yearly preparation for Christmas, they take precedence even over a solemnity and holy day of obligation. For this reason, whenever the Immaculate Conception falls on a Sunday, it is transferred to the following Monday. It has been the practice in the U.S.A. that, whenever the Immaculate Conception is observed on Monday, December 9<sup>th</sup>, it is not a holy day of obligation.

In a recent letter from the Holy See, the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops was informed that the Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception should always be a holy day of obligation in the U.S.A. even if it is transferred to Monday, December 9<sup>th</sup>. This requires a change in the current practice in our country.


I welcome this new directive from the Holy See and encourage all to attend Mass on December 9<sup>th</sup> to celebrate the Blessed Virgin Mary, our patroness. I am aware, however, that many people are unaware of the requirement to attend Mass on December 9<sup>th</sup> of this year. In fact, many people have already received calendars from their parishes or other Catholic organizations that state "Not a Holy Day of Obligation This Year," or similar words, on December 9<sup>th</sup>.

In light of the likelihood of confusion among the faithful and the short notice given by the Holy See, I dispense all Catholics living in the Diocese of Memphis and all those present in the Diocese on that day from the obligation of attending Mass on December 9, 2024. I encourage pastors to offer extra Masses on that day for the sake of the devotion of our people; however, the faithful are not obligated to attend Mass on that day. In future years, we will observe the Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception on whichever day it is observed.


With gratitude to the Blessed Virgin Mary for her prayers and maternal protection for our diocese and our nation, I am yours



In the light and the love of the Lord,

  
Most Rev. David P. Talley, M.S.W., J.C.D.  
Bishop of Memphis in Tennessee

Given at the Chancery in Memphis on the 24<sup>th</sup> of October 2024

  
Very Rev. James M. Clark, J.C.L., J.V.  
Chancellor

# PARISH NEWS

December 1, 2024	8:30	11:00	5:15
Lector 1	Judy Bettice	Debra Brittenum	Nana Sintim-Damoa
Lector 2	John Wigley	Isaac Souza	Joe Catrambone
EMHCs	Mike Stengel Susan Prince Kate Pera	Chris Claude Stephanie Poje	Jeanine Blackwell Matthew Bowles
Cantor	Ann Miranda	Maria Torres	Bill Gaudet
Musician	Diego Parra	Diego Parra	Diego Parra
Altar Servers	Sofia Lesure	Avery Kjellin	
Sacristan	Shannon Curtis	Gene Mangiante	Chuck Blackwell
Flowers	Advent		

December 8, 2024	8:30	11:00	5:15
Lector 1	Dell Stiner	Gerry Taulman	
Lector 2	Sharon Valente	Martha Cummings	
EMHCs	Mike Stengel Kate Pera Judy Bettice	Oneata Windler Margaret Calicott	
Cantor	Rusty Ramsey	Sandy Heiss	Ann Miranda
Musician	Diego Parra	Diego Parra	Diego Parra
Altar Servers	Teaira Ford	Liam O'Connell	
Sacristan	Tracy Burgess	Gemma Washington	
Flowers	Advent		

## ST. PATRICK PARISH STAFF

Rev. Dexter Noblefranca - Pastor  
[Fr.Dexter@stpat.cdom.org](mailto:Fr.Dexter@stpat.cdom.org) 901-527-2542 ext 106  
 Shannon Curtis – Pastoral Assistant  
[shannon.curtis@stpat.cdom.org](mailto:shannon.curtis@stpat.cdom.org) 901-308-6831  
 Diego Parra – Music Director  
[diego.parra@stpat.cdom.org](mailto:diego.parra@stpat.cdom.org)  
 Julie Boland – Office Manager  
[julie.boland@stpat.cdom.org](mailto:julie.boland@stpat.cdom.org)  
 Stephen Juma – Director of Youth Ministry  
[stephen.juma@stpat.cdom.org](mailto:stephen.juma@stpat.cdom.org)  
 Bambi Williams – Wedding Coordinator  
[bambi.williams@stpat.cdom.org](mailto:bambi.williams@stpat.cdom.org)  
 Debbie and David Perry – Housekeeping  
 Verna Hawkins – Housekeeping  
**ADULT FAITH FORMATION COORDINATOR**  
 Judy Bettice – [jbettice@earthlink.net](mailto:jbettice@earthlink.net)  
**JOURNEY TO CATHOLICISM COORDINATOR**  
 Sally Greene – [sbg1220@aol.com](mailto:sbg1220@aol.com)  
**ST. PATRICK OUTREACH CENTER**  
 Gene Mangiante – [poppy@mangiante.com](mailto:poppy@mangiante.com)

## ST. PATRICK PARISH PASTORAL COUNCIL

Please contact any of these people with comments, suggestions, or offers of help!

Lester Brown	<a href="mailto:brownmmps69@bellsouth.net">brownmmps69@bellsouth.net</a>
Doan Dinh	<a href="mailto:doandinh2011@gmail.com">doandinh2011@gmail.com</a>
Sophie Duffel	<a href="mailto:sduffel901@gmail.com">sduffel901@gmail.com</a>
Sandy Heiss	<a href="mailto:heisshouse@yahoo.com">heisshouse@yahoo.com</a>
Jan Kidder	<a href="mailto:jan.kidder62@gmail.com">jan.kidder62@gmail.com</a>
Donna McLellan	<a href="mailto:d.ellis@mac.com">d.ellis@mac.com</a>
Hannah Schultz	<a href="mailto:hschultz@cbu.edu">hschultz@cbu.edu</a>

**Parish Office Hours**  
**Monday - Friday**  
**8:30am - 4:30pm**

### Procedure for Reporting Sexual Abuse

Anyone who has knowledge of or who has cause to suspect an incident of sexual abuse should report the information to the appropriate civil authorities first at 1-877-237-0004, then to the Diocesan Director of Child & Youth Protection at 901-359-2027 or the Diocesan Victim Assistance Coordinator at 901-652-4066.



## PARISH NEWS



Welcome to Saint Patrick Parish, a Roman Catholic community that gathers day by day, week by week, to be the hands and feet of Jesus Christ. Our close-knit and diverse parish family has been serving our neighborhood since 1866. Young, old, poor, rich, various ethnic origins and differing backgrounds gather to proclaim and live the Gospel message of unconditional love, healing, and reconciliation through prayer, celebration, and action on behalf

of justice as a sign of hope for all God's people. From our lively music to our Catechesis of the Good Shepherd formation program; from our commitment to liturgy being truly "the work of the people" to plentiful social outreach opportunities through our St. Patrick-Champion Outreach Center, St. Pat's continues to be a vibrant community of faith that is centered in prayer and action that extends far beyond the walls of our buildings.

Saint Patrick is the third oldest parish in Memphis following St. Mary in The Pinch and St. Peter downtown. Our community was founded to serve the growing number of working-class Irish families in the south Memphis neighborhoods.

Despite sickness and tragedy of the Yellow Fever Epidemics in Memphis, the community continued to grow. In 1904, construction on a new Romanesque church building began. The parish served as a "mother church" to two new parishes, St. Thomas in Soulsville and Immaculate Conception in Central Gardens during this time. To honor our Irish heritage, the co-patrons of Ireland, Saint Patrick and Saint Brigid are featured on either side of the Holy Family in the apse above the Sanctuary. Our pipe organ is the oldest working pipe organ in Memphis. Completed and dedicated in 1905 by the Bishop of Nashville, Right Reverend Thomas S. Byrne, our gathering space stands today as a testament to not only the enduring spirit of our community, but also our charism of accompanying the people of God through the tests of time. The St. Patrick campus resides on the ancestral homeland of the Quapaw Nation.

In 1954, St. Patrick welcomed the Paulist Fathers, who served our community until 2013. Our time with the Paulists during the Civil Rights Movement, drastic changes to our neighborhood, and changes within the Catholic Church at large imbued our community with our famous radical welcome, commitment to justice and solidarity, and a call to action to love God and each other. As a result of the missionary spirit of the Paulist Fathers, many of our traditions such as an empowered laity, the Good Friday Neighborhood Stations of the Cross, Noyze in the Hood caroling, the first LGBTQ Catholic ministry in Memphis, and various outreach ministries that still root us in place and faith began.

Inspired by the Holy Spirit and Vatican II, St. Patrick became a full-time gathering space for the community and worship and not just a space for Sunday obligation. Taking note from the global Church and the Acts of the Apostles, we choose to forego kneeling and commit to the active act of standing shoulder-to-shoulder in communion with God and each other during Mass. Except during the solemn seasons of Advent and Lent, we clap during the Great Amen and hold hands during the "Our Father." We believe Mass is a celebration, Mass is a feast, Mass is a chance to share in the glory of God together actively and with joy. Some of our members still kneel and we encourage everyone to do what connects them with God and makes them comfortable.

We heartily welcome all who come through our doors and are committed to accompanying each other on all journeys of faith.

# PARISH NEWS

## St. Patrick Community Outreach, Inc. **MOBILE FOOD PANTRY**

**Saturday, October 26<sup>th</sup> at 8:30 am**

**St. Patrick Catholic Church  
4<sup>th</sup> St. & Dr. Martin Luther King**

across from FedEx Forum



Featuring the great  
**STAN BELL**  
from Radio Station



*TQ's Coffay*

**MUST HAVE PROOF OF ADDRESS & TRANSPORTATION**

**Contact: (901) 527-2542**

(Proof of address examples: MLCW bill, Mail addressed to you, etc.)



**Volunteer Shifts:  
Volunteers Check In: 7:30  
Gates Open: 8:30  
Second Shift: 10:00  
We are done by 12:00 Noon**



# PARISH NEWS

## *Día de Los Muertos*



We celebrate Día de Los Muertos with a special “side altar” where **we invite you to bring in and place pictures and remembrances of your deceased loved ones.** The altar will remain on display **until Thanksgiving.** Please put a label on the back of the item or photo stating who is in the photo, who the picture belongs to, and the “life-span” of the person. (DOB–DOD)

A mixture of indigenous and Catholic traditions, Día de Los Muertos is a joyous occasion when the memory of ancestors and the continuity of life is celebrated. Its roots are in ancient Mexico but it is celebrated in many North, Central, and South American countries.

Although the skeleton is a strong symbol for both Halloween and Días de Los Muertos, the meaning is very different. For Días de Los Muertos the skeleton represents the dead playfully mimicking the living and is not a macabre symbol at all.

Preparation begins weeks in advance when statues, candies, breads and other items to please the departed are sold in markets. A sweet bread, pan de muerto, with decorations representing bones of the deceased is very popular as are sugar skulls.



Altars, *ofrecetas*, are set up in the home with offerings of sweets and the favorite foods and beverages of the deceased. These offerings may later be given away or consumed by the living after their essence has been enjoyed by the dead. Marigolds are the traditional decorative flower and copal is the traditional incense.

The particulars of the celebration vary widely by region in Mexico. On November 2, the spirits of the dead return. Entire families visit the graves of their ancestors, bringing favorite foods and beverages as offerings to the deceased as well as a picnic lunch for themselves. They spend the day cleaning and decorating the grave sites and visiting with each other and other families. Traditionally there is a feast in the early morning although many now celebrate with an evening meal. There are cake, candy and cookie sugar skulls and toys for the children, emphasizing early on that death is a positive part of the life cycle. It is a happy occasion for remembering pleasant times with departed family members.