

“It happens to all of us eventually.”

Hector said these words to Miguel as they watched his friend Chicharron fade into nothingness. If you haven't seen the Disney/Pixar movie “Coco” – rent it today. Today of all days.

On the feast of All Souls' the church remembers the people who will never make the festival list. You know, the Apostles; women like Mary Magdalene (who was also an apostle), Lydia, and Perpetua; reformers like Thomas Cranmer and Phillip Melanchthon; and justice seekers like Dorothy Day and Martin Luther King Jr. In addition to All Saints' Day, they also get a special day of remembrance. Not so much for the rest of us souls.

What makes the movie Coco, and the festival Day of the Dead, special is that family is at the heart of the festival. Family remembers those who have gone on before us and if the dead are remembered, they continue to dwell among us.

The writer of the book of Wisdom, ages before Christ and Christians were twinkles in their fathers' eyes, spoke of the immortality awaiting the souls who trust in God. Paul, in his letter to the church in Corinth, reminded the faithful that they would be changed in death, made imperishable.

The remembering of our lost loved ones brings us grief. That's understandable. We grieve because we miss them. We grieve because a part of our heart is still broken by their absence. Yet, the faith of those who came before us sustains us. The faithful departed urge us to tell their stories. In doing so, they continue to occupy a place at our dinner tables and holiday tables and picnic tables.

Their presence remains with us as we remember those acts that made them memorable. We remember that they always drank from china cups or made the best noodles. We remember being rescued from a camping trip gone sour or being there for the school play or concert. We remember shared experiences that made our days special. Their story and yours are entwined forever.

The Christian family understood that. It is at the heart of the Jesus movement.

Remember me.

For two thousand years we've been telling the story of Jesus. We tell the story handed down to us generation to generation. "When you eat this bread and drink this cup, remember everything I've done. My ministry with you. My death, resurrection, and ascension. Remember these things every time you come to my table." The story is told in every language that has heard and taken to heart the story of a rabbi whose message changed the lives of the people he touched. We are all souls bound together in the story of our Savior.

As generations continue to tell the story of Jesus of Nazareth and remember his saving acts, death itself dies. Jesus is still reaching out to us. Rabbi Jesus still can touch us and transform our lives.

Death happens to us all eventually. And, without family to tell our stories, those stories too will fade away. However, “family” isn’t only your relatives or the people you grew up with. Family is why we gather in faith. We are here to celebrate our stories, bound together with Jesus, from now through eternity.

Come to this table. This end is earthly, and the other end is heavenly. In between are all the people we love and will see again, because this table stretches into forever. Share together a taste of the eternal presence of Christ.