

I welcome the publication of this booklet by the Northern Pastoral Network to help individuals and families to remember and pray for the dead and the bereaved during the month of November. The resources included in this booklet are simple and easy to follow and I would encourage all households to mark this special month of remembrance with some time for prayer together.

I encourage you to watch online the service that will take place in each Cathedral and Church at 3pm on Sunday, 1st November, to begin the month of prayer. It would be worthwhile, as well, set up a sacred space in your house with religious symbols such as a cross or holy water, pictures of deceased relatives and friends, and your own personal lists of the dead. Together as a family you could use the prayer in this booklet to have a short service around the prayer space at sundown on the 1st November, the eve of All Souls Day.

Please remember in your prayers, as well, the relatives of those who have died since the COVID-19 pandemic began last March. In many cases they were not able to have a traditional wake or funeral service for their loved one because of the government restrictions on gathering that were issued. I know that there is a lot of pain and hurt in families where a loved one has died recently. Please God, our prayers during November will help to bring them peace.

Thank you to the members of the Northern Pastoral Network for all their efforts in putting this valuable resource together. The network is made up of people who are deeply involved in pastoral ministry across the ecclesiastical province of Armagh. May it bring comfort and solace to many people during the coming days and weeks.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Michael Router". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'M' and 'R'.

Bishop Michael Router,
Auxiliary Bishop of Armagh