

November 2 - All Souls' Day



The early Church was slow to dedicate a liturgical day to offering prayers and masses to commemorate the faithful departed.

But in time prayers were offered on behalf of dead monks, that they might attain "the Beatific Vision" through purification, which the Church later described as Purgatory. Odilo, the powerful abbot of Cluny, (d 1049) decreed that All Souls' Day should follow the feast of All Saints' Day.

In bygone centuries All Souls' day was certainly uncomfortable for anyone who had wronged a person who had then died. For it was believed that souls in purgatory could appear on earth on this day, in the form of ghosts, witches or toads, to haunt anyone who had wronged them in life.

On a more cheerful note, it was also believed that you could help the dead on this day by almsgiving in cash or in kind. Some of these beliefs seem to have been caught up in the popular customs of Halloween.

November 5 - Kea

Kea was an early Christian and a monk from a good family who left Glastonbury to work in Devon and Cornwall, where Landkey (Devon) and Kea (Cornwall) bear his name. He founded several Christian centres in the area before going on to Brittany to become the saint known there as 'Saint-Quay'. It seems that Kea may also have tried a bit of early dentistry, as down the centuries since he has been invoked over the problems of toothaches.

November 13 - Remembrance Sunday



High Streets everywhere will blossom with red poppies this month: everyone from toddlers in prams to grannies will be wearing one. By Remembrance Day more than 33 million are expected to be sold around the county by an army of many thousands of volunteers. The money raised will help our ex-Service people and their dependants. To achieve all that takes more than flower power.

We have recently completed the bloodiest century that the world has ever known. More people died in wars last century than ever before in the history of mankind. Many millions of those died fighting fascism or communism.

How many will die this coming year in our war with international terrorism?