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ALL SAINTS DAY – NOVEMBER 1<sup>ST</sup>

All Saints Day, also called All Hallows Day, is celebrated every November 1<sup>st</sup>. Although most do not celebrate this religious holiday, it is important that we are aware of it for reasons I shall point out later. We shall examine its history and meaning.

Hallow: to make holy; to set apart for holy purposes.

All Hallows Day was instituted in Rome by Pope Boniface IV in 609 A.D. on May 13<sup>th</sup> when he dedicated the Pantheon in honor of Virgin Mary and all the martyrs.

Pope Gregory III (731-741 A.D.) changed the date to November 1<sup>st</sup> as he dedicated a chapel in St. Peter's Cathedral. It was dedicated to honor all saints presumed to make it to heaven whether known or unknown to all but God. The date, coincidentally coincided with the ancient Celtic, (Irish, U.K. and French) traditions of Sumhain.

In 837 A.D. Pope Gregory IV extended the November 1 observance of All Hallows Day to the entire Catholic church worldwide. It was not long before the Name All Saints Day became the more popular designation. Catholics were required to attend a special mass on that day to honor all the dead who went to heaven.

When the Protestant Reformation came, many of the early Protestant churches (notably the Methodist and others) continued to put high regard on November 1.

We do not observe it ourselves, nor is it a public holiday in America. However, it is observed in some countries publicly. In Germany and France, businesses are closed, and people have the day off from work.

I first heard of this holiday during my two years in the Philippines which is a predominantly Catholic country. There they not only attend mass, but they also pay respect to their departed loved ones by visiting the graves, placing flowers on it, saying special prayers, and giving good offerings.

It is a hallowed day, a special Christian observance to the saints who have passed on. The New Testament calls all who are saved "saints" because we are clothed in the righteousness of Christ.

But wouldn't you know that Satan would make his move to "trump" God's holiday by staging his own holiday on the eve of All Hallows Day.

Hmmm.... We shall discuss that tomorrow.