

PSYCHOSAVVATO

SATURDAY OF SOULS

SERVICES WITH PRAYERS FOR THE DEPARTED

February 22, 2025

March 1, 2025

March 8, 2025



Traditionally, the Orthodox remember the departed on a Saturday, the day Christ lay in his tomb. Four times a year parishioners assemble to pray for all their deceased loved ones. These general memorial services, known as Saturday of Souls (Psychosavvato) take place the two Saturdays that precede the beginning of Great Lent, the First Saturday of Great Lent, and the Saturday before the Feast of Pentecost. There is a popular belief that departed souls come back to earth at Easter and return the day after Pentecost.

To offer prayers for the deceased, one writes their first name(s) on a slip of paper, and the priest will read the list toward the end of the service. Submit the names only once for the first three consecutive Saturdays as the names are read even if you are not present. Put the list in an envelope with a cross on it (indicating these are prayers for the departed). A small plate of *Kollyva* - (a plate of specially prepared wheat with ingredients which have symbolic meaning: wheat for everlasting life, raisins for sweetness, pomegranate seeds for plenty, powdered sugar for the sweetness of heaven, and parsley for the green of the earth) - is also brought to church and placed on the memorial table for this service – a candle is placed in the center of the *kollyva* platter.

Following the service all the *kollyva* is combined, symbolizing the mixing of souls in heaven. Parishioners share the *kollyva* and greet each other with, “*O Theos na tous anapafsi*” (“May God forgive the souls of the departed.”) taken from *Greek Traditions and Customs in America* by Marilyn Rouvelas