# Liturgical Living: What is Hallowtide?

Hallowtide is the triduum (three days) encompassing the observances of All Hallows' Eve (Halloween), All Saints' Day (All Hallows') and All Souls' Day, which lasts from October 31 to November 2 every year.

The origins of Halloween are rooted in the Catholic Church. The word “Halloween” comes from a contraction of “Hallows’ Eve” which itself is short for “All Hallows’ Eve.” “Hallow” simply means “Holy” or “Sanctified.” Just like Christmas Eve is the day before Christmas, All Hallows’ Eve is the day before the Feast of All Hallows, better known as the Feast of All Saints.

In today’s culture, “Halloween” has become a less-than-holy celebration, but we can choose to reclaim the Catholic traditions associated with the day.

What are some ways we can bring the holiness back into Halloween?

- **Costumes:** If your kids dress up, choose costumes that reflect good instead of evil. Some ideas are Bible figures, Saints, animals from the Bible, Angels, warriors (Soldiers for Christ), etc. The Church has Saints that were from all walks of life: princesses, doctors, lawyers, teachers, etc.
- **Pumpkins:** Carve Christ-o-Lanterns! This link offers free, printable Catholic pumpkin stencils.
- **Tell Saint stories:** Let us remember our own memento mori by reliving the lives of the Saints, many of which were a bit spooky! Read or listen to stories of the Saints. Your kids might enjoy the Shining Light Dolls free podcast collection of spooky Saint stories.
- **Light candles:** Use the template here to make your own Saint shrines with candles out of cereal boxes.
- **Make soul cakes:** Soul cakes are an old English traditional cake (more like our cookie than a cake), sometimes known simply as "souls". The tradition of giving out soul cakes on All Hallows' Eve dates back to the Middle Ages, when children went door-to-door saying prayers for the dead. On All Hallows' Eve, All Saints' Day and All Souls' Day, children went "souling", asking for soul cakes from house to house. Some people believe this may have been the precursor to trick-or-treating.
- **Learn even more:** Into the Deep offers some beautiful Catholic unit studies on various topics, including this 3-day unit study on Hallowtide. It is a digital download so you can access it immediately.

You can also find some great activity and coloring pages here.