

HONORING THE SAINTS, RELICS AND IMAGES

Does the First Commandment forbid us to honor the Saints in heaven?
 The First Commandment does not forbid us to honor the Saints in Heaven, provided we do not give them the honor that belongs to God ALONE.

Why do we honor the Saints in heaven?

We honor the Saints in heaven because they practiced great virtue when they were on earth, and because in honoring those who are the chosen friends of God we honor God Himself.

We honor the Saints in heaven when we pray to them. Praying to the Saints does in no way constitute worship. When we pray to the Saints we are merely asking them for their help, and ask them to JOIN US as we pray for this or that favor or intention or need. The PRAYER OF THE SAINTS GIVES GREATER STRENGTH TO THE PRAYER WE ISSUE FORTH. Only God is the giver of all things - NOT THE SAINTS - and all must understand this very clearly. Those who insist that this activity constitutes worship of the Saints is simply muddle-headed, and should not be argued with.

The SAINTS ARE NOT the statues in the church. The statues are nothing more than marble or plaster or wooden (or photographic) REPRESENTATIONS of certain of the Saints: NOTHING MORE. These merely represent the Saints, who were real people like ourselves, whose souls are now in heaven. The statues help us keep the certain saint in question in our mind's eye. To kiss or embrace a statue or picture is nothing more than kissing the picture of a mother or father or any other loved one. It is a praise-worthy practice, and helps us keep our love alive. Those who insist that this activity constitutes worship of the Saints are simply muddle-headed and ignorant, and should not be argued with. The mainstream catholic church no longer approves of such attention being given to the Saints or the images, witness the wholesale exodus of ALL STATUES from modern catholic churches, and religious institutions.

When we read the lives of the Saints, we should remember that we are reading about real people whose souls are still alive in heaven and who want to help us.

The Catholic Church has always encouraged and promoted special prayer to the Saints - - ESPECIALLY THE GREATEST SAINT OF ALL - - MARY!!!!

How can we honor the Saints?

We can honor the Saints:

- (1), by imitating their holy lives;
- (2), by praying to them;
- (3), by showing respect to their relics and images.

IMITATING THE SAINTS - - - DOES NOT MEAN - - - imitating their outward actions, but imitating their virtues. If you imitate a Saint who slept on bare boards with no blanket, you might catch your death of cold. If you conduct extraordinary fasts you might do injury to your health. Imitate his love for penance and do what penance you can UNDER THE INSPIRATION OF THE GRACE THAT IS IN YOU.

Praying to the Saints means talking with them and asking them to help you in your need.

Respecting their Relics and Images means not merely showing respect to stone and wood and paper, but to the PERSONS these things represent. Relics and images remind us of the Saints whom we would otherwise tend to forget.