

Saints And Saints' Days

In addition to the prayers and devotions that are directed to Mary, Roman Catholics also honour and pray to various “*saints*.”

These saints, according to the Catholic position, are martyrs or other notable people of the church who have died and whom the popes have pronounced saints.

Yet according to the Christian Bible, all true Christians are saints, even those who may as yet sadly lack spiritual maturity or knowledge.

Ephesians 1:1 [King James] “*Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God, to the saints which are at Ephesus, and to the faithful in Christ Jesus:*”

Saints, it should be noticed, were living people **not** those who had died.

Also read **Acts 9:13, 32, 41; Acts 26:10; Romans 1:7; Romans 12:13; Romans 15:25-26, 31; Romans 16:2, 15; 1 Corinthians 1:2; 1 Corinthians 6:1-2; 1 Corinthians 14:33; 1 Corinthians 16:1, 15; 2 Corinthians 1:1; 2 Corinthians 8:4; 2 Corinthians 9:1, 12; Philippians 4:22; etc...**

The Greek word used for “*saints*” is “*châcîyd*” meaning Christ-like or Godly.

As we see the apostolic designation in the New Testament for all Christians is saints, and this continued to be used as a general designation at least up to the days of Irenaeus and Tertullian of the Roman church degenerated in ecclesiastical usage into a honorific title.

If we want a “*saint*” to pray for us, it must be a living person.

But if we try to commune with people that have died, what else is this but a form of spiritism?

Repeatedly the Christian Bible condemns all attempts to commune with the dead.

Isaiah 8:19 [NIV] “*When men tell you to consult mediums and spiritists, who whisper and mutter, should not a people enquire of their God? Why consult the dead on behalf of the living?*”

A direct command **not** to contact such people, or use them to talk to the dead, for what you are seeking to contact are evil spirits **not** dead human beings.

Ecclesiastes 9:5-6 [NIV] “*For the living know that they will die, **but the dead know nothing**; they have no further reward, and even the memory of them is forgotten. Their love, their hate and their jealousy have long since vanished; never again will they have a part in anything that happens under the sun.*”

All dead human beings are awaiting a resurrection after the Second Coming of Jesus Christ. [Psalms 6:5; Psalms 146:3-4; 1 Corinthians 15:50-58; 1 Thessalonians 4:13-17; Revelation 20:4-6; Revelation 20:11-13]

Quotation: The Catholic Encyclopaedia [volume 4, pages 653, 655; Article ‘*Prayers for the Dead*’]

“*Catholic teaching regarding prayers for the dead is bound up inseparably with the doctrine of the communion of saints which is an article of the Apostles’ Creed, prayers to the saints and martyrs collectively, or to some one of them in particular are recommended.*”

[The actual wording of the Council of Trent is that *“the saints who reign together with Christ offer up their own prayers to God for men. It is good and useful suppliantly to invoke them, and to have recourse to their prayers, aid and help for obtaining benefits from God.”*]

Quotation: The Catholic Encyclopaedia: *“The chief objections raised against the intercession and invocation of the saints are that these doctrines are opposed to the faith and trust which we should have in God alone ... and that they cannot be proved from scripture.”*

This we have already proved to be true, no indication can be found in the Christian Bible that prayers are blessed if directed to or through those who have died.

Instead in many ways, the Roman Catholic doctrines regarding “saints” are very similar to the old pagan ideas that were held regarding the “gods.”

In the false Babylon religion people prayed to and honoured a plurality of gods, [Hays *‘In the Beginnings’*, page 65].

In much the same way as Catholics believe concerning their “saints”, the Babylonians believed their “gods” had at one time been living heroes on earth, but were now on a higher plane. [*‘Encyclopaedia of Religions’*, volume 2, page 78].

“Every month and every day of the month was under the protection of a particular divinity,” [*‘The Historians History of the World’* by Williams, volume 1, page 518].

There was a “god” for every part of active life.

From Babylon such concepts about the “gods” spread to the nations.

Even Buddhists in China had their *“worship of various deities for places or occupations.”* [*‘The Story of the World’s Worship’* by Dobbins, page 621].

The Syrians believed the powers of certain “gods” were limited to certain areas, as an incident in the Christian Bible records.

1 Kings 20:23 [King James] *“And the servants of the king of Syria said unto him, Their gods are gods of the hills; therefore they were stronger than we; but let us fight against them in the plain, and surely we shall be stronger than they.”*

When Rome conquered the world, these same ideas were very much in evidence.

There were “gods” who presided over every moment of a person’s life. [*‘The Story of Civilization: Caesar and Christ’*, pages 61-63].

This explains why the people of Lystra thought of Paul as the god Mercury who was the god of orators. [**Acts 14:11-12**]

The gods Castor and Pollux were protectors of Rome and of travellers at sea. [**Acts 28:11**]

Since converts to the Roman church from paganism were reluctant to part with their “gods”, unless they could find some satisfactory counterpart in Christianity, the “gods” and goddesses were renamed and called “saints”.

The old idea of gods associated with certain occupations and days has continued in the Roman Catholic belief in saints and saints’ days.

“Saints” associated with occupations and days number 43 in all.

“Saints” for various people and problems in life number 20 in all.

“*Saints*” to help with certain afflictions in life number 20 in all.

But why pray to “*saints*” at all when we have direct access to God through our Saviour Jesus Christ?

Many of the old legends that had been associated with the pagan gods were transferred over to the “*saints*”.

Quotation: The Catholic Encyclopaedia; volume 9, pages 130-131; Article ‘*Legends*’

“Legends repeat the conceptions found in the pre-Christian religious tales ... the legend is not Christian ... only Christianised ... In many cases it has obviously the same origin as the myth... Antiquity traced back sources, whose natural elements it did not understand, to be heroes, such was also the case with many legends of the saints ... It became easy to transfer to the Christian martyrs the conceptions which the ancients held concerning their heroes. This transference was prompted by the numerous cases in which the Christian saints became the successors of the local deities, and Christian worship supplanted the ancient local worship. This explains the great number of similarities between gods and saints.”

As paganism and Christianity were mixed together sometimes a saint was given a similar sounding name as that of the pagan god or goddess it replaced.

The goddess Victoria of Basses-Alpes was renamed as St. Victoire, Cheron as St. Ceranos, Dionysus as St. Dionysus, etc.

The goddess Bright [regarded as the daughter of the sun-god and who was represented with a child in her arms] was renamed as “*Saint Bridget.*” In pagan days, her chief temple at Kildare was served by Vestal Virgins who tended the sacred fires.

Later her temple became a convent and her vestals, nuns.

They continued to tend the ritual fire, only it was now called “*St. Bridget’s Fire.*” [‘*Festivals, Holy Days and Saints’ Days*’ by Urlin, page 26]

The best preserved ancient temple now remaining in Rome is the Pantheon which in olden times was dedicated [according to the inscription over the portico] to “*Jove and all the gods.*” This was reconstructed by Pope Boniface IV to “*the Virgin Mary and all the saints.*” Such practices were not uncommon.

“Churches or ruins of churches have been frequently found on sites where pagan shrines or temples originally stood ... It is also to some extent true that sometimes the saint whose aid was to be invoked at the Christian shrine bore some outward analogy to the deity previously hallowed in that place. Thus in Athens the shrine of the healer Asklepios ... When it became a church, was made sacred to the two saints whom the Christian Athenians invoked as miraculous healers, Kosmas and Damian.” [‘*The Catholic Encyclopaedia*’ volume 7, page 636; Article ‘*Idolatry*’]

A cave shown in Bethlehem as the place in which Jesus was born was, according to Jerome, actually a rock shrine in which the Babylonian god Tammuz had been worshipped. Also, the scriptures never stated that Jesus was born in a cave!

Throughout the Roman Empire, paganism died in one form, only to live again within the Roman Catholic church. Not only did the devotion to the old gods continue [in a new form], but the use of statues of these gods as well. In some cases, it is said, the very same statues that had been worshipped as pagan gods were renamed as Christian saints. Throughout the centuries, more and more statues were made, until today there are in Europe as many as three thousand statues in churches. [‘*Hasting’s Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics*’, Article ‘*Images and Idols*’]

The use of such idols within the Roman Catholic church provides another clue in solving the mystery of modern Babylon, for, as Herodotus mentioned, Babylon was the source from which all systems of idolatry flowed to the nations. To link the word “*idols*” with statues of Mary and the saints may sound quite harsh to some. But can this be totally incorrect?

It is admitted in Catholic writings that at numerous times among various people, images of the saints have been worshipped in superstitious ways. Such abuses, however, are generally placed in the past. **It is explained that in this enlightened age, no educated person actually worships the object itself, but rather what the object represents. Generally this is true.**

But is it not also true of heathens that used idols [unmistakeably idols] in the worship of demon-gods?

Most of these do not believe the idol itself is a god, but only representative of the demon-god they worship.

Several articles within The Catholic Encyclopaedia seek to explain that the use of images is proper on the basis of them being representative of Jesus Christ or the saints.

“The honour which is given to them is referred to the objects which they represent, so that through the images which we kiss, and before which we uncover our heads and kneel, we adore Christ and venerate the saints whose likeness they are.” [‘The Catholic Encyclopaedia’, volume 7, page 636; Article ‘Idolatry’]

Not all Christians are convinced, however, that this “*explanation*” is strong enough reason to bypass verses such as:

Exodus 20:4-5 [King James] *“Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of any thing that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth: Thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them: for I the LORD thy God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me;”*

Or to the command given to Old Testament Israelites when they conquered a city or country, they were not to adopt the idols of these people into their religion. Such were to be destroyed. **[Deuteronomy 7:25-26]**

Numbers 33:52 [King James] *“Then ye shall drive out all the inhabitants of the land from before you, and destroy all their pictures, and destroy all their molten images, and quite pluck down all their high places:”*

The Israelites were also to destroy all the pagan pictures along with the idols of pagan gods.

To what extent these Biblical instructions were to be carried out under the New Testament has been often debated over the centuries. [‘The Catholic Encyclopaedia’, volume 7, page 620; Article ‘Iconoclasm’]

The pagans placed a circle or aureole around the heads of those who were “*gods*” in their pictures. This practice continued right on in the art of the Roman church. All Catholic saints are pictured this same way.

To see that this was a pagan practice we only have to look at pictures or drawings of Buddha, or the pagan goddess Circe, a sun goddess.

Pictures, supposedly of Jesus Christ, were painted with “*golden beams*” surrounding His head.

This is exactly the way the sun-god of the pagans had been represented for centuries. [‘Ancient Pagan and Modern Christian Symbolism’ by Inman, page 35]

2 Corinthians 5:16 [King James] *“Wherefore henceforth know we no man after the flesh: yea, though we have known Christ after the flesh, yet now henceforth know we him no more.”*

Having now ascended into heaven, we should no longer think of Jesus Christ “after the flesh” for He is now “glorified.” [John 7:39; John 17:4-5]

Not even the best artist in the world could portray the now-glorified Jesus Christ. Any picture, even at its best, could never show how wonderful Jesus Christ really is now in His glorified state.