

FAITH CHAT

with James & John

Why Care About Relics, Statues, & Images?

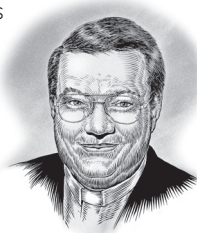
Know This...

When we die, whether we know God or not, we are judged for heaven or hell. If we die in a state of grace, we are destined for heaven. If we died in a state of mortal sin, we will spend eternity in hell. God gives each of us the grace we need to spend eternity with Him in heaven. The fullness of God's truth is only found in the Catholic Church; so the more we partake of her gifts, the stronger we are in turning away from sin and toward God. Relics, statues, and images—properly viewed and used—help us focus on the reality and beauty of God.



John: Relics are the personal possessions, clothing, bones, or ashes of saints held in high-esteem and revered by the Church. They do not possess magical powers; but they are often associated with miraculous healings.

James: Likewise, statues and images of Jesus, angels, and saints are not idols; they are not representations of false gods. They can help to awaken and deepen our sense of God's presence in our lives as we seek to grow in holiness.



John: In Ex 20:4-5, God says we should not carve idols and then bow down and worship them. In Ex 25:18-19, He directs the Israelites to carve images of angels and to mount them on the Ark of the Covenant.

James: Relics, statues, and images do not provide grace; but properly used, they can open us up to receive the grace of God that brings us home to Christ.

Deacon John Beckmann and Deacon James Russell are permanent deacons in the Archdiocese of St. Louis.

Please visit: www.catholicchristians.com for more insight into the teaching of Jesus Christ and His Church.



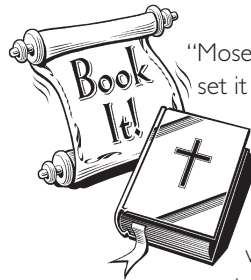
"A woman who had had a flow of blood for twelve years and could not be healed by any one, came up behind Jesus, and touched the fringe of his garment; and immediately her flow of blood ceased." Lk 8:43-44

"Even if we make images of pious men it is not so that we might adore them as gods but that when we see them we might be prompted to imitate them; and if we make images of Christ, it is so that our minds might wing aloft in yearning for Him." St. Cyril of Alexandria "Sacred images in our churches and homes are intended to awaken and nourish our faith in the mystery of Christ. Through the icon of Christ and his works of salvation, it is he whom we adore. Through sacred images of the holy Mother of God, of the angels and of the saints, we venerate the persons represented." CCC 1192



PAPA SAYS

"Many signs and wonders were done among the people at the hands of the apostles... the people esteemed them... Thus they even carried the sick out into the streets and laid them on cots and mats so that when Peter came by, at least his shadow might fall on one or another of them." Acts 5:12a, 13b, 15 "I will hasten to send you some part of the chains which the Apostle Saint Peter himself bore on his neck and hands, and from which many miracles are attested among the people." Pope Gregory I to the Empress Constantina Augusta, 6th century



"Moses [at God's direction] made a bronze serpent, and set it on a pole; and if a serpent bit any man, he would look at the bronze serpent and live." Num 21:9 "[The prophet] Elisha died and was buried. At the time, bands of Moabites used to raid the land each year. Once some people were burying a man, when suddenly they spied such a raiding band. So they cast the dead man into the grave of Elisha, and everyone went off. But when the man came in contact with the bones of Elisha, he came back to life and rose to his feet." 2 Kgs 13:20-21 "When face cloths or aprons that touched [Paul's] skin were applied to the sick, their diseases left them and the evil spirits came out of them." Acts 19:12

Generous Father, Your endless gifts flow through Your Church: Your sacramental grace, Your infallible and inerrant Word in Holy Tradition and Sacred Scripture, Your wisdom and guidance which safeguards our faith, and Your only Son through whom we see You. I, who worship You alone, pray that sacred images of You, the Blessed Virgin, and Your saints will strengthen my faith in times of doubt. Grant this in Your Most Holy Name. Amen.

