

## Why Do Catholics Have Relics?

We as Catholic Christians prize relics of Christ and the saints. For example, I have a relic (size of a splinter) of the cross on which Jesus died. Our churches have a relic of St. Anne, our patron saint of our Grand Lake church. At Our Lady of the Snow, we have a relic of St. Faustina in the daily Mass chapel, which has been named “The Chapel of Divine Mercy.”

What exactly is a relic? It is an item directly or indirectly associated with the events of Christ’s life or a saint’s life. We categorize relics into classes. A first-class relic is an item directly associated with the life of Christ (manger, cross, etc.) or the physical remains of a saint (bone, hair, etc.). A second-class relic is an item that a saint used (crucifix, book, etc.) or an item that he/she wore (shirt, glove, etc.). The chains that bound St. Peter are preserved in San Pietro in Vincoli, Rome; they are a second-class relic. A third-class relic is an object that has touched a first- or second-class relic. Many third-class relics are small pieces of cloth.

Why do Catholics like relics or use them? Sometimes we see God working miracles and exorcisms through them. God determines if He wants to give divine effects while using a relic. For example, a person may pray over another person who has cancer and then touch the relic of the cross of Christ to the forehead of that person. God may decide to heal the person with cancer as an effect of prayer and the use of the relic. Also, since relics remind us of the person they represent, we use them to intercede. Jesus said in Matthew 18:20: “For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them.” Thus, we might hold a relic, and we and the saint go to Jesus together to intercede on someone’s behalf.

Where is the use of relics in the Bible? There are several places in the Bible that talk about relics. I will list four of them. First, let’s begin with John 9:1-7. Jesus chose to use mud and spittle to heal the blind man. Jesus is God and all-powerful. He did not need mud and spittle to cure the man. He chose to associate matter (mud and spittle) with His divine grace. Since the mud and spittle touched Jesus’ hands, they are considered first-class relics. Second, in Matthew 9:20-22, the woman is cured of a hemorrhage by touching the hem of Christ’s cloak, a first-class relic. Third, we see in 2 Kings 13:20-21 that the bones of Elisha the prophet, a first-class relic, brought a dead man to life. Here is what it says:

*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.*

Thus, God chose to use His divine power, in association with the bones of Elisha, in order to work a miracle.

Finally, Acts 19:11-12, states:

*So extraordinary were the mighty deeds God accomplished at the hands of Paul that when face cloths or aprons that touched his skin were applied to the sick, their diseases left them and the evil spirits came out of them.*

In sum, there are many places in the Bible where relics are mentioned.

We Catholic Christians respect relics. We venerate them; we treat them as if they were a special picture of the person they symbolize. The greatest account of venerating a relic is that of the very body of Christ itself, after He was crucified. Joseph of Arimathea donated his own tomb (see Matthew 27:60). John 19:39 states that “Nicodemus, the one who had first come to him at night, also came bringing a mixture of myrrh and aloes weighing about one hundred pounds.” We also know from Matthew 28:1 that the women went to visit the tomb in a reverent manner. Also, there are numerous accounts of how early Christians venerated relics. In 156 A.D. we see the following account by the Smyrneans regarding the martyrdom of Polycarp:

*We took up his bones, which are more valuable than precious stones and finer than refined gold, and laid them in a suitable place, where the Lord will permit us to gather ourselves together, as we are able, in gladness and joy and to celebrate the birthday of his martyrdom.*

Finally, Saint Jerome (331-420) speaking about relics, said, “We do not worship, we do not adore, for fear that we should bow down to the creature rather than to the Creator, but we venerate the relics of the martyrs in order the better to adore Him whose martyrs they are” (*Ad Riparium*, i, P.L., XXII, 907).

How do we know if a relic is authentic? The answer is: We do our best to make sure they are. (I’m sure some relics are frauds.) Just as we evaluate whether Thomas Jefferson slept in a particular bed, we use the Church to evaluate whether a relic belongs to a particular saint. The Church does its best to approve of relics that have a reasonable probability of being authentic. [Note: during an exorcism, authentic relics really bother demons. The demons, using the voice of the demonized person, may demand that they be taken away; or, the relic will cause a burning sensation on the demonized person, when placed on him/her; or both. This is one way to see if a relic is authentic.] Even though the authenticity of a relic may be highly probable, there will always be skeptics.

Those who shy away from the use of relics (or even the sacraments or sacramentals of the Catholic Church) dislike the mixing of spirit and matter. They think that God’s grace should be separated from physical things. This attitude stems from the early heresies of Dualism, Marcionism, and Manichaeism. (Note: In the Incarnation of Christ, we see that Jesus, a spiritual being, took on human flesh.) In the sacraments, God effects grace through the use of material things such as water, wine, bread, oil, and the imposition of hands. Relics are not magic; they do not contain grace. God “graces” us as He wishes through their use.



Join thousands of Catholics nationwide in the annual pro-life novena, *9 Days for Life*, Monday, January 14 – Tuesday, January 22. Pray for the respect of all human life with daily intentions, brief reflections, and more. Download a free mobile app, or sign up to receive the novena through daily emails or text message. (A printable version is also available online.) Sign up at [www.9daysforlife.com](http://www.9daysforlife.com)! to pray.

For simplicity, you could do an additional Divine Mercy Chaplet for pro-life every day from January 14 – 22.

If you want to print the novena, visit: <http://www.usccb.org/about/pro-life-activities/january-roe-events/upload/novena-9-days-for-life-2019-english-pdf.pdf>

### **Quick Apologetics (Defending Your Faith)—The Bible**

We, as Catholic Christians, use a Bible that has 73 books (called the canon of Scripture); there are 46 books in the Old Testament, 27 in the New Testament. The canon of Scripture was settled at the Council of Rome in 382, under the authority of Pope Damasus I. This canon included the Septuagint, or Alexandrian Canon (written in Greek) of the Old Testament—46 books. It was soon reaffirmed on numerous occasions. The 73 books were affirmed at the Council of Hippo in 393 and at the Council of Carthage in 397. In 405 Pope Innocent I reaffirmed the canon in a letter to Bishop Exuperius of Toulouse. All of these canons were identical to our modern Catholic Bible. The Church also reaffirmed the 73 books of the Bible at the Councils of Florence (1442), Trent (1546), Vatican I (1870), and Vatican II (1965).

So why do Protestants have 66 books—seven less books? Historically, near 100 A.D. Jewish leaders rejected seven of “our books” [Wisdom, Sirach, Judith, Baruch, Tobit, and 1 and 2 Maccabees], mainly because they could not find versions of them written in Hebrew. This Jewish version is called the Palestinian Canon. In 1529, Martin Luther chose the Palestinian Canon, using the same reason to reject the seven books—he could not find the Hebrew version.

However, close to 1950, archaeologists found Hebrew copies of the seven books in question in the Dead Sea scrolls at Qumran. Who would have known?!

In the New Testament, there are 300 quotations taken from the Septuagint, which was used by Jesus and the New Testament writers. If Jesus used the Septuagint, we had better do the same.

### **Jesus and His Teachings, Yes! New Age/Occult, No!**

Parents and young people, you already know that video games waste a lot of time—time to exercise, time to pray, time to read, etc. Be especially careful not to let your kids play video games with a theme that God is the enemy and the devil is a hero. Be careful of the following for sure:

1) **Tecmo’s Deception: Invitation To Darkness** (Playstation) – Players “make an unholy pact and sell their soul to Satan in exchange for power” with the object of the game being to ensure the resurrection of Satan and obtain his power. (This game is rated “T” for teen.)

2) **Nocturne** (Playstation 2) – A game in which the hero (a demon) destroys the three archangels St. Michael, Gabriel and Raphael, then goes on to destroy God.

3) **Devil Summoner** (Playstation 2) – Involves communicating with and recruiting demons. One demon tells the player “That Catholic Church is such an eyesore” and in the end of the game, blows up the Church.

4) **Shadow Hearts** (Playstation 2) – The hero uses his power to intercept and destroy God and “save the world.”

5) **Dragon’s Age Origins** (Playstation 3/Xbox 360) – Game revolves around the story of God going mad and cursing the world. A witch attacks believers and players can “have sex” with her in a pagan act called “blood magic” so she can “give birth to a god.” Another scenario allows player to have sex with a demon in exchange for a boy’s soul.

6) **Dante’s Inferno** (Playstation 3/Xbox 360) – Loosely based on the *Divine Comedy*, player travels through nine circles of hell, fighting demons, “unbaptized babies” and other tormented souls. (This game is being considered for a movie by Universal Pictures.)

7) **Guitar Hero** (Playstation) – Players use guitars decorated with pentagrams. God is repeatedly mocked by the devil and in the end, the devil is the hero of the game. Women dressed as Catholic school girls are degraded. (Rated “T” for teen.)

Other games with Satanic themes are **Darksiders**, **Koudelka**, **Trapt**, and **Bayonetta**.

### Pint with a Priest on Tuesday, January 8, at 6 p.m.

Join Fr. Peter for a drink and a good discussion about the faith, with time for Q & A. This is for Catholics and non-Catholics alike. Bring a friend! The Peak Brewery and Restaurant in Winter Park.

### Snowshoeing with Fr. Peter on Friday, January 11

**Mass is at St. Bernard on Friday at 8:30 a.m.** So we will be leaving from St. Bernard at 10:05 a.m. Location to be determined. Suggestions welcome.

### US Air Force Academy Cadet Choir Coming

On January 19 and 20, the cadets will sing at St. Anne, Sat., 5 p.m. and Our Lady, Sun., 9:30 a.m.

If you want to sponsor some cadets this year, please call Angela at the office, 970-887-0032, x5.

### Parish Mission Talks at Our Lady of the Snow

-Speaker: Kyle Clement. Kyle grew up in Texas and is a cattle rancher, horse trainer, and lawyer. He is married with three children. He consults for exorcisms. He is a staunch defender of the Catholic faith.

#### **Talk 1: “What We Lost in the Fall and How to Reclaim It” [for Men 18 and over]**

-Sunday, January 27; Our Lady of the Snow

-Time: 3:30 – 5:30 p.m.

#### **Talk 2: “The Flow of Grace Depends on YOU!” [open to all parishioners, 16 and up]**

-Tuesday, January 29; Our Lady of the Snow

-Time: 6:30 – 8 p.m.

**St. Bernard Church** invites parishioners to host our popular COFFEE AND DONUTS Sunday one time during 2019. Call Jan Derks at 303-618-7826 to sign up! Coffee and donuts on January 13 at StB after Mass.

**MTYR** Believe in the miraculous gift from God. Jesus has come! Realize Jesus’ entire mission is to **rescue you, to forgive you, to transform you!** The time is now to admit you need Jesus. Admit your desire to have an unending relationship of love with God. As you allow Jesus to rule over your life, you will personally discover you are **MORE THAN YOU REALIZE!**

### Forgiven and Set Free Bible Study for Post-Abortive Healing—Mid-January

“Abortion triggers a series of powerful physical, emotional, and spiritual shockwaves. All those involved with the decision want to flee from the emotional fallout of the event as quickly as possible. The ‘shockwaves of abortion’ extend far beyond the epicenter of the procedure, like silent, invisible radioactive fallout...that over time can leave us deeply affected.” “Abortion scatters. Healing gathers.”

For more information about the study, please call Pat at [361-442-3532](tel:361-442-3532) or email [patpulliamj@ gmail.com](mailto:patpulliamj@ gmail.com).

All inquiries are strictly confidential.

### Help for Those Who are Struggling with Same-sex Attraction

Almost all of us know someone who is struggling. We recommend that anyone start by reading *The Battle For Normality: A Guide For (Self-) Therapy For Homosexuality*, by Dr. Gerard Van Den Aardweg, Catholic Psychologist. This book gives insights into the causes and how someone can be healed. We have seen the healings take place through faith, prayer and truth.

God is powerful! You can find insightful articles at:

<https://www.catholiceducation.org/en/search/?q=homosexuality>.

### Calendar of Events

**-Jan 19-20 (Sat-Sun).** United States Air Force Academy

Cadet Choir to sing St. Anne and Our Lady of the Snow

**-Jan 22 (Tue).** Pro-life Day of fasting and prayer

**-Jan 27 & 29 (Sun & Tues).** Mission talks at OLS

**-Feb 11 (Mon).** Parish Mission: Talks on Angels by Fr.

Piotr from the Congregation of St. Michael the Archangel

**-Feb 17 (Sun).** Pregnancy Resource Connection Banquet

#### Mass Collections, Dec 29 – 30

|                      |                |
|----------------------|----------------|
| St. Anne             | \$ 2650        |
| St. Bernard          | 8073           |
| Our Lady of the Snow | 2660           |
| St. Peter            | 5150           |
| St. Ignatius         | 774            |
| <b>Total</b>         | <b>\$19307</b> |

#### Vocations Prayer Calendar

*Please pray for our seminarians every day.*

**Sat**—Peter Tran & James Finders

**Sun**—Daniel Rivas & Blaise Buches

**Mon**—Christian Burns & Jose Delgado

**Tue**—Daniel Jordan & Daniel Kaelin

**Wed**—Christopher Mellen & Jun Pham

**Thu**—Jason DiRiton & Amilcar Ramos

**Fri**—Men and women applying for formation

#### Mass Intentions and Schedule for StA, StB, and OLS

**KEY:** StA = St. Anne; StB = St. Bernard;

OLS = Our Lady of the Snow

-Sat, Jan 5, StA, 5 p.m., People in our region/visitors

-Sat, Jan 5, StB, 4 p.m., Edward and Terra Plute

-Sat, Jan 5, StB, 5:30 p.m., Peter/Mary Katherine Savarie

-Sun, Jan 6, StB, 7 a.m., Len and Cheryl Conley

-Sun, Jan 6, OLS, 9:30 a.m., Antoni and Maria Krol

#### Weekday Masses

-Mon, Jan 7, StA, 8:30 a.m., Ted Fasso I

-Tue, Jan 8, OLS, 7:30 a.m., Margaret Ledezma

-Wed, Jan 9, StB, 8:30 a.m., Brian and Kendall Vogel

-Thu, Jan 10, OLS, **8:30 a.m.**, Jackie Mullen

-Fri, Jan 11, **StB, 8:30 a.m.**, Peter/MaryKatherineSavarie

#### Mass Intentions and Schedule for StP and StI

**KEY:** StP = St. Peter; StI = St. Ignatius (Walden)

-Sun, Jan 6, StP, 10 a.m., Margaret Ledezma

-Sun, Jan 6, StI, 1 p.m., People in our region/visitors