

**PARISH FAMILY ABLAZE: HONORING THE SAINTS, RELICS, AND IMAGES**  
**(9/29/24)**

**PRAYERS**

- I. “Signum Crucis”: “In nomine Patris et Filii et Spiritus Sancti. Amen.”
- II. “Prayer to the Holy Spirit”
- III. Saints and Virtue:
  - A. Saint Helena of the Cross
  - B. Dulia

**SACRED SEVEN – TRUE/FALSE**

- 1. It is foolish to kiss a holy card, since it is only paper.
- 2. We should pray to saints only when we want something.
- 3. When we go to church, we should pay our respects to the Blessed Sacrament before we pray before the statue of a saint.
- 4. We should imitate everything the saints have done.
- 5. The more we honor the saints, the less we honor God.
- 6. The saints are interested in us.
- 7. One should pray only to God, not to angels and saints.

**HONORING THE SAINTS, RELICS, AND IMAGES**

- I. Latria/Hyperdulia/Dulia (from Father John Hardon’s Modern Catholic Dictionary):
  - A. Latria—The veneration (adoration/worship) due to God alone for his supreme excellence and to show people’s complete submission to Him:
    - 1. Because Christ, while remaining a Divine Person, manifested Himself in Flesh and Blood, we may represent Him by statues or images (ie., the Sacred Heart) to remind us of Him
    - 2. Christ became like us in our humanity, so we could become like God by grace through His humanity and divinity: honoring a saint is honoring the goodness of God and the image and likeness of God reflected by the saint.
  - B. Hyperdulia—The special veneration due to the Blessed Virgin Mary

- C. Dulia—The honor/reverence/veneration given to the holy angels and saints as friends of God:
1. Statues and holy cards are images/pictures that remind us of the angels and saints we cannot see now, but who intercede for us and whom we hope to see in heaven.
  2. Saints are made in God’s image, and become more like Him through grace in the Mystical Body of Christ—the Church— with Christ as the Head and we as members of His Body, so much so, that when Saul was persecuting Christian like Saint Stephen the Martyr, Christ our Head asked him— “Saul, Saul, why do you persecute me?”
  3. We honor the saints by:
    - a. Imitating their holy lives of virtue
    - b. Praying to them to pray for us and help us—they watch over us and love us in union with God watching over us and loving us
    - c. Showing respect for their relics and images
- D. Idols are images or things that promote false worship of creatures, that place creatures on the level of God, and that involve superstition, magic, and manipulation rather than reality, grace, and mercy; venerating sacred images or things upholds the latria due to God alone and the honor and thanksgiving due Him for his good creation that reflects His goodness in various ways:
1. Respect for images reflects the respect we owe the Creator who made those persons we remember by seeing the images.
  2. God mediates reality to us through our senses, and these include both sound images and visible images.
- II. Relics (from Father John Hardon’s Modern Catholic Dictionary): An object connected with a saint, validated by the Church, and never to be sold:
- A. First class relic—part of a saint’s body (if a martyr’s relic, it can be placed in the altar stone when a church is consecrated—the priest kisses this at the opening of Mass, for the saint’s blood was spilled in witness to Christ Who poured out His Blood to save us)

- B. Second class relic—part of the clothing or anything used by the saint during his life
- C. Third class relic—any object touched to a first-class relic

### **TABLE TALK QUESTION**

Why does a priest actually exorcize (drive out any evil from) an image of Saint Benedict before he blesses this item? What does this tell us about all of creation?

### **MISSION/FINAL PRAYER**