



Faith Matters

Simple reflections on our faith

by Marilyn Bergeron

Why Do Catholics Pray to the Saints?

It's easy to understand why we pray to God. He is our Creator. He made us, loves us and wants what is best for us. He knows we aren't perfect and He still loves us. A relationship with God in Heaven is beautiful and necessary.

Why then do we pray to the Saints? Why not go directly to God?

There are different ways we can approach prayer. You may see Catholics praying in front of a statue of Our Lady or a painting of a Saint and question why they are doing so.

We are human beings with senses, including vision. A statue reminds us of Our Lady or a Saint and how they lived their lives. They can be a real inspiration for us to follow. Looking at a statue or painting can also help us focus. It is not a requirement. We are free to go straight to our Lord or ask a particular Saint to intercede on our behalf.

How often do we ask friends to pray for us, especially when we are feeling low or worried about something? In turn, they agree and promise to pray for us. Who are they praying to? They are praying to Almighty God.

To venerate a Saint means to honour that person as a holy example of faith. When we recognize how God has worked in the lives of the Saints, it gives glory back to God and gives us hope. They were, for the most part, ordinary people with the same weaknesses and challenges that we have. How they dealt with difficult situations encourages the faithful to stay focused on Heaven. That is our goal!

There are great examples of intercession in Scripture. Abraham interceded for the people of Sodom. Job interceded for his three friends who had wrongly judged him, and God accepted his prayer. When Mary asked Jesus to help with the wine at the wedding at Cana, she was interceding.

The Apostle Paul frequently wrote to early Christian communities explaining how he constantly remembered them in his prayers, asking God to fill them with wisdom, spiritual strength and knowledge of His will.

Intercession is the act of pleading, praying or intervening on behalf of another person. That's what our friends are doing for us and what we can do for them.

Pray to God directly or ask others, including the Saints in Heaven, to intercede for you. Both ultimately bring our prayers to God. 🌸