

## **HOLY TRINITY CHURCH RELICS**

**What is a relic?** A first-class relic comes from the body of a Saint or Blessed. A second-class relic is an object the Saint or Blessed owned or used. A third-class relic are objects that have touched a first-class relic or have been blessed in contact with it.

**Why venerate, touch the relic, and ask the Saint or Blessed to pray for us?** Let us ponder the following scripture: Matthew 9: 20-22: “And behold a woman who had suffered from a hemorrhage for twelve years came up behind him and touched the fringe of his garment; for she said to herself, If I only touch his garment, I shall be made well.” If we touch someone or something owned by someone who is in heaven with Jesus, and ask for their intercession, surely our prayers will be heard and answered according to Jesus' Will and our faith.

The practice of venerating relics is mentioned in the book of 2 Kings 13:20-21: “So Elisha died and they buried him. Now bands of Moabites used to invade the land in the spring of the year. And as a man was being buried, lo, a marauding band was seen and the man was cast into the grave of Elisha; and as soon as the man touched the bones of Elisha, he revived, and stood on his feet.”

There are many accounts of cures and miracles occurring through contact with relics in the New Testament also: the sick healed when the shadow of St. Peter passed over them (Acts 5 5:14-16) and objects touched to St. Paul's body (Acts 19:11-12)

The veneration of saints became more prominent in the early church with communities like Smyrna honoring the remains of martyrs like St. Polycarp, +AD 156. “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. “

St. Jerome, of the 4<sup>th</sup> century, wrote the following about relics, “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.”

After Christianity became legal in the 4<sup>th</sup> century AD, churches were built on the remains of Saints and relics became more widespread. The council of Trent (1545-1563) provided formal framework for the veneration of relics, emphasizing the importance of authentic relics and prohibiting their sale or commercialization.

Relics are venerated, not worshipped. We honor saints and their lives, but worship is reserved for God. Relics serve as reminders of the lives and faith of the saints, inspiring believers to strive for holiness.

## **HOLY TRINITY CHURCH RELIC HISTORY**

The majority of the relics located on the north wall of the church, near the altar were donated to Holy Trinity Church by Father Piotr Mozdyniewicz during the time he was Pastor at Holy Trinity Church, 2018-2021. The majority are first-class relics. We have a first- and second-class relic of St. Catherine of Sienna. The following are second class relics: St. Jean Jugan (from her tomb), St. Therese of Lisieux (her clothing), Blessed Eugene Bossilkov (his clothing), St. John Neumann (from his tomb), St. John Bosco (his clothing), St. Bernadette (her clothing), Blessed Miguel Pro (his clothing), and St. Catherine of Sienna (her clothing).

In the middle case there is a rosary with a cross and a separate crucifix to its' left which were probably owned by religious or monk(s). The name plates behind each crucifix are relics located within each crucifix. They are probably first-class relics.

Father Piotr gave the following history of how he inherited them. A religious sister and her friend brought the cases with the relics in them to him one day. They belonged to a family on the east coast. The family had a private chapel and house they wanted to sell as a retreat house. Unfortunately, there was nobody who wanted to purchase the property for that purpose, so she decided to give away all the religious items they had collected over the years. He was the blessed one to inherit them.

The following relics belonged to Holy Trinity Church: St. Catherine of Sienna (1<sup>st</sup> class), St. John Bosco, St. Vincent Ferrer, St. Pius X, and St. Charles Borromeo (in the altar).

The Blessed Miguel Pro relic, located in the middle case, was donated by a Holy Trinity parishioner to Holy Trinity Church who stated it had been passed down through her family.

The 1<sup>st</sup> class relics of the Saints, Blessed Miguel Pro and Blessed Francis Xavier Seelos are venerated on their feast days, if they do not land on a Sunday, after the 8am Mass.