



# What Makes Us Catholic?

## What is a Saint & Why Do We Pray to Them?

### What is a Saint?

A saint is simply someone who is in sanctifying grace, which is the life of Christ. Saints are in heaven, in purgatory and on earth. The Catholic Church calls this the Communion of Saints.

- The saints in heaven lived holy lives and died in sanctifying grace. They are good examples of a virtuous life and we should imitate them so we can go to heaven.
- The souls in purgatory are those who died in the state of sanctifying grace but have not made full reparation for personal sins. We can help them by our prayers and sacrifices.
- The saints on earth are those who stay in sanctifying grace. They have to, by God's grace and vigilance, overcome the temptations of this world, Satan, and their own weaknesses. The struggle continues until they die but by God's grace they can succeed.

### Why Do We Pray to Saints?

Some people ask, "Why say prayers to saints? Shouldn't all our prayers be to God?" Praying to the saints is praying to God, in a fundamental way. We are praying to those who can ask God to help us in our various needs in accordance with His will.

When you ask someone to pray for you are you worshiping that person? Of course not! It's the same when we ask the saints to pray for us. In our prayers to saints we ask them to "put in a good word" for us with God in Heaven. They are not the focus of our worship, God is.

In this regard, it is worth noting that many compilations of prayers to saints also include prayers by them as well, to our Lord. The important thing to remember is that all these prayers have the same Divine destination, for our salvation.

Do you have questions on this topic, or other topics you would like to learn more about?  
Please complete the back side of this sheet and leave it in the box on the "What Makes Us Catholic?" stand.

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***Want to read more about this topic?***

***Sources:***

- <http://www.catholicbridge.com/catholic/saints.php>
- <http://www.ourcatholicprayers.com/prayers-to-saints.html>
- Lumen Gentium (Light of the World) from Vatican II
- Catechism of the Catholic Church: Paragraphs 946-948

Please note your question on this topic, or other topics you would like to learn more about below and leave it in the box on the "What Makes Us Catholic?" stand.

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