

Know Your Faith

Contributed by Abigale Coates

Baltimore Catechism of 1885

LESSON THIRTY-FIRST. THE FIRST COMMANDMENT--ON THE HONOR AND INVOCATION OF THE SAINTS.

Q. 1189. Does the first Commandment forbid the honoring of the saints?

A. The first Commandment does not forbid the honoring of the saints, but rather approves of it; because by honoring the saints, who are the chosen friends of God, we honor God Himself.

Q. 1190. What does "invocation" mean?

A. Invocation means calling upon another for help or protection, particularly when we are in need or danger. It is used specially with regard to calling upon God or the saints, and hence it means prayer.

Q. 1191. How do we show that by honoring the Saints we honor God Himself?

A. We honor the Saints because they honor God. Therefore, it is for His sake that we honor them, and hence by honoring them we honor Him.

Q. 1192. Give another reason why we honor God by honoring the Saints.

A. Another reason why we honor God by honoring the Saints is this: As we honor our country by honoring its heroes, so do we honor our religion by honoring its Saints. By honoring our religion we honor God, who taught it. Therefore, by honoring the Saints we honor God, for love of whom they became religious heroes in their faith.

Q. 1193. Does the first Commandment forbid us to pray to the saints?

A. The first Commandment does not forbid us to pray to the saints.

Q. 1194. Why does the first commandment not forbid us to pray to the Saints?

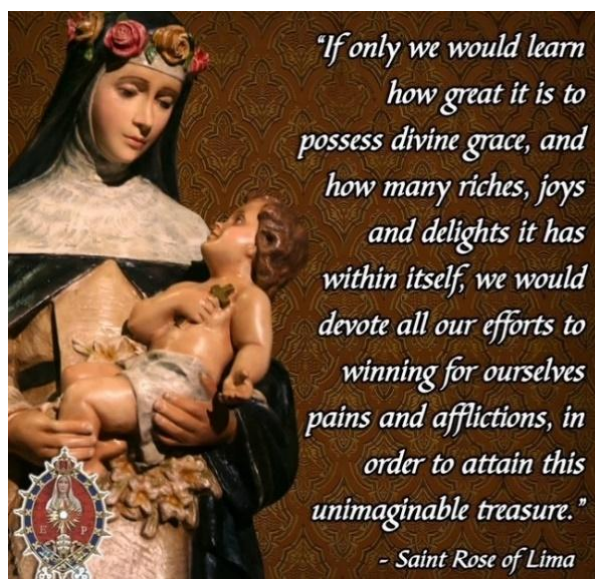
A. The first commandment does not forbid us to pray to the Saints, because if we are allowed to ask the prayers of our fellow-creatures upon earth we should be allowed also to ask the prayers of our fellow-creatures in heaven. Moreover, the Saints must have an interest in our welfare, because whatever tends to make us good, tends also to the glory of God.

Q. 1195. What do we mean by praying to the saints?

A. By praying to the saints we mean the asking of their help and prayers.

Q. 1196. Do we not slight God Himself by addressing our prayers to saints?

A. We do not slight God Himself by addressing our prayers to saints, but, on the contrary, show a greater respect for His majesty and sanctity, acknowledging, by our prayers to the saints, that we are unworthy to address Him for ourselves, and that we, therefore, ask His holy friends to obtain for us what we ourselves are not worthy to ask.



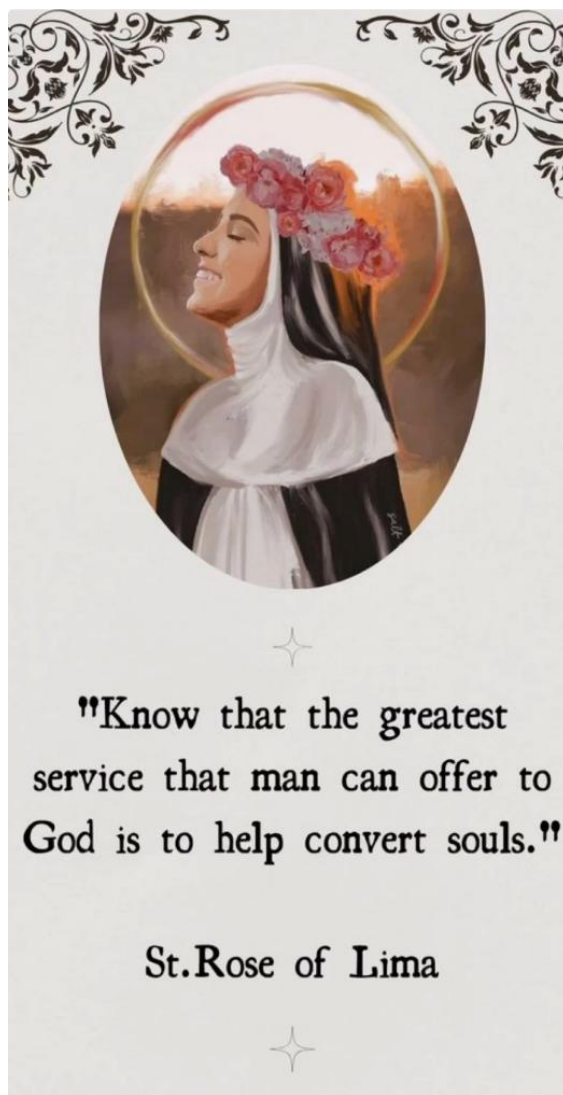
FEAST OF ST. ROSE OF LIMA

August 30. -ST. ROSE OF LIMA.

THIS lovely flower of sanctity, the first canonized Saint of the New World, was born at Lima in 1586. She was christened Isabel, but the beauty of her infant face earned for her the title of Rose, which she ever after bore. As a child, while still in the cradle, her silence under a painful surgical operation proved the thirst for suffering already consuming her heart. At an early age she took service to support her impoverished parents, and worked for them day and night. In spite of hardships and austerities her beauty ripened with increasing age, and she was much and openly admired. From fear of vanity she cut off her hair, blistered her face with pepper and her hands with lime. For further security she enrolled herself in the Third Order of St. Dominic, took St. Catherine of Siena as her model, and redoubled her penance. Her cell was a garden hut, her couch a box of broken tiles. Under her habit Rose wore a hair-shirt studded with iron nails, while, concealed by her veil, a silver crown armed with ninety points encircled her head. More than once, when she shuddered at the prospect of a night of torture, a voice said, "My cross was yet more painful." The Blessed Sacrament seemed almost her only food. Her love for it was intense. When the Dutch fleet prepared to attack the town, Rose took her place before the tabernacle, and wept that she was not worthy to die in its defence. All her sufferings were offered for the conversion of sinners, and the thought of the multitudes in hell was ever before her soul. She died in 1617, at the age of thirty-one.

Reflection: Rose, pure as driven snow, was filled with deepest contrition and humility, and did constant and terrible penance. Our sins are continual, our repentance passing, our contrition slight, our penance nothing. How will it fare with us?

1894 Butler's Daily Lives of the Saints



Her Feast Day is August 23rd around the world, although Peru celebrates her on August 30th.