

CATECHISM OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH

THE COMMUNION OF SAINTS

946 After confessing "the holy catholic Church," the Apostles' Creed adds "the communion of saints." In a certain sense this article is a further explanation of the preceding: "What is the Church if not the assembly of all the saints?" The communion of saints is the Church.

947 "Since all the faithful form one body, the good of each is communicated to the others.... We must therefore believe that there exists a communion of goods in the Church. But the most important member is Christ, since he is the head.... Therefore, the riches of Christ are communicated to all the members, through the sacraments." "As this Church is governed by one and the same Spirit, all the goods she has received necessarily become a common fund."

948 The term "communion of saints" therefore has two closely linked meanings: communion in holy things (*sancta*)" and "among holy persons (*sancti*)."

"*Sancta sanctis!* ("God's holy gifts for God's holy people") is proclaimed by the celebrant in most Eastern liturgies during the elevation of the holy Gifts before the distribution of communion. the faithful (*sancti*) are fed by Christ's holy body and blood (*sancta*) to grow in the communion of the Holy Spirit (*koinonia*) and to communicate it to the world.



INTERCESSION OF THE SAINTS

Miracles are deeds which are above all natural laws and powers and only God can perform. At times, we say that saints and the Blessed Virgin Mary perform miracles. What we really mean is that they pray to God, and in answer to their prayers, God performs a miracle. We Catholics believe that NO SAINT ever claimed to do a miracle by his own power.

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CATECHISM OF ST. POPE PIUS X

The Communion of Saints

214. (1) What are we taught by these words of the Ninth Article: The Communion of Saints?

A. In the words The Communion of Saints, the Ninth Article of the Creed teaches us that the Church's spiritual goods, both internal and external, are common to all her members because of the intimate union that exists between them.

215. (2) Which are the internal goods that are common in the Church?

A. The internal goods that are common in the Church are: the graces received through the Sacraments; faith, hope and charity; the infinite merits of Jesus Christ; the

superabundant merits of the Blessed Virgin and of the Saints; and the fruit of all the good works done in the same Church.

216. (3) Which are the external goods that are common in the Church?

A. The external goods that are common in the Church are: the Sacraments, the Sacrifice of the Mass, public prayers, religious functions, and all the other outward practices that unite the faithful.

217. (4) Do all the children of the Church share in this communion of goods?

A. All Christians who are in the grace of God share in the communion of internal goods, while those who are in mortal sin do not participate in these goods.

218. (5) Why do not those who are in mortal sin participate in these goods?

A. Because that which unites the faithful with God, and with Jesus Christ as His living members, rendering them capable of performing meritorious works for life eternal, is the grace of God which is the supernatural life of the soul; and hence as those who are in mortal sin are without the grace of God, they are excluded from perfect communion in spiritual goods, nor can they accomplish works meritorious towards life eternal.

219. (6) Do Christians then, who are in mortal sin derive no advantage from the internal and spiritual goods of the Church?

A. Christians who are in mortal sin still continue to derive some advantage from the internal and spiritual goods of the Church, inasmuch as they still preserve the Christian

character which is indelible, and the virtue of faith which is the basis of justification. They are aided, too, by the prayers and good works of the faithful towards obtaining the grace of conversion to God.

220. (7) Can those in mortal sin participate in the external goods of the Church?

A. Those in mortal sin can participate in the external goods of the Church, unless indeed they are cut off from the Church by excommunication.

221. (8) Why are the members of this Communion, taken together, called saints?

A. The members of this Communion are called saints because all are called to sanctity and have been sanctified by baptism, and because many of them have really attained perfect sanctity.

222. (9) Does the Communion of Saints extend also to heaven and purgatory?

A. Yes, the Communion of Saints also extends to heaven and purgatory, because charity unites the three Churches -- the Triumphant, the Suffering and the Militant; the Saints pray to God both for us and for the souls in purgatory; while we on our part give honour and glory to the Saints, and are able to relieve the suffering souls in purgatory by applying on their behalf indulgences and other good works.