

MYSTAGOGY

Imploring the Saints' Intercession

APPRENTICES IN FAITH: A Resource for the OCIA

*A mighty company
of witnesses,
O God,
attests to your holiness,
your glory,
your potent grace.
Make our voices
one with theirs.
May the saints
urge us forward,
closer to you,
O God.*

Recall the Easter Vigil

Before we approached the font of new life, we invoked the names of the holy ones who have gone before us in faith and asked for their prayerful intercession before the throne of God.

Probe the Mystery

We cannot do this all on our own. Fortunately, we are blessed to stand within a great company of saints.

In this household, the household of faith, we rely on others. We stand on the holy ground cultivated by the fidelity of others. Countless men and women of the faith have gone before us. By the example of

their lives—by their holiness—they show us how to hold fast to the things of Heaven even as we are surrounded by the things of earth.

That is why we ask them to pray for us, to intercede for us before the throne of God. In Heaven, they stand before that throne, thronged in their many ranks of order and harmony, raising their voices to praise the Lord God. Like any good friend, we ask them to put in a “good word” for us. Knowing that they are there for us, our resolve is strengthened; our attitude turns to joyful anticipation as we hasten along the paths of goodness, right, and virtue. “Pray for us,” we implore, “pray for us!”

At that moment during the Litany of Saints, did you feel inspired to live up to the saints’ holy example? Do you *now*?

Savor the Sweetness of Salvation

The names of the Holy Ones roll off of our tongues in a long litany that is consoling, powerful, and perhaps even a bit overwhelming. God is glorified in his saints, for their glory is the crowning of his multiplicity of gifts and graces. In the saints’ lives on earth, God gives us an example, and in our communion with them in the company of the Church, we are afforded friendship and protection.

Imagine! Our own names could very well end up in this litany one day. Do we not strive for holiness in every area of our lives? We can achieve this goal because others like us achieved it. It is doable.

Christian people . . . celebrate the memorials of the martyrs with religious solemnity both in order to encourage the imitation of them and in order to be united with their merits and helped by their prayers. . . . We do this in such a way, however, that we erect altars to none of the martyrs but to the God of the martyrs . . .

Saint Augustine, *Against Faustus, A Manichaeon* 20.21: WSA 1
20:278079

Inspire Others

Whom do you consider a “living saint,” someone whose life gives great example to the Good News of Jesus Christ? How might you share your thanks for that person’s good example?