

Primary 7 Talk Sunday 22nd May 2022

Theme: 'Moulded into Saints'

The Church honours the saints who are ready with the Lord in heaven. These are people who have served God and their neighbours in so outstanding a way that they have been given the title 'Saint'. That is, the Church has seen them as worthy of heaven, holds them as heroic models, and encourages us to pray to them and with them, asking for their help, with God in all our needs.

We do not worship the saints, but we honour them as heroes. They are ordinary people like us who have, by the power of faith in God achieved great things for the world.

Most of the saints started like you and I, by being baptised, many were baptised as infants, others in life. Like us also, many made their Confirmation and Holy Communion. Some like St Martin of Tours were on the way to sainthood even before he was baptised. Those who were Confirmed would also have chosen like you and I, a saint's name to model their lives on.

Saints have helped to make the world what it is today. Think of St Peter, the first Pope or Bishop of Rome, or St Paul, writer of so many powerful letters.

St Valentines Day marks a time of romance. The St Lawrence River is one of the biggest in North America. St Andrews University is the oldest University in Scotland. – founded on the relics of the apostle. St John's Town, is the old name for Perth and the name of their football team. St Francis started an order that serves the poorest people in the world to this day. St Ignatius of Loyola founded the Jesuits, one of the greatest teaching institutions in the world, still to this day, and the order that Pope Francis comes from.

Countries of the world are associated with their saints. St Patrick in Ireland, St Stanislaw's in Poland, St Andrew in Scotland, St George in England, St David in Wales, St Mother Theresa of Calcutta in India.

Your children also have the calling from God to be moulded into Saints. The early years of life are when they are helped to nurture their values, their morals and philosophy, based on the love of Jesus and the Gospel. It is for you as parents to give them good example, to protect them from the culture of evil and immorality. They are about to enter into High School, at a deeply impressionable age, and they can be drawn to all sorts of new age ideas and

peer group pressure to compromise on the principles of revealed truth and natural law.

Saints are people who are not easily led; they develop through prayer and actions of loving charity an inner strength to stand by what they believe to be right when all around are following other ideologies. They are not afraid to be different, to be even unpopular or not 'one of the crowd'. Sometimes, even members of our own families will not accept that their brother or sister, son or daughter has a calling to serve God in a saintly or courageous way. When St Francis told his father he wanted to renounce his wealth and inheritance, his father was furious.

Or again, when St Thomas Aquinas told his family he was becoming a Dominican Friar, they tried to lock him up in a tower, to prevent him going away.

The fact that we have so many great saints in the Church, is a sign of the Holy Spirit at work. Sainthood is not achieved by human resources alone; as Jesus says in the Gospel, 'the Holy Spirit, will be sent to you in my name, and bestow on you a spiritual power that will send you out into the world and proclaim the Good News to all nations. (Acts of the Apostles).

St Paul himself teaches us in the letter to the Corinthians that we as Christians are bestowed with a variety of Gifts, but it is the same Holy Spirit working in us that allows us to do great things on the name of the Lord. (1Cor 12:4).

Or again in St Paul's letter to the Ephesians 1:13-14, 'Now, you too in him have heard the message of the truth and the Gospel of salvation, and having put your trust in it, you have been stamped with the seal of the Holy Spirit of the Promise who is the pledge of our inheritance',

Forty years ago, at this time, Pope John Paul II, Karol Wojtyla, was preparing to come to Scotland to preach the Good News. He was confirmed in his parish nearly 90 years ago; now he is numbered among the saints in glory.

Every age of the Church produces men, women and children who turn out to be saints; never underestimate that your child is a saint in the making; moulded by your hands and the grace of God within them.

God bless,

Canon Jeremy Bath

