

# Relics, Strange Aids To Worship?

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St. John the Baptist or the still-existent reverence shown "Veronica's Veil" at three different churches.

In many cases no definitive decision can ever be given as to whether a supposed relic is actually true or not.

The case of the cloak at Trier is typical. After St. Helen found the robe in Palestine in the year 328 (three centuries after Christ died), she gave it to the Trier church where it was sealed away in plastic to be rediscovered in the year 1196 (at the height of the relic veneration era) but it was not put up for public view until the year 1912.

Trier's present bishop, in announcing this year's display, said he hoped the devotion would "increase our love for Christ and His Holy Church." When asked if he was sure it was the actual robe worn by Christ, he said it certainly "has been sanctified by the prayers of centuries."

And that is perhaps the best attitude to have in regard to the veneration of relics.

The Church is reluctant to call halt to customs which "increase our love for Christ and His Holy Church" even if the item or object involved cannot be scientifically authenticated.

This, however, is not a false way of worship.

We have pictures and statues, for example, in our churches today depicting Christ, the Blessed Virgin, and the saints, even angels. Nobody thinks that any one of these is "authentic" as a photograph would be, except in the case of the most recent saints yet there is no Catholic who complains that religion is abused thereby.

These quite unauthentic pictures and statues are recognized as mere aids to increase devotion.

Medieval minds were equally content to nourish faith with relics even if sometimes of questionable origin. It is also quite likely that the medieval people were wiser than we think they were and that they were fully aware that their objects of devotion were as much an artist's creation as are our pictures and statues.

The veneration of relics is actually not just a religious phenomenon.

In Washington, the Smithsonian Institution is a vast national reliquary with remnants of Indians — their teeth, skulls, bones and clothes — and relics of science including long obsolete autos, airplanes, cameras, and where original items are no longer available, replicas are made to substitute for them.

The Eastman House of Photography on Rochester's East

## Nation's Top Pilgrimage Scheduled

Uniontown — (NC) — The Apostolic Delegate will preside at a Solemn Pontifical Mass here on Labor Day, September 7, to climax what is described as the largest U.S. pilgrimage drawing as many as 100,000 Byzantine Rite Catholics to a shrine here.

ARCHBISHOP Egidio Vagnozzi will officiate at the Mass to be celebrated by Bishop Nicholas T. Elko, Apostolic Exarch of the Byzantine Rite Eparchy of Pittsburgh, at the Shrine of Our Lady of Perpetual Help at Mount St. Macrina, headquarters of the Sisters of St. Basil the Great.

Bishop John J. Wright, spiritual leader of the Latin Rite Diocese of Pittsburgh, will deliver the sermon at the Mass, which will climax the 29th annual pilgrimage, scheduled to begin on August 28.

The Byzantine Catholic World, newspaper of the Pittsburgh Eparchy, described the pilgrimage here as "topped by only two others on the North American continent — the annual pilgrimages on the feast days of St. Anne de Beaupre in Canada and to Our Lady of Guadalupe in Mexico.

The more bizarre relics of the Middle Ages have been removed. No new devotions honoring relics may be inaugurated without specific permission from Vatican authorities. Now relics are not to be venerated publicly unless authenticated by officials of the Church at Rome.

Without in any way minimizing its traditional stand that relics of saints deserve reverent treatment, the Church today, as in fact always, stresses the basic Christian devotion — sincere prayer, devout attendance at holy Mass and frequent reception of the sacraments.

## Bishops Named To Dioceses

Washington — (NC) — Pope John XXIII has transferred two bishops to new dioceses and named a new bishop for a third.

Bishop John B. Franz of Dodge City has been transferred from that Kansas See to the Diocese of Peoria, Ill.

Bishop Bernard J. Flanagan of Norwich, Conn., has been transferred to the Diocese of Worcester, Mass.

Msgr. Charles A. Buswell, an Oklahoma City pastor, has been named Bishop of Pueblo, Colo.

## Cardinal's Invitation

### 'Fly With Me To Lourdes'

South Bend — (RNS) — Rich-ard Cardinal Cushing, Archbishop of Boston, and a Notre Dame priest teamed up here to surprise and delight a 17-year-old South Bend girl and to bring to fulfillment two of her fondest dreams.

Patty Bradley, daughter of Francis X. Bradley, Jr., assistant dean of Notre Dame's graduate school, has been crippled since birth. But despite her handicap the girl has managed to earn a place on the National Honor Society and to distinguish herself at St. Mary's Academy here where she is a senior.

SHE HAS ALWAYS had an especially high estimate of Cardinal Cushing. "I guess I was attracted to him because of his interest in kids and crippled people," she explained.

So when Cardinal Cushing spoke of Notre Dame at the seventh annual Institute of Spirituality, Patty talked her father into taking her to hear the prelate's address and then into taking her to the Morris Inn on the campus where the cardinal was staying.

Patty did not know that her spiritual advisor, Father Glenn Boardman, C.S.C., Notre Dame prefect of religion, had written to Cardinal Cushing, and described Patty's affliction and her special affection for him.

"I was sitting in the lobby in my wheelchair waiting for the cardinal to arrive when his car pulled up," Patty said. "It comes the cardinal, two Bishops and a group of Monsignors and some

Notre Dame priests and I was feeling pretty good because I got a good look at him. Then His Eminence walked over to me, patted me on the head and said, 'Hello, there, Patty, old girl.' "I was dumfounded," Patty recalled.

Cardinal Cushing sat and chatted with the girl for about fifteen minutes and invited her to fly with him to the shrine of Our Lady of Lourdes in France. The shrine has been credited with miraculous recoveries of many persons who have been afflicted with crippling conditions.

"Two dreams came true at once," Patty said happily. "I always dreamed of going to Lourdes and of meeting the cardinal but I never thought I would ever do either one."

After the chat in which Cardinal Cushing said he would write the crippled girl and explain the details of the trip, the Boston archbishop arose and blessed the child while crowds of onlookers knelt in the hotel lobby.

Cardinal Cushing, well known for maintaining the common touch despite his prominence in the Catholic Church, was born and raised in heavily-Irish South Boston where he was a blacksmith and an aspiring baseball pitcher in his youth.



South Bend — (RNS) — Crippled since birth, 17-year-old Patty Bradley of South Bend, Ind., radiates amazed delight during a surprise visit by Richard Cardinal Cushing, Archbishop of Boston, who asked her to fly with him to the Shrine of the Blessed Virgin at Lourdes, France, where many miraculous cures have been reported.

## Rome Building Project Uncovers Catacombs

Rome — (NC) — A series of perfectly preserved catacombs was uncovered near the Basilica of St. Paul Outside the Wall during a housing construction project.

THE AREA near the basilica is well known for its other catacombs, as the ancient Roman road was lined with tombs and catacombs, many of which still exist.

Inscriptions and even lamps have been found in place, and a small room covered with frescoes depicting scenes of the Old and New Testaments is in a good state of preservation.

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