

## Catholics Do Not Practice Idolatry

Catholics do not make crucifixes, holy pictures, statues, medals or anything else their gods, or a substitute for the living God. Every Catholic person makes his or her Profession of Faith in the one living God(Father, Son and Holy Spirit) at Holy Mass every Sunday and Holy Day.

Many Catholic people pray the rosary every day. They begin that prayer by signing themselves, in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. They begin by praying The Apostles' Creed, another profession of faith in the one living God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

The example of people worshiping an idol(something made by human hands), instead of the living God, is found in the book of Exodus.

*“Then God spoke all these words: I am the Lord your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery; **you shall have no other gods before me. You should not make for yourself an idol, whether in the form of anything that is in heaven above, or that is on the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth’s. You shall not bow down to them or worship them;** for I the Lord your God am a jealous God, punishing children for the iniquity of parents, to the third and fourth generation of those who reject me, but showing steadfast love to the thousand generation of those who love me and keep my commandments.” (Exodus 20:1-6)*

*When the people saw that Moses delayed to come down from the mountain, the people gathered around Aaron, and said to him, ‘Come, make gods for us, who shall go before us; as for this Moses, the man who brought us up out of the land of Egypt, we do not know what has become of him.’ Aaron said to them ‘Take off the gold rings that are on the ears of your wives, your sons, and your daughters, and bring them to me.’ So all the people took off the gold rings from their ears, and brought them to Aaron. He took the gold from them, formed it into a mold, and **cast an image of a calf;** and they said, ‘**These are your gods, O Israel, who brought you up out of the land of Egypt!**’ When Aaron saw this, he built an altar before it; and Aaron made proclamation and said, ‘Tomorrow shall be a festival to the Lord.’ They rose early the next day, and offered burnt offerings and brought sacrifices of well-being ;and the people sat down to eat and drink, and rose up to revel.” (Exodus 32: 1-6)*

*“The Lord said to Moses, ‘Go down at once! **Your people** who you brought up out of the land of Egypt, **have acted perversely**; they have been quick to turn aside from the way that I commanded them; **they have cast for themselves an image of a calf**, and have **worshiped it and sacrificed to it, and said**, ‘**These are your gods, O Israel**, who brought you up out of the land of Egypt!’” (Exodus 32: 7-8)*

The world is a book of scripture. Everything created by God, tells us something about it's creator. The more person has had his eyes and ears, and all of his senses awakened by the gift of faith, the more he recognizes, in everything God created, the beauty, the intelligence, the love, the reality of the God who created everything good. This is the way, the genuinely religious person, looks at the world. He appreciates everything, as a gift from God. He never wants to stop thinking about God, and praising and thanking him.

*“The heavens are telling the glory of God; and the firmament proclaims his handiwork.” ( Psalm 10:1)*

*“The heavens are yours, the earth also was yours; the world and all that is in it -you have founded them.” (Psalm 89 :11)*

He realizes that of all created things, human beings, reveal more of God's love, beauty, and goodness, than anything else, he has created. Of all that can be seen in this world, humans are spiritual beings, more like God and dearer to God, than anything else he has created.

That is why Catholic people have a special feeling for holy people. The Catholic Church canonizes, gives public recognition, remembers with the help of written accounts, pictures and statues, these exceptional people who, by the way they have lived, have given us a wonderful example of the way to become holy, and to belong in heaven, with Jesus Christ.

We do ask the Saints, who are closer to God now, than they ever were during their lives on Earth, to pray for us. We don't pray to their pictures or statues, as if they were God. That would be idolatry. We only pray before these things, so that they can help us to remember, what they represent.

Because love prevails, and Christian love is invincible; we, who are members of the Body of Christ, Catholics living or dead, never stop praying for, or asking others to pray for, our loved ones. Who would be more willing to pray for us, or who would pray more effectively, than holy people, who were never closer to God, than they are now?

The crucified Christ shows us most of all, how much God loves us, understands and has compassion for us, in our suffering. **The crucifix** is a constant reminder to us, of, not only how

much Jesus Christ has revealed God's love to us; but what is essential for us, to be his effective followers.

*“Then he said to them all, ‘If any want to become my followers, let them deny themselves and take up their cross daily and follow me.’” (Luke 9:23)*

*“Whoever does not carry the cross and follow me cannot be my disciple.” (Luke 14:27)*

*“We know that our old self was crucified with him so that the body of sin might be destroyed, and we might no longer be enslaved to sin.” (Romans 6:6)*

*“May I never boast of anything except the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by which the world has been crucified to me ,and I to the world.” (Galatians 6:14)*