

# FAITH FORMATION

## OCTOBER NEWSLETTER

October 2017

ST. ANTHONY FAITH FORMATION

Volume 7, Issue 1

### INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

Mass With Our Families	2
Lead Me, Lord	2
Relic of St. Anthony continued	2
October Calendar	3
November Calendar	3
October Saints and Feast Days	4
Sacramental Preparation Information	4



## First Class Relic of St. Anthony of Padua

On October 18th, our parish will be presented with a First Class Relic of St. Anthony of Padua. Here are some questions and answers that will help you and your children understand what it's all about:

**What is a relic?** An object connected with a saint, e.g., part of the body or clothing or something the person had used or touched.

**What is a first class relic?** Relics are of three classes: the first is part of the saint's body or, if they are a martyr, the instrument of their death; the second is part of the clothing or anything used during the saint's life; and the third is any other object, such as a piece of cloth, that has been touched to a first-class relic.

**Why do we venerate relics?** St. Jerome (d. 420) wrote in defense of relics: "We do not

worship, we do not adore, for fear that we should bow down to the creature rather than to the Creator, but we venerate the relics of the martyrs in order the better to adore Him whose martyrs they are."



RELIQUARY HOLDING A FIRST CLASS RELIC

**What do we do with relics?** Just as we keep something that belonged to a beloved family member or friend after their death to remember them by, we keep relics of saints to help us remember their holy lives and to ask for their intercession for us to the Father in heaven.

**What is a "reliquary"?** This is

the vessel that holds the relic. It can be simple or elaborate.

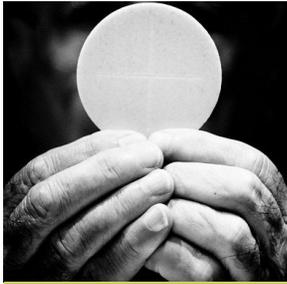
**What does "veneration" mean?** It means great respect or reverence. It does not mean worship or adore, which is exclusively for God. We respect those who have died in the fullness of grace that we all hope and pray for. Just as we ask for others to pray for us, we ask the saints in heaven to do the same.

**What do I do to venerate the relic?** Pray. There will be prayer cards to assist you in prayer if you aren't sure.

**Who is bringing the relic?** Fr. Mario Conte, a Franciscan Friar from Padua, Italy will bring the relic and present it with its authentication to Bishop Joe Vásquez at Mass on October 18th.

*Continued on Page 2*

## Mass With Our Families



**JESUS IN THE EUCHARIST  
INVITES US TO JOIN HIM AT  
MASS.**

Grace is the life of God in us. It is a free gift that He offers us. But, just like any gift it can be refused or accepted. If we accept the gift of grace, we unwrap it, put it on and wear it. One of the main ways God gives us this gift is through the sacraments; and the Holy Eucharist is “the source and summit of the Christian life.” (*Catechism of the Catholic Church* 1324)

Just as we want the best for our families in everything else in life, we want the best for them in the life of

the Church. The Mass and the Eucharist are the best. This is where Jesus is “in the flesh.” So, when your children ask “Do we have to go?” answer them “No, we GET to go see Jesus and tell Him all about our week, and praise Him and glorify Him, and ask Him to help us this coming week to be better than last week.”

Jesus Christ, King of the Universe, waits for us to join Him at Mass. The tabernacle is the throne, the nave of the church (where

the pews are), is the throne room. We are called “friends” (Jn. 15:15) and “family” (Lk. 8:21), and like friends and family He invites us to a meal. The sacrificial meal of the Eucharist, Communion, is where the King comes to us and shares His life with us.

We just have to be present and ask Him to come into our lives and be with us in all that we do. We just have to take the gift He offers and open it, and use it.

### Lead Me, Lord!

God has created each of us as a unique human being. He loves us and desires our love in return. He calls us into a relationship with Him.

Each of us has a vocation—a calling. For most of us it is to married life. For some it is single life. For some of our children, they may be called to these or to the consecrated life of a sister or brother in community,

or, for our sons, the priesthood or diaconate.

Within each of these vocations, there is also the general call to holiness. This is the primary vocation of all Christians. Part of our baptismal promises and the graces received orient us to holiness.

When we are uncertain of our state in life, or what we are “supposed” to be doing,

we should turn to God and say, “Lead me, Lord.” And be open to His answer and promptings. We need to be willing to let Him lead us to places and circumstances that may be uncomfortable for us. Know that wherever He leads us will bring us peace. Not necessarily ease or luxury, but peace.

**“GRACE TO YOU  
AND PEACE FROM  
GOD OUR FATHER  
AND THE LORD  
JESUS CHRIST.”**

**2 COR. 1:2**

## Relic of St. Anthony

**What is special about the Mass on October 18?** First of all Bishop Joe will be here to celebrate Mass along with several priests, including Father Joseph and Father Conte. There will be people in attendance from all over because this is such a special event. When Fr. Conte presents the relic to Bishop Joe, he will bless the congregation

with the relic, and after Mass there will be a candlelight procession around the St. Anthony grounds, so Bishop Joe can bless all the buildings with the relic.

**What should we wear?** To honor the solemnity of the event, to honor God and give Him glory, we dress nicely, neatly, cleanly for this and every Mass.

*Please read the attached article for more in-depth information about the history of relics in the Catholic Church’s tradition.*



**PHOTO FROM LAST FEBRUARY  
VISIT OF THE RELICS  
(FR. JOSEPH, FR. CONTE, DCN.  
MIKE)**

# OCTOBER 2017



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1 Sacramental Prep class 9AM—Malinowski Center	2	3	4 Regular classes	5	6	7
8	9	10	11 Living Rosary 6PM in Rosary Garden followed by classes Adult Faith Formation class—Divine Revelation	12	13	14
15	16	17	18 Relic Mass—no classes, no drop-off Please come as a family to participate in this special event.	19	20	21
22	23	24	25 Regular classes	26	27	28
29	30	31 				

# NOVEMBER 2017



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			1 All Saints' Day (Holy Day of Obligation) Mass 6PM in the Church—Children may dress up as a saint for Mass.	2	3	4
5	6	7	8 Regular classes	9	10	11
12 Sacramental Prep class 9AM—Malinowski Center	13	14	15 Regular classes Adult Faith Formation class—The Bible	16	17	18
19	20	21	22 No classes <i>Happy Thanksgiving!</i>	23 	24	25
26	27	28	29 Regular classes	30		

## St. Anthony Faith Formation

Beth Cowles  
Coordinator of Elementary RE  
bcowles@saintanthonys.org

Deacon Mike Beauvais  
Director of Religious Education  
mbeauvais@saintanthonys.org

Phone: 979-823-8145



October is Respect Life Month and the Month of the Rosary. You can honor both by praying a Rosary for the intentions of ending abortion in our country, for all pregnant women and their babies, for all fathers, for respect for all human life.

### Some October Saints and Feast Days

Oct. 2—Feast of the Guardian Angels

Oct. 4—St. Francis of Assisi

Oct. 7—Our Lady of the Rosary

Oct. 17—St. Ignatius of Antioch (martyr)

Oct. 18—St. Luke (writer of the Gospel)

Oct. 28—Sts. Simon and Jude, Apostles

Oct. 31—Halloween (the Eve of All Saints' Day, Holy Day of Obligation)

## Sacramental Preparation Information

October 1—Class

November 12—Class

December 10—Class

9:00AM in the Malinowski Center

December 16—Retreat and 1st Confessions

Children and parents come for the lessons on Reconciliation. Please bring the children's book with you.



THE PRIEST, IN THE PERSON  
OF CHRIST, HEARS YOUR CON-  
FESSION.

If you missed the first class in September, it's not too late. Please come on Sunday, October 1st to get started. Contact Mrs. Beth for details or questions.

### Items of Interest in our Gift Shop:

- ◆ Children Bibles
- ◆ Adult Bibles
- ◆ First Communion Bibles
- ◆ First Communion Gift sets
- ◆ Confirmation Gifts
- ◆ Religious Art
- ◆ Religious Jewelry
- ◆ Rosaries
- ◆ Prayer Books
- ◆ The Catechism of the Catholic Church
- ◆ Crosses and Crucifixes

We can only accept cash in exact change or checks during RE evenings. During office hours, there is change available.

## The Devotion to Relics

Straight Answers by Fr. William Saunders HERALD Columnist  
9/19/16

Relics include the physical remains of a saint (or of a person who is considered holy but not yet officially canonized) as well as other objects which have been "sanctified" by being touched to his body. These relics are divided into two classes: First class or real relics include the physical body parts, clothing and instruments connected with a martyr's imprisonment, torture, and execution. Second class or representative relics are those which the faithful have touched to the physical body parts or grave of the saint.

The use of relics has some, although limited, basis in Sacred Scripture. In II Kings 2:9-14, the Prophet Elisha picked-up the mantle of Elijah, after he had been taken up to heaven in a whirlwind; with it, Elisha struck the water of the Jordan, which then parted so that he could cross.

In another passage (II Kings 13:20-21), some people hurriedly bury a dead man in the grave of Elisha, "but when the man came into contact with the bones of Elisha, he came back to life and rose to his feet." In Acts of the Apostles we read, "Meanwhile, God worked extraordinary miracles at the hands of Paul. When handkerchiefs or cloths which had touched his skin were applied to the sick, their diseases were cured and evil spirits departed from them" (Acts 19:11-12). In these three passages, a reverence was given to the actual body or clothing of these very holy people who were indeed God's chosen instruments Elijah, Elisha, and St. Paul. Indeed, miracles were connected with these "relics" not that some magical power existed in them, but just as God's work was done through the lives of these holy men, so did His work continue after their deaths. Likewise, just as people were drawn closer to God through the lives of these holy men, so did they (even if through their remains) inspire others to draw closer even after their deaths. This perspective provides the Church's under-

standing of relics.

The veneration of relics of the saints is found in the early history of the Church. A letter written by the faithful of the Church in Smyrna in the year 156 provides an account of the death of St. Polycarp, their bishop, who was burned at the stake. The letter reads, "We took up the bones, which are more valuable than precious stones and finer than refined gold, and laid them in a suitable place, where the Lord will permit us to gather ourselves together, as we are able, in gladness and joy, and to celebrate the birthday of his martyrdom." Essentially, the relics the bones and other remains of St. Polycarp were buried, and the tomb itself was the "reliquary." Other accounts attest that the faithful visited the burial places of the saints and miracles occurred. Moreover, at this time, we see the development of "feast days" marking the death of the saint, the celebration of Mass at the burial place and a veneration of the remains.

After the legalization of the Church in 313, the tombs of saints were opened and the actual relics were venerated by the faithful. A bone or other bodily part was placed in a reliquary a box, locket and later a glass case for veneration. This practice especially grew in the Eastern Church, while the practice of touching cloth to the remains of the saint was more common in the West. By the time of the Merovingian and Carolingian periods of the Middle Ages, the use of reliquaries was common throughout the whole Church.

The Church strived to keep the use of relics in perspective. In his *Letter to Riparius*, St. Jerome (d. 420) wrote in defense of relics: "We do not worship, we do not adore, for fear that we should bow down to the creature rather than to the Creator, but we venerate the relics of the martyrs in order the better to adore Him whose martyrs they are."

Here we need to pause for a moment. Perhaps in our

technological age, the whole idea of relics may seem "strange." Remember, all of us treasure things that have belonged to someone we love a piece of clothing, another personal item, a lock of hair. Those "relics" remind us of the love we share with that person while he was still living and even after death. Our hearts are torn when we think about disposing of the very personal things of a deceased loved one. Even from an historical sense, at Ford's Theater Museum for instance, we can see things that belonged to President Lincoln, including the blood stained pillow on which he died. More importantly, we treasure the relics of saints, the holy instruments of God.

During the Middle Ages, the "translation of relics," meaning the removal of relics from the tombs, their placement in reliquaries and their dispersal grew. Sadly, abuses grew also. With various barbarian invasions, the conquests of the Crusades, the lack of means for verifying all relics and less than reputable individuals who in their greed preyed on the ignorant and superstitious, abuses did occur. Even St. Augustine (d. 430) denounced impostors who dressed as monks selling spurious relics of saints. Pope St. Gregory (d. 604) forbade the selling of relics and the disruption of tombs in the catacombs. Unfortunately, the Popes or other religious authorities were powerless in trying to control the translation of relics or prevent forgeries. Eventually, these abuses prompted the Protestant leaders to attack the idea of relics totally. (Unfortunately, the abuses and the negative reaction surrounding relics has led many people to this day to be skeptical about relics.)

In response, the Council of Trent (1563) defended invoking the prayers of the saints, and venerating their relics and burial places: "The sacred bodies of the holy martyrs and of the other saints living with Christ, which have been living members of Christ

and the temple of the Holy Spirit and which are destined to be raised and glorified by Him unto life eternal, should also be venerated by the faithful. Through them, many benefits are granted to men by God."

Since that time, the Church has taken stringent measures to insure the proper preservation and veneration of relics. The *Code of Canon Law* (No. 1190) absolutely forbids the selling of sacred relics and they cannot be "validly alienated or perpetually transferred" without permission of the Holy See. Moreover, any relic today would have proper documentation attesting to its authenticity. The *Code* also supports the proper place for relics in our Catholic practice: Canon 1237 states, "The ancient tradition of keeping the relics of martyrs and other saints under a fixed altar is to be preserved according to the norms given in the liturgical books," (a practice widespread since the fourth century). Many Churches also have relics of their patron saints which the faithful venerate on appropriate occasions. And yes, reports of the Lord's miracles and favors continue to be connected with the intercession of a saint and the veneration of his relics. In all, relics remind us of the holiness of a saint and his cooperation in God's work; at the same time, relics inspire us to ask for the prayers of that saint and to beg the grace of God to live the same kind a faith-filled life.

*Fr. Saunders is dean of the Notre Dame Graduate School of Christendom College and pastor of Queen of Apostles Parish, both in Alexandria.* Copyright 1999 Arlington Catholic Herald, Inc. All rights reserved. Reprinted with permission of the Arlington Catholic Herald. [catholicherald.com](http://catholicherald.com)