



**CONTACT
DETAILS**

Rev Canon
David Hopgood

Bishop's House
Edinburgh Road
Portsmouth,
Hampshire
PO1 3HG

Tel
023 9282 6170

Email
info@portsmouthcatholic
cathedral.org.uk

Web
www.portsmouthcatholic
cathedral.org.uk

www.portsmouthdiocese.
org.uk

ST THÉRÈSE'S RELICS AT ST JOHN'S CATHEDRAL



16th September 2009

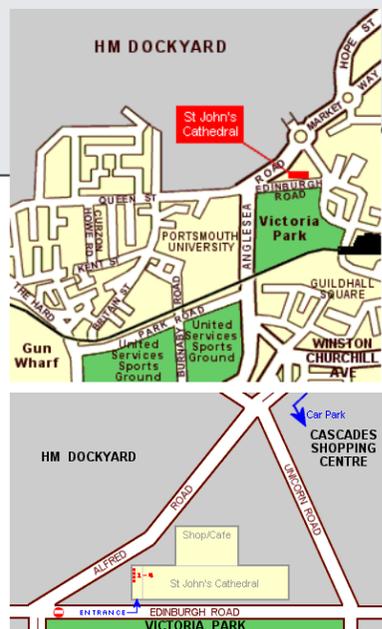


The Sacrament of Reconciliation is available during the day.

- **9.30am**
Bishop Crispian welcomes the Relics of St Thérèse to the Cathedral and leads the Opening Liturgy (involving local Catholic schools)
- **11am**
Bishop Crispian celebrates a Liturgy involving representatives of all the Catholic schools of the diocese
- **2pm**
Bishop Crispian celebrates Mass with Anointing of the Sick (representatives from parishes around the diocese)
- **7.30pm**
Bishop Crispian celebrates a Mass of Thanksgiving. Preacher, Canon John Udris (Dean of Northampton Cathedral)
- **10pm**
Celebration of Night Prayer. All-Night Vigil based on the Stations of the Cross

17th September 2009

- **7am**
First Mass of the day
- **10am**
Farewell Mass and Departure of the Relics



St. Thérèse's Relics



What is a Relic?

A Relic is either an item directly associated with the life of Christ (these are rare for obvious reasons), or a part of the physical remains of a saint after his or her death.

The next categories of relics comprise the objects which have been in contact with a saint's body or items of their personal use.

One of the first class relics is that of the Cross of Christ or the Shroud of Turin.

It is forbidden to sell relics. In fact, they are priceless, but they have their true value only in constant reference to faith and God.



The Pilgrimage in Reverse

Pilgrimage is a journey to a holy place or a site associated with a holy person. It helps us to get out of our routine, and by involving us in a physical journey it also suggests that our spiritual life needs to move forward and grow.

However, in our diocese we are preparing for another kind of pilgrimage, a pilgrimage in reverse. St. Thérèse comes to us, and in so doing, she makes the grace of pilgrimage available to many, regardless of whether they are Catholics or not. All will be welcome to venerate St. Thérèse's relics, with a special invitation to the sick, young people and those seeking their way in life.

Since 1994, when St. Thérèse's relics made their first journey around France, they have travelled to over 40 countries.

Come and See...

- The relics of St. Thérèse arrive at St John's RC Cathedral in Portsmouth **16.09.09**
- Prayer & Activities in the Cathedral
- Relics of St. Thérèse leave for the Plymouth Diocese **17.09.09**

Now they are coming to Portsmouth, offering us a wonderful opportunity to grow in faith. Of particular importance here is St. Thérèse's spiritual teaching, often known as the "Little Way" or the "Way of Spiritual Childhood" (see issue 1).

The message of St. Thérèse that stresses holiness as a way of life for ordinary people living in ordinary circumstances has proved immensely popular throughout the world.

But what about the relics? Aren't they outdated and a sign of superstition? Read more to find out...

Use this booklet to learn more about the relics of the saint, and pass it on to your friends.

This booklet uses some of the CASE materials marking the occasion of St. Thérèse's visit to the UK. www.catholic-ew.org.uk/ccb/catholic_church/relics_of_st_therese_of_lisieux

What does the casket actually contain?

Some of the bones of St. Thérèse. While it is true that in exceptional cases, the bodies of holy people have remained incorrupt, St. Thérèse herself predicted that her body would decay after her death, and this has been confirmed by the three exhumations of her body that have taken place. From very early days, however, healings and other extraordinary answers to prayer took place at her grave.



Why

Relics?

Relics are quite different from magical items such as lucky talismans. And a veneration of relics has certainly nothing to do with superstition! If understood correctly, the proximity of relics should draw people to conversion to Jesus Christ.

True veneration of relics is therefore a way of giving glory to God and expressing our faith in the goodness of creation and the importance of incarnation.

It is a way of acknowledging and celebrating our ties to the whole human race that reach beyond death.



Why do Catholics Venerate Relics?

“Many signs and wonders were worked among the people at the hands of the apostles so that the sick were even taken out into the streets and laid on beds and sleeping-mats in the hope that at least the shadow of Peter might fall across some of them as he went past.” (Acts 5:14-15)

The Catholic Church has always commended the veneration of relics for two main reasons. Firstly, God shows his approval by granting healings and/or other graces. This is a remarkable feature of the relics of St. Thérèse.

Secondly, relics help us feel close to a holy person, thus making the communion of saints more real and fostering in us a desire for holiness.

Looking at the Bible, we have a few miracles that were worked through the cloak of Elijah and the bones of Elisha in the Old Testament.

The New Testament then speaks of healings through, first of all, being touched by Jesus, or by a contact with St. Paul's body, or even St. Peter's shadow.

From the earliest times, the bodies of various martyrs were held in special veneration. The relics of St. Polycarp, for example, were described as being “more valuable than precious stones and finer than refined gold.”

In Rome, prayer services were held in the catacombs, and from the fourth century, the Eucharist was celebrated over the tombs of the martyrs.

Against those who were uncomfortable with such practices, St. Jerome explained that the relics of the martyrs are honoured for the sake of Him whose martyrs they are.

St. Augustine added that their bodies were worthy of veneration since they served them during their lifetime as organs of the Holy Spirit.

The Second Council of Nicaea in 787 laid down that no Church should be consecrated without relics of saints being placed in the altar stone. This was re-affirmed in the 1977 Rite of Dedication of a Church.

In short, the Catholic faith affirms the importance of the body and heralds the Good News of the Resurrection by commending the veneration of relics. There is nothing to lose, only gain, by drawing close to God's saints.



Benedict XVI prays next to the relics in November 2007

Photo: Catholic Herald

Pope Benedict XVI

“By inviting us to venerate the mortal remains of the martyrs and saints, the Church does not forget that, in the end, these are indeed just human bones, but they are bones that belonged to individuals touched by the transcendent power of God.

The relics of the saints are traces of that invisible but real presence which sheds light upon the shadows of the world and reveals the Kingdom of Heaven in our midst.

They cry out with us and for us ‘Maranatha!’ – ‘Come Lord Jesus!’”

(Pope Benedict XVI, Address to Young People at Cologne).

Veneration as an act of Faith

An act of veneration takes place when we display special honour and profound respect for someone, in this case a saint.

With relics, there is also an invitation to each person who comes to venerate them to take the next step on their own

journey towards God, inspired by the unique humanity of the venerated saint.

List of Countries Visited by the Relics

- 1995 Belgium
- 1996 Luxembourg, Germany, Italy
- 1997 Switzerland, Austria, Slovenia, Brazil
- 1999 Netherlands, Russia, Kazakhstan, Argentina, United States
- 2000 Philippines, Taiwan, Hong Kong
- 2001 Mexico, Ireland, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Canada
- 2002 Australia, Romania, French Polynesia, Lebanon, Iraq
- 2003 Réunion, Madagascar, Mauritius, Malta, Spain
- 2004 Benin, Gabon, Colombia,
- 2005 Burkina Faso, Poland, Seychelles, New Zealand, Portugal
- 2007 Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia, Hungary, Guam
- 2008 Jordan, Ecuador, Cameroon