

Relics in the Reliquaries on the High Altar

by Rev. William Rock, FSSP

Between the six High Mass candles on Regina Caeli's High Altar there are four golden reliquaries. Each reliquary contains a First Class Relic of a Saint. This page 1 of a 3-page article.

Pius X (adopted from Divinum Officium):

Pope Pius X, whose name previously was Joseph Sarto, was born in the village of Riese in the Venetian Province, Italy, on June 2nd in the Year of Our Lord 1835. He enrolled among the students in the seminary of Padua and, when he had been ordained priest, was first curate in the town of Tombolo, then pastor at Salzano, then canon and chancellor of the Bishop's curia at Treviso. He was so outstanding in holiness that Pope Leo XIII made him Bishop of the Church of Mantua. Lacking in nothing which makes a good pastor, he labored particularly to teach young men called to the priesthood; he fostered the beauty of divine worship and the growth of devout associations; he saw to the needs of the poor with generous charity. Because of his great merits, he was made a cardinal and created Patriarch of Venice. After the death of Pope Leo XIII, he took up the supreme pontificate as a cross, having refused it in vain. Placed upon the Chair of Peter, he gave up nothing of his former way of life. He shone especially in humility, simplicity and poverty. He ruled the Church firmly and adorned it with brilliant teachings. As a most vigilant guardian of the Faith, he condemned and suppressed Modernism, the sum of all heresies; as a most zealous defender of the freedom of the Church, he boldly resisted those who strove to bring about her downfall; he provided for the sound education of clerics, brought the laws of the Church together into one body; and greatly fostered the worship and more frequent reception of the Eucharist. Worn out with his labors and overcome with grief at the European war which had just begun, he went to his heavenly home on August 20th in the year 1914. Pope Pius XII numbered him among the Saints. His feast day is kept on September 3rd.

Aloysius Gonzaga (adopted from Divinum Officium):

Aloysius, son of Ferdinand Gonzaga, Marquis of Castiglione delle Stiviere, Italy, was in danger of death while he was being born. He was therefore baptized without delay, so that it seemed he was born to heaven even before he was born to earth. He retained this first grace so faithfully that he was believed to have been confirmed in it. When he was nine years old, he took a vow of virginity at Florence before the altar of the Blessed Virgin, whom he always thought of as his mother. By a singular blessing of God, he kept this vow without any rebellion of mind or body so that he was deservedly called a man without a body or an angel in the flesh. He handed over the right of succession to his brother and joined the Society of Jesus in Rome. Even in the novitiate, he began to be considered a master of all the virtues. So ardent was the love of God in him that he would be rapt out of his body. Possessed by a wonderful charity for his neighbor, he zealously served in the public hospitals, and as a result he contracted a contagious fever. After slowly wasting away, he went to heaven on the 21st day of June in the Year of Our Lord 1591, having just entered his twenty-fourth year. Pope Benedict XIII enrolled him among the Saints and gave him to students as both a model of innocence and charity and their heavenly Patron. His feast day is kept on June 21st.

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Maria Goretti (source: angelusnews.com):

St. Maria Goretti was born in Corinaldo, Italy, on October 16th in the Year of Our Lord 1890. Her father was a farmer and died of malaria when she was young, leaving his wife to support their six children. Maria took care of her younger siblings while her mother worked. She prayed the Rosary every night for the repose of her father's soul. Her grace, maturity, and cheerful obedience were well known. On July 5th in the year 1902, a neighboring farm hand, Alessandro Serenelli, tried to violate Maria's purity. He had harassed her many times before, and Maria had repeatedly rejected his advances. This time, Alessandro locked Maria in a room and tried to force himself on her. Maria fought back, telling Alessandro, "No, this is a sin. God does not want it!" She warned him that this would be the path to hell. When Maria declared that she would rather die than submit, Alessandro angrily stabbed her 14 times. Maria was found bleeding and rushed to the hospital. As she lay dying, she forgave Alessandro, saying, "Yes, for the love of Jesus I forgive him...and I want him to be with me in Paradise." Although the doctors tried to save her, she died two days later, at only 11 years old. Alessandro was sentenced to 30 years in prison. He was unrepentant until one night, eight years into his sentence, when Maria appeared to him. She was dressed in white and gathering lilies in a garden. She turned to Alessandro with a smile and offered him the flowers. Each lily he took transformed into a white flame, and Maria disappeared. After this, Alessandro converted and was at peace. When he was released from prison three years early, he begged forgiveness from Maria's mother, which she granted. Alessandro moved to a Capuchin monastery and worked in the gardens as a tertiary for the rest of his life. He was one of the witnesses who testified to Maria's holiness during her cause of beatification, citing his crime and his vision in prison. Many miracles were attributed to Maria after her death. In the year 1950, she was canonized by Pope Pius XII, and became the youngest Catholic Saint officially recognized by name. Maria is the patron saint of purity, victims whose purity has been violated, young women, and youth in general. Her feast day is kept on July 6th.

Relics in the Reliquaries on the High Altar, Vincent Pallotti

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Vincent Pallotti (source: roman-catholic-saints.com):

Saint Vincent Pallotti was born in Rome in the Year of Our Lord 1795. From earliest childhood, he evinced tender love for the Blessed Mother of God, and the decree on the heroic nature of his virtues emphasizes the following facts: "he possessed an exceptional love for poverty and penance and was therefore especially devoted to St Francis of Assisi. Because various obstacles were in the way of his entering the First Order [of the Franciscans], he desired at least to belong to the Third Order. It was his constant endeavor to imitate and venerate St Francis." Vincent became a Tertiary in the Franciscan church of Aracoeli on November 29th, in the year 1816. He distinguished himself not only by his piety but also by his brilliant intellect. In time, he received the degrees of Doctor of Philosophy and of Theology. He was overwhelmed with joy when on May 16th, in the year 1818, he was ordained to the Holy Priesthood. Then his apostolate began. With prayer and penance, with his labors in the pulpit and the confessional, with his efforts on behalf of the sick and the endangered, and especially on behalf of young clerics in the Roman seminary, he did a measureless amount of good. In fact, it is well known that the Saint often bilocated so as to be able to reach more souls when necessary. To his apostolic zeal must be ascribed the foundation of the Pious Society of the Missions, also called the Pallottine Fathers. The purpose of the society was to arouse faith and charity among Catholics and to propagate these virtues among heretics and infidels. Vincent placed his organization under the protection of the Immaculate Mother of God and under perfect submission to the Holy See. God glorified His humble servant by the gift of miracles both during his lifetime and after his death in the year 1850. There was a strange and marvelous scent, a heavenly perfume, that was noted about the Saint's body and in his room at the time of his death. That scent lingered in the room in which he had died for a month, even through the window to the room was left open. St Vincent Pallotti was comparatively young when he was called to eternity, but in that short span he had accumulated a wealth of merits. He was beatified in the year 1950 and canonized in the year 1963. The body of Saint Vincent Pallotti was exhumed in the years 1906 and 1950, and his body was found to be completely incorrupt. His feast day is kept on January 22nd.