



Editorial: it will take saints

Dear Reader and Friend,

The casket containing the relics of St Thérèse of Lisieux was touched by tens of thousands of hands across Britain during the last four weeks. The hands only expressed the souls' craving for intercession and spiritual help in general. Many among these pilgrims were not regular church-goers, possibly not even Catholics or Christians. To the secular eye, what a hurly-burly done for a few old bones... But these are the bones of a saint, that is, of a human being whose life and death were pleasing to God, to the point that at the end of time He will resurrect the whole body then united with its soul not for suffering in Hell, but in a state of integral perfection and amazing splendour, for ever reflecting His divine truth and bounty in Heaven.



Some saints are well known and some others we will discover only at the Last Judgment. How sad though when people admire the valuable casket and pay no attention to the relics left inside, as sometimes happens in museums. Visitors should be taught that such craftsmanship and care and wealth as displayed in such containers first and foremost express the deep faith of our forefathers in the value of relics and in the power of saints through God's grace. Just now if we look at our own hands we may ask ourselves: 'What sort of casket will be made for these limbs of mine (if not cremated)?' Thinking further, we will wonder what cathedrals and shrines will welcome our bones after our canonization. We tend to stop then, feeling this is pride and silly reverie.

Still, God is preparing for every single one of us more than a casket: "In my Father's house there are many mansions. If not, I would have told you: because I go to prepare a place for you" (John 14:2). God calls us all to holiness. This universal calling however is particularised in the

circumstances of our individual lives. It is shaped further by the part which the Redeemer has assigned for us to play in the spreading of His Word for the conversion of our contemporaries and countries. This is taking place now. Our modern era boasts of inventing globalisation, which allegedly manifests itself in wireless tools of instantaneous communication and in the spreading of uniform ways of dressing, eating, working, relaxing, and even of thinking.

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Though some of these things are useful (allowing you to read *Dowry* online for instance), on the whole it looks more like a materialistic making up of the Communion of Saints. Holy Mother Church had not waited for the world, so that in Her turn She should meet every man's secret aspiration for unity. Long before, the Church was offering genuine unity based upon truth, promoted diversely according to the talents of each person and aiming not at men's glorification but at God's. Even while you read these words, millions of saints of all ages and places are alive with us, as we strive for deeper faith, higher hope and more ardent charity. They don't mind at all if we pray to them in Breton or in

Japanese or Portuguese, just as little Norman girl St Thérèse has surely forwarded to God the thousands of requests expressed to her while on British soil these last weeks, although she did not speak English. But what the saints do mind is if we remain content with our mediocrity instead of drawing strength and inspiration from their lives – and bones – according to God's

beautiful design of supernatural fraternity. Bringing Her Dowry back to Mary will take saints. It will take you, and me please God. Saints... Our daily routines at home and at work, ornate with our sacrifices big and small, are the precious living caskets designed by God Himself to enshrine our immortal souls! And in His own celestial 'cathedral' – the New Jerusalem – the good God wants these 'caskets' to be brought into Heaven and then... then

our souls will be established in everlasting Life, and what on earth had weighed upon us as a rigid framework will then be floating like robes of silk and of ample damask embroidered with the shining virtues and the glorious merits humbly and faithfully cultivated here below.

Yours devotedly in the Hearts of
Jesus and Mary,

Malleray

Fr Armand de Malleray, Superior of
the English FSSP Apostolate
On the Feast of St Thérèse,
October 3rd, 2009.

(Picture: casket with St Thérèse's relics in Portsmouth Cathedral on 16-17 September 2009)

