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Box 07, Folder 11 - "Are There Any Saints Now?" (E.M.S.)

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ARE THERE ANY SAINTS NOW ?

We are often given books to read about the saints , or people tell us stories about them - like St Francis of Assis and St Anthony and St Benedict ; but they are all about people who lived in the past . So the question is - are there any saint saints alive to-day , or did they just belong to the past .

Well , the answer to that is : the Cathilic Church in the past , in every century since Our Lord lived on earth has been producing sainta -- AND STILL IS PRODUCING THEM .

Of course the very holy people who are alive to-day cannot be called Saints , in the strict sense of the word , while they are still alive . No one is really and trul and finally a saint until he has been canonized by the Pope in Rome . And this never happens until the person is dea . But once a person has been decreed to be a sanit by the Pope then you canput up a statue to that person in any church and have a special altar in his honour .

There is a special reason for all this , but it would be too long to go into it now . But the interesting things is that to-day (Sunday) one of the biggest and best Sunday papers has a whole page devoted to an Italian priest , who I am sure will be cannonized after his death and made a saint . His name is Padre Pio and he lives in a little monastery in Italy - away in the country .

Padre Pio is constantly working miracles and is now known all over the world . One of these miracles is described in to-day's Sunday times . It happened during the last war .

An Italian airman was flying and while right up in the air his plane went on fire . He tried to put it out , but could not so he put on his parachute and jumped . But the parachute did not open , so of course he expected to be killed with his fall and would have been killed if something extraordinary had not happened .

The airman said that while he was falling a monk in a brown habit got hold of him , while he was still up in the air - and carried him gently down to earth . When he got home he told this story to his mother and she said "That was Padre Pio (Father Pio) I'm sure ; because I had been praying very hard to him to protect you " . Then the mother went and got a photo of Padre Pio and showed it to her son , and at once the airman said "Yes , that was the man who rescued me " .

You might wonder how Padre Pio did it . Well , of course , it was through the power of God , Padre Pio has often appeared miles away from the monastery where he lives - yet he has never left the monastery . Which means that he has the power of bi-location , which means of being in two places at once -- just as if I could still be sitting at this typewriter and yet at the same time appear and speak to you at Beaufort . (But I can't of course - not being a saint , or anywhere near it)

Padre Pio , like St Francis of Assisi has meditated so much upon the sufferings of Christ on the cross , that he now , and for many years , has the wounds of the cross on his hands , feet and side. These are called the Stigmata .

November 29th

To-day is the Feast day of the Blessed Cuthbert Mayne He lived in the time of Queen Elizabeth the First . At that time all the Catholic Priests had been driven out of England , or were living in hiding , and saying Mass in private houses .

There was a new training college for training priests in France at a place called Douay . To this place a number of young English men went to be trained and ordained as priests in order to come back to England to keep the Faith alive . Amongst these was a young man , who was born in Devon, called Cuthbert Mayne .

Of course it was very dangerous to practise as a priest in England in Elizabeth's time as the punishment was death if you were caught . But , after his ordination Cuthbert Mayne came back and practised secretly as a priest in Cornwall , He lived in the house of a Catholic gentleman called Francis Tregran .

One day the house was raided by the high sheriff , and Cuthbert Mayne was captured , and confined in chains in a filthy dungeon . After a while he was brought to trial and condemned to death . The judge said "If you swear that Queen Elizabeth - and not the Pope - is the Head of the church in England you will be let off , and your life spared " . But Cuthbert Mayne replied "The queen never was , or is , or ever shall be head of the Church in England " - meaning of course that the Pope is the head of

the Church in England - and everywhere else. So on November 30th Outhbert Mayne was hanged in the market place at Launceston . But even to this day , if you look in an Anglican prayer book you will find it stated that the King or Queen of England is the Head of the Church in England . That is in fact one of the great differences between us and the Anglicans : they say that the present queen El zabeth is the Head of their church : we say there is only one head of the Church on earth and that is the Poep - at present Pope John 24th .(XXIV)

In your history you are bound some time to hear about Sir Thomas More , a very with and brilliant lawyer who was Chancellor of England under Henry VIII (the King who had six wives). It was Henry VIII who passed a law called The Act of Supremacy in Parliament , and by this law he made himself head of the Church in England instead of the Pope . Sir Thomas More refused to agree to this and would not say that Henry VIII was head of the church for - like Outhbert Mayne - he knew that the Pope is , and always has be and always will be the Head of the church , hether in England , Ireland or any other country . At this Henry VIII was so angry that he ordered Sir Thomas More to beexecuted in the Tower at London . So he too became a martyr , and now he has a still higher title than SIR Thomas More ; for he is now SAINT Thomans More . Sir Thomas More was a very witty man , and he made some joke even on the way to the scaffold - which I will tell you sometime - but not now .

Things are much better now than they were
 out of me believe in the Pope's in fact
 is going to visit the Pope next week
 best man is Queen Elizabeth
 the Pope's sur
 heads are not
 England's heads

"It would be highly technical to analyse at length the reciprocal interaction of the two faculties (faith and intelligence) The intelligence considers the trustworthiness of the revealer and compares it with the doctrine revealed , but as yet it does not formally assent . It is impelled thereto by the free will (under the influence of grace).....

Philosophers enumerate the stages in our intellectual assent from ignorance through doubt to certainty . This certainty , when it is the result of intuition or of strict scientific argument , is unwavering . Every rational man sees with the same immediate certainty that two and two make four , or that the whole is greater than the part . Every man also who is competent to follow the argument sees with the same certainty the truth of geometrical proposition or chemical law .

But in the domain of belief it is different . Certainty depends , not on the intrinsic evidence or argument , but on the will which has to urge the intelligence to adhere ."

Or as St Thomas Aquinas puts it "To believe , says St T is to give under the empire of the will , moved by grace , the assent and adherence of our intelligence to the divine truth .

Another writer : " Faith is the homage God expects from us and the probation we have to pass through before arriving at the eternal goal .. One day we shall see God unveiled : His glory will then consist in communicating Himself full in all His splendour But as long as we are upon earth , it enters into the economy of the divine plan that God should be for us a hidden God . Here below God wills to be known , adored and

served by faith .

"We are not criminals ; we have done no harm to any one. The judge said "I will give you time to think over it ; but if you do not offer a prayer to the Roman Emperore you will all be put to death .But one of them - an old woman - said "I am a Christian and I don 't want to be anything else " and all the others said the same . So they were all sent of to the place of execution . But they all went of in good spirits , singing hymns and their last words were "To-day we enter heaven as martyrs - thanks be to God ."

SAINT SYMPHORIAN

He also lived in the time of the Roman Emperor . One day there was a procession of pagans to the temple of the heathe goddess Cybele in a town in France (then know as Gaul) But amongst the crowd there was one man who would not join in the prayers to the idol . So the crowd seized him and brought him before the Roman magistrate and accused him of not woshipping the goddess .To the judge he said " My name is Symphorian and I am a Chrsitian " . The judge did not really believe him and thought he was not serious , and said "Hurry up and bow down to this ^{goddess} ~~daggaz~~ : I think yo are just making a fuss to show off " "No I am not " said the other , " give me a hammer and I will soon show you and I will go into your temple and smash the goddess to bits ,. At this the judge got angry and St Symphorian's head was cut off out side the city wall -- where a church to his honour now stands .

SAINT TARCISIUS

Saint Tarcisius was a boy who lived in Rome about the year 250 , whilst Britain was still part of the Roman Empire . The Christians were being persecuted by the Romans and many of them were in prison because they would not offer sacrifices to the Roman gods , such as Mars, Venus , Jupiter etc .

One day Tarcisius was asked by a Priest to carry The Blessed Sacrament to the Christians in prison , so that they could go to Holy Communion . On the way he was surrounded by a mob of pagans who asked him "What are you carrying " . Jesus , when He was on earth had said . "Cast not your pearls before swine or they will trample them under foot and trun again and rend you " . So Tarcisius wouldnot tell them , and the mobe of pagans were so angry that they surrounded attacked him with a shower of stones and blows till he fell dead . Thus he became a martyr at about the age of 12 years .

THE JEWISH BOY

There is another story of a Jewish boy who lived hundreds of years ago in Constantinople , which was then a Christian city . This boy wandered into a Catholic Church when Holy Communion was being given out to a lot of other children . Not knowing anything about it the Jewish boy went up with the others and received Holy Communion . Then the boys father (who hated the Christian religion)heard about it he was so angry that he threw his son into a furnace . After some time his mother , who had been looking for him, heard his voice calling from under the fire . She at once pulled him out , and he was

quite unhurt . The boy said " While I was in the furnace a beautiful lady came and cooled the flames around me" (You can easily guess who that was , I am sure) .

Later on the boy was brought before the Emperor Justinian and an Archbishop and told his story to them . In the end he and his mother were baptized .

SAINT STANISLAUS KOSTA

He was born from ~~xxxix~~ Polish parents in 1550. Even as a boy he was very saintly and especially hated to hear any horrid talk . Once when he was staying in the house of some people who were not Vatholics he got very ill . He wanted to send for a priest so that he could receive the Sacrament of Extreme Unction (do you know what that is ? - it means Holy Communion on what might easily be your death-bed). But the people of the house would not send for a priest. The boy therefore prayed very hard to his favorite saint - Saint Barbara - and she appeared to him with ^{angels} two angels who gave him Holy Communion . He died at the age of seventeen , and later was made a saint by the Pope of the day , and now many people when they are in trouble , especially in temptatation , pray to him - that is to Saint Stanislaus .

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TO ANYONE WHO FEELS SHY IN FRESH COMPANY

So you feel shy when you meet new people , people you meet for the first time ; or people you don't know very well ? Well , never mind ! I should n't worry about it . Hundreds of people feel just the same as you do ; and the great majority of them get over it .

I know just how you feel . There you are parked down shall we say at a party next to a perfect stranger . He doesn't know you and you do not know him . You feel as if your tongue had been tied up and won't , can't speak . And an awkward silence comes down on both of you . Very likely the other chap is feeling very like you , and does not know what to say . You can't think of anything to talk about : and the more you try the less do your thoughts come and the longer and more oppressive becomes the silence .

You think to yourself -- What shall I say to this person ?
How can I know what to say to him . Just because he is a perfect stranger to me I don't know what he is interested in . Really , a great deal of the shyness that bothers people like you (and me too at one time) is a matter of " making conversation " .

The best way to look at the problem of making conversation is to think of it as a sort of game . (Pretty rotten sort of game perhaps you think ! never mind , just hang on a minute and I will explain .

Let us think of making a conversation as something like a game of chess . First of all you have to know the rules .