

### Venerate versus Worship

**In the Catholic faith, we have great devotion for the angels and saints.** We have statues of them, dedicate churches to them, and say prayers to them. But we do not worship the angels and saints.

**We worship God alone, but we do venerate the angels and saints.** The highest reverence is due to God alone. In worship, we love and reverence God above all things. Reverence is the deep respect that we show to people or objects because of their connection to God. We venerate the angels and saints because of their holiness and the good works they did through the grace of God.

**One of the ways we honor the saints is by remembering them during the Mass.** In each Mass, we “join with the angels and saints in their unending hymn of praise” (Preface of the Mass).

**Saints also have their own feast days on which we recall the work God has done in their lives and pray for their intercession.** In the Mass, we show reverence to the saints, but all our prayers are directed toward God. In the prayers of the Mass, we ask God to give us the grace and virtues that He gave to the saints.

For example, November 25 is the Memorial of Saint Catherine of Alexandria. During Mass that day, the prayers reference Saint Catherine of Alexandria, but the prayers are directed toward God, not Saint Catherine! The Collect, or opening prayer, for the Memorial of Saint Catherine asks God that “we may be strengthened in faith and constancy and spend ourselves without reserve for the unity of the Church.”



**When we pray to the saints, we ask for their intercession.**

We ask them to pray for us that God would grant us what we need. The saints do not do anything by their own power. The saints themselves cannot cure diseases or help us in our troubles. Any good that comes from our prayers to them is because of God’s action. But we ask them to pray for us, because “the prayer of a righteous man has great power in its effects” (James 5:16).

**Just as we might ask a friend to pray for us, we can ask the saints to intercede on our behalf before God.** In both cases, we are asking someone to pray to God for us.

### Journal Reflection

**What are some ways you can show reverence for the angels and saints?** Write your answer on the journal page.

Journal pages are available on the parent and student portals.