



**Archdiocese of St. Louis
Office of Sacred Worship
Saints
In the Liturgy**

While the veneration of the saints and the possibility of prayers for the repose of the souls of the dead are not explicitly mentioned in Scripture, they are hinted at in several places (2 Macc. 15:11-16 being the most famous example). It was in the earliest decades of the Church in the liturgical veneration of the martyrs that the doctrine of the communion of saints first took on its explicit form.

The saints are venerated several ways liturgically:

The Mass:

Every Mass is offered on the Feast Day of some saint, and whenever it is, the prayers of that saint are invoked and added to the merits of the Sacrifice. Beyond this, every Mass includes in its merits the merits and prayers of all the saints and angels, whether or not they are specifically invoked by name. However, Eucharistic Prayer 1 does mention several saints by name: “In union with the whole Church we honor...Peter and Paul, Andrew, James, John, Thomas, James, Philip, Bartholomew, Matthew, Simon and Jude; we honor Linus, Cletus, Clement, Sixtus, Cornelius, Cyprian, Lawrence, Chrysogonus, John and Paul, Cosmas and Damian.”

The Litany of Saints:

The Church’s litany of saints is sung on All Saints Day and on the Easter Vigil and asks for the prayers of all the saints of the Old and New Testaments.

Dedication of Churches:

When a Church is dedicated liturgically, it is placed under the patronage of a specific saint. That saint is invoked as the special patron of that parish.

Baptism/Confirmation Name:

One entering the Church and receiving the sacraments of initiation chooses a saint under whose patronage they will place themselves. This saint is invoked liturgically at the celebration of these sacraments.