

All Saints Love the lord your God

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Love your neighbour as yourself

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St Cecelia AD 180 is famous for the proclamation that those who sing, pray twice. Go to Ewood Park on a match Day. Join a clan with the cake at a 60th do. Be present when the Welsh sing their national anthem at a Rugby game.

Those who sing pray twice, Loving God loving, their neighbour, and loving self.

St Teresa of Avila (born 1515) was persecuted by the official Church of the day. She was a women with real intellectual power. She was a mystic with genuine authority. She was a teacher in a male world. She was a woman who did not allow the bigoted prejudice of the time silence her.

She was also capable of fun. One day dancing the then new Spanish fandango before the sanctuary.

Loving God

Loving neighbour and self

St Francis of Assisi (1226) is a very romantic figure. Possibly disfigured by the rosy tinted writing of those who followed. What remains historical fact is that the Order he founded as a young man split even during his lifetime. It seems for many his act was too tough to follow. But maybe the legends are good fun. Such as, when he is said to have been accused of corruption in front of the Pope, so he stripped naked in front of the whole Papal court and left them with the only possessions he had.

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Mother Teresa of Calcutta (born 1910) was said to have once set up a convent in New York. The Church there delighted to have a presence of the order with them had hired a flat and furnished it in preparation of their arrival. Mother Teresa walked through the door and told them to remove that, and remove that, they did not need that or that and so on until the place was almost bare.

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Arch Bishop Romero of El Salvador (born 1917) was chosen for the role because it was thought he was quite conservative. That he would not make a fuss. However once in the role of Arch Bishop he saw the plight of the poor of El Salvador and the repression of those who worked for change. He spoke out, sheltered victims of the regime. Became a prophet for the helpless.

The regime warned him. Then killed him.

And the voice of that man, cry's out all the louder from the grave.

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Cardinal John Henry Newman (born 1801) was a deeply spiritual man who suffered so badly from depression. Who else would write the hymn, Lead kindly light amid the encircling gloom lead thou me on. The night is dark and I am far from home. Lead thou me on.

It was his faith, his deep faith. Which inspired him. Which inspired those close to him. **To go on.**

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St John Paul the second (born 1920) was not a man to be messed with. A wonderful story which again has evidence behind it came from an occasion of prayer. He had gone to a private chapel in a convent in order to spend some time in silence. A sister from the convent was delighted to see the Arch Bishop in their chapel. So ran to get tea and biscuits on a tray with cups and saucers. When she presented these to the future Pope he very clearly told her to go away. He was in prayer, **Go away.**

The same man went to confession every morning aware of his arrogance and intolerance.

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St Don Bosco (born 1815) the founder of the truly massive Salesian Order saw the need to educate the poor of Turin and with his mother began what must have seemed pointless and impossible. But there was a need and he responded to the need with the love of God. Thus Salesians Schools are to be found all over the World. The tradition of Catholic Education is to be found all over the world. Much of which began with an eccentric man who redeemed his old cassock from the bin, and gave away the new one that those close had tried to trick him into wearing

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The beautiful St Teresa of Lisieux (born 1873) did not live so very long, suffered so badly from TB and is close to the hearts of many Catholics. She never did anything spectacular. She just loved in her simple humble manner. What she wrote was not for heroes or heroines but for people of simple faith. I love the story of the nun from her order who really irritated her. As a penance and discipline she worked hard at developing a loving relationship with this woman. This lady oblivious of the challenge after the death of St Teresa remembered only the kindness.

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And so on and so forth

So many Saints Such a glorious tradition

Of real people who truly lived by love.

And there are Saints here amongst us.