

in the everyday walk of life. This tended to give the church even greater outreach into the private affairs of the life of the people.

VENERATION OF SAINTS

This is a practice to which we feel a certain loathing but you can see how it developed. There was a deep respect for those who gave their lives for the testimony. Children would be named for them, churches would bear their names, and perhaps streets and public places would be called in their honor. They were spiritual heroes (and indeed they were) and folks respected them for that. As time would pass a legend would grow up about the various martyrs and soon the reported events would be much greater than the actual deeds of life. May you be so fortunate!

In the middle of the 4th century a "martyr's calendar" grew in which the days of special martyr's deaths were recorded. People who were given to externalism or mysticism began to burn tapers in memory of a martyr...something like looking at your wedding pictures and remembering what that person was like then.

While we are great admirers of the Cappadocian fathers, they in particular seem to have been among the first to suggest that a martyr's name could be used in a prayer. The Roman pantheon "(hall of the gods) was sometime later given to the church at Rome and then converted into the chapel of the Most Blessed Virgin and Martyrs. In time the first of November was designated as Martyr's Feast Day and the veneration pattern follows after this.

USE OF RELICS

Probably the use of relics is a natural result of the veneration of martyrs. The idea is simple: if you like to think of someone why not have a piece of that party around to make the thinking more meaningful? In some ways, Helena, Mother of Constantine, aided in this business although it was incidental. Helena pursued the New Testament archaeological sites and places where sacred events transpired. Naturally she (and her staff) both identified sites and produced relics. The business soon became so hot that Theodosius actually prohibited traffic in relics in 386.