



By Chuck White

This information carries no official ecclesiastic approval. You are invited to further explore Church teachings in the Catechism of the Catholic Church.

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Catholic Evidence Guild of Guam

Visit us at www.cegguam.org

comments@cegguam.org

You may also contact us through
John Paul the Great Book and Gift Shop
134 W. Chalan Santo Papa
Suite 101
Hagatna, GU 96910
T: 477-7647, F: 472-8574

Do Catholics Worship Statues?



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Worshipin' Statues

When chatting with a beautiful lady recently at our Catholic Evidence Guild table at Night Market at Chamorro Village, she identified herself as being “born again” and said that she had left the Catholic Church many years ago. I asked her, “Do you have any questions about particular Catholic beliefs?”

She said, “As a matter of fact, I have a big problem with the Catholic Church: I don’t think Catholics should worship statues.”

I replied, “Well, I don’t personally know any Catholics that worship statues, and if you do, then please tell them to stop immediately! That’s idolatry!”

I continued, “You know that God forbids the worship of

idols (**Exodus 20:4-5**), but God commanded His people several times to make images and statues for use in their worship of Him. For example He once commanded the Israelites to ‘make two cherubim (angels) out of hammered gold’ and put them over the Ark of the Covenant in the Tabernacle (**Exodus 25:17-22**).”

I went on, “and in the book of Numbers, we see God commanding the Israelites to make a bronze snake and put it up on a pole so that anyone who had been bitten by a poisonous snake looked at it would be healed. (Numbers 21:4-9). And God certainly commanded His people to create engraved images of angels, trees, flowers, oxen, lions and even pomegranates for His temple in Jerusalem (1 Kings 6:23-29, 7:25-45). God certainly hates idolatry, but He doesn’t seem to have a problem with the use of religious art in worship.”

“You see, for us Catholics,

statues and religious images are just like photographs – they help us remember our holy brothers and sisters, the saints. When you gaze lovingly upon a photograph of someone you love or admire, nobody accuses you of worshipping the photograph, so please don’t accuse us of the same thing.”

My friend, replied, “I have to admit that sometimes I look at my mom’s picture, and say, ‘Mom, if you can hear me...’”

I replied, “Exactly! And furthermore if your mom was a member of the Body of Christ when she died, she can hear you and even pray for you.” But that’s a subject I’ll leave for another day.