

THE INCORRUPTIBILITY OF SAINTS

— excerpts primarily from Jim Dunning

<http://www.mysticsofthechurch.com/2010/04/saints-that-are-incorruptable.html>

When a body is described as being incorrupt it means that it does not decay after death. The same cannot be said of a body that is well preserved or mummified, or has undergone an embalming process. Most such corpses become stiff, but incorruptible saints remain completely flexible, as if they are only sleeping. This is particularly true of Saint Bernadette whose body is displayed in a glass case at the Convent of Nevers in France. In spite of having died more than 130 years ago, she looks for all the world as if she is about to wake up. It is true that when she was exhumed a second time, the nuns gave her face a light wax mask, but this was done mainly to cover damage caused earlier by washing. A doctor who removed one of her ribs to provide a relic found her body had remained pliable.

There is a whole list of saints whose bodies have been found to be incorrupt. Not all of them were Roman Catholics. The Russian Orthodox Church is well represented by such as St. Alexander of Svir, who was a monk, and by the martyrs of Vilnius, St. Anthony, St. John and St. Eustathios.

Some believe that the piety of a particular saint is so remarkable that it permeates the whole body, or that decomposition has been prevented directly by God, or that scientific treatments were used.

Cases of incorruptibility go back a long way. The first saint whose body was found to be incorrupt was St. Cecilia, who was martyred in AD 177. Her remains were moved to a new site in 822, and in 1599 an exhumation revealed her body to be incorrupt.

Over the centuries more than 100 cases of saints whose bodies have remained incorruptible have come to light. St. Agnes of Montepulciano died in 1317. Not only did her body remain incorrupt, but a perfumed liquid flowed from her hands and feet. She was canonized by Pope Benedict XIII in 1726.

Another Italian, St. Catherine of Bologna, died at the age of 49 in the year 1463 and was canonized in 1712. She was buried unembalmed and without a casket; 18 days later, after various reports of graveside miracles, her body was exhumed and found to be flexible and uncorrupted. It was moved to the chapel of the Poor Clares in Bologna where it is displayed to this day, dressed and seated upright in a glass case.

St. Catherine Labouré (1806 – 1876) was born in Burgundy, France. She is famous for having passed on a request from Our Lady for the creation of the Miraculous Medal, worn now by thousands of the faithful. When her body was exhumed in 1933 it was found to be incorrupt. It rests now on display in the chapel of Our Lady of the Sun in the Rue du Bac, Paris. In October, 1977, the canonization took place of an ordained Lebanese Maronite Catholic monk named Charbel Makhlouf. He had lived as a hermit from 1875 until his death at the age of seventy in 1898. With a reputation for holiness, he followed a strict fast and was devoted to the Blessed Sacrament. After his death, mysterious, dazzling lights were seen over his grave and pilgrims began to visit. His corpse which had been exuding sweat and blood was transferred to a special coffin, and hordes of pilgrims swarmed to the place seeking his intercession. They still do. As recently as January, 1993, a partially paralysed fifty-six-year old woman named Nohed El Shami saw two Maronite monks standing next to her bed. They performed surgery on her neck and when she woke up she found two wounds on her neck. She was completely healed and able to walk again. One of the monks she identified as Charbel. His canonization took place on October 9, 1977, in the Vatican. Mention has been made of the exudation of sweat and blood from St. Charbel's body.

The same symptoms have been observed with other saints, often many years after their death. The odour of sanctity is frequently mentioned, not only at the time of death or burial, but many years later. It is frequently described as a sweet-smelling perfume. In the case of the Venerable Mother Maria of Jesus, who died in 1640, the odour detected on the occasion of her exhumation in 1929 was described as a 'sweet perfume of roses and jasmines' which clung not only to her body, but to articles she was known to have used during her lifetime. This was 289 years after her death!



St. Padre Pio
(1887-1968)

http://opusbonum.g6.cz/hobby/mrtvi_bez_poruseni_rozkladem/padre_pio.html





Saint Bernadette (1844–1879)



Saint John Vianney (1786–1859)



Saint Catherine Laboure (1806 - 1876)



Saint Bernadette Soubirous (1844 - 1879)



Saint Teresa Margaret of the Sacred Heart (1747–1770)



St Vincent de Paul (1581–1660)



St John Bosco (1815–1888)



St Veronica Giuliani (1660-1727)



St Silvan (Died circa 350)
His body is 1600 years old.

INCORRUPTIBILITY

Ælfheah of Canterbury
Æthelthryth
Agatha of Sicily
Agnes of Montepulciano
Margaret Mary Alacoque
Albertus Magnus
Madeleine Sophie Barat
Paschal Baylon
Benedict the Moor
Bénézet
Mary Magdalen Bentivoglio
Bernardino of Siena
Julie Billiard
Andrew Bobola
Charles Borromeo
Virginia Centurione Bracelli
Frances Xavier Cabrini
Eustochia Smeralda Calafato
Rita of Cascia
Catherine of Bologna
Catherine of Genoa
Catherine of Siena
Saint Cecilia
Jane Frances de Chantal
Clare of Montefalco
Coloman of Stockerau
Conrad of Piacenza
Germaine Cousin
Cuthbert
Annibale Maria di Francia
Didacus of Alcalá
Mary of the Divine Heart
Rose Philippine Duchesne
Edward the Confessor
Helen Enselmini
Peter Julian Eymard
Lucy Filippini
Frances of Rome
Francis of Paola
Veronica Giuliani
Maria Goretti
Guthlac of Crowland
Herculanus of Piegara
Hugh of Lincoln
Idesbald
Ioasaph of Belgorod
James of the Marches
John of the Cross
Stanislaus Kostka
Josaphat Kuntsevych
Isidore the Laborer
Catherine Labouré

Peregrine Laziosi
Ursula Ledóchowska
Camillus de Lellis
Mary of Jesus de León y Delgado
Jeanne de Lestonnac
Louis Bertrand
Mafalda of Portugal
Charbel Makhluf
Margaret of Cortona
María de Ágreda
Mariana of the Purification
Louise de Marillac
Angela Merici
Narcisca de Jesús
Stephen Nehmé
Philip Neri
John Neumann
Nicholas of Tolentino
Luigi Orione
Vincent Pallotti
Vincent de Paul
Magdalena de Pazzi
Pio of Pietrelcina
Martin de Porres
Catherine of Ricci
Edmund Rich
Romuald
Rose of Lima
Rose of Viterbo
Saint Silvan
Francis de Sales
Salvador of Horta
Dominic Savio
Alfredo Ildefonso Schuster
Pacificus of San Severino
Bernadette Soubirous
John Southworth (martyr)
Sperandia
Alexander Svirsky
Teresa Margaret of the Sacred Heart
Teresa of Ávila
Ubaldo
Joaquina Vedruna de Mas
John Vianney
Waltheof of Melrose
Werburch
Wihtburh
Winibald
Francis Xavier
Anthony Maria Zaccaria
Zita