


Classes of Catholic Relics



"Handkerchiefs and aprons that had touched Paul were taken to the sick, and used to cure their illnesses, and to drive out the evil spirits" (Acts 19:11-12)

1st class

First class relics are the **earthly mortal remains of saints**, and are classified as being sacred relics. These remains could be **any part of the body**, be it bone, flesh (either skin or organs), and even hair. As remains are considered to be precious and sacred relics, the Church has prohibited the sale of any first class relics. Custodians of first class relics are usually members of Faith Communities. Rarely, if ever, are first class relics entrusted to individuals.

Second class relics are the **possessions or tools that were owned or used by a saint** during their lifetime. Items such as articles of clothing, vestments, jewelry, scepters, bibles, and hand tools, could all be considered to be second class relics, so long as they were used by a saint. In the case of a martyr, the instruments of their demise may also be considered a second class relic. Second class relics are prohibited from sale by the Church.

2nd class

3rd class

Third class relics are the only form of relic that the Church permits for sale. A third class relic is **any item that has made contact with the remains of a saint, or pressed against their first class relic**, such as their tomb or reliquary. Third class relics could include burial cloths used during a saint's funeral, soil from which they were buried in, the saint's casket, or newer items that have been blessed by God when placed against a first class relic.