

GREAT News from Boston

Michael Sean Winters | Aug. 17, 2010 Distinctly Catholic

The relic of the True Cross that was stolen from the Blessed Sacrament Chapel at Boston's Cathedral of the Holy Cross [has been recovered](#) [1]. This is great news.

Ever since the time of the Reformation, many non-Catholics have scoffed at our Catholic devotion to relics. They doubt the authenticity of the claims made about the relics. But, they misunderstand the nature of religious authenticity. That relic has been venerated by Christians for centuries. I have no reason to doubt that it is indeed a part of the piece of wood on which hung the Savior of the World, recovered by Saint Helena in 313 A.D. We have every reason to assume that the early Christians, for whom the death and resurrection of the Lord, was a contemporary event, would have tried to preserve this artifact of the central event in their lives and, indeed, in the life of the world.

The reason that the scoffers object to relics, I suspect, has less to do with any sense of historical provenance. It is deeper than that. Scoffers cannot get their head around the idea that our Christian faith is rooted in an historical claim: The Crucified Lives. We believe that this event which transcended history also happened within history. We believe that the Risen Lord really did appear to the disciples on the road to Emmaus, eat fish with the disciples, hold out his hands to Thomas that he might put his finger into the nail holes. It is a large belief. It is difficult to imagine that the Lord of all Creation came down from heaven, was born of a virgin, walked the earth, was crucified and raised from the dead. It is less difficult to imagine when we read the testimony of the apostles and when we can reach out and touch an artifact of those events. That is why we cherish relics. They are not magical talismans. They are reminders of the historicity of our claims. That was the scandal to a doubting world two thousand years ago and it remains the scandal to a doubting world today.

We should rejoice with the Church of Boston that this link in the long chain of belief has been restored and will once again help Christians to deepen their faith in Him who hung upon the wood of the Cross.

Source URL (retrieved on 06/27/2017 - 15:50): <https://www.ncronline.org/blogs/distinctly-catholic/great-news-boston>

Links:

[1] http://www.boston.com/news/local/breaking_news/2010/08/relic_of_cross.html