

Saint telemachus

Religion



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The Roman Catholic faith is one of the religions that believe in martyrs and saints and honored their lives because of the sacrifices that they have made in the name of fighting for their religion and in the name of preaching the values and morals that the Roman Catholic faith is teaching and preaching to everyone. How these martyrs and saints lived was somewhat similar – a moment of recognition of the presence of God in their lives, the life of prayer and devotion to the faith, the episode of their life wherein they become the tool or vessel of God for an important mission before they die.

While their lives seem to follow a certain pattern, their death is somewhat not always the same. There are those who die peacefully in their sleep or because of old age, and there are those who die a violent death in front of an angry crowd. Jesus Christ, the son of God and one of the three personas of the Roman Catholic God, in life mortal human form, died a very violent and brutal death.

So did other saints, martyrs and other individuals who are considered faithful to the Roman Catholic faith especially during its early stage and during the time the religion's main enemies are persecution of the faith and the presence of a set of social norm that strongly go against the paradigm of the Roman Catholic faith, The setting of the world at the time of St. Telemachus' life, whose death, like Jesus Christ and the other saints, were violent and brutal, and became a source of an important catalyst in the social landscape inside Rome. This paper will discuss the life of St. Telemachus and the significant aspects related to St.

Telemachus that will help establish St. Telemachus as one of the important and noteworthy saint and martyr whose contributions were very realistic and practical and transcended the basic act of religious theoretical teaching and selfless public service. ABOUT SAINT TELEMACHUS Saint Telemachus was known by different other possible names, including Saint Tilemahos as well as Almachus, whose birth is remains unknown. He was a monk who was believed to be the one who influenced the policy about gladiatorial fights after his very popular but seriously challenged story about stopping the fighting gladiators that resulted to his death.

His proclamation as a martyr and the stopping of the entertainment of the crowd for armed combats which is usually a fight to the death to which spectators gamble. St. Telemachus was mentioned in many different literary forms by authors from different places. Little is known about St. Telemachus, and because of this, many theological experts, historians, as well as critics and analysts, challenge the veracity and truthfulness in the story about Telemachus. The usual tempo and outline of the available St.

Telemachus story - from his journey to Rome, his entry in the arena, his stoppage of the fight, his death and martyrdom, runs something like this: “ The emperor Honorius first prohibited gladiatorial shows at Rome, on occassion of the death of St. Telemachus, who coming thither from the East, during the exhibition of these spectacles, went down into the arena, and exerted himself to prevent the gladiators from continuing the sport . ” THE STORIES SURROUNDING THE DEATH OF SAINT TELEMACHUS There were many versions of how exactly St. Telemachus died after he supposedly stopped a fight between two gladiators inside a Roman fighting arena during <https://assignbuster.com/saint-telemachus/>

the height of the fad of this particular type of death match entertainment. Authors like Alban Burns explained that there were two versions believed by the Catholic faithful about how St. Telemachus died. The first version is the death of St. Telemachus from the stoning he got from the audience who were “infuriated” by his mediation and intervention that spoiled the excitement of the action that was already progressing by the time he arrived and tried to stop the fight. Another version pointed the death of St.

Telemachus towards the actions of the “city prefect,” who, like the audience, found St. Telemachus’ action inside the arena not agreeable to his preferences and interests. Because of that, the prefect of the city ordered the gladiators (whether the ones who were fighting or those on standby inside the arena is not exactly ascertained by Butler and Burns) to kill him, who supposedly said before dying that “Today is the octave day of the Lord, cease from the superstitions of idols and from polluted sacrifice.” This act cost his life, but in return earned him the stature of a martyr in the annals of the Roman Catholic faith.

THE IMPORTANCE OF SAINT TELEMACHUS Despite the fact that St.

Telemachus is not a very popular name or saint among many Roman Catholics compared to other popular saints and martyrs (largely because of the fact that very little was written or known about St. Telemachus besides his action inside the Roman gladiatorial arena compared to other saints and martyrs whose life and works are well written, well documented and well publicized), there are those, especially the devout and the learned religious faithful who does not forget the place of St. Telemachus not just in the religious aspect of the understanding of his life and the significance of his <https://assignbuster.com/saint-telemachus/>

contribution, but also historically as a person who in one particular time, in the history of the Roman Catholic faith and faithful, made his mark and contribution in the effort of the religion to sustain the values and moral preached by Roman Catholic faith. St. Telemachus is nonetheless considered and appraised with the same fervor as with the other saints and martyrs, especially when discussed alongside his contemporaries and those whose life and location was never far before or after him.

For almost four hundred years the martyrs of the Church met here, beginning with St. Ignatius... and ending with St. Telemachus who, dying, implored the mob: ' In the name of Christ, forbear. ' They loved and suffered enough to finally change the mind of Rome . " ST. TELEMACHUS AND THE IMPACT ON LITERARY WRITING St. Telemachus was indeed an inspiration not just to the traditional and conventional religious individuals but to literary artists as well. The life and tragedy of St. Telemachus perhaps was a source of inspiration for Sir Alfred Tennyson when he wrote the poem featuring this particular saint, a poem which was another solid contribution and addition to the long list of literature of the same genre, but unlike some of the works which is very puritan and hard line in the messages that it wishes to throw across the audience, St. Telemachus and the poem dedicated to him somehow managed to break off from the general trend a bit. " Tennyson's St. Telemachus, who accepts martyrdom in the Colosseum as he repeats to himself 'the call of god'... s a notable exception to this secularized application (Jeffrey, p 816). "

ANALYSING ST. TELEMACHUS' LIFE THROUGH LITERARY REFERENCES It is really hard to ascertain why St. Telemachus did what he did. But a very good <https://assignbuster.com/saint-telemachus/>

source of information is the analysis of the critics about St. Telemachus and the parallelisms that he and his life shares with other characters in real life and fictional stories that talk about the boldness and honor in the act of sacrifice as the climactic event in a life that is dictated by a life in solitude and constant communing with God and nature and heightened by the belief of a mission from a vision, which, in St. Telemachus' case led him towards westward from his Asian point of origin towards Rome. In reading how he is appraised and put side by side with other characters to which he seemed to share a particular likeness or similarity, the individual looking for a deeper understanding about the personality of St. Telemachus will be given a chance to expand his or her knowledge about St. Telemachus.

“ Several other poems in the collection share significant thematic elements with ‘ The Death of CEnone. ’ ‘ St. Telemachus,’ for example, immediately follows ‘ The Death of CEnone’ and similarly depicts a hermit living alone in a cave, muttering ‘ Vicisti Galilae,’ as in Swinburne’s ‘ Hymn to Proserpine’ . ” This particular side by side analysis of equally significant literary materials and notable characters somewhat provides an individual an idea about how St. Telemachus lived his life and the level of significance he bears, as a person and as a central character in a literary material that is written by one of the most notable and popular poet that ever lived. Like CEnone, Telemachus is drawn out of his cave by the vision of a burning image, in this case the sun, and he leaves the cave to commit an act that will bring his life to a close. Telemachus travels to Rome to attempt to put a stop to the deaths of gladiators in public spectacles . ” ST. TELEMACHUS AND HIS

CONTRIBUTION TO THE IDEA OF HUMAN RIGHTS St. Telemachus can be considered as one of the earliest examples of advocates for human rights.

He was merely battling for human rights during his interference midway in the game and the plea to stop because he believes that killing each other is not morally right. He was not a political pawn that was sent to create a situation that is profitable or favorable for a particular group or individual. All that was obvious was that the prospect of what he planned to do will no doubt put his life in peril since he was set to do an action that will put him in cross current with the existing social practice, like the gladiatorial fights.

But he did it, and it cost him his life as well as a posthumous recognition, as well as an action that was inspired by his own initial move to stop gladiatorial fight. “ Though he is killed in his attempt, his act draws the attention of the Emperor Honorius, who thereby prohibits such combats in the future . ” The claim that gladiatorial fights were indeed ordered stopped after the reported murder of St. Telemachus was supported by many other different literary sources explaining the same repercussion of St. Telemachus' action as the springboard towards the stoppage of such kinds of fights. “ Never again after St. Telemachus implored them in the name of Christ to cease did gladiatorial fights take place in the Colosseum. ” A proof that St. Telemachus led a life that exemplifies the passion for a humanitarian cause and to improve the situation of human rights crisis during his time is the fact that some observers describe St.

Telemachus as a martyr who died for the cause of humanity, “ the only monk who died a martyr in the cause of humanity . ” ISSUES ON THE STORY OF ST.

TELEMACHUS Besides the presence of many different version of the story of St. Telemachus, particularly the story of his death as was discussed earlier in the paper, there are also other significant issues that are involved everytime critics and analysts try to ascertain the veracity of the information available and surrounding St. Telemachus' life and death. What is not clear, however, is the extent of the political impact of the death of St. Telemachus which was enough and sufficient to actually order the stoppage of such practice.

Bear in mind that St. Telemachus was an ascetic; he was not well connected, politically and his death is not important inside the political circles of the Roman legislative body; his death was of no serious repercussions, meaning the death of St. Telemachus was far from being akin to political killings or assassination that affect politics and social order. Bear in mind also that gladiatorial fights inside the Roman Colosseum and arenas are a long standing traditional practice that seemed to be not that easy to demolish, especially since many individuals depend their lives on the regular undertaking of this fights, including the fighters themselves as well as the slave traders, merchants, gamblers and many other different individuals.

Because of this, it is really very difficult to really understand how it happened that the death of an unknown hermit who is not a native of Rome managed to result in such impact like the stoppage of the gladiatorial fights. And because of this vague, gray part in the history and story of St. Telemachus that begs for more explanation and proof, it is not surprising that many individuals find it difficult to believe in the veracity of the story. McCabe provided a very insightful input in the discussion of the possibility that St.

Telemachus indeed put a stop to the gladiatorial fights and how this may not be socially and realistically possible. McCabe discussed in his book that the gladiatorial fights nonetheless persisted long after Telemachus was dead, and that this particular bloodsport featuring man versus beast and man versus man is an important institution in the Roman entertainment that it cannot just be stopped in one fell swoop, just because one person said so by act of intervention and mediation in an actual fight. There are socio-political as well as socio-economical implications that make the story of St.

Telemachus very weak and the fact that it is poorly supported in literature by actual real information makes it less and less credible. " And it is historically false that the games were suppressed in 404; though even this is ninety years after the bishops began to have influence over the emperors . " Some of those who are also very critical about their assessment of what qualify as martyrdom and what is not a considerable act or life of martyrdom questions the martyrdom of several different saints and martyrs, and St. Telemachus has not escaped the criticisms.

Those who dissect the understanding of sainthood and martyrdom in a very puritan and very skeptical and crucial way questions the manner by which martyrs and saints like St. Telemachus was proclaimed martyrs in the first place, including in the assessment the understanding of selflessness as well as sacrifice and what really constitutes as real acts of selflessness and sacrifice that is considered as sufficient and legitimate to make the individual a saint or a martyr in the Roman Catholic faith. " It is likely enough also that martyrs to charity - men like St. Telemachus and St. Philip of Moscow, Abp.

Affre and Bp. Patteson - have their portion with the perfect martyrs to faith; in some cases, as in the last, it is hard to draw a line between the two: any way, those who suffer for righteousness sake suffer for Christ... but to suffer for conscience's sake, however noble, is not necessarily quite the same thing: and it is hardly right to claim the name of martyr for the victims - certainly not for the victims on one side only - in the fratricidal contests of Christians . " But even this kind of assessment or criticism does not provide enough ground to challenge the merit of the martyrdom of St. Telemachus. Even with the surfacing of this particular criticism, those who believe in him seem to feel that their faith in the saint did not diminish, especially since the presence of the criticism is not credible or strong enough to push for the review or even the relinquishing of the martyrdom of St. Telemachus.

A very difficult problem that needs to be addressed when it comes to establishing the veracity of St. Telemachus as a person, as well as his martyrdom and sainthood is the fact that those who would really want to believe in St. Telemachus finds it odd that there is no cathedral, church or chapel as well as shrines and even statues of St. Telemachus found in popular as well as small religious establishments for the Roman catholic faith. This is odd because Roman Catholicism is one of the religions that is characterized by the penchant of its religious leaders as well as religious followers to create stone, wood, glass or steel statues of Jesus, Mary, the Holy Spirit, as well as the saints and the angels and other holy individuals who are related to the Roman Catholic faith.

If this was the practice of this religion, then why one of their Roman civilization-era saints was not featured in any tangible, three dimensional <https://assignbuster.com/saint-telemachus/>

sculpture at least placed in at least one of the lowliest and smallest church in the world? If this is true, then this affects in a negative way the manner by which St. Telemachus is being seen and appreciated as a real martyr and saint in the Roman Catholic domain. “ I wish to believe in the story of St. Telemachus. Yet no church has been dedicated, no altar has been erected ” for St. Telemachus.

There are critics, historians and analysts who downplay the storyline of St. Telemachus, dismissing it as no more than a work of imagination or fiction and pointing that the socio-political aspects of the time, as well as supporting information (or lack of) makes the idea about St. Telemachus untrue and grossly inconsistent of the closest possible facts that might have really happened. Add to the fact that consistent to the question of fratricide among the Christian brothers belonging to the same religious affiliation, making the story of St. Telemachus close to being fabricated for PR purposes it the fact that St. Telemachus would have surely died in the hands of the same Christian crowd. This scenario seem like it cannot stand well on the moral and values of Christianity that St. Telemachus was though to have been preaching. “ On the other hand, the claim that Christianity redeemed the Romans of their callousness by suppressing the gladiatorial games is a piece of rhetorical deceit. It is chiefly based upon a pretty story of a monk, Telemachus, throwing himself into the arena at Rome in protest.

Those who repeat the story do not add that the monk is supposed to have been killed by the Christian mob, but the story is worthless . ” McCabe went to the great extent of challenging the notion of reality of the story of Saint Telemachus and the veracity of the true Telemachus as a person and as a <https://assignbuster.com/saint-telemachus/>

martyr by providing an important point. The name of St. Telemachus, according to McCabe apparently is not found in the list of martyrs that are officially recognized by the church. “ There is no St. Telemachus in Roman lists of martyrs . ”

CONCLUSION. Whether St. Telemachus and the story of his martyrdom is real or merely fabricated by historians who seek to improve the list Roman Catholic devout and faithful throughout the history by creating a person who will symbolize the stand of the Roman Catholic faith against one of the barbaric past times and forms of leisure in the history of mankind, it cannot be denied that St. Telemachus and his life was an inspiration to some people. It maybe true, it maybe untrue, it may even be a story that is a combination of both, but the important thing is that St. Telemachus was capable of symbolizing the ability of the human individual for sacrifice and act of faith even at the cost of his life. Religious faith, after all, is all about the ability for selfless and unquestioning faith. If St. Telemachus can help them achieve this state, then he will no doubt be an important personality in the Roman Catholic history, unless of course, a very competitive and authoritative work can actually challenge St. Telemachus’ life and prove that none of the stories surrounding him were true, real or consistent with facts that should be proven and authenticated.

Until that time, the religious can rest their faith on the martyrs and the saints, including St. Telemachus. Even if St. Telemachus was criticized by some, there are those who feel that St. Telemachus should also be taken highly and accorded their necessary fervor, an example of which is how Charles Kingsley referenced St. Telemachus in ‘ Hypatia,’ where he wrote: “
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Take care, sir, of your words. You revile the blessed martyrs, from St. Stephen to St. Telemachus, when you call such a deed foolish . ”