



Discovery of Symbols Throughout the Ages

WATERHOUSE SYMBOLISM

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Saint Barbara Sculpture, Warsaw, Poland (2006)

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In honor of All Saints Day on November 1, this issue will highlight Saints. The original date of **All Saints Day** was probably chosen close to pagan harvest festivals. However, the idea of a common festival goes back to the Middle Ages and "All Saints Days" were celebrated at different times of the year. The Pope declared an All Saints Day in 837. Photo to the right is **Saint Barbara**. Her symbols are the tower and lightning. The symbol of the tower is captivity because her father hid her in a tower because of her beauty and to keep her away from suitors. She converted to Christianity and when her father found out, he tried to get her to renounce her religion and she refused. He commandeered her to put to death but her father was killed by a bolt of lightning before that deed could take place.



Saint Francis in Meditation, Zurbaran (1598-1664)

This painting is by the Spanish artist Francesco de Zurbaran. **Saint Francis of Assisi** is known as the Patron Saint of poverty and humility because at the age of 25 he renounced his inheritance from his father. He is known for his sermon to the birds and his receiving the stigmata (five wounds of Christ). Notice, here, he is holding a skull which symbolizes that time passes rapidly, life here on earth is not endless and earthly things are transient. Skulls, many times, are associated with Saints.



Oakland Cemetery, Atlanta, GA (1850)

The final one is **Saint John the Apostle**. He is holding a book and pen suggesting his role as patron saint of writers and booksellers. He wrote Gospel of John (Fourth), three epistles and Revelation. A more usual symbol for him is the eagle, but not seen here. He and his brother James were fishermen and were summoned by Jesus. They were known as "sons of thunder" because of their fiery temperaments.

Thanks to Aline Henderson for providing the description and pointing out St. John the Apostle in Oakland on the Rawson lot near Sam Inman.



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