

Pope Gifts Relic from 'True Cross' to King Charles for Historic Coronation

As the coronation of King Charles III approaches on Saturday, May 6, an event that bears great spiritual significance, he received a most unexpected gift from Pope Francis.

Two small shards believed to be taken from the cross on which Jesus was crucified will be incorporated into the processional cross used in the royal ceremony.

As reported by Reuters, "The new cross, made from recycled silver along with Welsh slate and reclaimed wood, was a gift from the king to the Church in Wales to mark its centenary in 2020. It will lead the coronation procession at Westminster Abbey in London on May 6.

"It features two small shards from the relic donated by the pope which have been shaped into a cross behind a rose crystal gemstone."

The Church in Wales, a branch of the Anglican Church, released a statement saying, "In a significant ecumenical gesture, the Cross of Wales will incorporate a relic of the True Cross, the personal gift of Pope Francis to His Majesty the King to mark the Coronation."

Joining the example of unity set by the Church of Wales, Archbishop Mark O'Toole of the Catholic Archdiocese of Cardiff and Diocese of Menevia gave thanks to King Charles for the gracious gesture, as the Church of England and Catholic Church have had a rocky relationship in the past.

"With a sense of deep joy, we embrace this cross, kindly given by King Charles, and containing a relic of the true cross,

generously gifted by the Holy See. It is not only a sign of the deep Christian roots of our nation but will, I am sure, encourage us all to model our lives on the love given by our Savior, Jesus Christ. We look forward to honoring it, not only in the various celebrations that are planned but also in the dignified setting in which it will find a permanent home," O'Toole said.

Evangelist Ray Comfort shared with Charisma News the spiritual significance of this rare event.

"When Charles is crowned on May 6, he's going to reach out his hand and lay it on a Bible and swear to uphold the biblical truth of salvation by grace, through faith," explained Comfort in an exclusive Charisma News interview.

"He's going to be the defender of the faith. He's going to carry an 's a golden globe with diamonds and pearls. [It has] a cross on the top, and it's symbolic of Jesus Christ's reign over the whole earth. He's going to hold a scepter, as David held and as Solomon held.

"He's going to be anointed with oil, there's all sorts of it's going to be witnessed by literally hundreds of millions around the world," says Comfort.

The Cross of Wales, an item of immense spiritual importance to the Catholic and Anglican churches respectively, will be shared between the two churches upon its return to Wales after the ceremony.

"Its design speaks to our Christian faith, our heritage, our resources and our commitment to sustainability," said Andrew John, the Anglican Archbishop of Wales.

"We are delighted too that its first use will be to guide their majesties into Westminster Abbey at the Coronation Service," he added.

The cross itself is made up of Welsh slate, wood and silver. Inscribed on it are the words of the patron saint of Wales, St. David, saying: "Be joyful. Keep the faith. Do the little things."

The shards that are believed to be from the cross of Jesus are arranged in the center of the Cross of Wales.

According to the Catholic News Agency, the story of the "True Cross" has captivated Christians for over 1,000 years:

"Relics of the true cross have long been treasured by Christians around the world. According to legend, St. Helena, the mother of Constantine, miraculously discovered the cross in A.D. 326. Pieces of the cross were taken back to Rome and Constantinople. From there those pieces were further divided and dispersed to other shrines and holy sites.

"According to historians of the Crusades, the true cross was regularly carried into battle by the armies of the Crusader kingdom of Jerusalem." {eo}



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