

The Contextual Significance of the “Less Popular Saints” of the Archdiocese of Colombo

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The paper is a study of the contextual significance of the “less popular saints” venerated by the Roman Catholic Church in the Archdiocese of Colombo, Sri Lanka. While many churches have been dedicated to the so called popular saints such as St. Mary, the Mother of Jesus, St. Anne, the Grand Mother of Jesus, St. Joseph, the Foster Father of Jesus, St. Anthony of Padua and St. Sebastian, it is observed that only a very few churches have been dedicated to saints such as St.

Isidore, St. Augustine, St. Mary Magdalene, St. Martin de Porres, St. Barbara, St. Cecilia, St. Maximillian Kolbe, St. Gerard Majella, and St. Blaise.

This study inquires into the historical, social and cultural significance of each of these saints to the respective faith communities. Patron Saints of churches have a deep significance for the worshipping communities and the present research studies this phenomenon in detail.

Keywords: Saints, patron saints, Catholic communities, archdiocese of Colombo.