

A lock of hair from St. Thérèse of Lisieux is an authenticated relic featured at the Shrine of All Saints. To slow down its natural decomposition, the relic is preserved in a dry and minimally airy condition. Upon request, the shrine's docents will open the display case so that visitors may have a closer look. When exposed to air, the lock of hair emits a scent of roses.

Is there a scientific explanation for the scent of roses?

The lock of hair is a “dead” fiber, has no growth, and are non-living, keratinized cells. This is because it is no longer connected to a host (body), and a lock of hair has no hair follicles from which to grow.

We can confirm that the scent is not synthetic. If perfume or scented oil were

used, the humidity and warmth created by the chemicals would quicken the hair's degradation. As of today, the relic is well preserved.

The fragrance is not a unique occurrence. After St. Therese's death at the age of 24 in 1897, reporting and sightings were documented about roses, their fragrance, or symbols of roses. Roses appear to be the saint's signature.

In short, there is no available scientific explanation. The Catholic Church does not believe in 'relic miracles' but that relics are sacramental vehicles for God's healing and miracles. St. Therese promised on her deathbed to “send down a shower of roses from the heavens.” What better way to call attention to her message than by showering visitors to the Shrine of All Saints with the scent of roses?



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