



MISSION HOLY HOUR 4:

"The Witness of Missionary Saints and Martyrs"



Gathering Hymn: *Will you come and follow me (The Summons)*

(The Blessed Sacrament is exposed in a monstrance, as the hymn is sung)

Introduction: Through the ages of the Church, women and men, like Christ, have offered their lives for their faith in God. The Lord himself told the first disciples that they would be hated, misunderstood, persecuted, tried and possibly be put to death, for our faith in God through him. (Matthew 10:17-22).

Even in the Old Testament, those who were God's mouthpiece, the prophets, were misunderstood, persecuted, and some shed their blood for the sake of the message ("Kerygma") they had to share. Sometimes the message they had to deliver from God disturbed their hearers. Yet they bore truths that had to be shared in spite of the cost!

Similarly in our own time, the Christian message and our way of life - lived in accord with God's will - may challenge, criticise and call upon the hearers of our day to convert. We too must expect the same misunderstanding, ridicule, persecution and even death for the sake of the Good News. In the year 2018, 37 committed Christians, in priesthood, religious life or committed lay people, lost their lives for the sake of the Gospel, some in circumstances of martyrdom. This number increases year on year in the Church.

In spite of such, am I ready to respond actively to God's call in my life; to witness to the Gospel, which gives my life purpose, meaning and direction?

In this Holy Hour, we pray for those persecuted because of their faith in God throughout the world today. We pray that the right of everyone to follow God as they feel called may be recognised and respected everywhere. We pray in thanksgiving for the example of the saints and martyrs, and pray that we be inspired by their example to commit ourselves more to Christ and the spread of his Good News.

Scripture reading: Isaiah 41:8-10, 13-14.

"I am holding you by the right hand; I call you, do not be afraid, I will help you."

Reflection:

- Suffering and some form of sacrifice are endemic aspect of the life of a disciple.
- God's knows that in order to remain faithful, we need His assistance.

- Foreseeing the need of His help, the Lord has promised us the assistance of His Holy Spirit. (Acts 2:1-12)
- Just as the first Disciples were instilled with the necessary strength, courage, enlightenment, eloquence, and courage, we too are fortified by the same Holy Spirit.
- Essential to this Divine Mission (Matthew 28:16-20), is the support of community around us. We need one another for support and encouragement. It was for this reason that one of the first acts Jesus performed was to gather a community around him. These were the women and men to whom he initially entrusted the continuation of his mission and ministry.
- The community of faithful is not a passive but an active group of committed believers.
- Having made an adult faith decision to follow God through his Son, Jesus Christ, and being open to His Spirit, how committed am I in my witness of what I believe?
- Am I prepared to "disturb the peace" and endure persecution for the sake of the Gospel?

(Period of silent reflection)

Scripture Reading: Psalm 122 (123)

"Our eyes are on the Lord till he show us his mercy."

Hymn: *Faith of our fathers, living still* (Frederick William Faber)

Scripture Reading: Revelation 7:14-17

"They washed their robes white again in the blood of the Lamb."

(Period of silent reflection)

Intercessions:

Through the martyrs who were slain for God's word, let us give glory to our Saviour, the faithful and true witness. R/

R/ You redeemed us by your precious blood.

Through the martyrs, who bore witness to your love, set us free to live for you. R/

Through the martyrs who proclaimed your saving death, give us a deep and constant faith. R/

Through the martyrs, who took up your cross, grant us courage for every trial. R/

Through the martyrs, washed in the blood of the Lamb, give us grace to conquer our weakness. R/

Inspire us through the example of all the saints who prove your grace grants us all that is necessary to be your witnesses in the world today. R/

Recitation of the Our Father

BENEDICTION

Hymn: *O salutaris hostia* (St. Thomas Aquinas) English version:

1. O saving victim, op'ning wide the gate of heav'n to man below;
our foes press on from ev'ry side; thine aid supply, thy strength bestow.
2. To thy great name be endless praise, immortal Godhead, One in three;
O grant an endless length of days in our true native land with thee. AMEN

Scripture reading: 2 Corinthians 1:3-5.

"Through Christ we share in his great help."

(Period of silent reflection)

Hymn: *Tantum ergo sacramentum* (St. Thomas Aquinas) English version :

1. Come, adore this wondrous presence, bow to Christ, the source of grace.
Here is kept the ancient promise of God's earthly dwelling place.
Sight is blind before God's glory, faith alone may see his face.
2. Glory be to God the Father, praise to his co-equal Son,
adoration to the Spirit, bond of love in Godhead one.
Blest be God by all creation, joyously while ages run. AMEN

Hymn: O sacrament most holy, O sacrament divine, all praise and all thanksgiving be ev'ry moment thine. (x3)

(During this hymn, the Blessed Sacrament is deposited)

Prayer: Almighty, ever living God, you gave your saints and martyrs grace to lay down their lives for Christ. Help us in our weakness too: give us the strength to live for you even as they did not shrink from suffering dying for your sake.

We make this prayer through Jesus Christ our Lord. AMEN

Anthem to Our Lady: *Salve Regina*

Salve Regina, Mater misericordiae, vita dulcedo, et spes nostra salve.

Ad te clamamus exsules filii Havae, ad te suspiramus, gementes et flentes in hac lacrimarum valle.

Eia, ergo, advocata nostra, illos tuos misericordes oculos ad nos converte; et Jesum, benedictum fructum ventris tui, nobis post hoc exilium ostende.

O clemens, O pia, O dulcis Virgo Maria.

(Translation: Hail holy Queen, mother of mercy, hail our life, our sweetness and our hope. To thee do we cry poor banished children of Eve, do thee do we send up our sighs weeping and mourning in this vale of tears. Turn then, most gracious advocate, thine eyes of mercy upon us, and after this, our exile, show unto us the fruit of thy womb, Jesus. O clement, o loving, o sweet Virgin Mary.)

During Eastertide: *Regina Caeli*

Regina caeli, laetare, alleluia, (Queen of heaven, rejoice, alleluia,)

Quia quem meruisti portare, alleluia, (For he whom you were worthy to bear, alleluia,)

Resurrexit, sicut dixit, alleluia, (Has risen as he said, alleluia,)

Ora pro nobis Deum, alleluia. (Pray for us to God, alleluia.)