

Reflection Wednesday 9th Week 2020 – Ugandan Martyrs

God's gift was not a spirit of timidity, but the Spirit of power, and love, and self-control. Christ made available to us a grace given to us from the beginning of time. (1 Tim 1:6). One of our regrets when we finally leave this mortal coil will be to discover all the grace that God made available to us that we failed to use. The power of grace is not about power over others quite the opposite. Grace is an enabling power. It is a strength that enables us to do the impossible whenever we seek to reach out and help, support and uphold others. It is also a power, as Paul says, wrapped in love. Our only concern will be the goodness, happiness and wellbeing of others. It was the power of grace that enabled the Ugandan martyrs to give up their lives for the sake of Jesus Christ. They remind us not only of what Christ has done for us, does for us and is willing to do for us, but also of the many faithful who have been loyal to the faith and who built a strong foundation on which we stand today. We are called to strengthen that foundation even more using the same grace that inspired and encouraged them, the same grace that Paul speaks about to Timothy, and the same grace that inspired the Ugandan martyrs.

Pope Francis said, *"The example offered by martyrs gives Christians hope and inspires strength, setting out a path of how to witness to the Gospel and repudiate violence. Christians love others, but they are not always loved back. Jesus warned his disciples about the hostility they would encounter when he said "you will be hated by everyone because of me." (Mt. 10:22). Christian men and women are "nonconformist" because they are called to proclaim the Gospel in a world of sin and injustice. Christians are seemingly naked and defenceless, without riches or weapons, before persecution and hostility. The only strength of Christians is the Gospel. In times of hardship, one must believe that Jesus stands before us and knowing that he never ceases to accompany his disciples. The strength demonstrated by martyrs throughout the centuries is an inspiration for Christians today to model their life on Christ. In this sense, every Christian is a "martyr," a witness to the sure hope that faith inspires.*

End thoughts . . . Oh, dear!

- *What do you call a Frenchman wearing sandals? Phill-ipe Phill-ope.*
- *I own a chewed pencil that Shakespeare once used to write his famous works. He chewed on it so much that I can't tell whether it's . . . 2B or not 2B.*
- *A telephone repairman was on my street today and he asked me what time it was. I replied "It's between 1 and 8 pm."*