

Reflection Thursday Week 30 – Martyrs of Douai College 2020

The Blessed Martyrs of Douai College

The college was founded in 1568 by William Allen (later, Cardinal Allen). It aimed to educate English Catholics and act as a seminary training priests to enter England covertly, minister to English Catholics, and attempt the re-conversion of England to the faith. Simply being a Catholic priest was high treason in England at this time, with the penalty of being hanged, drawn and quartered. More than 160 priests from Douai were executed. Each time the news of another execution reached the College, a solemn Mass of thanksgiving was sung. In November 1794 permission was given for the college to return to England. It settled at Old Hall Green Academy, a school in Ware

In his letter to the Ephesians, Paul writes: *“Have truth buckled round your waist, integrity for a breastplate, and be eager to spread the gospel of peace. Accept salvation from God as your helmet and the word of God from the Spirit to use as a sword.”* This is certainly what the priests who came to England from Douai between 1577 and 1680 did during the Reformation. Truth, integrity and eagerness are hallmarks of disciples of Christ with the Word of God inspired by the Spirit as the preferred means of living and preaching the Gospel with courage, trust and faith in God.

We can imagine these martyrs echoing the words of Jesus in the Gospel in this way *‘England, England, you kill the priests who are sent to you! Priests who wished only to gather your children, as a hen gathers her brood under her wings, and you refused them!*

‘They came to England in the name of the Lord and were truly blessed!’ May these blessed martyrs of Douai inspire us with greater eagerness, courage and commitment to live the Gospel more openly, more truthfully and without shame.

Which has more courage, a rock or a tree? A rock, because it's boulder!

A certain president was rushed to the hospital after learning that 3 Brazilians died from the Coronavirus. Lying in the hospital bed his face still white with shock, he finally got the courage to ask shakily and in a quiet voice, *“How many people is a brazillion?”*