

Reflection Thursday Week 32 St Josaphat 2020

Saint Josaphat was born in the Ukraine **c.1580** of Orthodox parents. In 1595 the Union of Brest brought the Ruthenian Church into communion with Catholic Rome while retaining its own liturgy. This resulted in a schism within the church itself. One part remained Orthodox aligned with Moscow and Constantinople; the other part accepted the Union. Josaphat was the first person to join the first monastery, of the order of St Basil, to be united to the Catholic Church. He was ordained priest and, eventually but reluctantly, appointed bishop of Polotsk in 1617. Although Sigismund III Vasa, King of Poland and Grand Duke of Lithuania, supported the union, the local aristocracy were against it because it threatened their control of ecclesiastical benefices. Plotting with the Orthodox Patriarch of Jerusalem, they stirred up trouble resulting in Josaphat being murdered by a mob in 1623 while on a pastoral visit to Vitebsk.

Many of us grew up with the phrase *Be the best that you can be*. It was a phrase often voiced at school or at home and we made it our own. Unfortunately, when we discovered we were not particularly good at sports and did not find academia to our liking, that belief became less and less real. Often, exemplary phrases like this are not translated well into our faith but they are present all the same. In Baptism we become a child of God and God says to us, as God said to Jesus, you are my beloved child, my love rests of you. Easily translated into *Be the best that you can be* and I will help you. Through various anointings, God gives us all the graces and help we need to become the best that we can be. Our only difficulty is knowing what that best is??? Saints, like Josaphat, seemed to have their paths made very clear for them. God shows through them that he keeps his promises by giving them the help they needed to be the best that they could be. For the majority of us, it is less clear. St Paul recognised that God will help us be the best that we can be in all sorts of different ways. So, *be the best you can be each day*. Whatever it is, God is there to help you, **always!**

- **What's the best thing about Switzerland?** I don't know, but the flag is a big plus.
- If we shouldn't eat at night, why do they put a light in the fridge?
- Everyone has heard of the historical figure, Karl Marx ... But no one remembers his sister, **Onya**, who invented the starting pistol.