

## Reflection Wednesday Week 7 St Polycarp 2022

**St Polycarp (- 155)** was a disciple of the Apostles, bishop of Smyrna, and a friend of St Ignatius of Antioch. He conferred with Pope Anicetus in Rome about the celebration of Easter. He was martyred at Smyrna about 155, burnt to death in the stadium. Polycarp is important because he is one of the earliest Christians whose writings still survive. He bears witness to the beliefs of the early Christians and the early stages of the development of doctrine.

### **Polycarp wrote:**

*“If Polycarp believed Jesus to be the Son of God, he certainly had it on good authority. He had been personally acquainted with the apostle John.”*

In the face of death, Polycarp could well have quoted Ps 56: *“When I am afraid, I put my trust in you. In God, whose word I praise, in God I trust; I shall not fear. What can flesh do to me?”* Pray for all the saints. Pray also for kings and magistrates and rulers, and for those who persecute and hate you, and for the enemies of the cross, so that your fruit may be evident among all people, so that you may be perfect in him.”

*Now may the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the eternal high priest himself, the Son of God Jesus Christ, build you up in faith and truth and in all gentleness and in all freedom from anger and forbearance and steadfastness and patient endurance and purity, and may he give to you a share and a place among his saints, and to us with you, and to all those under heaven who will yet believe in our Lord and God Jesus Christ and in his Father who raised him from the dead”*

*“Eighty-six years I have served Jesus, and he never did me any injury. How then can I blaspheme my King and my Saviour?”*