

Reflection Monday Week 29 St Ignatius of Antioch 2022

St Ignatius of Antioch was the 2nd bishop of Antioch after St Peter (the first being Evodius). He was arrested, condemned to death, and transported to Rome to be thrown to the wild beasts in the arena. In one of his letters, he described the soldiers escorting him as being *“ten leopards, who when kindly treated only behaved worse.”* On his journey he wrote seven letters to various churches, in which he dealt wisely and deeply with Christ, the organisation of the Church, and the Christian life. They are important for the early history of the Church and reveal a deeply holy man who accepted his fate and begged the Christians in Rome not to deprive him of the crown of martyrdom. He was martyred in 107 and his feast was celebrated on this day in the 4th century Antioch.

So much of life is about dying and rising again. Creation offering us the very best of examples of this. Quite rightly we want to live the gospel as did Ignatius. We may never know his reason for wanting to offer his life so freely but, in the process of doing this, he was able to leave us inspirational writings about the early Church. He is an example of deep faith and trust in God, in salvation and in resurrection. He became an inspiration and example of what St Paul writes about in his letter to the Philippians. We may not believe ourselves capable of giving away our lives in this radical way but we are very aware of those around us who spend their lives caring for a spouse or a family member whose is ill, suffering from dementia or physical disability, sacrificing their lives for one they love and being an inspiration for us in the process.

I was in Tesco's and I saw this man and woman wrapped in a barcode. I said, “Are you two an item?”

What do you call a parade of rabbits hopping backwards?

A receding hare-line.