

Reflection Wednesday Week 29 North American Martyrs – 2022

Between 1642 and 1649 eight members of the Society of Jesus, who had travelled to North America to preach the true faith, were killed by the native Huron and Iroquois tribes after horrible tortures. Isaac Jogues died on 18th October 1647, and John de Brébeuf on 16th March 1648.

Today we are called to seriously reflect on the graces and the power of the Holy Spirit given to us in baptism. The Jesuits, who died in North America, certainly responded to the graces they had received and were willing to risk their lives, which they lost all too quickly after terrible torture. At the same time, they sowed the seed of faith which eventually grew strong. We do not face the same challenges and uncertainties that they did. All the more reason for us to work hard to be and to preach good news.

Not only was Paul chosen to preach the gospel but you and I are too!

In Verona, Pier Paolo Spinazze, is a celebrated creative street artist. *“Verona is beautiful,”* he says, *“but it has a big problem with the far right.”* Whenever he encounters swastikas and other racist graffiti, he paints over them with colourful depictions of his favourite foodstuffs, from cupcakes to pizza.

His art has two positive effects. The extremists often spray-paint over Spinazze’s cheerful food pictures, but he simply re-paints over their hateful messages again, and they usually give up. The other positive improvement: his paintings are awakening Verona’s citizens to the seriousness of the problem. *“Before I started this, people were so used to seeing those messages, they didn’t really see them at all. Now people start to see and understand.”*

Spinazze believes food is a natural corrective to hate, representing a language that connects people and cultures. *“Food is about union and sharing,”* he says. *“We are all equal around a table—everybody eats.”*

What cheese is made backwards? Edam.

If a crocodile makes shoes, what does a banana make? Slippers!

Why do the French like to eat snails? Because they don't like fast food!