

## Reflection Saturday Week 8 St Charles Lwanga & companions 2023

**Saint Charles Lwanga & companions (- 1885/7).** Many Catholic and Protestant Christians were killed by the Ugandan king Mwanga. Some of them were servants in the king's palace or his personal attendants. Charles Lwanga and his twenty-one companions (the youngest, Kizito, was only 13) were executed for being Christians, for rebuking the king for his debauchery and his murder of an Anglican missionary, for "praying from a book," and for refusing to allow themselves to be ritually sodomised by the king. They died between 1885 and 1887. Most of them were burned alive in a group after being tortured. Within a year of their deaths, the number of catechumens in the country quadrupled. St Charles Lwanga is the patron of Catholic Action and of black African youth, and the Ugandan martyrs' feast day is a public holiday in Uganda.

Today we are reminded that our faith in Jesus came to birth through the horrific torture and suffering of Jesus. The story has been repeated time and again as Christianity came to birth in each new nation, as happened in Uganda. Yet it was through that torture and suffering that the roots of the faith in those countries grew stronger. Rather than deter people the torture and suffering inspired people to want to follow the way of Jesus - a way of peace and harmony, building a just society in which everyone is cared for and valued.

*Martyrs of Uganda, pray for the faith where it is in danger and for Christians who must suffer because of their faith. Give them the same courage, zeal, and joy that you showed. And help those of us who live in places where Christianity is accepted to remain aware of the persecution in other parts of the world. Amen*

**Why did the robber wash his clothes** before he ran away with the loot?

He wanted to make a clean getaway.

**Why did the invisible man** turn down a job offer? He just couldn't see himself doing it!