

A prayer service
commemorating the 165 Brothers
who were executed in Spain in the 1930s

and celebrating especially the last 74 of our Brothers
and one lay colleague
who are being beatified in Tarragona
on 13 October 2013

BroNH

1 THE PRESENCE OF GOD

It is not that we somehow 'place ourselves' in God's presence but, rather, that we remind ourselves that God is already with us. John Baptist De La Salle found this to be a life-giving practice himself, and so he urged it on the teachers and young people alike, affirming them in "*acquiring a great habit of remembering the presence of God* (Med 189.2). This custom is very much part of the Lasallian way of life and, surely, it will have been a great strength to each of the 165 Brothers, tortured or not, as they awaited execution singly or in groups.

And so, let us remember that we are in the presence of God
And let us adore him.

2 HYMN For example, and preferably sung: The author – Percy Dearmer (1867-1936) – was a contemporary of our Martyrs. The hymn was inspired by the writings of John Bunyan (1628-88) who lived at the time of our Founder, and wrote 'The Pilgrim's Progress'

www.youtube.com/watch?v=zstKjGb6uAE
www.youtube.com/watch?v=PyQmwa_e4BM

1. He who would valiant be 'gainst all disaster,
let him in constancy follow the Master.
There's no discouragement
shall make him once relent
his first avowed intent to be a pilgrim.
2. Who so beset him round with dismal stories,
do but themselves confound:
his strength the more is.
No foes shall stay his might
though he with giants fight:

he will make good the right to be a pilgrim.
3. Since, Lord, those dost defend us with thy Spirit,
we know we at the end shall life inherit.
Then fancies flee away!
I'll fear not what men say,
I'll labour night and day to be a pilgrim.

3 **PRAYER** – the witness of our martyrs

BrNH

1. God our Father,
inspired as we are by the witness of our martyrs,
we ask you to hear their prayers for us,
that we may remain credible witnesses
of the abundance of your love.
2. Time after time martyrs have shown
that the only way out of the labyrinth of suffering
is to forgive,
3. and we have testimony given by their persecutors
that our own martyrs prayed the words:
"Father, forgive them."
4. May your Spirit enable us, Father,
to conquer evil with what is good,
and may our generosity deepen
in forgiving and praying for
those who have not treated us well.
We make this prayer through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Romans 12

4 **for PERSONAL REFLECTION**

John Baptist De La Salle wrote:
"You must be willing – even if you have to give your life for Jesus
in the fulfilment of your ministry."

Med 201.1

5 **CANTICLE**

St Paul to the Romans

12: 9-18, 21

Jerusalem Bible

1. Do not let your love be a pretence,
but sincerely prefer good to evil.
Love each other as much as brothers and sisters should,
and have a profound respect for each other.
Work for the Lord with untiring effort
and with great earnestness of spirit.
If you have hope, this will make you cheerful.
2. Do not give up if trials come; and keep on praying.
If any of the saints are in need
you must share with them,
and you should make hospitality your special care.
3. Bless those who persecute you:
Never curse them, bless them.
Rejoice with those who rejoice, and be sad with those in sorrow.
4. Treat everyone with equal kindness;
never be condescending, but make real friends with the poor.
Do not allow yourself to become self-satisfied.
5. Never repay evil with evil
but let everyone see that you are interested
only in the highest ideals.
Do all you can to live at peace with everyone.
Resist evil and conquer it with good.

Glory be to the Father....

6 for SILENT REFLECTION

“For he today that sheds his blood with me
shall be my brother.”

Shakespeare: Henry V
(Part IV: iii. 60)

“Each Brother shares
in all that his Brothers suffer.”

JBDLS: Med 73.2

“Eat and drink together;
talk and laugh together;
enjoy life together:
but never call it friendship
until you have wept together.”

An African saying
(page 5 of An Iona Prayer Book
by Peter Millar: Canterbury Press)

7 PSALM (89) 90

1,10-12,14-17

Grail translation

1. O Lord, you have been our refuge
from one generation to the next.
Our span is seventy years,
or eighty for those who are strong.
2. Most of our days are emptiness and pain.
They pass swiftly, and we are gone.
Make us know the shortness of our life
that we may gain wisdom of heart.
3. In the morning, fill us with your love;
we shall exult and rejoice all our days.
Give us joy to balance our affliction
for the years when we knew misfortune.
4. Show forth your work to your servants;
let your glory shine on their children.
Let the favour of the Lord be upon us:
give success to the work of our hands
- give success to the work of our hands.

Glory be to the Father....

8 PRAYERS of THANKSGIVING and INTERCESSION

BrNH

(There is no spoken response after each prayer)

John Baptist De La Salle wrote:

“Do not forget to give thanks for so many blessings”.

Letter 76

1. We thank you, Father, for St John Baptist De La Salle, our Founder,
and for his response to your call
to live the good news with ordinary – yet special – people.
2. We thank you for Lasallians who have taught the young and needy,
and who have inspired other teachers to live their own vocation fully.
3. We think of our Brothers who gave their lives in Spain and elsewhere,
and for those facing hostility and difficulties in our own times.

May Lasallians of all ages be bridge-builders and promoters of peace.

4. We pray for all who are seeking to discover the particular way of holiness along which the Lord is calling them. May all Lasallians discover how to live the warmth of ever-closer friendship with the Lord.
5. We thank you for those who have inspired Lasallian educators with affection, and for all who have greatly encouraged us, renewed us and touched our hearts. May people of all ages and circumstances realise how effective their prayer and encouragement really can be.
6. May those who once were children and are now considering inflicting violence, look into the depths of their being and learn how to discover that God is still gazing upon them in love. May all who are tempted to turn to violence recall particularly the face and eyes of children who have had such overwhelming suffering thrust upon them: children who cry so profoundly because they have lost great love and now, so suddenly, feel abandoned by those whose love had been most evident.
7. May our schools and other places of discovery be communities of faith and compassion where the experience of God is shared and celebrated.

9. CONCLUDING OUR PRAYER

As Pope Francis knelt before the Assisi Crucifix from which his patron-saint heard the Lord calling him, he mentioned later that “we should let the crucified Christ gaze upon us”.

4.10. 2013

With the Lord gazing on us, let us join him in praying together: Our Father....

St John Baptist De La Salle – pray for us.

All our holy Brothers – pray for us.

Live Jesus in our hearts – for ever!

9 of the 165 Brothers have already been canonised, declared Saints. From this time on, all of those who have been named as saints will share a common feastday (9 October); and our remaining 156 beatified Brothers from those times will have their celebration on 8 November. It is appropriate that these 2 feastdays will be shared with others on similar paths: sisters, lay people, seminarians, Brothers, bishops and priests.

The present Beatification of 550+ leads us to a number approaching 200 Lasallian Saints and Beati: surely a great blessing for all Lasallians. Some biographies of individuals and groups can be read via ‘*Magazine*’ in each issue of *The Lasallian* magazine at www.delasalle.org.uk/signposts.htm. Other remarkable Brothers who have lived or ministered or died in the following countries have already had their ‘Causes’ introduced at the Vatican: Argentina, Austria, Belgium, Canada, China (Hong Kong), Colombia, Cuba, The Czech Republic, England, France, Guatemala, Germany, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Malaya (which then included Singapore), Mexico, Myanmar (Burma), The Philippines, Poland, Puerto Rico (a Caribbean island, east of Cuba), Spain, Sri Lanka, The Ukraine, The U.S.A., and Vietnam. It is encouraging to reflect on the words of the Founder that “*prayer draws down God’s graces on the others*” (Letters 5 and 10).

– If adapting this prayer service or creating others, there are numerous suitable prayers in *Come, Lord Jesus* by Lucien Deiss. See also MTR 10:2-3; *Evangelii Nuntiandi* (#80) by Pope Paul VI; and type into *Google* ‘O Lord, remember not only’. In his excellent biography of the *Turón* Martyrs (pg 74), Br Luke Salm lists criteria for martyrdom, and details of those times are explored in Issue 9 of the magazine.

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