

FAITH FUNDAMENTALS

Helping Catholics to Learn, Live, and Love their Faith.

SEPTEMBER 2024 SUPPLEMENT

Saint of the Month



St. Andrew Kim and Companions, Martyrs (Feastday, Sept 20) – Korea may be the only country that evangelized itself. In the late 1700s, a group of wise men began to study the Christian scriptures that they had received from visiting foreigners. One of them wished to learn more, so he traveled to China to be baptized and then returned home to baptize his friends and family. Most of these first Christians were persecuted and killed by the government. Andrew Kim Taegon was born into this wave of oppression.

As a teenager, he fled to China to study for the priesthood and returned to his country to find most of his family wiped out by the persecution. Both of his grandfathers, his father, and several uncles were martyred. He created an Underground Railroad system to smuggle missionary priests into his country and ministered to his own people in secret for little over a year until he was betrayed, tortured, and beheaded in 1846. Christians in Korea today constitute over 27% of the population.

Catechism Connection



WHAT IS MARTYRDOM? – The Catholic Church doesn't ask people to be martyrs, but it emulates the example of Christ who freely laid down His life for us on the Cross. Many have followed Him in facing persecution and certain death for their faith in Christ. The word "martyr" comes from the Greek language and simply means "witness". Our Catechism defines it for us:

Martyrdom is the supreme witness given to the truth of the faith: it means bearing witness even unto death. The martyr bears witness to Christ who died and rose, to whom he is united by charity. He bears witness to the truth of the faith and of Christian doctrine. He endures death through an act of fortitude. (CCC, 1473)

Back to Basics



TYPES OF MARTYRDOM

Red Martyrdom is the first and classic definition of martyrdom. Red symbolizes blood and designates someone who sheds his blood for Christ or who is killed out of "hatred of the faith" (the Latin term is *odium fidei*). This category also includes people who die indirectly through maltreatment (in prison, in harsh conditions, etc.) Martyrdom is the most ancient category of "saint" in the Church. Martyrs do not need the standard proof of two miracles for canonization.

White Martyrdom designates someone who suffers greatly because of their faith, even though their suffering does not result in death. It is called white because this type of life is a silent and heroic sacrifice for others that is often known only to God but which purifies a soul through their union with the Cross of Christ.

Green Martyrdom is a modern term that has to do with money (which is green!) It designates someone who is penalized financially for their faith, particularly through the confiscation of property, financial penalties, or legal fees to defend their Christian beliefs in a court of law.

"Blessed are you when they insult you and persecute you and utter every kind of evil against you [falsely] because of me. Rejoice and be glad, for your reward will be great in heaven" (Mt 5:11-12).

Pete & Paulie



Pete & Paulie are the SitStandKneel mascots, conveniently named after the two great apostles of the Catholic Faith.

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