

# THE CHURCH OF MARTYRS

## Pope Francis, Shepherd of Truth

Notable quotations from Pope Francis and official teachings  
of the Roman Catholic Church

### “HEROIC WITNESSES”

We have come as pilgrims to this Basilica ... where the ancient history of martyrdom unites with the memory of the new martyrs, of the many Christians killed by the demented ideologies of the last century — and today too — and killed solely for being disciples of Jesus. The memory of these ... heroic witnesses confirms us in the knowledge that the Church is Church if she is the Church of Martyrs

### MARTYRS RESPONDED TO GRACE

Martyrs ... had the grace to confess Jesus until the end, unto death. They suffer; they give their life, and we receive God’s blessing through their witness.

### “WITHOUT RESERVATION”

... There are also many hidden martyrs, those men and women faithful to the gentle power of love, to the voice of the Holy Spirit, who in everyday life seek to help their brothers and sisters and to love God without reservation.

### HATRED IS THE CAUSE

... The cause of all persecution is hatred: the hatred of the prince of this world toward those who have been saved and redeemed by Jesus through His death and His Resurrection..



### THE ORIGIN OF HATRED

The origin of hatred is this: since we are saved by Jesus, and the prince of this world does not want this, he hates us and causes persecution, which since the time of Jesus ... continues to our day.

### THE GRACE OF GOD

It is the grace of God, not courage, that makes us martyrs... The Church is led forward by saints... Without them, the Church can no longer go forth.

### THE CHURCH NEEDS ...

The Church needs everyday saints, those of ordinary life carried out with coherence, but she also needs those who have the courage to accept the grace to be witnesses to the end, unto death. All those are the living blood of the Church. They are the witnesses who lead the Church forward; those who attest that Jesus is Risen, that Jesus lives, and affirm it with coherence of life and with the strength of the Holy Spirit which they have been given.

### “PEACE AND UNITY”

The living legacy of martyrs gives us peace and unity today. They teach us that, with the power of love, with meekness, one can fight against arrogance, violence and war, and one can bring about peace with patience. And thus, we can pray in this way: O Lord, make us worthy witnesses to the Gospel and to Your love; pour out Your mercy upon humanity; renew Your Church; protect persecuted Christians; hasten to grant the whole world peace. To you, Lord, glory; and to us, Lord, shame (cf. Dn 9:7).

(Source: Homily, Mass in memory of the martyrs of the 20th and 21st century, Church of St. Bartholomew on Tiber Island, 4/22/17)

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