

Bloodless Martyrdom/Dry Martyrdom

After centuries of Christians being martyred for their faith, Emperor Constantine legalized Christianity and promoted religious tolerance in 313 CE through the Edict of Milan (sites.rhodes.edu). St. Jerome observed many believers wishing for the “good ol’ days” of martyrdom. St. Jerome immediately nipped that sentiment in the bud. He told his congregation “Let us not think there is martyrdom only in shedding blood. There is always martyrdom.”

“Martyrdom” comes in a daily dying to self in imitation of Jesus Christ. Jesus told us, “If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself [...] daily.” What could this look like, for us today?

- Not eating lavishly, when others are hungry. (Donate the funds you would normally use to buy your daily coffee shop beverage or the funds used to eat out.)
- Not wearing opulent clothing when others are in rags. (Donating excess clothes or choosing to buy a cheaper brand and donating the difference.)
- Never holding back testimony to faith, charitably, if one’s neighbor is living in sin or in ignorance of the love of Jesus Christ.

Excerpts from Mike Aquilina’s book: [Fathers of the Church](#): Martyr’s Cup

There is a more subtle kind of martyrdom taking place; a *Dry Martyrdom*, that is, the relentless attacks on the Catholic faith from what John Paul II called the *Culture of Death*.

This is not the death of the rack, the gallows, or the block but a clever attempt, a kind of doctrinal deconstruction, to cut away or weaken the basic tenets of the Catholic faith through innuendoes and historical falsehoods, so that there will be no need for any “wet” martyrdoms because there will be few true believers left standing. The faith itself will suffer this martyrdom on a Cross of relativism, indifference, and boredom, thanks to a steady dose of propaganda in the media, books, schools, and in even our own churches. Hollywood has long been an agent of this bloodless martyrdom.

The best way for Catholics to defuse the left’s assault on the Church is simply to tell the truth. In understanding this *Dry Martyrdom*, Catholics should remember that being a real martyr means literally bearing witness to the truth. If Catholics and other Christians don’t stand up for their respective beliefs, the blood of the faith in America will eventually run dry.

catholicjournal.us/2015/06/03/a-dry-martyrdom/

Father Saucier has been sharing with the parish, through his homilies, about the Church Fathers. For some this is a refresher course that can firm up our Christian foundation and rekindle the fire of our faith. For others, this is all wonderfully new, a little boring but exciting too. For all of us, this opens up conversations to discuss with family over dinner and do more research, so that we can start learning more about our faith and be martyrs for Christ. Jesus gave himself entirely to us and we need to be like our early Christian forefathers, give ourselves to Him in return.

Sacrifice = Martyrdom
“The Sacrifice”

Whatever the Early Christians had, they gave. They gave of themselves - just as the martyrs gave themselves in the arena - just as Jesus Christ gave Himself on the Cross - and just as Jesus Christ gave Himself in the Eucharist. When the early Christians said “Amen” to Jesus Christ, they meant “So be it!”/ “I accept” and consented to the communion. We need to understand that when we say “Amen” to the Body of Christ we are accepting the Cross of Christ as our own. We are accepting our own martyrdom.

Romans 12:1 - I urge you therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God, to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God, your spiritual worship.

Let us never forget that in the ancient world temples were not mere shrines, they were places of sacrifices. Our bodies are places of sacrifice, and our lives are the offering on the altar. We ourselves are the Mass in motion. Our dutiful dedication to our work and our families should be an outward sign of a profoundly inner sacrifice, a Christ-like gift of ourselves. Total gift of self. There is no other way to be happy.

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