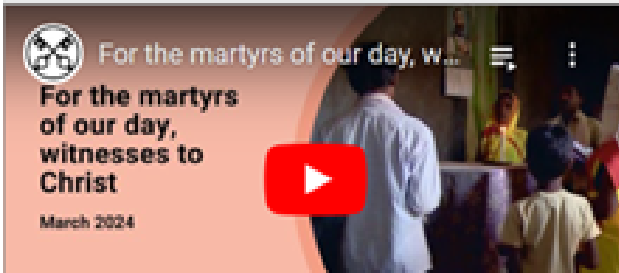




# Prayer 20

## March 2024

### POPE FRANCIS' INTENTION FOR THIS MONTH OF MARCH



We unite ourselves to the intentions of our Holy Father Francis, praying that those who risk their lives for the Gospel in various parts of the world may spread their courage and missionary zeal to the Church.

The Pope reminds us that martyrs "are more numerous in our time than in the first centuries".

<https://youtu.be/RJbGE0AtjL0?si=ubQhEV1kGA7vqEn>

*"Martyrdom is [...] to suffer steadfastly to the point of laying down one's life for God"* Francisco Palau, OCD

*"Then I looked, and there was a great multitude, such as no man could number, of every nation, race, nation, and tongue, standing before the throne and the Lamb, clothed in white robes, with palm branches in their hands. [...] One of the Elders took the word and said to me, "Those who are clothed in white robes, who are they, and where have they come from?" I answered him, "My Lord, you will know." He answered me, "Those are who come out of the great tribulation; they have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb" Rev. 7:9,13-14.*

Suggested song: God of the Movements and Martyrs

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=F4sCalkzZOo>

#### REFLECTION:

There are many countries in the world where the unarmed and non-violent witness of the Christians is a scandal in the face of violence, corruption and terror. There are places where people die for going to mass, where churches and Christian schools are burned, where people are threatened, terrorized or killed because they educate young people and save them from criminal gangs.

"Martyrs have accompanied the life of the Church in every age and flourish as "mature and excellent fruits of the Lord's vineyard" even today.... The martyrs are more numerous in our time than in the first centuries: they are bishops, priests, consecrated men and women, lay people and families who, in the various countries of the world, with the gift of their lives, have offered the supreme proof of charity"

Pope Francis.

**PRAYER:** Father of tenderness. Caress and embrace the suffering, look at your sons and daughters who, because of faith, in your Holy Name suffer persecution and discrimination in so many parts of the world.

Jesus, we contemplate you in your Body which is the Church, wounded and crucified, destitute, persecuted, despised and mocked.

Give us wisdom and courage to speak out  
In front of the society that, out of fear,  
indifference or discouragement,  
is being unable to commit  
in the face of barbarism and terror.

That we allow ourselves to be moved by suffering  
of thousands of Christians and non-Christians  
persecuted throughout the world for their faith.

May the Holy Spirit fill them with His strength.  
in the most difficult moments of persevering in faith.  
May he enable them to forgive those who oppress them.  
May He fill them with hope so that they may live their faith  
with joy and freedom.

May the children, men and women persecuted in your name  
have the certainty that the Church to which they belong,  
far from abandoning them, is a courageous witness  
of their pain before the world. **AMÉN**