

NOVEMBER 24, 2021
Memorial of St. Andrew Dung-Lac, Priest and Companions, Martyrs
Luke 21: 12-19

“WILLINGNESS TO DIE WITH JESUS.”

The ministry and works of Jesus was based on love, compassion, mercy and truth. Even if people do not believe in Him, He remained steadfast and patient. These are also the principles and attitudes needed for those people who want to follow Him. Our gospel speaks about the persecution of disciples and followers of Jesus in the hands of authorities, “they will hand you over to synagogues and prisons and you will be brought before kings and governors because of my name.”¹ Many Christians during the time of Jesus experienced conflict, dissent and disagreement with civil authorities and accused them of being subversive and their Christian ideas were threatening. They were handed over to synagogues, not only a place for prayer or learning the Scriptures but a place of civil administration and confinement for those awaiting trial. These first Christians were charged with civil or criminal offenses but in reality they were accused of being faithful followers of Jesus.

“What is Jesus' response to hostility and persecution? Love, forbearance, and forgiveness. Only love - the love which is rooted in God's great compassion and faithfulness - can overcome prejudice, hatred, and envy. God's love purifies our heart and mind of all that would divide and tear people apart. Knowing God as our compassionate Father and loving God's word of truth and righteousness (moral goodness) is essential for overcoming evil. Jesus tells us that we do not need to fear those who would oppose us or treat us harshly for following the Lord Jesus. He promises to give us supernatural strength, wisdom, and courage as we take a stand for our faith and witness to the truth and love of Christ. What will attract others to the truth and power of the Gospel? When they see Christians loving their enemies, being joyful in suffering, patient in adversity,

¹ Luke 21: 12 Holy Bible NRSVCE Canadian Bible Society

pardoning injuries, and showing comfort and compassion to the hopeless and the helpless. Jesus tells us that we do not need to fear our adversaries. God will give us sufficient grace, strength, and wisdom to face any trial and to answer any challenge to our faith.”²

My brothers and sisters, let us stand on our faith and pronounce and live our love for Christ amidst trials and conflict. Let us persevere and have patient endurance until the end. Like St. Andrew Dung-Lac and his companions, 117 martyrs, gave their lives for the sake of Christ, we too may follow the will of God everyday by our simple act of love and compassion to those people around us. May we die for ourselves for the sake of Christ and His Kingdom by embracing our own difficulties, sickness or anxiety and offer it to the Lord for our and others’ conversion. May the martyrs and saints be our inspiration and guide.

² www.dailyscripture.net