



**“The Church, the world, needs faithful witnesses
who speak with words of blood
that flow from the unfathomable spring
of the first love.”**

(Bernard Olivier, Abbot of the Trappist Monks, 1997)

TSHIMANGADZO SAMUEL BENEDICT DASWA



Martyr for the Faith

16 June 1946 - 02 February 1990

Novena Prayer



DIOCESE of TZANEEN

PO Box 261
TZANEEN 0850
SOUTH AFRICA

TEL: (015) 307 5244
FAX: (015) 307 3078

bendaswa@mweb.co.za

Writing to the Church in Africa, Pope Benedict XVI called for more African saints: *"I encourage the pastors of the local churches to recognise, among servants of the Gospel in Africa, those who could be canonised according to the norms of the Church, not only in order to increase the number of African saints, but also to obtain new intercessors in heaven to accompany the Church on her pilgrim journey and to plead before God for the African continent. I entrust to Our Lady of Africa and to the saints of this beloved continent the Church that dwells there"* (AM No 114).

From the time of the early Church, Africa has been richly blessed with many great saints, including three of the Early Fathers of the Church, Saints Augustine, Cyril of Alexandria and Cyprian. There have also been great women saints from that period, among them, St Monica, the mother of St Augustine, as well as many brave martyrs, including Saints Perpetua and Felicity. In more recent times Africa has given the Church additional outstanding saints and martyrs, such St Josephine Bakhita, a slave girl from Sudan, and the Ugandan martyrs, St Charles Lwanga and his twenty-two companions.

Catholics look to the saints and martyrs as their special ancestors in the faith. They are in perfect communion with God and also remain members of our human family deeply concerned about our welfare. We can therefore approach them with great confidence to bring our needs and concerns to God. The powerful example of their lives is a source of courage and inspiration to us in the daily living of our faith. We too as disciples of Christ should be happy to share our faith with others and never be afraid to stand up for it, even at the cost of sacrifice or death itself.

It is important for the Catholic Church in Africa to respond to the Pope's appeal for more African saints. In the Diocese of Tzaneen, Benedict Daswa was recognised in his own life-time as an exemplary Catholic, a devoted husband and father, a conscientious teacher and principal, who was deeply involved in the life of the Church and of the local community. He was a man of truth, integrity and great charity. Benedict was admired for his courage in bearing witness to the faith in face of certain cultural beliefs and practices which are opposed to it. After his brutal death the Catholic community kept his memory alive by visiting his tomb and praying there. The people encouraged the local Church leadership to initiate an investigation into his life and death with a view to his possible canonisation as a saint and martyr.

The Official Canonical Diocesan Inquiry into the life and death of the Servant of God, Tshimangadzo Samuel Benedict Daswa, was completed in early 2009. This was

accepted by the Sacred Congregation for the Causes of Saints in Rome in November 2010, as having met all the legal and canonical requirements. This approval from Rome was very encouraging to the Diocese of Tzaneen, as it opened the way for it to actively promote the Cause of Benedict Daswa as a possible martyr and saint, not only for South Africa, but for the Continent of Africa, and indeed for the whole world. The theological consultants voted unanimously on 9 October 2014 that Benedict died a martyr, as did the Ordinary Congress of the Sacred Congregation on 13 January 2015. Pope Francis approved the promulgation of the Decree of Martyrdom on 22 January 2015 and issued it on 26 January 2015.

We encourage people to learn more about this holy and courageous man and to be inspired by his example in standing up for the faith. For Benedict, human life was sacred and always to be respected and protected. As an apostle of life, he is very relevant for promoting a true culture of life in today's world. For this reason we urge people to pray for favours through his intercession with God, canonization.

This Novena devoted to Benedict Daswa is a powerful form of prayer which can be used individually or in groups. We are confident that if this Novena is prayed with faith in Christ and in his Holy Spirit that God will bless you with many favours through Benedict Daswa's intercession. We encourage anyone who has received favours through his intercession to make it known to others and to us.

Our sincere gratitude to Father Andre Bohas MSC and Father Herman Van Dijck MSC for his work in producing this Novena Prayer.

Bishop Joao Noe Rodrigues
Diocese of Tzaneen
Limpopo Province
South Africa

Bishop Hugh Slattery msc
Bishop-Emeritus, Tzaneen

ABBREVIATIONS

- AM *Africae Munus – Africa's Commitment*
Post-Synodal Apostolic Exhortation – Pope Benedict XVI, 2011
- CCC Catechism of the Catholic Church
Promulgated by Pope John Paul II, 1992
- CIC Codex Iuris Canonici – *Code of Canon Law*
Promulgated by Pope John Paul II, 1983
- CL Christifideles Laici – *On the Vocation & Mission of the Laity*
Apostolic Exhortation – Pope John Paul II, 1988
- EV Evangelium Vitae – *The Gospel of Life*
Encyclical – Pope John Paul II, 1995
- FC Familiaris Consortio – *The Family in the Modern World*
Apostolic Exhortation – Pope John Paul II, 1981
- GS Gaudium et Spes – *The Church in the Modern World*
Pastoral Constitution – Vatican Council II, 1965
- LG Lumen Gentium – *Light of the Nations*
Dogmatic Constitution – Vatican Council II, 1964
- NMI Novo Millennio Ineunte – *Entering the New Millennium*
Apostolic Letter – Pope John Paul II, 2001

What is a Novena?

A Novena is a devotion consisting of prayers said on nine consecutive days, asking to obtain special graces or favours from God. This has always been a popular form of prayer in the Church. It follows the example of the nine days that the apostles and Mary spent in prayer between Ascension and Pentecost Sunday as they awaited the outpouring of the Holy Spirit. (cf Acts 1,14)

To make a Novena is to persevere in prayer, by asking for a favour over a period of nine successive days. It is in fulfillment of our Lord's teaching that we must continue to pray and never lose confidence. This is based on Our Lord's words: *"Ask and you shall receive; seek and you shall find; knock and the door shall be opened to you. For whoever asks receives; whoever seeks finds; whoever knocks is admitted."* (Luke 11:9-10)



An Apostle for Life

PRAYER

The Novena Prayer

(To be recited at the end of each day's Novena Prayer)

*O Blessed Trinity,
I believe that you dwell in me through my baptism.
I love You, I adore You and I worship You.
I give you thanks for Blessed Benedict,
Whom you chose to bear witness unto death for his faith
In Jesus Christ, my Saviour and my Lord.*

*Almighty Father, you filled the heart of Blessed Benedict,
With great love and zeal in building up your kingdom.
You gave him the courage and the strength
To stand up for his faith without fear, even the fear of death.*

*Loving God, keep me free from all deeds of darkness.
Protect me from evil spirits and the powers of evil.
Make me a true apostle of life in my family and in society.
May your light, O Lord, shine upon me and through me.*

*Lord Jesus, through the intercession of Blessed Benedict,
I ask that I may follow his example
Of always being ready to forgive in a Christian spirit.*

*You know all about my many problems and worries
And my great fears when I look to the future.
I draw strength and courage from the life of Blessed Benedict.
I come to you now, Lord, and through his intercession
I ask for this very special favour... if it is according to your will.*

*Help me always to follow the good example of Blessed Benedict.
By daily prayer and regular attendance at Church,
Help me to love You, O Lord, above all things
And to love others as you love me.
Amen.*

DAY 1 BAPTISED IN CHRIST

The eldest of five children, Tshimangadzo Samuel Benedict Daswa was born on 16 June 1946, in the village of Mbahe near Thohoyandou. Growing up in the African Traditional Religion, he belonged to the Bakali clan of the Lemba tribe, who regard themselves as descendants of the Jews. They live mainly among the Venda tribe but are also found among the Northern Sotho and Tsonga tribes in the Province of Limpopo, South Africa. As a high school student Tshimangadzo took instruction in the Catholic faith from his catechist, the late Father Benedict Risimati. He was greatly influenced by this man of deep faith and as a result chose Benedict for his baptismal name. He made his own motto of St Benedict, "Pray and Work", which inspired his whole life as a Christian. On 21 April 1963 he was baptised by Father Augustine O'Brien MSC and received his First Holy Communion. Three months later he was confirmed by Rt Rev Abbot/Bishop F C Van Hoeck OSB, Bishop of Pietersburg Diocese. After completing High School, Benedict trained as a Primary School teacher.

Word of God

We were indeed buried with him through baptism into death, so that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might live in newness of life. For if we have grown into union with him through a death like his, we shall also be united with him in the resurrection. (Romans 6,4-5)

Deepening of Faith

...since Baptism is a true entry into the holiness of God through incorporation into Christ and the indwelling of his Spirit, it would be a contradiction to settle for a life of mediocrity, marked by a minimalist ethic and a shallow religiosity. To ask catechumens: "Do you wish to receive Baptism?" means at the same time to ask them: "Do you wish to become holy?" It means to set before them the radical nature of the Sermon on the Mount: "Be perfect as your heavenly Father is perfect" (Mt 5,48). (NMI 3)

Reflection What does the baptism I have received mean to me?
Do I really wish to become holy, as God is holy?

Prayer *You guide me along the right path for the sake of your name.
Even when I walk through a dark valley,
I fear no harm for you are at my side;
your rod and your staff give me courage.
I will dwell in the house of the Lord for years to come.
(Psalm 23, 2b-4.6)*

Pray The Novena Prayer on Page 5

DAY 2 A MAN OF WORK

True to his motto, “*Pray and Work*”, Benedict believed in honest, hard work as a way of glorifying God and helping people in the community. As Principal of Nweli Primary School, Benedict was wholly dedicated to the work of education. One day a teacher tried to skip his lesson preparation for the following week by going to the bank in Sibasa to withdraw his salary. On noticing his absence, Benedict got in his car, chased after him, stopped the taxi and made the teacher return with him to school to complete his preparation. That done, Benedict then drove the teacher to the bank.

In his relationship with his learners, Benedict was always motivated by love. He encouraged them to be diligent, independent and self-reliant. Those unable to pay school fees were invited to work in his garden to earn their school fees. Benedict would visit the families of absentees to find out the reason and to see if he could offer help. With his own children, he worked in his vegetable garden and planted trees – something quite unusual for school teachers, headmasters, or educated people in general.

Benedict exercised good stewardship by using his money wisely and well. He was the first in his village to build a brick house with savings from his salary and from selling vegetables and fruit from his garden and orchard. Through careful budgeting, he purchased a car, TV set and telephone, but because of envy, some people suspected him of making use of zombies (corpses supposedly brought back to life by witchcraft).

Word of God

It will be as when a man going on a journey called his servants and entrusted his possessions to them; to one he gave five talents, to another two; to a third, one – to each according to his ability. Then he went away. Immediately the one who received the five talents went and traded with them, and made another five. Likewise, the one who received two made another two. (Matthew 25, 14-15)

Deepening of Faith

Nazareth, O House of the “Carpenter’s son”, it is here that we would like to understand and celebrate the severe and redemptive law of human labour; here restore awareness of the nobility of work; here remember that work is not an end in itself, but its freedom and its nobility come, as well as its economic value, from values which are its goal; how we would like to finally welcome here all workers of the world and show them their great model, their divine brother, the Prophet of all their just causes, Christ our Lord. (Pope Paul VI, Address in Nazareth, 5 January 1964)

Reflection Am I doing my job/work as well as I can?
Do I feel ashamed when doing manual work?

Prayer *People go forth to do their work, to their labour till the evening falls.
How varied are your works, O Lord! In wisdom you have made them all;
The earth is full of your creatures. (Psalm 104, 23-24)*

Pray The Novena Prayer on Page 5

DAY 3 A TRUE FAMILY MAN

In 1980, Benedict married Shadi Eveline Monyai, a Lutheran who was then received into full communion with the Catholic Church. They had eight children, the last being born four months after his death. Benedict believed that helping his wife with the children and doing household chores were part of his marriage commitment. He told people, "You should assist your wife with her household chores", and taught his children to help in the home. He also trained them to work hard, both at school and in his orchard.

The family prayed together each evening. This family prayer time, which included the reading of Scripture as well as family prayer, was a true "domestic Church". As family, they always attended the Sunday liturgical celebrations. Benedict instituted the "Daswa Day" around the Feast of Christmas. The family and all their close relatives used to spend the day together during which as Christmas gifts, each child received useful school materials for the coming year.

Word of God

"For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh". This mystery is a profound one, and I am saying that it refers to Christ and the Church; however, let each one of you love his wife as himself, and let the wife see that she respects her husband. ... Fathers, do not provoke your children to anger, but bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord. (Ephesians 5, 31-32; 6, 4)

Deepening of Faith

Mothers, do you teach your children the Christian prayers? Do you prepare them, in conjunction with the priests, for the sacraments that they receive when they are young: Confession, Communion and Confirmation? Do you encourage them when they are sick to think of Christ suffering, to invoke the aid of the Blessed Virgin and the saints? Do you say the family rosary together? And you, fathers, do you pray with your children, with the whole domestic community, at least sometimes? Your example of honesty in thought and action, joined to some common prayer, is a lesson for life, an act of worship of singular value. In this way you bring peace to your homes. (FC 60)

Reflection How do I relate to my spouse, my children?
Do we pray together as a family? How often?

Prayer *Blessed is everyone who fears the Lord, who walks in his ways!
Your wife will be like a fruitful vine within your house;
your children will be like olive shoots around your table.
Lo, thus shall the man be blessed who fears the Lord.*
(Psalm 128, 1. 3-4)

Pray The Novena Prayer on Page 5

DAY 4 A MAN COMMITTED TO THE COMMUNITY

Benedict was highly respected in the community. He was a natural leader and a confidant of the headman who chose him as the secretary of his council. Always guided by his Christian principles, Benedict was never afraid to speak his mind. He was greatly respected for his honesty and integrity as also for his truthfulness and humility. On one occasion, falsely accused of using school funds to build his house, Benedict's innocence and good stewardship were upheld after the headman had ordered an enquiry.

As Benedict believed strongly in character formation through sporting activities for young people, he started soccer clubs for the youth. He wanted them to be busy, disciplined, and off the streets.

During a drought in the Venda area in the eighties, Benedict used his contacts and persuasive skills to obtain food supplies for the children in his school.

Word of God

You are the salt of the earth; but if salt has lost its taste, how shall its saltiness be restored? It is no longer good for anything except to be thrown out and trodden under foot by men. You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hid. Nor do men light a lamp and put it under a bushel, but on a stand, and it gives light to all in the house. Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven. (Matthew 5, 13-16)

Deepening of Faith

In order to achieve their task directed to the Christian animation of the temporal order, in the sense of serving persons and society, the lay faithful are never to relinquish their participation in "public life", that is, in the many different economic, social, legislative, administrative and cultural areas, which are intended to promote organically and institutionally the common good. (CL 42)

Reflection What/how do I contribute to improve my community?
Do I take my public/political responsibilities seriously?

Prayer *But you do see; you do observe this misery and sorrow;
You take the matter in hand.
To you the helpless can entrust their cause;
you are the defender of the orphans. (Psalm 10, 14)*

Pray The Novena Prayer on Page 5

DAY 5 A MAN COMMITTED TO THE CHURCH

As a voluntary catechist, Benedict Daswa helped to build up the Church community, especially by preparing people for baptism. He was a member of the Parish Pastoral Council and was always regular at the meetings. He led the Sunday Service when a priest or a pastoral worker was not available and was very involved in youth ministry, encouraging the young people to live good, productive lives and to be proud of their faith.

Benedict promised his wife that he would start building their house as soon as the new Church of Nweli was finished. This task of building the first Catholic Church in the area was a project so dear to his heart that he not only helped the priest with his own car to transport the building material for it, but worked tirelessly on it and encouraged others to do likewise. After its completion, true to his promise, he started building his own house.

Word of God

So we, though many, are one body in Christ, and individually members one of another. Having gifts that differ according to the grace given to us, let us use them; if prophecy, in proportion to our faith; if service, in our serving; he who teaches, in his teaching; he who exhorts, in his exhortation; he who contributes, in liberality; he who gives aid, with zeal; he who does acts of mercy, with cheerfulness. (Romans 12, 5-8)

Deepening of Faith

In virtue of their rebirth in Christ there exists among all the Christian faithful a true equality with regard to dignity and the activity whereby all cooperate in the building up of the Body of Christ in accord with each one's own condition and function. (CCC 872. See also CIC, Can. 208; Cf. LG 32)

Reflection What do I do for the Church and in the Church?
Do I contribute to the building/upkeep of the church and its services?

Prayer *I will not enter my house or get into my bed;
I will not give sleep to my eyes or slumber to my eyelids,
Until I find a place for the Lord,
A dwelling place for the Mighty One of Jacob. (Psalm 132,3-5)*

Pray The Novena Prayer on Page 5

DAY 6 A MAN OF PRAYER AND CHARITY TO THE END

People who knew Benedict well observed that he was a prayerful person in his daily life, in his family, and in the Church. He had a deep personal relationship with Christ and was guided and strengthened by his faith in every aspect of life. He had special love and concern for the sick, the vulnerable and those in prison and liked to visit them. He gave freely of his resources to help the poor and the needy in his village, as well the learners in Nweli Primary school.

In the afternoon of 2 February 1990, as Benedict was working in his orchard, his sister-in-law urgently requested him to take her very sick child to the doctor at Makwarela (Sibasa). Before he started his car, he said to her, "Let us first pray". On his way back to Mbahe, he gave a lift home to a man living in a neighbouring village. The man was carrying a bag of mealie-meal and was unable to get public transport because of unrest in the area.

Word of God

"For I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, I was naked and you clothed me, I was sick and you visited me, I was in prison and you came to me." Then the righteous will answer him, "Lord, when did we see thee hungry and feed thee, or thirsty and give thee drink? And when did we see thee a stranger and welcome thee, or naked and clothe thee? And when did we see thee sick or in prison and visit thee?" And the King will answer them, "Truly, I say to you, as you did it to one of the least of these my brethren, you did it to me". (Matthew 25, 35-40)

Deepening of Faith

... The whole Church as such, is directly called to the service of charity: "In the very early days the Church added the agape to the Eucharistic Supper, and thus showed herself to be wholly united around Christ by the bond of charity. So too, in all ages, she is recognized by this sign of love, and while she rejoices in the undertakings of others, she claims works of charity as her own inalienable duty and right. For this reason, mercy to the poor and the sick, works of charity and mutual aid intended to relieve human needs of every kind, are held in special honour in the Church". (CL 41)

Reflection Do I help and support people in need?
Do I pay attention to the poor and destitute in my community?

Prayer *In return for my love they accuse me, even as I make prayer for them.
So they reward me evil for good, and hatred for my love.
(Psalm 109, 4-5)*

Pray The Novena Prayer on Page 5

DAY 7 A COURAGEOUS WITNESS TO THE TRUTH

On 25 January 1990 during a heavy thunderstorm, several lightning strikes burned a number of thatched rondavels (round huts) in the area. Traditionally when this happens it is not seen as a natural phenomenon, but as the work of a supposed witch. The headman gathered his council and the community to discuss the matter, with the aim of finding out who was responsible. They agreed that a traditional healer be consulted to “sniff out” (identify) the person who was responsible for these burnings. A contribution of R5 per person was agreed on to pay the person.

Benedict arrived late at the meeting after this decision had been taken. His explanation that lightning was a natural phenomenon was rejected. He argued strongly against blaming witches for causing lightning strikes. When the decision was upheld, Benedict refused to pay the contribution, arguing that his Catholic faith prevented him from taking part in anything connected with witchcraft.

Word of God

“And I tell you, everyone who acknowledges me before men, the Son of man also will acknowledge before the angels of God; but he who denies me before men will be denied before the angels of God”. (Luke 12, 8-9)

Deepening of Faith

Witchcraft, which is based on the traditional religions, is currently experiencing a certain revival. Old fears are re-surfacing and creating paralyzing bonds of subjection. Anxiety over health, well-being, children, the climate, and protection from evil spirits at times lead people to have recourse to practices of traditional African religions that are incompatible with Christian teaching. The problem of “dual affiliation” to Christianity and to the traditional African religions remains a challenge. Through profound catechesis and inculturation, the Church in Africa needs to help people to discover the fullness of Gospel values. It is important to determine the profound meaning of these practices of witchcraft by identifying the many theological, social and pastoral implications of this scourge. (AM 93)

Reflection

Am I afraid to stand up for my Christian belief when it is ridiculed or attacked in the name of 'traditional culture'?
Do I believe in witchcraft? Have I sometimes practised it?

Prayer

*Incline not my heart to any evil, to busy myself with wicked deeds
in company with men who work iniquity;
and let me not eat of their dainties!
Let a good man strike or rebuke me in kindness,
but let the oil of the wicked never anoint my head;
For my prayer is continually against their wicked deeds.*
(Psalm 141, 4-5b)

Pray The Novena Prayer on Page 5

DAY 8 A TRUE APOSTLE OF LIFE

After his strong stand against witchcraft at the community meeting on Sunday, 28 January 1990, people started grumbling and said, "He is the one who is influencing people, as he is a leader. Why does he refuse to burn witches? He does not agree with our way".

Many saw him as belittling their traditional beliefs and practices, and as a stumbling block in the community because of his consistent stance against witchcraft. Because Benedict, as a true disciple of Jesus Christ, was standing firm in his Catholic faith, some people said, "We had better kill him!" They therefore conspired to get rid of him.

Word of God

There shall not be found among you any one who burns his son or his daughter as an offering, anyone who practices divination, a soothsayer, or an augur, or a sorcerer, or a charmer, or a medium, or a wizard, or a necromancer. For whoever does these things is an abomination to the LORD; and because of these abominable practices the LORD your God is driving them out before you. You shall be blameless before the LORD your God. For these nations, which you are about to dispossess, give heed to soothsayers and to diviners; but as for you, the LORD your God has not allowed you so to do. (Deuteronomy 18, 10-14)

Deepening of Faith

We are asked to love and honour the life of every man and woman and to work with perseverance and courage so that our time, marked by all too many signs of death, may at last witness the establishment of a new culture of life, the fruit of the culture of truth and of love. (EV 77)

Reflection Do I respect the lives of others, even the weakest ones, especially the unborn babies?
Do I live a healthy and responsible life?

Prayer *The LORD is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear?
The LORD is the stronghold of my life; of whom shall I be afraid?
When evildoers assail me, uttering slanders against me,
my adversaries and foes, they shall stumble and fall.
(Psalm 27, 1-3; 12-14)*

Pray The Novena Prayer on Page 5

DAY 9 A TRUE WITNESS OF FAITH

On 2 February 1990, after dropping home the man with the bag of mealie-meal, Benedict found his way blocked by tree logs across the road. When he got out of the car to remove them, a mob of young boys and men came from behind the bushes and began throwing large stones at him. Bleeding and injured, he left the car and ran across a soccer field hoping for assistance from a nearby Shebeen (a place where alcoholic drink is sold illegally). Seeing an open door at the rondavel kitchen he ran straight in to hide and save his life.

The mob who quickly chased after him, asked the woman there where Benedict was hiding, threatening to kill her if she did not tell them. Pointing to where Benedict was hiding, she pleaded, "Don't kill me. He is inside". Two of the mob entered and pulled Benedict out. Hugging one of them, Benedict pleaded, "Please, spare my life!" The youth responded, "OK. Let me go, we're not going to kill you." Believing him, Benedict went out.

As the mob had now surrounded the rondavel, Benedict could not escape, so seeing one of them coming with a knobkerrie, he knelt and prayed. Things then moved very quickly. The man hit Benedict on the head with his knobkerrie, crushing his skull. Benedict fell to the ground. Boiling water was then poured over his head, ears, nostrils and other injuries.

The burial Mass was concelebrated on 10 February 1990. At it all the priests wore red vestments because they believed that Benedict had died for his faith. It was his stance against witchcraft which had brought about Benedict's death.

Word of God:

Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven...Blessed are you when men revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account. Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven, for so men persecuted the prophets who were before you. (Matthew 5, 10-12)

Deepening of Faith

For it is the function of the Church, led by the Holy Spirit who renews and purifies her ceaselessly, to make God the Father and His Incarnate Son present and in a sense visible. This result is achieved chiefly by the witness of a living and mature faith, namely, one trained to see difficulties clearly and to master them. Many martyrs have given luminous witness to this faith and continue to do so. By their example they have shown us, and made smooth for us, so to speak, the path to the future. All that remains for us is, with God's grace, to follow in their footsteps. (GS 21. See also NMI 41)

Reflection How does the courage of martyrs like Benedict help me to live my faith?
How can I stand up for my faith, both in private and in public life?

Prayer

*My soul magnifies the Lord,
and my spirit rejoices in God my Saviour,
for he has regarded the low estate of his handmaiden.
For behold, henceforth all generations will call me blessed;
for he who is mighty has done great things for me,
and holy is his name.
And his mercy is on those who fear him
from generation to generation.
He has shown strength with his arm,
he has scattered the proud in the imagination of their hearts,
he has put down the mighty from their thrones,
and exalted those of low degree;
he has filled the hungry with good things,
and the rich he has sent empty away.
He has helped his servant Israel
in remembrance of his mercy,
as he spoke to our fathers,
to Abraham and to his posterity forever.
(Luke 1, 46-55 – The Magnificat)*

Pray The Novena Prayer on Page 5

“Into your hands, I commend my spirit”

(Psalm 31,6)

