

1 February

## **BLESSED BENEDICT DASWA, Martyr**

### **Memorial**

## **THE LITURGY OF THE HOURS**

Tshimangadzo Samuel Benedict Daswa was born on 16 June 1946 at Mbahe village near Thohoyandou, South Africa. Baptized in 1963 by Fr Augustine O'Brien MSC, he qualified as a teacher and later became a school principal. As a married man with eight children, he was very involved in both Church and community activities. On 2 February 1990, he was bludgeoned to death for refusing to take part in anti-Catholic practices of witchcraft.

**From the Common of Martyrs: For One Martyr, except:**

### **INVITATORY**

**Ant.** The Lord is the king of martyrs: come, let us adore him.

## **THE OFFICE OF READINGS**

### **THE FIRST READING**

**Rom 8:18-39**

A reading from the Letter of St Paul to the Romans

*Who will separate us from the love of Christ?*

I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worth comparing with the glory about to be revealed to us. For the creation waits with eager longing for the revealing of the children of God; for the creation was subjected to futility, not of its own will but by the will of the one who subjected it, in hope that the creation itself will be set free from its bondage to decay and will obtain the freedom of the glory of the children of God. We know that the whole creation has been groaning in labour pains until now; and not only the creation, but we ourselves, who have the first fruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly while we wait for adoption, the redemption of our bodies. For in hope we were saved. Now hope that is seen is not hope. For who hopes for what is seen? But if we hope for what we do not see, we wait for it with patience.

Likewise, the Spirit helps us in our weakness; for we do not know how to pray as we ought, but that very Spirit intercedes with sighs too deep for words. And God, who searches the heart, knows what is the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints according to the will of God.

We know that all things work together for good for those who love God, who are called according to his purpose. For those whom he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, in order that he might be the firstborn within a large family. And those whom he predestined he also called; and those whom he called he also justified; and those whom he justified he also glorified.

What then are we to say about these things? If God is for us, who is against us? He who did not withhold his own Son, but gave him up for all of us, will he not with him also give us everything else? Who will bring any charge against God's elect? It is God who justifies. Who is to condemn? It is Christ Jesus, who died, yes, who was raised, who is at the right hand of God, who indeed intercedes for us. Who will separate us from the love of Christ? Will hardship, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? As it is written, "For your sake we are being killed all day long; we are accounted as sheep to be slaughtered."

No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor rulers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

## **RESPONSORY**

**R/.** Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, bless those who curse you, pray for those who abuse you, \* so that you may be children of your Father in heaven.

**V/.** Be perfect, therefore, as your heavenly Father is perfect, \* so that you may be...

## **THE SECOND READING**

(30, 128-130, 158: AAS 104 [2012] pp 253-254, 295, 306-307)

A reading from the post-Synodal Apostolic Exhortation *Africae Munus* of Pope Benedict XVI

*Cultivate interior life and relationship with God in all circumstances*

In Africa's present situation the Church is called to make the voice of Christ heard. Through her ability to see the face of Christ on the

face of children, the sick, the needy and those who suffer, the Church is helping slowly but surely to forge a new Africa. In her prophetic role, whenever peoples cry out to her: "Watchman, what of the night?" (Is 21:11), the Church wants to be ready to give a reason for the hope she bears within her (cf. 1 Pet 3:15), because a new dawn is breaking on the horizon (cf. Rev 22:5). Only by rejecting people's dehumanization and every compromise prompted by fear of suffering or martyrdom can the cause of the Gospel of truth be served. "In the world", said Christ, "you will have tribulation. But be of good cheer, I have overcome the world" (Jn 16:33).

Through her lay members, the Church is present and active in the world. Lay people have an important role to play in the Church and in society. Lay men and women, in fact, are "ambassadors of Christ" (2 Cor 5:20) in the public sphere, in the heart of the world! Their Christian witness will be credible only if they are competent and honest professional people.

Lay men and women are called, above all, to holiness, a holiness which is to be lived in the world. Dear members of the faithful: cultivate your interior life and your relationship with God, so that the Holy Spirit may enlighten you in all circumstances. In order to ensure that the human person and the common good remain effectively at the centre of all human, political, economic or social activity, deepen your union with Christ, so as to know and love him by devoting time to God in prayer and in the reception of the sacraments. Allow yourselves to be enlightened and instructed by God and by his Word.

I would like to dwell again on the distinctive feature of a Christian's professional life. In a word, it means bearing witness to Christ in the world by showing, through your example, that work can be a very positive setting for personal development and not primarily a means of making profit. Your work enables you to participate in the work of creation and to serve your brothers and sisters. Acting in this way, you will be "the salt of the earth" and "the light of the world", as the Lord asks of us. In daily life, put into practice the preferential option for the poor, whatever your position in society, in accordance with the spirit of the Beatitudes (cf. Mt 5:3-12), so as to see in them the face of Jesus who calls you to serve him (cf. Mt 25:31-46).

"May the memory of the great witnesses who gave their lives in service of the Gospel and the common good, or for the defence of truth and human rights, be kept alive and faithfully recalled". For the saints are the true stars of our life, those "who have lived good lives. They are lights of hope. Certainly, Jesus Christ is the true

light, the sun that has risen above all the shadows of history. But to reach him we also need lights close by — people who shine with his light and so guide us along our way."

## **RESPONSORY**

Mt 5:13-14.16

**R/.** You are the light of the world. A city built on a hill cannot be hidden. You are the salt of the earth; you are the light of the world. You are the salt of the earth; but if salt has lost its taste, how can its saltiness be restored?

**V/.** Let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father in heaven. You are the salt of the earth...

The concluding prayer as at Morning Prayer.

## **MORNING PRAYER**

**Benedictus ant.** Blessed are you when people 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.

## **CONCLUDING PRAYER**

O God, who were pleased to give light to your Church by adorning Blessed Benedict with the victory of martyrdom, graciously grant that, as he imitated the Lord's Passion, so may we, by rejecting evil and casting out the snares of the enemy and the leaven of malice, follow in his footsteps and be worthy to attain eternal joys. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God for ever and ever.

## **EVENING PRAYER II**

**Magnificat ant.** When they hand you over, do not worry about how you are to speak or what you are to say; for what you are to say will be given to you at that time; for it is not you who speak, but the Spirit of your Father speaking through you.