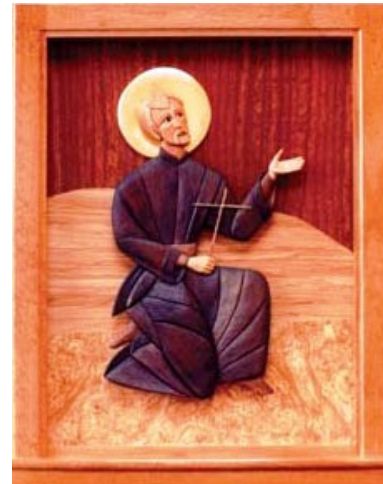




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Saints Isaac Jogues and John de Brebeuf: North American Martyrs

Between the years 1642 and 1649 eight members of the Society of Jesus were killed in North America after brutal torture by Indians of the Huron and Iroquois tribes. These Jesuits had worked diligently to bring the Native Americans of the region of what is now Upper New York and Canada to the Catholic faith. Saint Isaac Jogues died on October 18, 1647, and Saint John de Brebeuf on March 16, 1648. This selection, taken from the Spiritual diaries of Saint John de Brebeuf (The Jesuit Relations and Allied Documents, The Burrow Brothers Co, Cleveland 1898, 164, 166) is used in the Roman Catholic Divine Office of Readings on October 19, the liturgical memorial of Sts. Isaac Jogues and John de Brebeuf and their companions.



For two days now I have experienced a great desire to be a martyr and to endure all the torments the martyrs suffered.

Jesus, my Lord and savior, what can I give you in return for all the favors you have first conferred on me? I will take from your hand the cup of your sufferings and call on your name. I vow before your eternal Father and the Holy Spirit, before your most holy Mother and her most chaste spouse, before the angels, apostles and martyrs, before my blessed fathers Saint Ignatius and Saint Francis Xavier-in truth I vow to you, Jesus my savior, that as far as I have the strength I will never fail to accept the grace of martyrdom, if some day you in your infinite mercy should offer it to me, your most unworthy servant.



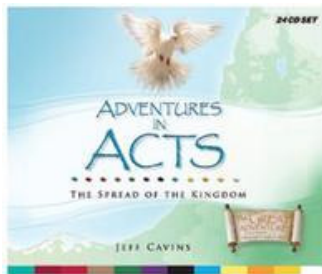
I bind myself in this way so that for the rest of my life I will have neither permission nor freedom to refuse opportunities of dying and shedding my blood for you, unless at a particular juncture I should consider it more suitable for your glory to act otherwise at that time. Further, I bind myself to this so that, on receiving the blow of death, I shall accept it from your hands with the fullest delight and joy of spirit. For this reason, my beloved Jesus, and because of the surging joy which moves me, here and now I offer my blood and body and life. May I die only for you, if you will

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grant me this grace, since you willingly died for me. Let me so live that you may grant me the gift of such a happy death. In this way, my God and savior, I will take from your hand the cup of your sufferings and call on your name: Jesus, Jesus, Jesus!

My God, it grieves me greatly that you are not known, that in this savage wilderness all have not been converted to you, that sin has not been driven from it. My God, even if all the brutal tortures which prisoners in this region must endure should fall on me, I offer myself most willingly to them and I alone shall suffer them all.

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