Three years ago on May 26, 2002, the Holy Father, Pope John Paul II, beatified our beloved brothers in the Lord: Kamen Vitchev. Pavel Djidjov and Josaphat Chichkov. On the night of November 11, 1952 they were shot to death for their faith in Jesus Christ.



Bulgarian Martyrs - Icon by Father Donat Lamothe, A.A.

In his homily in Plovdiv, the Pope meditated on the mystery of the Trinity, a mystery which goes to the heart of our faith, a mystery of love and of communion which inspires a prayer found often on our lips: “To you be glory and praise forever.” We are speaking of a Trinitarian God, to whom we owe all praise: a Father whose love and mercy are always faithful; a Son who shared with us his daily life and his suffering; a Spirit who dwells in us and who gives us the courage to live our Christian faith.

It is this God who filled the hearts of our Bulgarian brothers. He inspired their mission, enlightened their minds, and gave them the strength they needed when the enemies of love and of human dignity revealed their opposition. It is this God who allowed them to persevere at the last moment of their trial.

There exist even in our own day individuals who resist love and who are unwilling to recognize the dignity of the human person. We have not see the end of these temptations. But there are also so many women and men of goodwill in our Catholic community, among Christians, and among so many others who work ceaselessly for the cause of truth, to hasten the Kingdom of peace and harmony. Pope John II, in his homily, spoke of an “ecumenism of the saints.” This witness of all persons of goodwill who are willing to sacrifice their lives for the good of humanity should draw us closer together.

On the occasion of the anniversary of that happy day of three years ago, when our Assumptionist brothers were honored by the Church, I pray that each of us may share their dedication to the cause of love and of human dignity, that each of us may pray to this one God in these words, “To you be glory and praise forever!”

On the occasion of this celebration, be assured of my prayers and fraternal affection.

Richard E Lamoureux, aa
Superior General
Rome, November 13, 2005

To read more about Assumptionist Martyrs please click here.