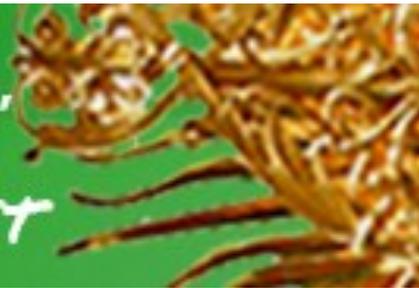




Pray for Life, Marriage, and Religious Liberty *JOIN THE MOVEMENT*



February 21: Friday Fast

Intention:

This week, we ask martyrs who have died for Christ to intercede for people around the world who suffer persecution so that they can continue to witness to the faith.

Did you know?

Pope Francis [remarked](#) on the Syrian crisis last year, asking for prayers for those killed. He recognized the great courage of those who have kept their faith despite suffering and persecution and said, “To all those who are suffering, I say: Never lose hope! The church is alongside you, accompanies you and supports you.”

Quick Links

- ⇒ [Call to Prayer facebook page](#)
- ⇒ [Join the Movement!](#) (video)
- ⇒ [Call to Prayer webpage](#)

Reflection:

Saturday, February 22 marks the Feast of the Chair of St. Peter, whom we remember as the first Pope and head of the Roman Catholic Church. St. Peter suffered a martyr’s death, which Origen, a scholar and early Christian theologian, [described](#) as follows: “Peter was crucified at Rome with his head downwards, as he himself had desired to suffer.”

The testimony we learn of St. Peter and all Catholic martyrs reminds us to remain ever ardent in our faith even in the face of persecution in the modern world. The [Catechism of the Catholic Church](#) reminds us: “Martyrdom is the supreme witness given to the truth of the faith: it means bearing witness unto death.” (CCC, no. 2473) In this way, we follow Christ who came into the world to proclaim the truth.

At a recent U.S. congressional hearing, the Vatican’s apostolic nuncio to the United Nations [testified](#) that “flagrant and widespread persecution of Christians rages in the Middle East even as we meet.” Other speakers at the hearing spoke about violence against Christians in Indonesia, Vietnam, Nigeria, Myanmar, Sudan, Eritrea, and elsewhere. We must continue to pray for those who suffer persecution on account of their faith.

VISIT WWW.USCCB.ORG/FAST TO SIGN THE FASTING PLEDGE & TO SIGN UP FOR WEEKLY E-MAIL REMINDERS & INTENTIONS, OR TEXT “FAST” TO 99000 TO RECEIVE WEEKLY TEXT MESSAGES.