

OCTOBER 30
BLESSED DOMINIC COLLINS
RELIGIOUS, MARTYR
AND HIS COMPANIONS
MARTYRS
OPTIONAL MEMORIAL

Dominic Collins was born around 1566 in the city of Youghal, County Cork, in Ireland. At the age of about twenty years he went to France where he decided to follow a military career; he distinguished himself to such an extent that in a short time he was promoted to the rank of captain. In 1598 he made a new choice by entering the Society of Jesus at Santiago de Compostela where he made his perpetual profession as a Brother. He returned to Ireland in 1601, but on June 16, 1602, he was captured by the English who tried in vain to make him abjure his faith. Condemned to death, he was hanged in his native city on October 31, 1602. Together with sixteen other Irish martyrs, he was beatified by John Paul II on September 27, 1992.

From the Common of One Martyr

THE OFFICE OF READINGS

Second Reading

From a letter of Richard Haries, dated January 19, 1603, sent from the Irish Seminary at Lisbon to Fr. James Archer, S.J. (Roman Archives of the Society of Jesus, Mss. Castell., 33, f. 94; cf. M. Gonçalves da Costa (ed.), *Fontes inéditas Portuguesas para a história de Irlanda*, Braga, 1981, p. 409).

*For this cause I would most willingly suffer not just one
but a thousand deaths.*

I have learned the following facts from a trustworthy Irishman about your happy brother and companion, Dominic Collins.

After he had been imprisoned in Cork for some

time, sentence of death was pronounced against him by the heretics on a Friday—which was for him a Good Friday.

As he was led between soldiers to the place of execution he displayed every sign of fortitude. Few citizens were present to witness his death because of their fear of spies. When he came to the gallows he greeted it with great joy of spirit and gave a brief exhortation to those who stood around, speaking in Spanish, Irish, and English. His words might be summarized as a declaration of the reasons for his coming to Ireland. Quite openly he stated that he had come to dissuade his own people from giving adherence to the errors of the heretics. . . . The only profession of the true faith was that taught by the Roman Catholic Church, and not the new-fangled one professed in England and full of abusive words against the Pope.

When the enemies of the Church heard this, they could no longer restrain themselves from putting a stop to his words. Around his neck they placed the noose. He bore this with a very joyous spirit and gave such a smile of gladness that an English captain who stood nearby remarked, "I say, what kind of man is this who goes to his death as eagerly as I would go to a banquet?" To him Dominic replied, "For this cause I would most willingly suffer not just one but a thousand deaths."

In the end they could find nobody willing to carry out the hanging, for his speech had struck terror into all those present. At last, however, they found a poor fisherman passing by whom they beat and forced to perform this office. He first begged the glorious martyr for forgiveness;

this was readily granted.

Before he climbed the gallows, he asked all the Catholics . . . to pray for him. As he mounted the steps he began to recite the psalm "In you, O Lord, I have hoped." When he arrived at the top, he murmured, "Into your hands, O Lord, I commend my spirit," and was dropped to his death.

After he had remained hanging there for three or four hours, the rope was severed and his dead body fell to the ground. There it was left lying bare, stripped by those who had made off with his garments, but by night it was taken away by some devout persons.

Responsory (Phil. 1:20, 21)

R. It is my eager expectation and hope that I shall not be at all ashamed, but that with full courage now as always Christ will be honored in my body, whether by life or by death.

V. For me to live is Christ, and to die is gain. Christ will be. . . .

Concluding Prayer

In troubled times, O Lord, you gave us as a pattern of constancy Blessed Dominic and his fellow martyrs, who, for the joy that was set before them, endured the cross, rejecting its shame. Grant, by their prayers, that faithfully following your commandments we may bring forth fruits of unity and peace. We ask this through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever.