

ON MARTYRDOM OUTSIDE THE CHURCH

Heretics or schismatics, being placed outside the Church and cut off from unity and charity, even though one should be slain for the name of Christ, he could not be crowned in death.

- St. Cyprian

There are also some among the heretics who ... flatter themselves with claims of martyrdom ... But not all who submit their bodies to suffering, even to flames, are to be considered as having shed their blood for their sheep; rather, they may have shed it against the salvation of their sheep, for the Apostle says: "If I should deliver my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profits me nothing" (1 Corinthians 13:3). And how can he have the faintest charity in him who, though shown to be at fault, yet has no love for that unity which the Lord chose to recommend? Indeed, so long as you remain outside the Church and severed from the fabric of unity and bond of charity, you will be punished with everlasting chastisement, even if you were burned alive for the sake of Christ.

- St. Augustine

Without the cup of the Lord preserving the holy bond of love, even if a man should deliver his body to be burned he gains nothing.

- St. Fulgentius

He who is not armed by the Church for battle cannot be fit for martyrdom.

- St. Cyprian

Although it is a fact that some philosophers, like Socrates, seem to have suffered and been put to death for the sake of righteousness; nevertheless, where there is no true faith or charity, there is no true and perfect righteousness.

- St. Augustine

Baptism of Blood cannot profit a heretic unto salvation because there is no salvation outside the Church.

- St. Cyprian

Outside the Church no one can be a martyr.

- St. Pacian

It is not the torture, but the cause which makes the martyr.

- St. Augustine

Grant that the heretic suffered somewhat; nevertheless, he was not put to death. And even if he had been put to death he would not have been crowned because of it. Why? Because he was out of the peace of the Church, outside concord, outside that Mother of whom he ought to be a part.

- St. Pacian

Even if one should shed his blood for Christ, he cannot be saved unless he has remained inside the Catholic Church.

- St. Fulgentius

True martyrs are found only in the Catholic Church; for, since there is but one true faith, there is but one true martyrdom.

- St. Irenaeus of Lyons

Nay, though they should suffer death for the confession of the Name, the guilt of such men is not removed even by their blood, for not even blood can wash away the stain of heresy. Baptism of Fire does not help such a person if he dies outside the Church, for the grievous and irremissible sin of schism is not purged away even by martyrdom. No martyr can he be who is not in the Church. If he be outside the Church when put to death, he cannot come to the rewards prepared for the Church. Though they be cast into the fire and burnt in the flames, though they be exposed to wild beasts and lay down their lives, this will not win them the crown of glory, but will be the penalty for their unfaithfulness; it will not be the glorious consummation of holy valor, but an end to their recklessness. Such a man may be put to death, crowned he cannot be.

- St. Cyprian