**“Br Henri Verges – Passion for Jesus”**

**(IMVY Community Prayer #5 – Br Henri was martyred on May 8)**

**Invocation of the Light:** *L: Glory be to God who has shown us the light!*

**R: Lead us from darkness to light,**

*L: Lead us from sadness to joy,*

**R: Lead us from death to immortality.**

*L: Glory be to God who has shown us the light!*

**Introduction:** *Br Henri Verges worked in Algeria as a missionary from France, and was martyred by extremists on May 8, 1994. Except for the excerpts from the 20th General Chapter, all the reflections, antiphons and prayers in this service are taken from either Henri’s own writings or the testimonies of people who knew him, reproduced in the book, “A Christian in the House of Islam”, edited by Robert Masson, November 2004. One witness said of Henri* “I perceived in the account he gave me of his work a real passion, passion for meeting, passion for service of the young, passion which led him to this land. He went right to the end of this passion.” *May the witness of Br Henri’s life draw us closer in our understanding and appreciation of God speaking to us through our Moslem sisters and brothers, may it be a sign against all those who would take up violence to further their cause, and may it lead us further along our own vocational path and inspire others to join our Marist way of life in all its forms!*

**Opening Song: “Show me the path”** (in “With You By My Side, Vol.2 Confirmation” by David Haas, #4)

**Show me the path for my life:**

# (option #2) – “We Will Rise Again”

#  (in “You Are Mine” the best of David Haas Vol.2, #8)

**We will run and not grow weary,**

**for our God will be our strength,**

**and we will fly like the eagle,**

**we will rise again.**

Like a shepherd I will feed you; I will gather you with care.

I will lead you and hold you close to my heart.

I am strength to the weary, to the weak I am new life. Though the young may grow weary; I will be their hope.

Lift up your eyes, and see who made the stars.

I lead you and I know you, I call you each by name.

Fear not I am with you, I am your God.

I will strengthen you and help you; uphold you with my hand.

**my portion and cup**

**it is you I claim as my prize**

[*sing repeat of chorus*]

In you, O God, I take refuge.

I sing: “You are my God.

In you alone I find joy,

you are the path of life.” [*sing chorus*]

I bless you, my God and my guide,

who leads my heart in the night.

I keep you, God, in my sight,

with you we stand in the light. [*chorus*]

In you my soul will rejoice

Even my body shall rest,

you will not leave me for dead,

your loved ones will be kept safe.[*chorus*]

**Opening Prayer:** We pray, Lord Jesus, that we “make of you, our friend, our brother, our holiness, the whole of our life. May you be our Life, our Breathing, our Strength.

May you be the one whom the souls we are responsible for meet.” – Lord we pray…. AMEN.

**Reflection 1:** Why in Algeria? Because there is God’s mysterious plan for the people of Islam, a temple of his presence where he invites me to enter, a mutual opening to promote, a dialogue between believers to pursue and develop, our paths to God can only converge. Because God sends his Church to all the people of the universe, a simple presence which purifies itself, which allows itself to be challenged by the Word and which challenges, liberates itself and liberates, which leaves to God the choice of times for a more explicit revelation of the gospel of his Son journeying with all peoples in this world. [*PAUSE*]

**Reflection 2:** To be transparent to the Gospel, transparent of the Gospel. To be a grain buried in the world of humanity from which will burst the leaven of the Gospel. To let myself be transformed each day a little more by the living Word of the Gospel: not to let it lose its edge through routine, distraction, comfortableness. May it ceaselessly cause new growth in me. To be continually more a Gospel word. To be awakened! [*PAUSE*]

**Reflection 3:** (by *Andree Ghillet* p72) After work, with the students gone, we would go to the chapel to say Vespers and the rosary. One evening he confided to me that this moment, when he abandoned himself into the arms of Mary, was the dearest to his heart, and he spoke of our Mother with great tenderness, slowly, softly. His eyes shone with joy. The spiritual richness of his soul moved me and was contagious. It was against the wall of this chapel, of the tabernacle, that his body collapsed from the deadly shot. [*PAUSE*]

**Response: Psalm 54**

**ANTIPHON: I try to let shine through a little, what should be the life of one of the baptized, radiation of a Presence which transforms everything into love.**

O God, listen to my prayer,

do not hide from my pleading,

attend to me and reply;

with my cares, I cannot rest.

I tremble at the shouts of the foe,

at the cries of the wicked;

for they bring down evil upon me.

They assail me with fury

My heart is stricken within me,

death’s terror is on me,

trembling and fear fall upon me

and horror overwhelms me.

O that I had wings like a dove

to fly away and be at rest.

So I would escape far away

and take refuge in the desert.

I would hasten to find a shelter

from the raging wind,

from the destructive storm, O Lord,

and from their plotting tongues.

For I can see nothing but violence

and strife in the city.

Night and day they patrol

high on the city walls.

It is full of wickedness and evil;

it is full of sin.

Its streets are never free

from tyranny and deceit.

It this had been done by an enemy

I could bear his taunts.

If a rival had risen against me,

I could hide from him.

But it is you, my own companion,

my intimate friend!

How close was the friendship between us.

We walked together in harmony

in the house of God.

As for me, I will cry to God

and the Lord will save me.

Evening, morning and at noon

I will cry and lament.

He will deliver my soul in peace

in the attack against me:

for those who fight me are many,

but he hears my voice.

God will hear and humble them,

the eternal judge;

for they will not amend their ways.

They have no fear of God.

The traitor has turned against his friends;

he has broken his word.

His speech is softer than butter,

but war is in his heart.

His words are smoother than oil,

but they are naked swords.

Entrust your cares to the Lord

and he will support you.

He will never allow

the just one to stumble.

But you, O God, will bring them down

to the pit of death.

The deceitful and bloodthirsty

shall not live half their days.

O Lord, I will trust in you. *Glory be*…

**ANTIPHON: I try to let shine through a little, what should be the life of one of the baptized, radiation of a Presence which transforms everything into love.**



**Intercessions:**

(from “Choose Life”, Message of the 20th General Chapter, Arts. 31-36)

God has given us the gifts we need to bring fire to the world and to those around us. We are sowers of hope.

**R/ Lord, shine through our lives.**

We walk alongside young people, helping them to piece together their fragmented lives and to discover the meaning of life. Hence our call to:

*Go forward, Brothers and Lay persons together, in a clear and decisive way, drawing closer to the poorest and most marginalised of young people, through new ways in education, evangelisation and solidarity.*

**R/ Lord, shine through our lives.**

We have already taken a considerable number of steps in this direction, but there is still a long way to go. We are looking for new forms of mission and new situations.

**R/ Lord, shine through our lives.**

We remain convinced that education is a privileged place for evangelisation and human promotion.  We want to express our gratitude to all, Brothers and lay people, who are so active in our schools and other Marist ministries.  At the same time, we have a burning desire for our institutions to be clear signs of Gospel values and promoters of social justice. We proclaim the right of education for all and we wish to involve our Marist mission in this campaign.

**R/ Lord, shine through our lives.**

We are searching for new projects to express our preferential option for the poor. Being open to the poor is a call to a prophetic life, for each of us personally and for each community. The initial and ongoing formation of Brothers and laypersons will constantly be attentive to the world of the marginalised. There is an appeal here for us to think about moving our places of living and working.

**R/ Lord, shine through our lives.**

In a world ever more fragmented and individualistic, we feel a strong call to live brotherhood in a prophetic way, to live up to our identity as brothers of young people through our ready welcome, listening, dialogue and attentiveness.

**R/ Lord, shine through our lives.**

The fire of Pentecost urges us to take part in the missionary outreach of the whole Church.

**R/ Lord, shine through our lives.**

And for what else shall we pray? ………..

**Final Prayer:** Lord Jesus, we “give ourselves to You, to be given by You and with You, entirely to the Father, in the Love of the Holy Spirit.

May my will be the Father’s will on me

And may it be done day after day, to the end.”

We make this prayer in Jesus’ name …. AMEN

**Blessing:** May the risen Christ shine out by means of our lives,

through which the cross continues to rise up on our paths like a beacon. …AMEN