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Today on the traditional Roman calendar, Holy Mother Church bids us to celebrate the martyrdom of the seven brothers during the reign of Antiochus IV Epiphanes (175-164 B.C.), the tyrannical king who ruthlessly persecuted the people of God and tried to supplant the true religion with Greek paganism.

We read in the Second Book of Machabees: "It came to pass also that seven brethren, together with their mother, were apprehended and compelled by the king [Antiochus] to eat swine's flesh against the law [of God], for which end they were tormented with whips and scourges. But one of them, who was the eldest, said thus: What wouldst thou ask, or learn of us? We are ready to die rather than to transgress the laws of God, received from our fathers" (2 Mach. 7:1-2).

As a result of their refusal to compromise, each of the seven brothers was tortured and killed one-by-one in the sight of their mother, of whom it is written: "Now the mother was to be admired above measure and worthy to be remembered by good men, who beheld her seven sons slain in the space of one day and bore it with a good courage, for the hope that she had in God" (2 Mach. 7:20-21).

Throughout the centuries, "the people of God" (1 Pet. 2:10) have suffered many persecutions from external enemies, resulting in millions of souls receiving the crown of martyrdom. However, as Pope Benedict XVI (RIP) reminded us in 2010, while replying to a question about the Third Secret of Fatima, "the greatest persecution of the Church comes not from her enemies without, but arises from sin within the Church" (May 11, 2010).

As *Catholic Family News* has been reporting for 30 years, now, the Church has been infiltrated by her enemies, who have set up a corrupt parallel structure within her visible confines — what Archbishop Carlo Maria Viganò has rightly called "a *deep church* that betrays its duties and forswears its proper commitments before God" (Letter to President Trump, June 7, 2020). At present, this deep church is poised to push hard for the normalization of unnatural vice and other aberrations at the Synod of Bishops meeting in October. The working document for the meeting asks Synod members to reflect on these questions (among others):

> "How can we create spaces where those who feel hurt by the Church and unwelcomed by the community feel recognised, received, free to ask questions and not judged? In the light of the Post-Synodal Apostolic Exhortation *Amoris*

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> *Laetitia*, what concrete steps are needed to welcome those who feel excluded from the Church because of their status or sexuality (for example, remarried divorcees, people in polygamous marriages, LGBTQ+ people, etc.)?" (B 1.2, Q. 6)

In the face of such threats, we must likewise resolve, with the help of God's grace, to stand firm and refuse to compromise with those who want to supplant the true religion with "profane novelties" (1 Tim. 6:20). Within our individual spheres of influence, we must imitate Mathathias, the father of Judas Machabeus, who stood up and exhorted the people: "Every one that hath zeal for the law and maintaineth the testament, let him follow me" (1 Mach. 2:27).

To help CFN continue fighting this "good fight of faith" (1 Tim. 6:12), please subscribe or renew your subscription today. We sincerely appreciate your prayers and generous support, and we consider it an honor to stand with you in defense of the Faith and Mass of our fathers. May we be true to them, even unto death.

In the Sacred and Immaculate Hearts,

Matt Gaspers
Managing Editor

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