

MAY 21 2026, DEACON KEVIN DAUDLIN

Today is the memorial of St. Christopher Magallanes and his companions. They were passionate about their faith in a time where their country was against the church. They were members of the Knights of Columbus as well. Today's readings speak to their faith and struggles. Especially in today's climate maybe these Saints will help us with our own struggles, divisions, and hopes.

In our first reading from Acts, we find St. Paul standing in the middle of conflict. He is surrounded by tension, misunderstanding, even hostility. Despite all of this, what does he do? He doesn't go run and hide. He doesn't panic. Paul speaks the truth he has received, and in the midst of all that chaos, the Lord comes to him and says, "Take courage."

This is everything: "Take courage."

Not because things are going well. Not because the crowd has suddenly become friendly. But because God is present in the middle of the storm.

Now think about St. Christopher Magallanes and his fellow martyrs. They lived in a time when the practice of their faith was dangerous. When simply being a priest, or even publicly living one's Catholicity, could cost you your life. Yet they continued. They celebrated the sacraments. They served their people. They proclaimed Christ in the midst of their chaos.

Why? Because they, too, had heard those same words in their hearts: "Take courage."

Courage in the Christian sense is not bragging. It's not loud or aggressive. It is just quiet loyalty. It is choosing Christ again and again, even when it costs us something.

Which brings us to the Gospel.

Jesus is praying, not just for the apostles, but for all of us. "I ask not only on behalf of these, but also on behalf of those who will believe in me through their word." That's you, me, all of us.

So, what does He pray for?

Unity.

"That they may all be one."

Sure, that sounds like a nice idea, That is, until we try to live it. Unity is hard. It asks something of us. It asks us to love when it's inconvenient, to forgive when it's undeserved, and to stay when it would be so much easier to just walk or run away.

The martyrs we remember today lived that unity in a radical way. They didn't just belong to the Church, they gave their very lives for her. Their unity with Christ was so deep that not even death could break it.

And here's the connection: the courage Paul receives, the unity Jesus prays for, and the witness of the martyrs, all flow from the same source: a living relationship with God.

Our psalm today says, "Keep me safe, O God; you are my hope." This is not just poetry to make us feel good. This is the heart of a disciple who knows where to stand when everything else is shaking.

What does this mean for us, here and now? Especially in today's world with all its uncertainties.

Most of us are not being asked to die for the faith in a literal sense. However, we are being asked to live it...fully, consistently, and sometimes perhaps, even maybe against the norm.

We are asked to take courage when speaking the truth may be uncomfortable.

We are asked to remain in unity when division would be so much easier.

We are asked to trust that God is with us, even when the situation around us feels uncertain or even hostile.

And maybe most importantly, we're reminded that we don't have to do this alone.

Jesus is praying for us.

Right now. At this very moment.

That we may be one. That we may remain in His love.
That we may share in His glory.

That's the promise. That's the mission.

So today, as we remember St. Christopher Magallanes and his companions, let's not just admire their courage, but let's ask for it.

Let's ask for the grace to stand firm in our faith, to live in unity with one another, and to trust deeply and daily that the Lord is with us.

Therefore, when we find ourselves in those moments of tension, of fear, or uncertainty, may we hear those same words spoken to St. Paul, and spoken to the martyrs:

"Take courage."

Amen.