



Balta Lelija

3. February 2026 MEMORIAL OF SAINT BLAISE

“Consolations and tribulations under the gaze of the Father”

Today we celebrate the memorial of Saint Blaise, bishop of Sebaste in Armenia, who performed great miracles and suffered martyrdom in the year 316. In his honor, we will hear the reading from the second Mass for a martyr and bishop in the traditional rite.

2 Cor 1:3–7

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and God of all comfort, who comforts us in all our affliction, so that we may be able to comfort those who are in any affliction, with the comfort with which we ourselves are comforted by God. For as we share abundantly in Christ's sufferings, so through Christ we share abundantly in comfort too. If we are afflicted, it is for your comfort and salvation; and if we are comforted, it is for your comfort, which you experience when you patiently endure the same sufferings that we suffer. Our hope for you is unshaken; for we know that as you share in our sufferings, you will also share in our comfort.

In his constant concern for the churches entrusted to his care, St. Paul makes them see that everything that happens to him in his apostolic ministry is for the benefit of the community. God is the source of everything, and the apostles understood this deeply. In this context, we can clearly distinguish between what God actively wills and what He allows to happen. It is very important to make this distinction so as not to fall into confusion and risk serious deviations in our way of thinking. If, for example, we believed that God could will something evil and that, therefore, good and evil, light and darkness coexist in Him, then our image of God would be distorted, and we could not trust the Heavenly Father without reservation. The Gospel, on the other hand, testifies without a doubt: *“This is the message we have heard from him and proclaim to you, that God is light and in him is no darkness at all.”* (1 Jn 1:5).

There are events that God allows and that require us to carry a cross, which represents various forms of suffering on our journey of following Christ. He uses them to strengthen our faith and also to make us participants in the Lord's suffering, as St. Peter clearly shows us in his epistle: *“Beloved, do not be surprised at the fiery ordeal which comes upon you to prove you, as though something strange were happening*

to you. But rejoice in so far as you share Christ's sufferings, that you may also rejoice and be glad when his glory is revealed. If you are reproached for the name of Christ, you are blessed, because the spirit of glory and of God rests upon you." (1 Peter 4:12–14)

St. Paul expresses this even more clearly in another of his letters: *"Now I rejoice in my sufferings for your sake, and in my flesh I complete what is lacking in Christ's afflictions for the sake of his body, that is, the church"* (Col 1:24).

So, if we internalize that both consolations and tribulations—however different they may be—take place under the loving gaze of our Heavenly Father, they not only become instruments with which God forms and guides us on our personal journey, but they also contribute to the good of other people. Today's reading clearly states: *"[God] comforts us in all our affliction, so that we may be able to comfort those who are in any affliction, with the comfort with which we ourselves are comforted by God."*

Undoubtedly, the apostles have a special and unique bond with the churches they shepherd. In short, St. Paul presents us with the image of a missionary who knows that both tribulations and consolations are granted to him by God for the benefit and growth of the faithful. God maintains a strict order in the gifts He distributes, and when He grants special graces, He wants them to serve for the edification of others as well.

If we apply the Apostle's teaching to our own reality, we can be certain that everything that happens in the life of a Christian is in the hands of the Heavenly Father and that He integrates it into His plan of salvation. We too can console others through the consolation that comes from God and that we ourselves have experienced from Him. But likewise, the suffering, fatigue, and adversities that we consciously accept from the Lord's hand and offer to Him can become a blessing for others. This happens in two ways. On the one hand, through the way we bear suffering. In this context, I recall a phrase from St. Thérèse of the Child Jesus: *"It is true that I suffer a lot, but do I suffer well?"*

And what about us? Do we suffer well? Do we carry our cross in the Lord? That would be a wonderful example for the people we live with, who often have difficulty coping with suffering. In that sense, our suffering can become a blessing for them. But it can also benefit them in the sense that St. Paul taught us: *"I complete what is lacking in Christ's afflictions for the sake of his body, that is, the church."*

Our Heavenly Father is able to use everything that happens to lead people back to

Him.