

April 9

Blessed Thomas of Tolentino and Companions

Good day, good people. May the Lord give you peace!

Danger and violence accompanied the ministry of our company visiting us today. Blessed



Thomas of Tolentino and his companions were not strangers to the hatred of Christianity. Thomas entered the Order at a young age and grew in wisdom and grace. At the age of 29 he was asked to leave Italy and embrace a dangerous mission to Lesser Armenia to convert the Saracens. While in Persia, he received communication from the friars in China asking Thomas to go to Rome and appeal of the Holy Father for support of their mission in China. He did this successfully, after which he returned to Persia. He and three other friars decided to join their Brothers in China. While traveling there they got as far as India and it was there that they were martyred. Thomas of Tolentino, James of Padua and Brother Demetrius of Tifles were beheaded on April 8, 1321. Three days later Peter of Siena was beheaded.

None of these friars was unaware of the dangers of travel and the danger of moving among non-Christians. They also knew that political winds can shift at any time, blowing in a very different level of tolerance. And so it was for them. There was no "safe" time for them. There was no possibility of traveling with any guarantee of peace. They had to go forward, be as prudent as possible and hope for the best. While not nearly so threatening or odious as this, there are times when we can do nothing else. We are challenged to go forward in our lives, be as prudent as possible and hope for the best. It requires a radical trust in God. In those desperate moments in our lives, let us remember people like Thomas, James, Demetrius and Peter. Let us draw on their witness and believe in the abiding love of God.

Let us pray.

Almighty God, there are times in our lives when we feel threatened and in perilous situations. The way forward is so difficult, fraught with the unknown. At those moments, be at my side. Let me know that whatever would befall me, you are there, guiding me, sustaining me and delivering me. This I pray confidently, through our Lord, Jesus Christ, who lives with you and the Spirit as one God, forever and ever. Amen.

Blessed Thomas of Tolentino and Companions are friends of God, the company we keep today.