
10 WEDNESDAY

Feast of St LAWRENCE, Deacon
[Wednesday, 19th WEEK of the YEAR]

2Cor 9: 6 -10
Ps 111: 1, 2, 5 - 9
John 12: 24-26

The function of a deacon in the church is to serve --- that's why the first seven deacons were chosen. St Lawrence, a deacon of the church of Rome, and second Patron of all deacons, served in alms-giving and as a minister of the Eucharist and served with his own blood when he was killed on 10th August 258. Four days before, four other Roman deacons together with the Pope, Sixtus the 2nd, were also killed. It was a huge tragedy and loss for the church. But it was also, in God's providence, the start of a new stage in the church's growth. Those single wheat grains falling on the ground and dying have yielded a rich harvest: the blood of martyrs became the seed of future Christians. Those deacons served Christ, and (as Jesus said) they thus had to follow Him on His way: and following and serving Him, they have received honour from the Father and the acknowledgement of millions of Christians ever since who've heard and been inspired by their story. They sowed richly, they gave generously. Lawrence not only gave alms freely, but gave his own life and (as St Paul wrote) "his good deeds will never be forgotten" In the same part of his letter to Corinth, St Paul also noted that "God loves a cheerful giver". Though details of Lawrence's martyrdom are not actually known, there is a legendary story of his courage and lightheartedness in the face of torture which is evidence of how Christians believed Lawrence was blessed and loved by the God who "makes the harvest of good deeds a larger one".

May we and all Christians today be inspired by Lawrence's life and service to Christ.