

*Martyrs in Asia* is a collection of essays featuring the meaningful stories of Christians who – by serving the neighbor through the language of God’s mercy and truth until the supreme moment of the martyrdom – succeeded to establish a solid platform for proclaiming the Good News of the salvation in Jesus Christ across the Asian continent. They are the bedrock upon which the Church in Asia has been founded, and the book also examines the current relevance of their missionary example and living witness to the theology of mission and to evangelization in the countries selected as case studies.

“The blood of the martyrs is the seed of the Christians” (*Tertullian*), and Jesus is always “present” with His Church (Mt 28:20) in Asia wherever it is under hardship, Archbishop Thomas Menamparampil SDB, Apostolic Administrator of Diocese of Jowai, India, reminds in the Introduction. Retracing the four-century long predicament of Christians in Vietnam, Fr. Joseph Tran Anh Dung OFMConv, Vicar at the Vietnamese Catholic Mission in Paris, hails the numerous missionary disciples who received from God the grace of martyrdom. Fr. Dinh Anh Nhue Nguyen OFMConv, President of the Pontifical Theological Faculty of St. Bonaventure, argues that their spirituality greatly helped the seeds of faith sown on Vietnamese soil to grow.

Fr. Roland Jacques, a member of the Missionary Oblates of Mary Immaculate with major experience of service to his Congregation in Laos, highlights the powerful portent represented by the Beatification of the Laotian Martyrs for the future of the local Catholic Church and its integration at the very heart of the nation.

As regards Myanmar, Dr. Ulderico Parente, Professor of Contemporary History at the University of International Studies in Rome, explains that the life and death of the Blessed Martyrs Fr. Mario Vergara PIME and Isidoro Ngei Ko Lat, a lay catechist, are acting as an invaluable source of inspiration to the evangelizing work of the Burmese Church in a context of discrimination and oppression for religious and ethnic minorities. Christians in Myanmar are probably heading towards new martyrdoms, according to Benedict Rogers, East Asia Team Leader at Christian Solidarity Worldwide. However, they can rely on the enduring legacy of the past

Martyrs, which keeps prompting them not to be afraid of proclaiming the message of Jesus' Gospel in the midst of conflicts, injustice, and suffering.