

**REDEMPTORIST NORTH AMERICAN SECRETARIAT FOR PARTNERSHIP IN MISSION  
ONGOING FORMATION AND FAITH-SHARING**

**BLESSED METHODIUS DOMINIC TRČKA  
REDEMPTORIST MARTYR**

Time Frame: 90 minutes

**CENTRE OF BEAUTY:**

- Mission Cross
- Cloth
- Icon or picture of Blessed Methodius Dominic Trčka
- Candle
- Bible

**HANDOUTS:**

- Brief Biographies of Blessed Methodius Dominic Trčka (attached)
- Prayer of St. Alphonsus to the Holy Spirit
- Prayer in honour of Blessed Methodius Dominic Trčka (attached)

**MATERIALS:**

- Name Tags (if needed)
- Pens/pencils
- Paper

**NOTES:**

In preparation for this session, copies of the biography of Blessed Methodius Dominic Trčka are distributed to all participants, in order that they may read the short article before coming together.

## **SATURDAY MORNING OR WEEKDAY EVENING SESSION**

### **GATHERING and WELCOME**

**OPENING PRAYER**– Prayer of St. Alphonsus to the Holy Spirit (attached)

**Experience**– Share with the participants these words, written by the Superior General of the Redemptorists, Fr. Michael Brehl, of martyrs and martyrdom:

“The witness of martyrs has always been very significant for the Church. The first disciples of Christ viewed martyrdom as following closely in the footsteps of Jesus and sharing his sufferings... The witness of the martyrs goes beyond the act of enduring a violent death. It expresses the reason for which they are willing to give their lives: as witnesses to Jesus Christ and to announce plentiful redemption for all. Martyrdom is a proclamation of the Good News, and the martyrs become witnesses to the Gospel, continuing to do good” for the sake of their sisters and brothers.”

**Reflection**– What is your response to Fr. Brehl’s words? Invite the group into a conversation about their response to his proposal that the final act of sacrifice was really a result of a much longer process of a life-long practice of sacrifice. Is this how you have thought of martyrdom? What is your response to this proposal?

### **Generalization**–

From the foundation of the Redemptorists in 1732, for over 200 years, no Redemptorist suffered martyrdom. This changed in Spain in 1936. Since then, Redemptorist martyrs from Spain, Slovakia and Ukraine have been beatified.

Discuss the article which participants have read in preparation for this gathering: a brief biography of Blessed Methodius Dominic Trčka. Some reflection questions were appended to the article.

You might wish to use the following questions as a discussion guide:

1. What impressed you about Blessed Methodius Dominic Trčka as you read and reflected on these very brief notes?
2. What can we draw from the spirituality of these brave servants of God that we could apply to our own lives or our own day?
3. As you read about Blessed Methodius Dominic Trčka, was anything affirmed for you? If so, what?
4. Did anything you read challenge you? If so, what was it?

**Action:** Name one thing that you will take home with you from tonight's session.

**Closing Prayer:**

**Prayer in Honor of Blessed Methodius Dominic Trčka**

Lord our God, you gave to Blessed Methodius, your priest and martyr,  
outstanding bravery in the face of trials and torture.

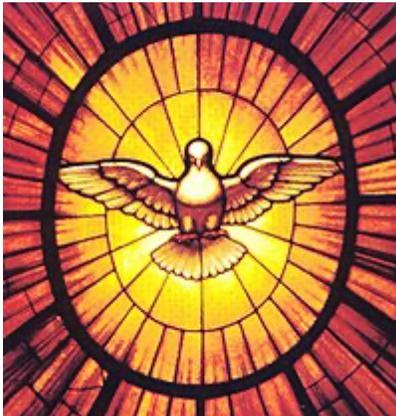
Through his intercession, may we remain faithful to the Gospel of truth.

For all the glory and honor belong to you,

Almighty Father, Eternal Son, and Life-giving Spirit,

now and for ever and ever. Amen.

## PRAYER OF ST. ALPHONSUS TO THE HOLY SPIRIT



**L.** You are **fire**;  
**R.** enkindle in me your love.

**L.** You are **light**;  
**R.** enlighten my mind with the knowledge of eternal things.

**L.** You are the **Dove**;  
**R.** give me innocence of life.

**L.** You are the gentle **Breeze**;  
**R.** disperse the storms of my passions.

**L.** You are the **Tongue**;  
**R.** Teach me how to bless you always.

**L.** You are the **Cloud**;  
**R.** shelter me under the shadow of your protection.

**L.** You are the **Giver** of all heavenly gifts;  
**R.** animate me,

**L.** I beseech you, with your **grace**;  
**R.** sanctify me

**L.** with your **charity**;  
**R.** enlighten me

**L.** with your **wisdom**;  
**R.** adopt me by your goodness as your child, and save me in your infinite mercy;  
so that I may ever **bless** you, **praise** you, and **love** you;  
first during this life on earth, and then in heaven for all eternity.

Amen.

**BLESSED METHODIUS DOMINIC TRČKA**  
**REDEMPTORIST MARTYR**  
**Feast: August 25**



Methodius was born in Frýdlant nad Ostravicí (today the Czech Republic), on 6 July 1886. He entered the Redemptorists in 1902, was professed in 1904, and ordained in Prague on 17 July 1910.

From the start of his priesthood, in the Czech Republic, he began his apostolate of preaching popular missions. During the First World War at Svata Hora, he took care of Croatian, Slovene and Ruthenian refugees.

In 1919 in answer to his request to work with the Eastern Catholic Church, his superiors sent him to Lviv, to work among the Greek Catholic faithful. He learned their language with the help of a confrere, Bl. Fr Nikola Carneckyj. At that time he took the name Methodius. In December 1921 he was sent to Stropkov, in Eastern Slovakia, where he founded the first mixed Latin and Byzantine rite Redemptorist community and served as superior. He was a zealous missionary in the Eparchies of Presov (Prjasev), Uzhorod and Krizevci. As superior he oversaw the installation of Greek Catholic Redemptorists in Michalovce. In 1932 he returned to Stropkov to rest and do parish work. In 1935, he returned to Michalovce where the Congregation for the Oriental Churches appointed him Apostolic Visitor to the Basilian Sisters in Presov (Prjasev) and Uzhorod. In Michalovce, he served a second term as superior from July 1936 to April 1942; he completed the church, helped found a convent, set up one retreat house and started another in the Eparchy of Uzhorod. He founded an association for women domestics, the most neglected group at the time.

During the Second World War, the Slovak State suspected the Redemptorists of anti-State propaganda since they were helping Ruthenians in a Slovak nationalist situation. Since Fr Methodius was the chief suspect as superior of the house, to save the community he resigned

his post as superior. In 1945, at the end of the war, the Redemptorists established the Vice-Province of Michalovce. Fr Methodius was appointed the first Vice-Provincial on 23 March 1946. He encouraged the Redemptorists' return to Stropkov where they worked until the Communists came to power.

In 1949 the Communists suppressed the Vice-Province; and on the 13 April 1950 all were taken to concentration camps, to be interrogated and tortured. Fellow prisoners said that to protect his confreres Methodius would take the blame and calmly endure torture.

On 12 April 1952, he was accused of collaboration with Bishop Gojdic because he spread his pastoral letters. He continued the regular reports to his superiors in Prague and through them to the ones in Rome. This was called espionage, high treason and brought him the sentence of 12 years in prison. He held out, despite ill health, trusting in God and doing His will. In April 1958 he was moved to Leopoldov prison. At Christmas he was caught singing a carol and condemned to the "correction cell" where he contracted pneumonia. Another prisoner, a doctor, asked that he be admitted to hospital, obtaining only his transfer to solitary confinement. Finally, he died in his own cell on 23 March 1959, after forgiving his persecutors. In 1969, his remains were transferred from the prison cemetery to the Redemptorists' Church of the Holy Spirit at Michalovce.

John Paul II proclaimed him to be Blessed Methodius Dominic on November 4, 2001. The remains of Blessed Methodius Dominic Trčka are buried in the Redemptorist plot in the cemetery of Michalovce, Slovakia.

### **Prayer in Honor of Blessed Methodius Dominic Trčka**

Lord our God, you gave to Blessed Methodius, your priest and martyr,  
outstanding bravery in the face of trials and torture.  
Through his intercession, may we remain faithful to the Gospel of truth.  
For all the glory and honor belong to you,  
Almighty Father, Eternal Son, and Life-giving Spirit,  
now and for ever and ever. Amen.

### **For your reflection...**

1. What impressed you about Blessed Methodius Dominic Trčka as you read and reflected on these very brief notes?
2. What can we draw from the spirituality of these brave servants of God that we could apply to our own lives or our own day?
3. As you read about Blessed Methodius Dominic Trčka, was anything affirmed for you? If so, what?
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