

GOSPEL PEARLS

Plenty of trouble

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Jesus said to his disciples: "Beware of men, for they will hand you over to courts and scourge you in their synagogues, and you will be led before governors and kings for my sake as a witness before them and the pagans. When they hand you over, do not worry about how you are to speak or what you are to say. You will be given at that moment what you are to say. For it will not be you who speak but the Spirit of your Father speaking through you. Brother will hand over brother to death, and the father his child; children will rise up against parents and have them put to death. You will be hated by all because of my name, but whoever endures to the end will be saved." (Mt 10: 22)

Jesus warns us that following him does not mean that all our problems will be solved, but that this will also cause us to be hated by others. Thus the Christian living in time must continually ask God for the grace of conversion and the strength necessary to persevere in it. The martyrs who mixed their blood with the blood of Jesus sowed the hearts of future Christians, as happened to the first martyr Saint Stephen. Saul assisted at his stoning, but one day he would become Saint Paul, the apostle of the pagans. Lord, give strength to all martyrs to persevere to the end so that they may be saved for all eternity.