



St. Catherine of Alexandria, a martyr of the 4th century, at the age of 18, debated 50 pagan philosophers. Amazed at her wisdom and debating skills, they became Christians — as did about 200 soldiers and members of the emperor's family. All of them were martyred. She is the patroness of students, teachers, librarians and lawyers.

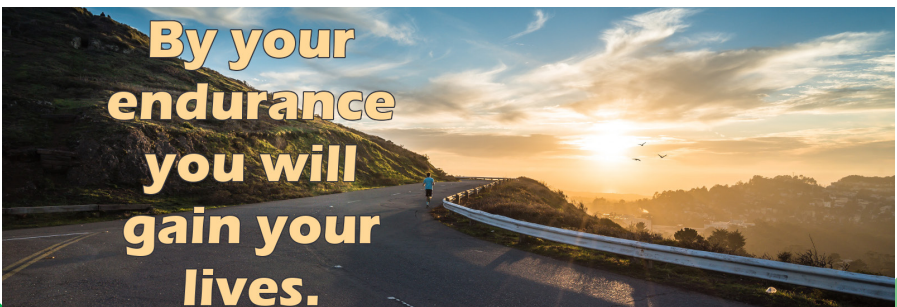
First Reading: *(Dan 6:11-26)* The presidents and satraps came by agreement and found Daniel making petition and supplication before his God. Then they came near and said before the king, concerning the interdict, "O king! Did you not sign an interdict, that any man who makes petition to any god or man within thirty days except to you, O king, shall be cast into the den of lions?" The king answered, "The thing stands fast, according to the law of the Medes and Persians, which cannot be revoked." Then they answered before the king, "That Daniel, who is one of the exiles from Judah, pays no heed to you, O king, or the interdict you have signed, but makes his petition three times a day." Then the king, when he heard these words, was much distressed, and set his mind to deliver Daniel; and he laboured till the sun went down to rescue him. Then these men came by agreement to the king, and said to the king, "Know, O king, that it is a law of the Medes and Persians that no interdict or ordinance which the king establishes can be changed." Then the king commanded, and Daniel was brought and cast into the den of lions. The king said to Daniel, "May your God, whom you serve continually, deliver you!" And a stone was brought and laid upon the mouth of the den, and the king sealed it with his own signet and with the signet of his lords, that nothing might be changed concerning Daniel. Then the

king went to his palace, and spent the night fasting; no diversions were brought to him, and sleep fled from him. Then, at break of day, the king arose and went in haste to the den of lions. When he came near to the den where Daniel was, he cried out in a tone of anguish and said to Daniel, "O Daniel, servant of the living God, has your God, whom you serve continually, been able to deliver you from the lions?" Then Daniel said to the king, "O king, live for ever! My God sent his angel and shut the lions' mouths, and they have not hurt me, because I was found blameless before him; and also before you, O king, I have done no wrong." Then the king was exceedingly glad, and commanded that Daniel be taken up out of the den. So Daniel was taken up out of the den, and no kind of hurt was found upon him, because he had trusted in his God. And the king commanded, and those men who had accused Daniel were brought and cast into the den of lions -- they, their children, and their wives; and before they reached the bottom of the den the lions overpowered them and broke all their bones in pieces. Then King Darius wrote to all the peoples, nations, and languages that dwell in all the earth: "Peace be multiplied to you. I make a decree, that in all my royal dominion men tremble and fear before the God of Daniel

Dan 3:68-74

R./ Give glory and eternal praise to him!

**By your
endurance
you will
gain your
lives.**





Gospel: (Lk 21:20-28) Jesus said to his disciples, "When you see Jerusalem surrounded by armies, then know that its desolation has come near. Then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains, and let those who are inside the city depart, and let not those who are out in the country enter it; for these are days of vengeance, to fulfil all that is written. Alas for those who are with child and for those who give suck in those days! For great distress shall be upon the earth and wrath upon this people; they will fall by the edge of the sword, and be led captive among all nations; and Jerusalem will be

trodden down by the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled. "And there will be signs in sun and moon and stars, and upon the earth distress of nations in perplexity at the roaring of the sea and the waves, men fainting with fear and with foreboding of what is coming on the world; for the powers of the heavens will be shaken. And then they will see the Son of man coming in a cloud with power and great glory. Now when these things begin to take place, look up and raise your heads, because your redemption is drawing near."

REFLECTION

The first Reading of the day presents before us the story of Daniel who was thrown to the lions by king Darius. But "God sent his angel and shut the lions' mouths" that they could not harm him. Indeed, Daniel always trusted his God whom he deeply worshipped that's why he could defy the order of the king. God came to Daniel's rescue when he prayed sincerely to Him. **It is our faith in God and our life of prayer which keep us in close relationship with God.** It is through our faith in our Saviour we can truly await Him whenever He comes again in glory. It is in and through prayer we can experience His closeness to us. St. Francis de Sales rightly says that it is prayer which is the first proof of one's love for God. Let us keep trusting in God and turn to him with deep faith always and in all circumstances.