



The Feast of Nayrouz

in the Coptic Orthodox Church

Years 7 & 8

11th September 2011

**ΜεΡεμνηνμη
ηΧριστιανος**

Nayrouz Quiz

What is martyrdom?

What are the names of some martyrs you know?

Has the era of martyrdom finished?

Could you become a martyr today?

Nayrouz Quiz

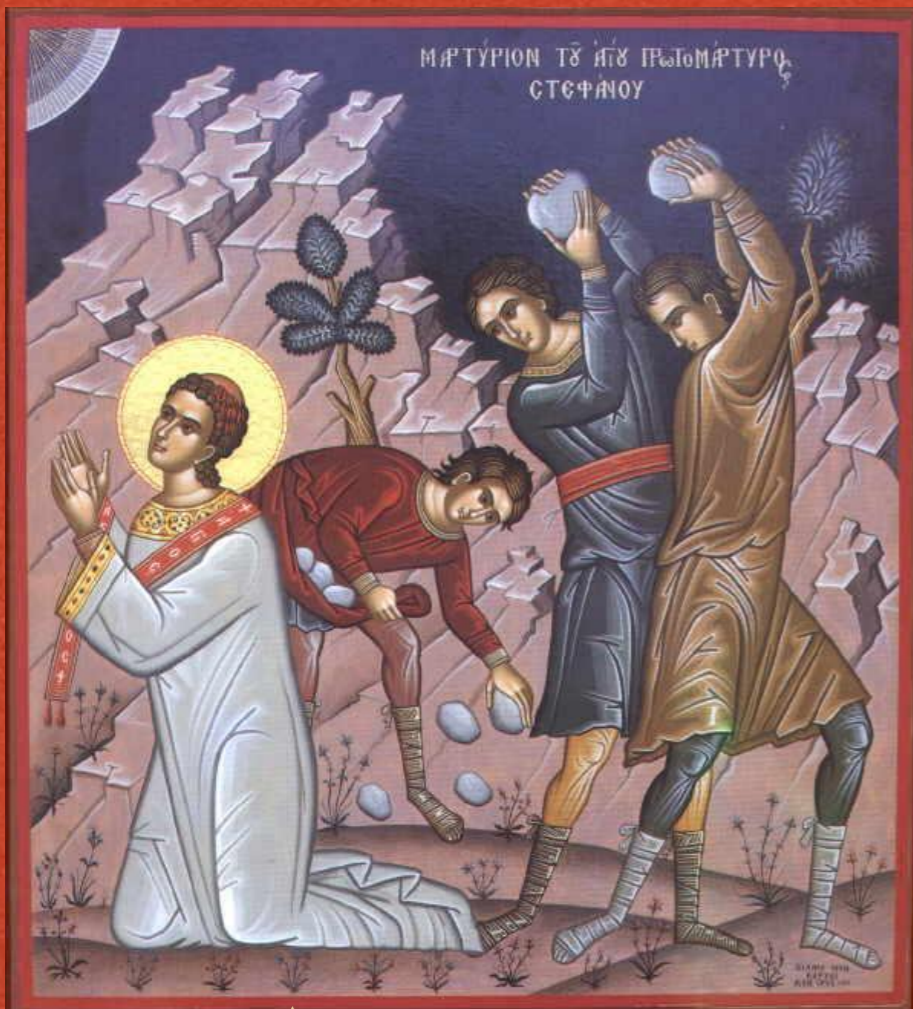
Do you have to die to be a martyr?

Are you able to bravely and proudly acknowledge that you are Christian?

Are you willing to take out certain pleasures of your life to live for Christ?

Is today's martyrdom different from the old days?

What is El-Nayrouz?



St Stephen the first Martyr

The word 'Nayrouz' is a Persian word meaning "The beginning of the year".

It was adopted for the feast of the martyrs.

The Copts use the word Nayrouz to denote the beginning of the Coptic Year.

Christians faced persecution from the pagans from the start of Christianity until the 4th Century AD

What is El-Nayrouz?

The aim of the long persecutions was to wipe out Christianity and its followers.

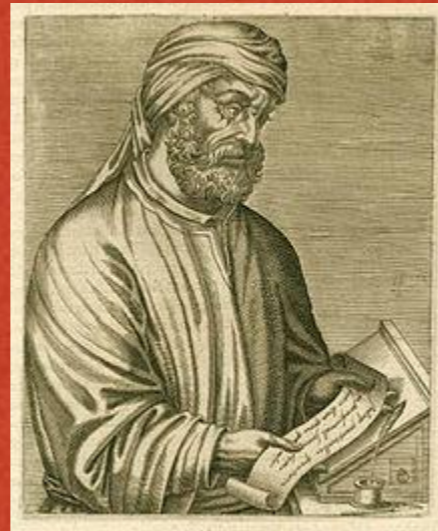
Persecution had the opposite effect of purifying the Christian faith and revealing its most magnificent virtues.

This example set by its heroes lead to the spread of Christianity & to many pagans entering the Christian faith.



What is El-Nayrouz?

Tertullian – a man who witnessed these persecutions first hand and never saw their end wrote, “The blood of the martyrs are the seeds of the church”.



Tertullian

The tenth and last persecution by Emperor Diocletian was considered the most brutal persecution the Christians ever faced, and in which the most martyrs died.

What is El-Nayrouz?

Given this momentous event and so as never to forget the sacrifice of those martyrs, the Coptic Orthodox Church decided to start the Coptic Year from the year Emperor Diocletian came to the throne in 284 A.D.

The calendar became known as the calendar of the martyrs (Abbreviated to AM – meaning ‘according to the martyrs’). So the Feast of the Nayrouz became the feast and the commemoration of the martyrs.

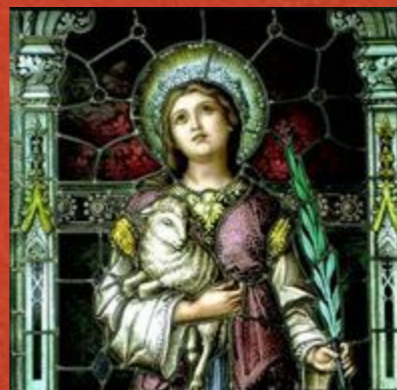
Class Activity

The class will be split up into three groups. Each group will be given the story of a saint which they need to read, and then act out to the rest of the class:

Group 1 – Saint Abanoub - The Child Martyr

Group 2 – Saint Catherine of Alexandria

Group 3 – Saint Agnes of Rome



Martyrdom in the Holy Bible

Hebrews 12:1-2

Therefore we also, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which so easily ensnares us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.

Revelation 12:11

And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony, and they did not love their lives to the death.

Martyrdom in the Holy Bible

John 15:20

Remember the word that I said to you, 'A servant is not greater than his master.' If they persecuted Me, they will also persecute you. If they kept My word, they will keep yours also.

Acts 5:41

So they departed from the presence of the council, rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for His name.

Final Questions

Why do you think these young men and women were willing to die for their faith?

How can you accept martyrdom in your daily life?

What is something that you can do starting this week to show your love for Christ?



May the prayers of the Virgin Saint Mary & all the martyrs be with us all, Amen.

