

The Story of Saint Genesius

In the Sacrament of Baptism, we are washed of Original Sin and receive sanctifying grace, which saves us. But Baptism is not the only way that we can receive this grace. In some circumstances, God will grant the grace of salvation to someone who is not baptized through no fault of his own. God can give His grace apart from the sacraments. For example, if a person desires Baptism but is prevented by his death from receiving it, God still recognizes that person's desire and grants him His grace.

In the ancient Church, when Christians often were persecuted, it was not uncommon for people preparing for Baptism to be put to death for refusing to deny the faith. This is called Baptism of blood. Baptism of blood is not another form of the sacrament. Giving one's life for the faith is not another way to receive the sacrament itself, but one receives the *grace* of Baptism, which grants salvation.

One example of someone who received the Baptism of blood is Saint Genesius. Saint Genesius lived in Rome in the third century A.D. He was an actor and comedian who used to perform regularly for the emperor himself. One day, Genesius and his troupe put on a play mocking Christians, whom the emperor hated. During the play, Genesius was pretending to be baptized. But he heard the voice of an angel telling him to turn away from sin. After his mock Baptism, Genesius turned to the emperor and the audience and proclaimed himself a true believer in Christ. The emperor ordered Genesius to be tortured. When he refused to renounce his newfound faith, Genesius was killed.

Jesus said, "Greater love has no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends" (John 15:13). Saint Genesius lived out this truth by giving his life for the faith. Those who lay down their lives for Christ show their love for Him. Saint Genesius never received the Sacrament of Baptism, yet he still died as a martyr for the faith. By giving his life for Christ, Saint Genesius received the graces of Baptism.



A statue of Saint Genesius. Notice that he is holding a mask and pointing to a baptismal font.

Journal Reflection

How can you imitate the martyrs in giving everything for Christ? Write your answer on the journal page. [Journal pages](#) are available on the parent and student portals.