

**Remain faithful to what you have learned and believed....2 Ti. 3:14**

**Recently ISIS crucified and beheaded Christians who did precisely what St. Paul urges Timothy to do:**

**"Remain faithful to what you have learned and believed."**

**God rest their brave souls.**

**(This weekend I am in transit to Seattle to begin as chaplain on a cruise down the west coast, so the reflection will be shorter.**

**The Scriptures today are about not losing heart and being persistent in prayer.**

**Currently: Last night I watched a program on the history of World War Two.**

**In particular, I was struck by the footage of Benito Mussolini the Fascist dictator of Italy, known as:**

**"Il Duce"**

**The Leader!**

**He gesticulated from a balcony, with his two right fingers raised for emphasis.**

**And he declared before a Giant rally OF CHEERING PEOPLE:**

**"I shall make Italy GREAT AGAIN!"**

**"i WILL RESTORE THE SPLENDOR OF THE ROMAN EMPIRE!"**

**He also said: "I love war!" and proceeded to attack helpless Ethiopia.**

**There was something about the scene that was so familiar and like rallies we are witnessing in our own day.**

**From modern stages an opponent is actually described as THE DEVIL!**

**And a threat is made to: "prosecute her if I am elected."**

**This is Mussolini like talk, or like the claims of many modern dictators in third world countries who do precisely that when they gain power, and justify it because ater all their opponent is "the devil."**

**And so we pray:**

**Holy Spirit brood over our land.**

**Deliver us from the evil of**

**demonizing our opponents.**

**Help us to pray always,**

**and have some of the heroic persistence of those crucified in Syria.**

**Deliver us always from genuine evil**

**Amen**