Evangelism in the Martyrdom Period

By Victor Beshir

St. Catherine (third century) eighteen years old educated Christian girl who was supported with heavenly wisdom courageously went to the emperor Maximins while he was offering twenty cows to his gods. She asked him to stop persecution of Christians. He was astonished of her courage and wisdom, so he asked her to come to his palace. Over there he promised her of marrying her. Instead of answering his call to marry her, she started talking about the creator God and attacking other gods. The emperor had been fascinated by her wisdom and learning, he said he would gather the philosophers and scientists of Alexandria to answer her thoughts. At that time the philosopher and scientists of Alexandria were the best in the world.

St. Catherine prepared herself by fasting and praying, asking for the grace of the Holy Spirit. When they gathered in the presence of the emperor to answer her ideas, she talked about the falseness of the idols and about the Lord Jesus Christ and his salvation. She was proclaiming the truth with heavenly power that touched the hearts and minds of all the philosophers and scientists. They all declared that Catherine speaking the truth. The emperor threatened them with death if they will not deny their proclamation, but they insisted in their confession of One Creator God. The emperor, the, threw them into a furnace.

Obviously, St Catherine used her education to speak in a language that is respected by the philosophers and used convincing evidence. However, what lead the best philosophers and scientists of the world was more than mental compelling argument. What lead them to offer their lives as a substitute for new ideas and they got used to discuss new ideas more often. The answer is the mental revelation by the Holy Spirit in a way that they did only heard about Jesus Christ but to mentally saw His salvation. Without such mental revelation it would have been impossible for them to became martyrs.

Therefore, evangelism in this story and other hundreds similar stories with people who just heard about the Lord and immediately were ready to die for that faith, tell us that evangelism was accompanied by the power of the Holy Spirit who put the face-to-face with the crucifixion and the power of the blood of Jesus Christ. I will not go far if I think tat those new believers were deeply touch by a great grace.