

## Fire

By Roberto Bruno

The Bishop Polycarp was the last living link with Jesus' twelve Apostles. Polycarp was a student of the Apostle John. In 168AD Polycarp was arrested and stood before the Roman proconsul who tried to get him to deny Jesus Christ. Polycarp stood firm and said, *"Eighty-six years have I served the Lord Jesus Christ, and He never once wronged me. How can I blaspheme my King who has saved me?"* Polycarp refused to recant. He was sentenced to be burned at the stake. As the soldiers lit the fire, eye witnesses said, *"He (Polycarp) was in the midst of the fire, not as burning flesh but as gold and silver refined in a furnace. And we smelled such a sweet aroma as of incense or some other precious spice"*.

*"And the LORD smelled a soothing aroma"*. Genesis 8:21. If our day to day lives were to be presented to God as a sacrifice would it be a sweet aroma? The things we do privately when no one is watching or the way we conduct ourselves at work. Do our lives emanate a sweet fragrance? The Bible clearly tells us that a day will come when our life work will be tested. *"Each one's work will become clear; for the Day will declare it, because it will be revealed by fire; and the fire will test each one's work, of what sort it is."*

I Corinthians 3:13. We can take this verse two ways, either as a warning or as an encouragement. I know first hand that God loves us and accepts us just the way we are but there has to be a time when we start contributing to the relationship. We understand that God is a "giver" but every relationship is a two way street. Romans 12:1 says, *"I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service"*. Living sacrifice! This means we continue to give our lives to God every day. God doesn't expect perfection but He does expect dedication.

What made Polycarp or any other martyr we read about in history such a great example to Christianity? They were willing to do anything to bring God the honor and the glory He deserves.

We should learn to put ourselves aside and dedicate to the cause of Christ. With that being said, "Does anyone have a match?"☺

