

October 28 **James Hannington**, Bishop of Eastern Equatorial Africa,
and his Companions Martyrs, 1885

James Hannington was born at Hurstpierpoint, Sussex, September 3, 1847, and was educated at Temple School, Brighton. For six years, he assisted his father in the warehouse business. The family became members of the Church of England in 1867, and the following year, Hannington entered St. Mary Hall, Oxford, where he obtained his BA and MA degrees. Following his ordination at Exeter, Hannington served as a curate in his native town until, in 1882, he offered himself to the Church Missionary Society for its mission in Victoria, Nyanza, Africa. Serious illness soon required his return to England, but he went out again to Africa in 1884, as Bishop of Eastern Equatorial Africa. Hannington's mission field was the shores of Lake Victoria. On a difficult venture towards Uganda, he and his party were apprehended by emissaries of King Mwanga, who feared this foreign penetration into his territory. After a week of cruel privations and suffering, he and the remaining members of his company were martyred on October 29, 1885. Hannington's last words were: "Go, tell Mwanga I have purchased the road to Uganda with my blood." Other martyrs of Uganda (see June 3) shared his fate before the gospel was firmly planted in this heartland of Africa, where today the Church has a vigorous life under an indigenous ministry. Mwanga was eventually exiled to the Seychelles in 1899, where he was received into the Anglican Church and baptized; he died there in 1903.

Collect

Precious in your sight, O Lord, is the death of your saints, whose faithful witness, by your providence, has its great reward: We give you thanks for your martyrs James Hannington and his companions, who purchased with their blood a road into Uganda for the proclamation of the Gospel; and we pray that, with them, we also may obtain the crown of righteousness which is laid up for all who love the appearing of our Savior Jesus Christ; who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

Lessons

Deuteronomy 32:1-4

"Give ear, O heavens, and I will speak; and let the earth hear the words of my mouth. May my teaching drop as the rain, my speech distill as the dew, as the gentle rain upon the tender grass, and as the showers upon the herb.
For I will proclaim the name of the Lord. Ascribe greatness to our God!

"The Rock, his work is perfect; for all his ways are justice.
A God of faithfulness and without iniquity, just and right is he.

Psalm 119:89-96

89 O Lord, your word is everlasting; *it stands firm in the heavens.

90 Your faithfulness remains from one generation to another; *you established the earth, and it abides.

91 By your decree these continue to this day, *for all things are your servants.

92 If my delight had not been in your law, *I should have perished in my affliction.

93 I will never forget your commandments, *because by them you give me life.

94 I am yours; oh, that you would save me! *for I study your commandments.

95 Though the wicked lie in wait for me to destroy me, *I will apply my mind to your decrees.

96 I see that all things come to an end, *but your commandment has no bounds.

John 15:17–27

“If the world hates you, know that it has hated me before it hated you. If you were of the world, the world would love its own; but because you are not of the world, but I chose you out of the world, therefore the world hates you. Remember the word that I said to you, ‘A servant is not greater than his master.’ If they persecuted me, they will persecute you; if they kept my word, they will keep yours also. But all this they will do to you on my account, because they do not know him who sent me. If I had not come and spoken to them, they would not have sin; but now they have no excuse for their sin. He who hates me hates my Father also. If I had not done among them the works which no one else did, they would not have sin; but now they have seen and hated both me and my Father. It is to fulfil the word that is written in their law, ‘They hated me without a cause.’ But when the Counselor comes, whom I shall send to you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth, who proceeds from the Father, he will bear witness to me; and you also are witnesses, because you have been with me from the beginning.