

Builder of the Coliseum

The story is told of a Roman emperor who hired a Greek architect and told him: "Build me a coliseum, and when it is done, I will crown you and I will make your name famous through all the world."

The work was completed, and the emperor, proudly surveying the completed project, said, "Now we will crown that architect. We will have a grand celebration."

The day of the first event came, and the coliseum was crowded with spectators. Everything was in place. The emperor and the architect strode to the stage where all could see. On the field below were Christians, brought to the opening of the coliseum, ready to die for the truth. From doors underneath, hungry lions were ready to spring on their victims.

Amid the shouting assemblage, the emperor waved for silence and proclaimed: "The coliseum is done, and we have Christians at the mouth of these lions. We have come here to honor the architect who has constructed this wonderful building. The time has come for him to be crowned, and then we further celebrate his triumph by the slaying of these Christians."

At those words, the Greek architect stepped forward and shouted: "I also am a Christian."

The emperor ordered the architect flung to the wild beasts, and his body, bleeding and dead, was trampled into the dust of the amphitheatre.

Today, we may not risk death by acknowledging our faith in Christ, but it is possible that we can be belittled or face some form of persecution, social or otherwise, for our beliefs. But by our words and our actions, we must identify with our Savior.

– Beecher Hunter