

ModernMARTYRS

HEROES OF THE FAITH

The gift you offer will support these and similar pastoral projects.



Akash's STORY

Watch a video testimony from a friend of Akash recounting how he gave his own life so that others may live.



MARTYR

Akash Bashir

Pray for us

On 15 March 2015 two bombs exploded in Youhanabad, a Christian suburb of Lahore in Muslim Pakistan; one in front of the Catholic church of St John, another in front of the Protestant church. Seventeen people were killed, another 80 were wounded. The attacks were carried out on a Sunday morning to ensure maximum damage. More than 2,000 faithful had come to the churches on that day. However, the damage wrought by the explosion in front of the **Church of St. John could have been much worse had it not been for the efforts of 16-year-old Akash Bashir.** Akash volunteered as a security guard for the parish and he died while preventing the bomber from entering the church.

Akash was born and raised in a Catholic family with three brothers and a sister. They were poor but they lived happily. As Akash grew in age and in faith, he would be the one to remind his family, **"Let's go, it is time for the rosary, it is time to go to Mass!"**

Akash was often sick though. He was weak and thin - and although intelligent - it was difficult for him to learn. He had to change schools several times when his family moved in search of work. He attended a school run by the Salesians in Lahore for a year, but then fell ill and had to be hospitalised and underwent treatment. At this

point he decided he wanted to live more for others. He joined the choir. He wanted to take part in catechesis. He volunteered as a security guard for the church. He served the parish on a voluntary basis every Sunday, which meant that he spent a great deal of his time there. Akash would give up his entire weekend to serve his brothers and sisters in faith.

The parish priest of St John, Fr Gabriel Cruz has said, **"Akash is an example for a beautiful, ordinary life. Today, the young people in the world think that sainthood is something that is impossible to achieve, but in my opinion Akash can be used to show young people that they can live an ordinary life in an ordinary way,** but with extraordinary spirituality, simply by doing everything they do as well as possible, for example taking their grandmother to the physician's office, serving the parish, no matter where they live - in a poor family, in a Muslim country or wherever. Akash served his family, his friends, the parish, and died while serving and bearing witness to service."

MAKE A DONATION

- in honour of Akash to support the growth of the Church in Asia. Your offering will fund the legal costs of Christians accused of blasphemy, translate the Scriptures - and other catechetical books - into local languages and distribute them across Asia.