

INQUISITION

From its height of papal glory,
Rome still bears a stain:
Cruelties and tortures gory
Of believers slain;
Hung or flayed to die of bleeding,
Burned alive in prayer,
Slaughtered for their Scripture-reading,
All by “Peter’s chair.”

Had their protestation perished
Under fire and lash
Or their hope for freedoms cherished
Vanished in the ash,
We today would too be liable,
As that martyred host,
Just because we owned a Bible
Or made Christ our boast.

Roman faith, if it has merit,
Cringes at these tales.
Mass and Mary can’t repair it;
Explanation fails.
But the popes who wrote this story
Pray without refrain
That those flames be purgatory
Where their souls remain.

— *David L. Hatton, 4/13/2015*