

ST. CRISPIN'S DAY SPEECH

by
William Shakespeare



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ST. CRISPIN'S DAY SPEECH

William Shakespeare

From "King Henry, V."

*The Saints, Crispin and Crispian, are the patron saints of shoemakers, tanners, and sadlers. This speech is said to have been President Kennedy's favorite selection from Shakespeare. Mrs. Kennedy arranged for Basil Rathbone to read it at a White House party as a surprise to the President.

The scene is an English Camp before the Battle of Agencourt. Westmoreland is speaking as the king enters.

WESTMORELAND: Of fighting men they have full threescore thousand.
Of that we now had here
But one ten thousand of those men in England
That do no work today!

KING: What's he that wishes so?
My cousin Westmoreland?--No, my fair cousin.
If we are mark'd to die, we are enow
To do our country loss, and if to live,
The few men, the greater share of honour.
God's will! I pray thee, wish not one man more.
By Jove, I am not covetous for gold,
Nor care I who doth feed upon my cost.
It yearns me not if men my garments wear,
Such outward things dwell not in my desires.
But if it be a sin to covet honour,
I am the most offending soul alive.
No, faith, my coz, wish not a man from England.
God's peace! I would not lose so great an honor
As one man more, methinks, would share from me,
For the best hope I have. O do not wish one more!

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