

THE CHILDREN'S CORNER

"Let the children come to me, do not hinder them," (Mk 10:14)

A Summer of Saints!

For the first 300 years of Christianity in the Roman Empire, the followers of Jesus were under great pressure to betray Him. For almost the entire period from 100 to 313 it was against the law to be a Christian in most of the areas of the Roman Empire. All the men, the women and even the kids were expected to honor the Roman emperor as a god by publicly burning a little incense in front of a statue and saying, "Caesar is god!" Of course, Christians refused to do this because only Jesus is God, not Caesar. Because they refused, some were put in prisons, some were sent to islands where they were forced to work in mines and some were even put to death. Those who died for Jesus were often executed in arenas where large crowds of people would gather to watch. It was like a big show. Christians who die for their faith are called "MARTYRS" meaning "WITNESSES." They are witnessing to their great love for Jesus! We can say that the Martyrs are *true friends* of Jesus. Would anyone today know what it was like to be a true friend of Jesus if the early Christians had betrayed Him? Is our precious Catholic faith worth living if it isn't worth dying for? There are actually thousands of Martyrs from the first three centuries of Christianity. The marvelous thing about these stories that come down to us about their deaths tell us that these men, women and children died with *peaceful hearts*. They died forgiving and praying for their persecutors just like Jesus had done. They were able to do this because they had always tried to say "yes!" to Jesus in the difficult small things so now the Holy Spirit was helping and sustaining them through the very big things that were hard. They received the "Martyr's palm & crown" and are safe and happy in Heaven forever! *All you early Martyrs of the Church, pray for us!*

Mrs. Prather - CatholicKids101.com
"We are kids telling kids about Jesus!"



Early Martyrs of the Church

Saint Polycarp, Bishop of Smyrna, was martyred in the year 155. This is what he prayed before he died:
"Lord, Almighty God, Father of Your beloved and blessed Son Jesus Christ... I bless You for judging me worthy of this day, this hour, so that in the company of the Martyrs I may share the cup of Christ, Your Anointed One, and so rise again to eternal life in soul and body, immortal through the power of the Holy Spirit. May I be received among the Martyrs in Your presence today as a rich and pleasing sacrifice... I praise You for all things! I bless You! I glorify You through the Eternal Priest of Heaven, Jesus Christ, Your beloved Son. Through Him be glory to You, together with Him and the Holy Spirit, now and forevermore. Amen."