
THE CHILDREN'S CORNER

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

A Summer of Saints!

Saint José Sánchez del Río lived in Mexico during a very difficult time when Catholics were terribly persecuted by the Mexican government for their faith. To go to Mass and receive the Sacraments was against the law. Catholics who did not obey the immoral government laws were fined, imprisoned, or even executed. A brave army, called the Cristeros, rose up to fight the evil Mexican government. Two of José's older brothers joined the Cristeros and he too wanted to join. However, because he was so young his parents were reluctant to let him. After much pleading and a visit to a Cristero officer, his parents gave José their parental blessing. José was overjoyed but also aware of the suffering he would endure. Before departing, he declared: "For Jesus Christ, I will do everything!" As a Cristero, he carried water, prepared the fire, served food and coffee, washed dishes, fed the horses, and cleaned rifles. José enthusiastically went about his chores and the soldiers quickly became fond of him. He was given the nickname: Tarcisus, after the early Christian Saint who was martyred for protecting the Holy Eucharist from desecration. He fervently attended daily Mass and prayed the Rosary with the soldiers every evening. He was put under the care of General Luis Guizar Morfin who gave him the duty of standard bearer. During heavy fighting on January 25, 1928, government troops captured José and imprisoned him. Because he refused to renounce his Catholic faith, he was eventually sentenced to death. Thirty minutes before his execution, José's aunt brought him dinner. At her request, a priest hid the Blessed Sacrament in the food package and José secretly received Holy Communion. His last words were: "I will never give in! Viva Cristo Rey!" *Saint José, pray for us!*

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Saint José Sánchez del Río

While being held prisoner in a Catholic Church, Saint José was outraged by the sacrilegious behavior of his captors who released fighting roosters inside the sacred sanctuary. The colorful fighting birds roamed freely and even perched on top of the tabernacle. José decided to stop the profanation so he grabbed the roosters and cracked their necks one by one. After he finished them off, he knelt down and prayed devoutly with a strong and loud voice. When one of his persecutors saw what happened, he wrenched José up by the arm and screamed, "What have you done? Don't you know the cost of a rooster?" José replied, "The only thing I know is that the house of God is not a corral nor a barnyard!" Another time, as he awaited his martyrdom, our Saint calmly declared, "I die happy because I die in the ranks of Our Lord."