



Roman martyrology: Saint Peter of Jesus Maldonado Lucero was a Mexican diocesan priest, the first canonized saint and martyr from Chihuahua City, Chihuahua, Mexico.

Born: June 15, 1892 Chihuahua City, Chihuahua, Mexico

Died: February 11, 1937 (aged 44) Chihuahua City, Chihuahua, Mexico.

Beatification date: November 22, 1992 by St. John Paul II.

Canonization date: May 21, 2000 by St. John Paul II.

Attributes: Priestly vestments, stole, palm, monstrance, Eucharist, Nocturnal Adoration pendant, Knight of Columbus pendant.

PROFILE

Early life

Peter of Jesus was the son of Apolinar Maldonado and Micaela Lucero, and had seven siblings. He was born in a neighborhood of Chihuahua City known as San Nicolás, nowadays called Colonia Obrera. Peter entered the diocesan seminary when he was 17 years old. He had a great formation process, without being the best of students, but he was known for his piety and Eucharistic devotion. On a certain occasion, after he had completed the Spiritual Exercises, he told the rector of the seminary, "I have thought of always having my heart in heaven and in the Tabernacle." Between 1913 and 1914, during the religious persecution in Mexico, many seminarians fled to El Paso, Texas, but Peter remained in Chihuahua and developed his musical skills. Later, he continued with his priestly studies.

After concluding his studies in Chihuahua, he was ordained a priest on January 25, 1918 in the Cathedral of St. Patrick, in the Diocese of El Paso, by Bishop Anthony Joseph Schuler, S.J., since the Bishop of Chihuahua was sick in Mexico City. Even though his first Masses were celebrated in El Paso, his first Solemn Mass was on February 11, 1918 in the Church of the Holy Family in Chihuahua on the feast of Our Lady of Lourdes, to whom he had a special devotion.

Priesthood

He worked for the Tarahumara Natives and sought to reduce the amount of alcohol that they consumed. He lived in the municipality of Jiménez and was persecuted there, being beaten several times even inside the church by freemason groups.

Father Maldonado was sympathetic to the needs of the people. He used to help the poor with money and clothing, and he himself raised and educated an orphan who was poor. He liked to visit the fields during harvest time and the farmers used to ask him to bless the fields invaded by locusts. There are many accounts that say that more than once he expelled the locusts through his prayers. He had a special interest in the Catholic education of children, youth, and adults, and he explained to them the history of salvation by using photographs.

He was constantly persecuted from 1926 to 1929. The three periods of religious persecution saw Father Maldonado constantly fleeing from the police and government agents. When the persecution was over, he came back to his parish, Santa Isabel (St. Elizabeth), but then another persecution emerged, so he hid again.

Patron of: Clergy of the Archdiocese of Chihuahua, Clergy of the Diocese of El Paso, Knights of Columbus, Mexican Nocturnal Adoration.