

## Thirty Second Sunday 2019

My beloved brothers and sisters, on the 16<sup>th</sup> of October 2016, a young boy, 14 years of age was canonized and declared to be a Martyr. He is one of the Saints I pray to every day. His name was Jose Sanchez del Rio. He was a Cristero, a member of the Catholic Counter revolution in Mexico, against a communist and Freemason government, which denied the people their Catholic Faith. When he was captured, they offered him a pardon and even money if he would reject his faith. His uncle was one of the people who tried to persuade him. He said: "My faith is not for sale!" He was tortured horribly, even having the soles of his feet sliced from his feet, and then made to walk to his grave where he was shot. His dying words were: "Viva Cristo Rey!" Long live Christ the King! He valued his faith and friendship with God above everything else, and died a witness to God.

In the gospel for today, Jesus defends the truth of the Resurrection against the Sadducees, who did not believe in life after death. They were attacking Jesus' teaching with their ridiculous example. In turn, Jesus defends the truth of His teaching for two reasons: First, because it is true! There is life after death. Heaven is real, but so is hell. He taught this many, many times, and so does the entirety of the New Testament. Indeed, the whole of life is an absolute absurdity if there is no life after death, and if Jesus did not raise from the dead, then, as St. Paul teaches us, our Christian faith is a pipe dream, and ultimately, there is no justice, and all of this life is an illusion!

Secondly, Jesus teaches us throughout the Gospels that we live in a fallen world. Sin, self-indulgence, self-glorification, are to be found in each one of us. We naturally tend towards sin, because of sin! But Jesus also teaches us that true happiness, true and everlasting life and joy are incompatible with sin and selfishness, and in order to enter into true joy and happiness, there must be an end to sin, and a new beginning in goodness and the life of God.

This world, as we see in the life of San Jose and in the seven brothers in the Macabees, is constantly trying to break down our friendship with God, it tries to make us to conform to worldly values which give into our selfishness. So much

so, that the world will use any means to destroy our values and our relationship with God by any means.

But, we are not left alone in our struggle. By our Baptism and our constant living out of our faith, by our constant repentance, we are more and more brought into the life of God, through prayer and by Sacraments and by the practice of virtue, especially faith, hope and love. As St. Paul reminds us: "If we die in Christ, we shall also live in Christ...", and death is merely a portal into the Divine Life of Christ! This is what gave this 14 year old boy the courage to face unspeakable pain and to testify to the end to his faith in Christ the King. It is what will give us the same courage in our daily lives!