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J. Prager

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II. Latin American Martyrs

1. Mexico (1917)

Introduction

Porfirio Díaz ruled Mexico as dictator for more than thirty years. After the rigged elections of 1910, middle class resentment grew and broke out in a small armed revolt. Soon rural revolutionaries, led by Francisco Villa in the north and Emiliano Zapata in the south, joined the revolt. Díaz fled and a series of provisional governments took power. The events of the Mexican revolution are bloody and confused. Several million people were killed by government and revolutionary soldiers. (John Prager, CM)

Martyrs of the Association of the Children of Mary Immaculate

1. Josefa PARRA FLORES, *member of the Association of the Children of Mary Immaculate, born on 15 May 1892 at Le Sabinito, Michoacán (Mexico) and died on 24 December 1917 at Degollado, Jalisco.*

Josefa had immigrated with her parents to Jalisco where she joined the Association of the Children of Mary Immaculate of Degollado. She was remarkable by her piety and especially by her love for Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament. When she went to her father's house, she always took with her a book of meditation on the Passion of Christ and she always spent a few minutes at the edge of a brook reading a passage. Then, she commented on it, and her compassionate love for the sufferings of Christ were such that she began crying.

On 24 December 1917, a group of guerillos came into the village of Degollado which they put to fire and the sword. The captured Josefa and she, sensing that she would be abused, with the characteristic purity of the Children of Mary, threw herself into a burning house where she died, burned alive at the age of 25. The Diocese of San Juan de los Lagos, Jalisco, has now introduced the cause of this Servant of God.

2. Coleta MENENDEZ DE LA TORRE, *member of the Association of the Children of Mary Immaculate, born on 16 March 1896 at Tierras Blancas, Gto. (Mexico) and died on 24 December 1917 at Degollado, Jalisco.*

Coleta had immigrated with her family to Jalisco. She joined the Association of the Children of Mary Immaculate of Degollado in 1910. She did not know how to read or write. She often went to Degollado with the unique desire to receive Holy Communion. She stopped at the house of her friend and sister in the Association Josefa Parra Flores. She always recited the rosary on her way. She died on 24 December 1917, under the same circumstances as Josefa Parra Flores.