

After Judas left the Last Supper with the intention to betray Jesus, Jesus said, “Now is the Son of Man glorified.” Why “now”? How does Judas’ betrayal relate to Jesus’ glorification? Well, Judas’ betrayal would ultimately lead Jesus to the Cross, and on the Cross Jesus’ perfect, divine, love is made manifest. On the Cross, by an act of sacrificial love, Jesus paid the price for our sins and won victory over sin and death. Sacred Scripture says, “Because He was obedient unto death God highly exalted Him and bestowed on Him the name above all names so that at the name of Jesus every knee shall bow” (Eph 2:8-10). **The Son of Man is glorified in His Passion because glory is the fruit of love.**

After announcing His glorification Jesus says: “I give you a new commandment: Love one another. Such as my love has been for you, so must your love be for each other. This is how all will know you for my disciples: your love for one another.” Here, Jesus is saying, “watch closely . . . look at me . . . see how I love . . . see what I do, then love one another in this way!” **St. Claude reflects on the depths of love in the heart of Jesus:**



“The love of Our Lord’s Heart was in no way diminished by the treason of Judas, the flight of the apostles, and the persecution of his enemies. Jesus was only grieved at the harm they did themselves; his sufferings helped to assuage his grief because he saw in them a remedy for the sins committed by his enemies. The Sacred heart was full of most tender love: there was no bitterness in it; no cruelty and injustice that he received moved it to feelings other than those of compassion and affection. . . . I turned to Mary and asked her to obtain for me the grace to imitate Our Lord’s Heart. I saw how perfectly her heart copied his: she loved those who put her Son to death and offered him to God the Father for them. This enkindled a very great love of virtue in my heart.”

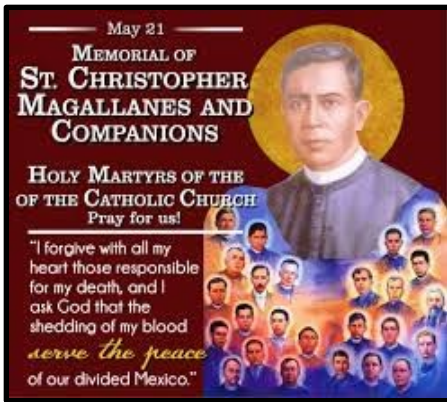
- St. Claude de la Colombiere

Wow! This is truly supernatural virtue! Is it possible for us to live this way? Is it possible for us to love one another as He has loved us? Yes and no. We cannot do this on our own. No psychologist in the world can teach us this; no human being can teach us to live this way; we cannot, by our own willpower achieve the ultimate heights of love to which we are called. We must be open to the Spirit of God—to allow Him to live and move and have His way with us. The Scriptures teach us, “The love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Spirit” (Rom 5:5).

The challenge for us is obvious: how do we respond to betrayal? How do we respond to the crosses and trials of life? Do we allow the Holy Spirit to have His way with us in these matters? What was true for Jesus is true for us: our future glory will be the fruit of the love we manifest in this life—no more, no less. The way we respond to our betrayers and crosses reveals the true depths of our love.

Sacred Heart of Jesus, have mercy on us! Immaculate Heart of Mary, pray for us!

Your Servant in Christ,
Fr. Terry Staples



Saint Cristobal Magallanes and Companions

Feast Day: May 21

Born: July 30, 1869

Died: May 25, 1927

Companions died between 1915 and 1937

Beatified: 1992

Canonized by Pope John Paul II in 2000

In the early 20th century, Mexico underwent a period of intense anti-Catholic sentiment, particularly during the presidency of Plutarco Elias Calles (1924-1928). The government closed churches, schools, and seminaries, expelled foreign clergy, and made it a crime to perform basic religious rites such as baptism or the celebration of Mass. This era, known as the Cristero War, saw many Catholics-clergy and laity alike-forced to practice their faith in secret.

Saint Cristobal Magallanes was a priest ordained in 1899 and deeply committed to his faith and his people. He served as a parish priest in Totatiche, Mexico where he worked tirelessly to serve the poor and build up the local church establishing schools and catechism centers for both children and adults. He initiated public works projects such as the construction of a dam improving access to water and supporting agriculture, opened a carpentry shop and other businesses to provide jobs and vocational training, and founded agrarian cooperatives and credit unions to support indigenous farmers and promote social justice; demonstrating a commitment to both spiritual and material well-being. When seminaries were closed, he clandestinely established a seminary in Jalisco to continue training future priests. Saint Cristobal Magallanes and his 25 companions (22 priests and three layman) are remembered as martyrs of the Catholic faith during this turbulent period in Mexican history. Their story is one of steadfast faith, courage in the face of persecution, and ultimate sacrifice.

The group known as Saint Cristobal Magallanes and Companions did not die together or in a single event. Over a span of 22 years and across eight Mexican states they were systematically targeted for their unwavering commitment to the Catholic faith. The three laymen; David, Manuel, and Salvador, were martyred alongside their parish priest, Luis Batis. Even though he preached against armed resistance, Saint Cristobal himself was falsely accused of inciting rebellion. While on his way to celebrate Mass, he was arrested and later executed without trial, alongside Saint Augustin Caloca. Before the execution, Cristobal gave his few possessions to his executioners, absolved them, and declared: "I am innocent and I die innocent. I forgive with all my heart those responsible for my death, and I ask God that the shedding of my blood serve the peace of our divided Mexico." Saint Cristobal Magallanes and his companions stand as enduring witnesses to the power of faith, forgiveness, and courage. Their story is a testament to the resilience of the human spirit in the face of injustice and remains a source of inspiration for all who seek to live out their beliefs with integrity and love.

Reflection: Every martyr realizes how to avoid execution. However, a persistent dedication to serving God's will is more valuable to them than an extended life. We may be tempted to compromise our faith telling ourselves that we are simply being realistic or practical but the Saints remind us that our daily choices, especially in adverse circumstances, form the pattern of our lives and represent our commitment to being a loyal servant of God. Are our daily choices aligned with these values?