



9 February

**SAINT MICHAEL FEBRES CORDERO**

Religious  
(1854-1910)

*Ecuador and Spain: Feast*  
*Institute: Memoria*

Francisco Febres Cordero was born at Cuenca, Ecuador November 7<sup>th</sup> 1854 into a family that has always been prominent in Ecuadorian politics. Crippled from birth, he had to overcome family opposition to realize his vocation to be a lay religious, the first native of Ecuador to be received into the Institute. Brother Miguel was a gifted teacher from the start and a diligent student. When he was not quite twenty years old, he published the first of his many books, a Spanish grammar that soon became a standard text.

In time his research and publications in the field of literature and linguistics put him in touch with scholars all over the world and he was granted membership in the National Academies of Ecuador, Spain, and France. Despite high academic honors, teaching remained his first priority, especially his classes in religion and for the young men he prepared for first communion.

His students admired his simplicity, his directness, his concern for them, and the intensity of his devotion to the Sacred Heart and the Virgin Mary. In 1907 he passed through New York on his way to Belgium where he had been called to translate texts into Spanish for the use of the Brothers recently exiled from France.

His health, always delicate, did not easily adjust to the rigors of the European climate. Transferred to the junior novitiate at Premia del Mar in Spain, during a revolutionary outbreak in 1909 he supervised a dramatic evacuation of his young charges to the safety of Barcelona across the bay. Shortly after they were able to return, he contracted pneumonia and he died at Premia February 9<sup>th</sup> 1910, leaving behind a remarkable reputation as scholar, teacher, and saint.

Beatified October 30<sup>th</sup> 1977

Canonized October 21<sup>st</sup> 1984

## MASS

### ENTRANCE ANTIPHON

Mathew 5:19

"Whoever obeys and teaches these commandments will be called greatest in the kingdom of heaven," says the Lord.

### OPENING PRAYER (COLLECT)

Almighty and everlasting God, in Saint Miguel Febres Cordero you gave your Church a distinguished educator of youth. Grant that by imitating his exemplary dedication, we learn to welcome young people with kindness and thereby guide them more surely to you. Through Christ our Lord.

### FIRST READING

Sir 39: 6b-9.13-14

*The doctrine of the just man will shine forth*

#### A reading from the book of Sirach

He will be filled with the spirit of understanding;  
He will pour forth his words of wisdom  
and in prayer give thanks to the Lord,  
Who will direct his knowledge and his counsel,  
as he meditates upon his mysteries.

He will show the wisdom of what he has learned  
and glory in the law of the Lord's covenant.  
Many will praise his understanding;  
his fame can never be effaced;  
Unfading will be his memory,  
through all generations his name will live.

Listen, my faithful children: open up your petals,  
like roses planted near running waters;  
Send up the sweet odor of incense,  
break forth in blossoms like the lily.

Send up the sweet odor of your hymn of praise;  
bless the Lord for all he has done!  
The word of the Lord.

### RESPONSORIAL PSALM

Psalm 34:2-7

**R) Proclaim the word of the Lord to your brothers and sisters.**

I will bless the Lord at all times;  
praise shall be always in my mouth.  
My soul will glory in the Lord  
that the poor may hear and be glad. **R)**

Magnify the Lord with me;  
let us exalt his name together.

I sought the Lord, who answered me,  
delivered me from all my fears. R)

Look to God that you may be radiant with joy  
and your faces may not blush for shame.  
In my misfortune I called,  
the Lord heard and saved me from all distress. R)

The angel of the Lord, who encamps with them,  
delivers all who fear God.  
Learn to savor how good the Lord is;  
happy are those who take refuge in him. R)

**SECOND READING**

2 Corinthians 2:14-15, 17; 3:2-6a

*You are our letter, written on our hearts.*

**A reading from the second letter of Paul to the Corinthians**

But thanks be to God, who always leads us in triumph in Christ and manifeste through us the odor of the knowledge of him in every place. For we are the aroma of Christ for God among those who are being saved and among those who are perishing. For we are not like the many who trade on the word of God; but as out of sincerity, indeed as from God and in the presence of God, we speak in Christ.

You are our letter, written on our hearts, known and read by all, shown to be a letter of Christ administered by us, written not in ink but by the Spirit of the living God, not on tablets of stone but on tablets that are hearts of flesh.

Such confidence we have through Christ toward God. Not that of ourselves we are qualified to take credit for anything as coming from us; rather, our qualification comes from God, who has indeed qualified us as ministers of a new covenant.

The word of the Lord.

**GOSPEL ACCLAMATION**

John 3: 34

**Alleluia, Alleluia.**

The one who has come from God proclaims the word of God.

**Alleluia.**

**GOSPEL**

Matthew 11: 25-30

*No one knows the Father except the Son and anyone to whom the Son wishes to reveal him.*

**A reading from the gospel according to Matthew**

At that time Jesus said in reply, "I give praise to you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, for although you have hidden these things from the wise and the learned you have revealed them to the childlike. Yes, Father, such has been your gracious will. All things have been handed over to me by my Father. No one knows the Son except the Father, and no one knows the Father except the Son and anyone to whom the Son wishes to reveal him.

"Come to me, all you who labor and are burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am meek and humble of heart; and you will find rest for yourselves. For my yoke is easy, and my burden light."

The gospel of the Lord.

**PRAYER OF THE FAITHFUL**

Strengthened by the example and holiness of Saint Miguel Febres Cordero, let us express our heartfelt

prayers as faithful children of God, the source of all perfection:

**R) Grant us your Holy Spirit.**

Intentions...

O Lord, you purify and renew your Church through the sanctifying waters of baptism. Grant us the grace of your Spirit, so that through the example of Christ we proclaim your boundless mercy. Through Christ our Lord.

**PRAYER OVER THE GIFTS**

Graciously accept, O Lord, the prayers and offerings we make to you in memory of Saint Miguel Febres Cordero, and through this sacrifice fill us with the abundance of your gifts. Through Christ our Lord.

**COMMUNION ANTIPHON**

John 8: 12

"Whoever follows me will not walk in darkness, but will have the light of life," says the Lord.

**PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION**

O God, you have nourished us at your table with the word and the bread of life. Fill us with the same love for this sacred banquet which animated Saint Miguel Febres Cordero, so that we live in your peace and zealously proclaim your gospel. Through Christ our Lord.

**LITURGY OF THE HOURS**

*Common of saints: educator*

**OFFICE OF READINGS**

**SECOND READING**

*Proclaim the glory of the Lord among the people*

**Homily of John Paul II for the canonization of Saint Miguel Febres Cordero**

*AAS LXXXVII, 1985, 118 - 123*

This is the song of the Church for this Sunday.

Brother Miguel did not doubt for even one moment the divine call. "I assure you, in the presence of God and with no human regard," he wrote, "that I felt called to the Institute of the Brothers of the Christian Schools and that I felt called to no other state as I did to them. I ask you to communicate these feelings to my father. If he really desires my happiness, that is to say, my eternal happiness, he will let me follow the path that God has set."

Faithful from the beginning of God's call, Saint Miguel remained that way without any doubt during the forty years of his religious and apostolic life and God, as he had promised the prophet, "put his words in his mouth," opening the path to the heart who was drawing close to him

His brothers and former students have outdone one another in giving testimony about how humble and gentle he was, how he was able to move them and lead them to good.

He never wavered in presenting Christianity as being committed to and demanding of the young people who were drawn to it. As Saint Paul did with the Corinthians, "he preached Jesus crucified."

The crucifix was key during his life and work: in the classroom, on his desk, in the chapel, in community spaces.

Saint Miguel participated heroically in the suffering of Christ. Among the crosses he carried during his life was

not least having malformed feet which brought considerable pain when he walked. But from his weakness he drew strength.

The joyful acceptance of his cross is edifying for everyone and a Christian example.

He welcomed everyone with simpleness and cordiality. Following the example of Christ, Brother Miguel he generously visited the poor and needy, advised the young, and taught children, giving of himself to all.

The slogan of his apostolic and educational activity were the words of the Gospel: "Whoever receives one of these children receives me."

These words were for Brother Miguel a way of life, a kind of constant pressure in his vocation as teacher. All his efforts had as a reference point the integral education of new generations, moved by the conviction that the time devoted to the religious and cultural training of youth was of great importance for the life of the Church and society.

With a true Gospel spirit, he always saw to it that his preference was that of teaching financially, culturally and spiritually poor children, seeing in them the persona and the face of Christ.

I pray to the Almighty, through the intercession of Saint Miguel, to grant to all his Brothers in religion new impetus, joy and enthusiasm, to continue faithfully in the footsteps that, like those of Christ, have been admirably charted by this good son of Saint John Baptist de La Salle and by the Church.

## RESPONSORY

Lk 9: 46-48

**R/.** An argument arose among the disciples about which of them was the greatest. Jesus took a child and placed it by his side and said to them: \* Whoever receives this child in my name receives me.

**V/.** For the one who is least among all of you is the one who is the greatest.

\*Whoever receives this child in my name receives me.

## PRAYER

Almighty and everlasting God, in Saint Miguel Febres Cordero you gave your Church a distinguished educator of youth. Grant that by imitating his exemplary dedication, we learn to welcome young people with kindness and thereby guide them more surely to you. Through Christ our Lord.

## MORNING PRAYER

**Ant. Ben. Blessed is he who walks perfectly in the way, who follows the law of the Lord.(T.P. Alleluia)**

## INTERCESSIONS

United in morning prayer, let us pray to our Lord so that we may serve him in holiness and justice all the days of our lives.

**R) Sanctify your people, O Lord!**

Intercessions...

Our Father.

## PRAYER

Almighty and everlasting God, in Saint Miguel Febres Cordero you gave your Church a distinguished educator of youth. Grant that by imitating his exemplary dedication, we learn to welcome young people with kindness and thereby guide them more surely to you. Through Christ our Lord.

## EVENING PRAYER

**Ant. Magn.** Whoever obeys my commandments and teaches others to do likewise will be great in the kingdom of heaven. (T.P. Alleluia)

### INTERCESSIONS

Let us pray to God, source of all holiness, to help us lead a life worthy of our baptism, through the intercession and example of Saint Miguel Febres Cordero.

**R) Sanctify us, O Lord, for you are Holy.**

Intercessions...

Our Father.

### PRAYER

Almighty and everlasting God, in Saint Miguel Febres Cordero you gave your Church a distinguished educator of youth. Grant that by imitating his exemplary dedication, we learn to welcome young people with kindness and thereby guide them more surely to you.

Through Christ our Lord.