

José María Rubio Peralta, S.J. (1864 – 1929)

Fr. José María Rubio Peralta is commonly known as the “Apostle of Madrid.” Born in 1864 in southern Spain, he was drawn as a young man to the thought of becoming a member of the Society of Jesus (Jesuit), but because of personal obligations he was not able to do so until 1906. By then he was already a diocesan priest with many years of experience working in parishes. For most of his life as a Jesuit – from 1911 until his death in 1929 – he served in Madrid where his simple and sincere sermons touched many people and where he was sought after in the confessional as a compassionate and wise priest. His work, however, was not limited to the church building; he regularly visited Madrid’s slums where he was known as a friend to the city’s destitute and homeless, providing both spiritual and physical aid. He died of a heart attack at the age of 64 while visiting the Jesuit community in Aranjuez. His remains are buried in Madrid, in the Jesuit church of San Francisco de Borja on Calle Maldonado. In 2003 Pope John Paul II declared him a saint.

