



[Image](#): Stained glass window in St. Peter Church | Jaffa | photo by yiftah-s

Blessed Emmanuel Ruiz and Companions

Not much is known of the early life of Emmanuel Ruiz, but details of his heroic death in defense of the faith have come down to us.

Born of humble parents in Santander, Spain, he became a Franciscan priest and served as a missionary in Damascus. This was at a time when anti-Christian riots shook Syria, and thousands lost their lives in just a short time.

Among these were Emmanuel, superior of the Franciscan convent, seven other friars, and three laymen. When a menacing crowd came looking for the men, they refused to renounce their faith and become Muslims. The men were subjected to horrible tortures before their martyrdom.

Emmanuel, his brother Franciscans and the three Maronite laymen were beatified by Pope Pius XI in 1926.

Reflection

The Church in Syria has known persecution throughout its history. Yet it has produced saints whose blood was shed for the faith. Let us pray for the Church in Syria.