

A Spanish Christmas carol: "Madre, en la puerta hay un Niño"

St Josemaría had very fond memories connected with the family's Christmas celebrations. Together with Carmen, he would help his father put up the Nativity scene. And the whole family sang Christmas carols together.

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He remembered in particular the one which begins *Madre, en la puerta hay*

un Niño – “Mother, there’s a little boy at the door”. This carol has a chorus in which the Child Jesus repeats, “I have come down to earth to suffer.” The song stayed with him from the cradle to the grave. “When I was three years old,” he would say, “my mother would take me in her arms and sing me that carol, and I would very happily go to sleep.” In his last years he would be visibly moved, and would become totally absorbed in prayer, whenever he heard this carol at Christmastime.

Recording and words of the carol in Spanish

An English translation of *Madre en la Puerta*:

1. “Mother, at the door there’s a little Child,

Lovelier than the radiant sun

Saying that he’s chilled with cold

For his clothes are thin and torn.”

“Bring him to the fireside blaze, give him plate and cup;

Loving-kindness these days has nearly all dried up.” (x 2)

2. So the Child came and sat down,

Where the fire was bright and warm

And the kindly housewife asked him

What country he came from.

“My Mother’s from Heaven, and my Father too

Down to earth I’ve come, where - suffering’s my due.” (x 2)

3. “Make up a bed for this noble Child

In my alcove, the best we can.”

“Don’t do that for me, my lady,

In a corner I’ll lay me down.

On the cold hard floor I've slept, ever
since my birth

Such will be my bedding till I leave
this earth.” (x 2)

For young people

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