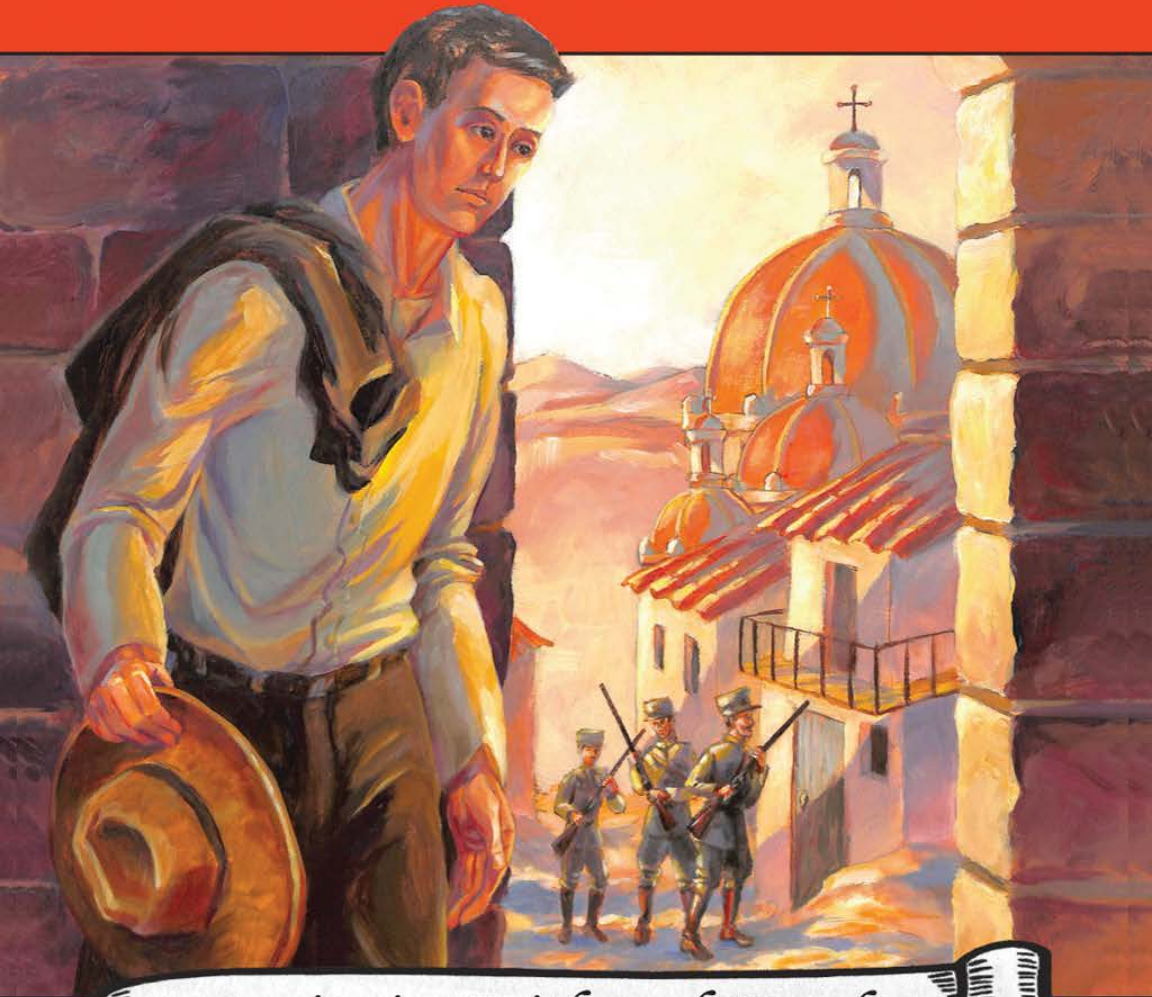


# Padre Pro

## Mexican Hero



*Portraits in Faith and Freedom*

**Fanchón Royer**

# Padre Pro

*Mexican Hero*

by Fanchón Royer



Illustrated by James J. Fox

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# Portraits in Faith and Freedom

SET 3: SPANISH AND MEXICAN HEROES

*The Sea Tiger: The Story of Pedro Menéndez*  
*Padre Pro: Mexican Hero*

## **Statement on Portraits in Faith and Freedom**

Bethlehem Books is bringing back this series of biographies originally made available in the 1950's and 60's by publishers who wished to introduce young people to a wide range of arresting and faithful Catholic lives. Slightly edited now for the modern reader, these biographies present key people and events from the past that help us reflect anew on the meaning of freedom. They depict how powerfully men and women of faith have formed and influenced the world in which they live.

## **Web Resources**

To access printable maps, a timeline, and other information, visit <https://www.bethlehembooks.com/padre-pro-mexican-hero-829>

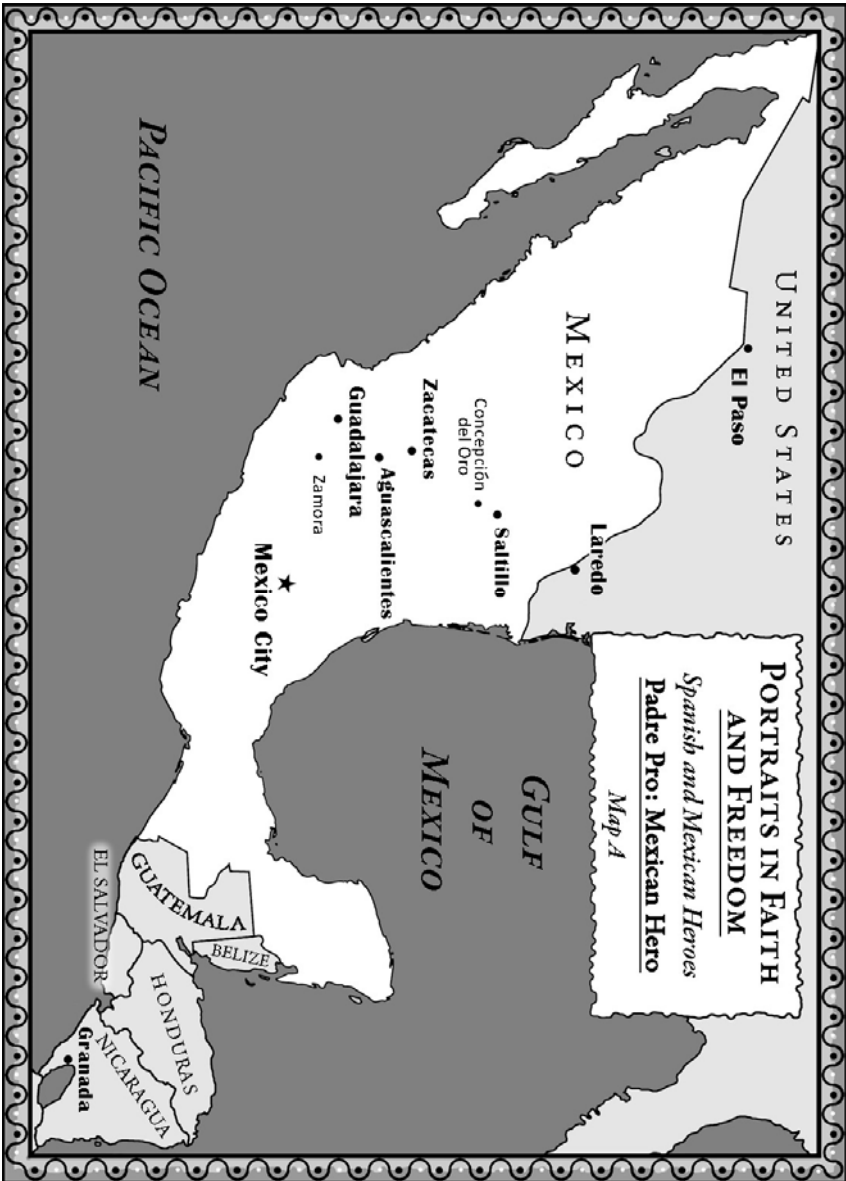
For  
Padre Arturo Jiménez

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# Maps





# 1. The Boy Who Didn't Go to School

“MIGUEL AGUSTÍN” called the Mine Bureaus new agent, “will you please dig into the closed files for a couple of cases titled Amalgamated Silver and Santa Marta Mining? I’ll need to run over them before this afternoon’s meeting.”

His young clerk looked up amiably from the counter full of fat folders he was sorting. “Certainly, Papá. But they won’t take much digging. Cases 105 and 110 in Justified Claims, 1901, coming right up!” He laughed as he slid off his stool and crossed the old-fashioned office to an ancient cabinet.

Watching him swiftly whip out the wanted material, Don Miguel Pro was marveling, as usual, at his 15-year-old’s amazing memory. But then he sighed. It was really a shame that memory wasn’t being used in study toward a professional career. In permitting his clever eldest son to cheat himself of even a high-school education hadn’t he sadly failed his parental duty?

The bright-eyed youngster with the wide, humorous mouth dropped the case histories on his father’s desk, saying: “Just don’t let that meeting drag on too long, Papá. This is the big night, you know. And I’ve got the girls, even the little fellows, ready to make your and Mamá’s anniversary a real fiesta.”

Don Miguel’s frown melted into a fond smile. “Don’t worry, son. I’ll run the gentlemen out in good time.”

One of the reasons why young Miguel had not received the proper formal education was his tremendous attachment to his family. Two times he had been sent away to city boarding schools from this isolated Zacatecan mining camp, but he had been so miserable over the separation from his parents, from his adoring sisters and brothers, that his health was endangered. So they had had to bring him home.

At one point, Don Miguel had resigned his mine managership in order to move his children near good schools, but then had come this government appointment to keep them in rude little Concepción del Oro. It just had been too good a post to refuse. Whereupon, in this year, 1907, Miguel had become his excellent assistant. Even so, he wasn’t fooling his father that he was actually interested in anything about the mining industry—save the poor,

overworked miners to whom he was forever carrying his mother's gifts of food, medicines, and clothing. No, his invaluable services in the office were simply owed to the obedience he always showed to his parents. But what, then, was he going to do with his future? Well, sighed Don Miguel again, he must certainly see to it that his failure with Miguel's schooling wasn't repeated in the cases of the younger boys. . . .

If the ambitious and surprisingly well-rendered concerto by the Pro family orchestra had won a buzz of most gratifying compliments, its melodious standbys, "Over the Waves," "Mixteca," and "Zacatecas," had rung the rafters with the applause of parents and guests. As he took his bows, Director Miguel Agustín knew that his orchestra had done itself proud this night. So he motioned to his older sisters Concepción and Luz, and his younger sisters Ana María and Josefina, to rise for their bows.

Only young Edmundo and the babies, Humberto and Roberto, had still to master a musical instrument under his teaching. And even they had perfectly committed to memory the verses he had written for them to recite in honor of their parents. Their part of the program would come now, then the poems by the others and pres-



tation of the home-made gifts, and, lastly, the lively charades Miguel was so clever at thinking up. Much better than the applause was the sight of Mother Josefa's eyes ashine with happy tears; and Father Miguel's, glinting with pride and approval. Miguel would have hated the very thought of exile, for any reason whatsoever, from this closely knit clan and its flattering admiration of his talents.

However, this life that the Pros had lived so long was due to undergo a radical change. The very next morning, during a quiet half-hour in the office, his father announced: "Your mother and I have decided she must take the children to Saltillo for the coming school year. Neither of us can bear the prospect of none of our sons having a good education. Moreover, today Concepción del Oro can't produce a single tutor such as we were lucky enough to hire for the primary instruction you and the older girls received. Ana María and Josefina will attend high school and Edmundo a good grammar school. . . ."

"But, Papá . . ."

"I know. It'll be very hard being parted from my family, but there's no other way to handle this problem. And besides, I can take the train up to Saltillo each weekend to see you."

"To see *us*, Papá? I'm to go, too? To leave the office?"

