

ST. TARCISIUS
Martyr of the Eucharist
Patron of the Altar Servers

- *Devotion to the Blessed Sacrament.*
- *Readiness to give up our lives for Jesus.*

Tarcisius, a 12 years boy, lived in Rome on the third century. During his days, the Christians were fiercely persecuted. Each day, from a secret meeting place in the catacombs where Christians gathered for Mass, a deacon or a volunteer would be sent to the prisons to carry Holy Communion to the Christians condemned to death. .

One day, there was no one to be sent. Then, Tarcisius, already an altar boy, at the risk of his life, volunteered to take Communion to the Christians imprisoned in the dungeons of the Coliseum.

On his way, a crowd of rowdy street boys stopped him and asked him to join their games. They needed a partner to play with them. He told them. "I wish I could play with you, but, not now, I am in a hurry. I'll join you on my way back"

Those rowdies noticed that Tarcisius was carrying something hidden under his clothes.

So, they asked him to show it to them. But, Tarcisius bluntly refused to show them the Consecrated Hosts he was carrying.. Those ruffians, in anger turned upon him, and with fury pounced on him, fiercely punching him. Tarcisius held the Blessed Sacrament as tightly as he could against his chest. Under their heavy blows, he fell down bleeding all over

Fortunately, a passer by, a Soldier, a fellow Christian, who saw what was happening, drove off those ruffians away and rescued the young altar boy. He carried the wounded Tarcisius back to the catacombs. Tarcisius, however, on the way to the catacombs died from his injuries in the arms of that soldier. Ever since, he has been an example of youthful courage and of devotion to the Blessed Sacrament.

Tarcisius, is one of the patron saints of the Altar Servers.

Thoughts for reflection:

Mere young boys and girls can become saints; age is no barrier to holiness. The call to holiness begins at baptism, and we do not have to wait to become old and have gray hair to give our lives for Jesus.

Saints like young Tarcisius, by their example, tell us all, specially to the Altar Servers, something very inspiring. They show us the way to spend our lives in service to Jesus.

In a race, everyone runs, but only one gets first prize. So, dear Altar Servers, run your race to win the prize of securing eternal joy with Jesus in heaven.