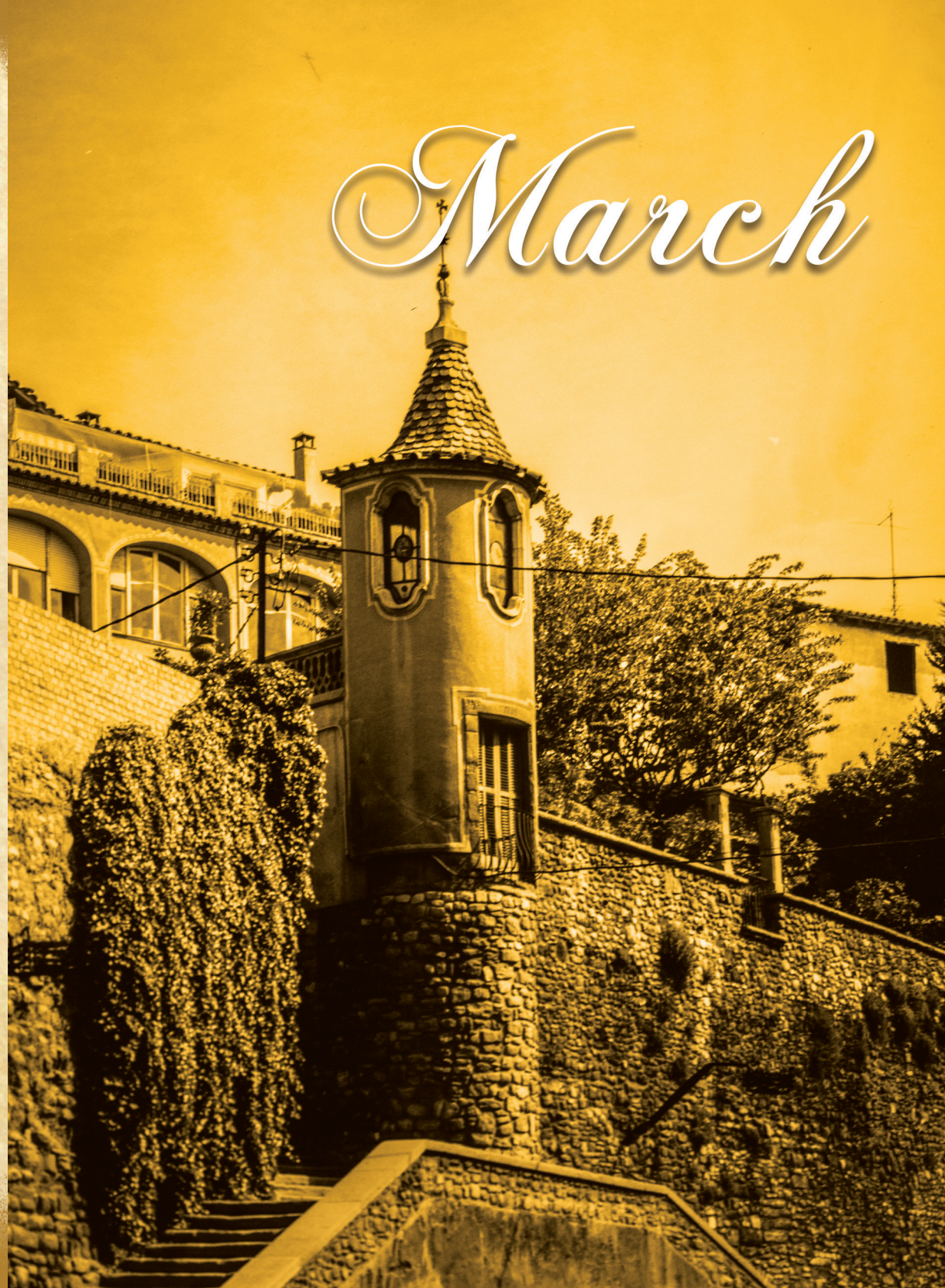


*F*ather, today I pray
for my brothers in community.
That you may know them personally:
Know their full names,
their virtues and their shortcomings,
their joys and their sorrows, their strengths and their weaknesses,
their whole life story;
and that you may accept them as they are,
and that may you make them fully alive with your Spirit.
Lord, you love them
not because they are good,
but because they are your sons.
Teach me to truly love them, following the example of Jesus,
not for their words or actions, but for themselves,
discovering in each one,
especially those who are weakest,
the mystery of your infinite love.
I thank you, Father,
for having given me brothers,
all of whom are a gift to me, a true sacrament,
a tangible and efficacious sign of the presence of your Son.
Give me the eyes of Jesus to contemplate them,
and give me his heart to love them unto the end,
because I also want to be, for each of them,
a living sacrament of the presence of Jesus.
Amen.

March





1850. Claret is impatient for the book *Las Hijas del Santísimo e Inmaculado Corazon de Maria* [Daughters of the Most Holy and Immaculate Heart of the Blessed Virgin Mary] to be printed as soon as possible, which he composed three years earlier.

1851. Claret concludes the first Spiritual Exercises for the clergy of Santiago, Cuba and establishes the three weekly days of conferences, monthly retreat, etc.

1860. Claret sends Fr. **Paladio Currius** faculties to celebrate since he had traveled to Rome without them. Since he will not return until the end of September, they came in handy.



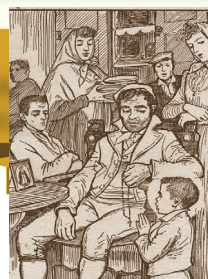
THE CONGREGATION WITHOUT FR. XIFRE

THE CONSOLIDATION (1899-1906)

Following the death of Fr. **Xifre** (November 3, 1899), the VIII General Chapter was celebrated in Vic, from December 19 to 27, 1899. The work was based on a questionnaire with two sections: Constitution and Rules of the Institute and Religious Spirit and Regular Observance. Fr. **Clement Serrat** was elected as the new Superior General, who was accompanied in the Council by Fr. **Martin Alsina**, Fr. **Domingo Sola**, Fr. **Jose Busquet** and Fr. **Francisco Naval**. Fr. **Ramon Fluvia** and Fr. **Jeronimo Batllo**, were elected as Econome and Procurator, respectively.

Although neither in this Chapter nor in the subsequent Provincial Chapters of Catalunya and Castilla much progress was made in the consolidation of the Provinces, their fruits did not take long, the decree of constitution of a Novitiate for each Province arrived in 1901: Vic (Catalunya) and Segovia (Castilla). During this period, the Congregation continued its journey towards greater consolidation without ceasing to create new foundations. We can say that history became more complex as the paths of the two Provinces were distinct.

MARIA CLARET CLARA Claret's Sister (1815-1894)



Sallent (Barcelona, Spain). She accompanied her brother Anthony Claret during his time as a priest in Sallent from 1835 to 1839. In 1842 she entered the Institute of the Carmelite Sisters of Charity, taking the name of Maria de Santa Teresa. She was the superior of Borjas Blancas and Vic, and Novice Mistress. General Councilor from 1876 to 1886. Because of her many illnesses that prevented her from continuing to hold such positions, she lived the rest of her days in the Mother House. She was very devoted to her holy brother. In 1888 she had the pleasure of testifying in the Informative Process for his beatification, where she affirmed: *I have been envied as the sister of a saint; I have found myself confused many times at seeing my imperfections before the innumerable congratulations granted me for simply being the sister of a Servant of God (...)* He had told me many times that he envied me for having the name Maria. She died on March 2nd. She was tall, with brown eyes, a regular nose, a long face and healthy color.

A SON OF MARY



Since during our recreations we talked of nothing but virtues, devotion to Mary, and means for winning souls for heaven, the flame of zeal for the greater glory of God and the salvation of souls took fire in my heart and totally consumed me. I offered my all to God without reserve. I was continuously thinking and planning what I could do for the good of my neighbor, and since the time had not yet come for me to set out on my work, I busied myself with prayer. Among others, I composed the following two prayers. **(Aut 153)**

O my mother, how much I love and esteem you, and firmly trust that you will grant me perseverance in your holy service and grace until death. **(Aut 154)**



Image of the Immaculate Heart of Mary at the Motherhouse (Vic)



FOR PERSONAL REFLECTION

Claret remembers the conversations held during his novitiate with the Jesuits.

- How do you judge the communication among the members of your community?
- Is there someone from the community with whom you need to improve your level of communication?
- What values do your brothers contribute to the edification of the community?
- Write a prayer for your community.

"Our greatest glory is not in never falling, but in rising every time we fall."
(Confucius)



1843. Claret is preaching during Lent in Igualada (Barcelona), beginning the day before.

1845. Claret continues Lenten preaching in Mataro (Barcelona).

1861. Claret composes the little paper *Reloj de la Pasion* [Clock of the Passion], which is a holy card and a text partly taken from St. **Alphonsus Maria Liguori**, and Claret feels that Jesus approves it.



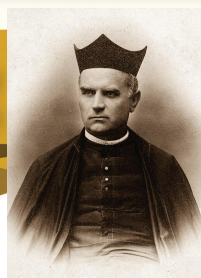
THE CONSOLIDATION (1899-1906)

GENERAL RULES

In 1897, the first *General Rule* (as it was later named), had been published and was an organic and systematic compilation of the general norms of the Congregation. It was a summary of the rules, ordinances and notices emanating from the General Chapters and Fr. **Xifre's** Circular Letters in alphabetical order. The book synthetically and systematically presented the pastoral and formative guidance, and the legal ordinances of the life of the Congregation from the beginning of its canonical existence, which were previously widely dispersed

in several publications. It was a practical and pedagogical book that helped people easily find what they wanted. It would be the seed of what became the *General Rule* of later years and of the C.I.A. (*Codex Iuris Additicii*) and the basis of our congregational law. In addition to ensuring compliance, they were about giving the Institute its own features and character, serving as a hallmark. Later they were updated in the years 1900, 1905, 1906 and 1912. However, some of Fr. Xifre's circular letters would not be included in that volume.

MARTIN ALSINA, CMF
V Superior General (1859-1922)



Manresa (Barcelona, Spain). He was a diocesan seminarian. He entered the Congregation at the end of his first year of theology. He was ordained a priest in 1883. Soon he began the work entrusted to him by his superiors as a formator. As a basis for spiritual edification, he demanded great loyalty and truth from his formandi. Simple, kind, serious and balanced, he was born with leadership skills. In 1894 he was appointed Superior of the School in Santo Domingo de la Calzada. In 1899, upon the death of Fr. **Xifre**, he was elected Sub-Director General. In 1906, upon the death of Fr. **Clement Serrat**, he was elected Superior General in the Chapter of Aranda de Duero, a position in which he would be confirmed in 1912, until his death occurred in Zafra on March 2, 1922. He greatly expanded the Institute with some thirty foundations, almost all in the two Americas. He accepted the difficult mission in Choco, Colombia. He put a strong emphasis on the apostolate of the press with the founding of publishing houses and important magazines like *Ilustracion del Clero*, *Tesoro Sacro Musical* [Treasure of Sacred Music] and *Commentarium pro Religiosis*.



I SHALL NOT BE SILENT

And would you, my Mother, have me, who am a brother of these luckless ones, look on indifferently at their utter ruin? Ah, no! Neither the love that I bear God, nor that I bear my neighbor, could stand it. For how can I say that I love God if, seeing my neighbor in this plight, I do not come to his rescue?...How can I have charity if I am silent at the theft of those most precious jewels that cost the lifeblood of a God, or at the sight of people setting fire to the house and heritage of my most loving Father? (**Aut 158**)

Ah, my Mother, I cannot still my voice on such occasions. No, I shall not be silent, even if I knew it meant that I should be cut to pieces. I shall shout, cry out, and lift up my voice to heaven and earth to remedy so great an evil. I shall not be silent, and when my voice is hoarse or mute from all my crying I shall lift up my hands to heaven, make my hair stand on end, and stamp my feet upon the ground to make up for my lack of speech. (**Aut 159**)



Image of the Crucified Christ in the Church of St. Andrew's in Montecavallo (Chiesa di Sant'Andrea al Quirinale - Roma)



FOR PERSONAL REFLECTION

- Do you feel committed to the reality of our world?
- Do the needs of others affect your apostolic life?

"Woe to me if I do not evangelize!"

- With a partner, write the new Decalogue of the evangelizer.

"The first means I have always employed and still do is *prayer*. In my opinion, this is the greatest means that can be used for the conversion of sinners, the perseverance of the just and the relief of the souls in purgatory." (**Aut 264**)



1844. Claret preaches the Sermon on Light in Manresa (Barcelona), in Spanish.

1851. Claret visits the Sanctuary of the Virgen del Cobre, which he will consider the Prelate of his diocese.

1861. In Madrid, Claret concludes a mission in the Church of the Comendadoras and begins another in San Cayetano, which ends on the 10th.



THE FIRST PARISH, ANDACOLLO (CHILE)

THE CONSOLIDATION (1899-1906)

In the year 1900 the house in Andacollo was founded, at the request of the Bishop of La Serena. The first contract was provisional in order to see how the foundation would develop since it was so unsuited to the ministry the Missionaries had done up until then, as it was permanently attending to the Marian Shrine and a large rural area. Soon the effectiveness of their work was seen and the need for not depending on the pastor of La Serena. They requested the creation of the first parish of the Congregation, which was effectively achieved in October 1902. A new form of apostolate emerged

in the Congregation: the first parish.

With regard to the topic of parishes, we look ahead considering that the second parish was going to be in Texas (1902): Corpus Christi and San Antonio. The growth was very rapid: in 1949 we already had 127 parishes (out of 241 communities); in 1973, we served in 218 parishes.

The IX General Chapter (1904) accepted them under certain conditions. The XII General Chapter (1922) again discussed whether we were obligated to accept parishes. The answer was that the canons did not forbid it.



JULIAN BUTRON CMF Missionary Preacher (1874-1901)



Erigoiti (Biscay, Spain). At age 12 he entered the Claretian Congregation. Once ordained priest in 1899, he was sent to Portugal. He devoted himself to ministry with great zeal, especially to confessions and popular missions.

In June 1900, the year after his priestly ordination, he arrived in Aldeia da Ponte (Portugal). Barely half a year after his arrival, he had mastered the Portuguese language enough to give missions to the people. The first mission he gave was in Cimbres, where he was remembered for his holiness. From there he traveled to Vila Cha de Cangeiros. It was February 24, 1901. On March 3rd pleurisy ended his young life. He was 27 years old. He was buried in Vila Cha de Beira. He soon began to be venerated as a saint throughout the region. In 1922 his corpse was found incorrupt. Even today he is venerated privately in a chapel, his grave being a place of pilgrimage.

DISCERNING THE LORD'S WILL



Dome of the Church of
St. Andrew's at Montecavallo
(Chiesa di Sant'Andrea al Quirinale - Roma)

I was very happy in the novitiate where I was always occupied with our classes in catechizing, preaching, and hearing confessions... (Aut 165)

I was making great progress when suddenly one day I felt such a stabbing pain in my right leg that I couldn't walk. I had to go to the infirmary. Appropriate remedies relieved the pain somewhat but not totally, and it was feared that I might be permanently lame. When the rector saw my condition, he said: What is happening to you is not natural...It makes me think that the Lord wants you for something

else. He added: If it's all right with you, the General should be consulted because he is so good and has so much godly knowledge. We shall consult him. I replied that the plan seemed very good and so I went to see the General. He listened to me attentively, and after he had heard my account of the whole matter he told me, without any hesitation, It is God's will that you go quickly to Spain. Have no fear. Courage! (Aut 166)

In time I came to see that the Father General had been inspired when he spoke to me... (Aut 167)



FOR PERSONAL REFLECTION

- Do occasional health problems or other negative experiences influence your discernment of God's will?
- Do you try to see the hand of God in human mediations?
- Have you had the sensation of recognizing in the long run that an assignment that seemed difficult to you was positive in your life?
- Where have your discernments of the Lord's will led you? What fruits have they born? When have you carried them out?

"What we need is a *conversion* that will lead us to recognize and accept, amid the challenges of our era, the gift of God, which is life, which becomes *personal and community history*, which is a *gift for others*."
(MCT 131)



1844. Claret continues Lenten preaching in Manresa (Barcelona).

1853. Claret continues the mission in Baracoa (Cuba).

1865. Claret visits the Vincentians, whose Major Superior, like that of his missionaries, has just obtained from Rome the faculty of extending dimissorial letters. Claret obtains a copy of the form and sends it to Fr. **Joseph Xifre**.



EARLY HISTORY OF THE CONGREGATION

THE CONSOLIDATION (1899-1906)

Fr. **Mariano Aguilar**, who had already published *Vida Admirable del P. Claret* [Admirable Life of Father Claret], prepared the first *History of the Congregation* (1901) in two volumes, on the occasion of its 50th anniversary, which did not satisfy everyone because it contained a not so generous or broad concept of the nature and demands of the History. He told about the difficulties he had in the Prologue of the work: *at times for not having been able to search the archives of our houses myself, at other times for*

the omission that was almost necessary at the beginning of the Congregation to record the main events and conserve the interesting documents, many of which have been lost, and in the end, because of the excessive modesty of not a few Fathers.

We must remember here that Fr. Aguilar, together with Fr. Manuel Pardinilla, Fr. **Jose Busquet** and Fr. Juan Ayneto, were the fruit of the intellectual concerns of the Congregation which made Fr. **Xifre** send them to study in the Roman Universities.



PEDRO GRAU, CMF

Apostolic Vicar of Quibdo (1903-2002)



Sant Jaume de Viladrov (Barcelona, Spain). He made his first religious profession in 1919 and was ordained a priest in 1929. From his first assignment in 1930, his missionary life was linked to the difficult missions of Choco, in Colombia. He carried out tasks of governance in Colombia and Venezuela, including that of Provincial Superior and formator of Claretian seminarians. He was director of the magazine *El Voto Nacional* [The National Vow] and initiator of the widespread *Hoja Dominical* [Sunday Bulletin]. He knew a lot about the life of a constant traveler, a navigator, the hot sun and the downpours he endured in a canoe, the nights on the riverside farms. Nothing daunted him. Pius XII appointed him Titular Bishop of Pella and Apostolic Vicar of Quibdo, where he worked with exemplary dedication until 1983, when he was succeeded by the Claretian Jorge Ivan Castaño. With a missionary, joyful and tireless spirit, he knew how to give and receive affection of the people to whom he gave himself and for whom he always lived.

EVANGELIZE WITH FREEDOM



In mid-March I left Rome for Catalonia. The fathers of the Company wanted me to settle in the city of Manresa, while the Rev. Father Fermin de Alcaraz wanted me to go to Berga, where missions were being held. Nevertheless, in view of my condition, I was given complete freedom to decide. I placed myself under observation in Olost. From Olost I went to Vic, where my superior told me to go to neither of the places that had been suggested but to Viladrau, and to this end I was named regent of the parish and left for Viladrau on May 13. Here I successfully recovered from my illness. (Aut 167)

In the parish of Viladrau there was an elderly and disabled pastor and an assistant pastor from the town itself... This was very convenient because it allowed me to start out on missions from there. (Aut 168)

How admirable God's Providence is! He freed me from going to Berga, where my mere presence would have put me in danger because the royalists were in power there... (Aut 169)



Church of Sant Marti de Viladrau (Osona, Spain)



FOR PERSONAL REFLECTION

Berga and Manresa were cities controlled by the two opposing political factions of that time. Thanks to the assignment he was given by the head of the diocese, Claret was able to evangelize with freedom.

- Do you find dangers that could hinder your freedom as an evangelizer?
- Does your attitude towards the various political tendencies diminish your missionary freedom?
- Watch some scenes from the movie "Of Gods and men".

"To live our Claretian missionary vocation with enthusiasm is the first condition for building the future that we all long for. It is not a matter of promoting some vain forms of triumphalism, but rather one of feeling glad to have been called to this family of evangelizers and of consolidating our sincere adherence to the project of life that has inspired that family and given it meaning."

(Josep M. Abella Batlle, *Witnesses and Messengers of the God of Life*, 26)



1851. Claret begins the mission in Santiago, Cuba, which will last twenty days. He preaches in the cathedral, and Fr. **Manuel Vilario**, in the church of San Francisco.

1865. Claret starts a mission in the Church of the Pious School of San Fernando (Madrid). Some have advised him against preaching because they believe that his life is in danger. The persecution had intensified. However, it was very successful.

1865. Claret allows for the formation of a choir in the **Academy of St. Michael** in Medina de Rioseco (Valladolid).



LA VOCACION RELIGIOSA [THE RELIGIOUS VOCATION]

THE CONSOLIDATION (1899-1906)

In 1902, on his name day, Fr. **Clement Serrat** published a beautiful circular letter to the Congregation entitled *La Vocacion Religiosa*, in which he aimed to awaken feelings of gratitude in everyone, reminding them of the benefit of the divine vocation. At the same time, he invited fidelity and imitation of the Master through three means: the first and foremost humility and meekness. These are two typical virtues of the Claretian Missionary, a motivated, profound and personalized humility, sincere and well-founded; religious

must be aware of the sacrifice and self-denial that it implies. The second virtue is a patient charity, which helps to understand one's brother, his character and his temperament, his pain and suffering, avoiding hardness and harshness with him, and leads towards a call to the responsibility that each one has for the vocation of their brother. And, finally, unity in the spirit with the bond of peace. If the previous means tends to encourage mutual charity among the brothers, considered individually, this one considers them collectively, forming a whole.



PEDRO NAUDO

Collaborator of Claret (1801-1882)



Enveitg (Cerdanya, France). He entered the seminary in Barcelona. An enlightened man, simple and full of zeal, he was the beneficiary and administrator of the parish of Santa Maria del Mar, in Barcelona. There he founded several pious and charitable works. He was an intimate friend and representative of Father Claret for many years, *well respected and known for his character and virtues*. Bishop **Rosendo Salvado** gave him special charge of the Australian missions. He died in Barcelona on March 4, 1882. In a letter from Naudó to Claret in 1870 he said: *My nephew Xifre is useful to me*. But it is not known whether Xifre was his nephew, surely it was a copy error. Because of the many letters between Claret and Naudó we can understand the trust that Claret professed to him. He was the one who supplied books and mailings for him and others from the *Libreria Religiosa* in Barcelona. In 1879 he wrote of Claret: *Claret's whole life is admirable. God, in his time, will do what is necessary for his beatification*.

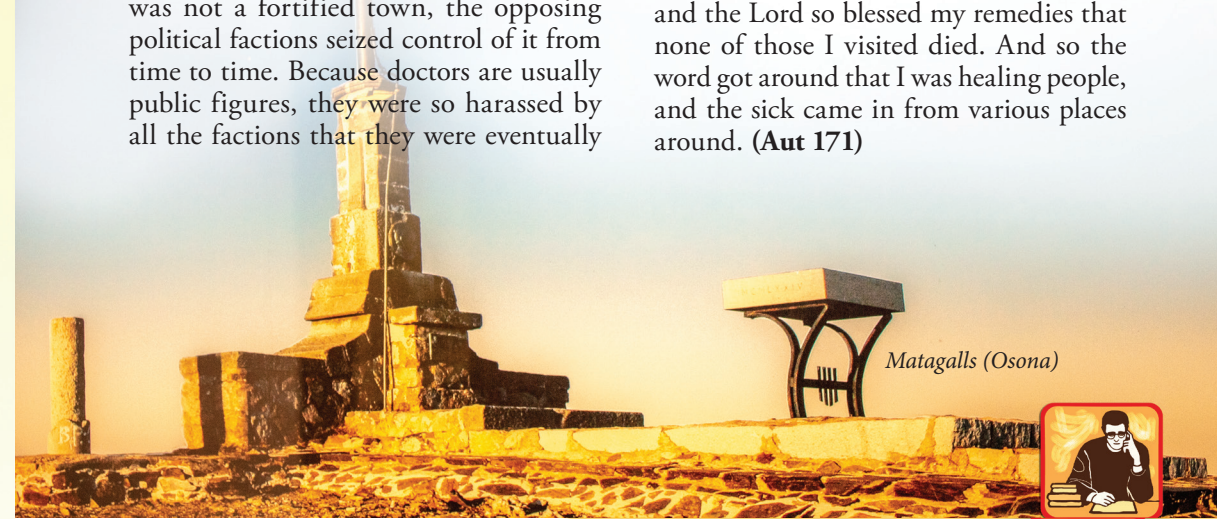
BODILY AND SPIRITUAL PHYSICIAN



After I had settled in the parish of Viladrau as regent, I did my best to care for the spiritual welfare of the people. On Sundays and feast days I explained the Gospel in the morning at the main Mass, and in the evening, I taught catechism to children and adults of both sexes. I visited the sick daily. As Viladrau was not a fortified town, the opposing political factions seized control of it from time to time. Because doctors are usually public figures, they were so harassed by all the factions that they were eventually

forced to move, and so the town was left without a single doctor. (**Aut 170**)

Thus I had to become not only the spiritual but also the bodily physician of the people, on the basis of my general knowledge and consultation of the medical books I procured. When some doubtful case arose, I would look it up in my books, and the Lord so blessed my remedies that none of those I visited died. And so the word got around that I was healing people, and the sick came in from various places around. (**Aut 171**)



Matagalls (Osona)



FOR PERSONAL REFLECTION

In the absence of doctors, Claret does not hesitate to attend to the sick with natural medicine and prayer.

- *In your apostolic life do you have a relationship with the sick?*
- *How do you relate the human and the spiritual in your missionary service?*

“I want to remind priests that the confessional must not be a torture chamber but rather an encounter with the Lord's mercy which spurs us on to do our best.”
(Francis, *Evangelii gaudium*, 44)



1848. Claret sails from Cadiz towards the Canary Islands with Bishop **Codina**.

1850. Claret begins Spiritual Exercises for Ordinands in Vic.

1867. Claret sends Mother **Paris** a copy of the new catechism that he has sent to all the bishops of Spain and that he would like to see as the single catechism; in November 1865 he presented it to **Pius IX** and earned his approval.



THE MISSIONS IN GUINEA DURING THIS PERIOD

THE CONSOLIDATION (1899-1906)

Thanks to a Decree of the State Ministry in 1902, in which he was obliged to present an annual Report of the Spanish possessions in Africa, we have abundant information from the hand of Fr. **Armengol Coll**. In 1903 the publication of the bimonthly Claretian magazine also began *La Guinea Española [Spanish Guinea]*, with the objective of *commenting on the religious, material and moral interests of the Gulf of Guinea*.

The missions in Guinea can be grouped into three groups: the Fernand group, all located on the

island of Fernando Poo, which were separated and isolated from the others, with a lot of information about their lives and apostolic works. The group of those on the borders of the continent, all of them in the vicinity of Muni River: Corisco, Cabo San Juan, Elobeys and Rio Benito. And finally, Annobon, which because of its absolute isolation, because of the special condition of his inhabitants, offered a very particular atmosphere for the apostolate, very different and segregated in its development and in its history from the other missions.

LEON CARBONERO SOL Journalist (1812-1902)



Villatobas (Toledo, Spain). He was one of the most influential personalities of Spanish ecclesiastical life of the 19th century. Founder, director, owner and editor of the newspaper *La Cruz [The Cross]*, a religious magazine that was created in Seville in 1852. He arrived in Madrid in 1828 to study at the Imperial College. He married in 1840 and had six children. He moved to Toledo and later to Seville as professor of Arabic language. He was editor of the newspaper *El Conciliador [The Mediator]* until he founded his great work *La Cruz*, which made him an important figure in the history of the Spanish Church. On November 1, 1858 Claret founded the **Academy of St. Michael** in Madrid. Among the partners of the first Hierarchy was Leon Carbonero y Sol. He moved to Madrid during the revolution of 1868. He published a large number of books and held numerous positions. Claret was his great friend and counselor. *La Cruz* published numerous articles about the saint, including those about his beatification process. He corresponded with Claret. He died on March 4th.

FAITHFUL TO HIS MISSIONARY VOCATION



I started giving missions in the parish of Viladrau on August 15, 1840, while I was conducting a novena in honor of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary. Next, I gave another in the parish of Espineltas, a good hour away from Viladrau. Then I went to the parish of Seva. The mission here was more sensational than the others. A large number of people underwent conversion and made general confessions. This was the start of my fame as a missionary. (**Aut 172**)

During November I held an All Souls' novena in Igualada and Santa Coloma de Caral... Thus I remained in Viladrau for eight months, going out on missions and returning. But I couldn't continue in this way any longer. As I have said, when I was in town, I visited the sick... I was terribly upset at seeing the tears of the people and listening to all the reasons they gave why I shouldn't leave the parish to go preaching. (**Aut 173**)

This forced me to ask my superior to relieve me of my duty as regent and free me from any parish obligations. I asked him to let me know his decision soon so that I could go and preach missions wherever he chose. This he did... (**Aut 174**)



Church of Sant Vicenç d'Espinelves (Osona)



FOR PERSONAL REFLECTION

Despite the pastoral success he experienced in Viladrau, Claret did not forget his missionary vocation.

- Have you had to make sacrifices in order to be faithful to your missionary freedom?
- How could you convert your pastoral work into a more missionary and Claretian apostolate?

Doing God's will happens, sometimes, by disappointing some people.

- Have you experienced that?

"Oh, how good a Friend art Thou, my Lord!...
Thou dost remember the times when we love Thee,
my Lord, and, when for a moment we repent,
Thou dost forget how we have offended Thee.
(St. Teresa of Avila, *Life*, 8. 6)



1840. Claret asks the Spanish ambassador in Rome for a pass to return to his homeland upon leaving the Jesuit novitiate.

1853. Claret leaves Baracoa (Cuba), by sea, towards the Bay of Tanamo, and from there to Sagua to start a mission and a pastoral visit.

1858. In Madrid, the mission started in San Cayetano continues in the church of the Caballero de Gracia.



THE PROVINCES OF CATALUNYA AND CASTILLA

THE CONSOLIDATION (1899-1906)

Soon after being reelected as Provincial of Catalunya in the Provincial Chapter of 1901, Fr. **Felix A. Cepeda** began to face difficulties that led him to resign his office in 1902. Fr. Francisco Cases was appointed to replace him. In this period the Province of Catalunya established only one foundation, in Cartagena (1906).

In Castilla, Segovia had been confirmed as the seat of the Provincial Government, a government that was re-elected in full in the Provincial Chapter

of 1901, with Fr. **Isaac Burgos** at the helm, who led the Province decisively. In 1902 this Province founded the house of Zamora, fruit of some Spiritual Exercises given by Fr. **Domingo Sola** and Fr. Eduardo Gomez. One of the first assigned to this house was Fr. **Nicolas Garcia**, future Superior General of the Congregation. In 1904 the houses of Jerez de los Caballeros and Gibraltar were founded. In Portugal, where only the foundation of Aldeia da Ponte existed, Castilla founded communities in Fraga (1903) and Lisbon (1905).



LUCIANO CASADEVALL Y DURAN

Bishop of Vic (1785-1852)



Vic (Barcelona, Spain). He earned his doctorate in Theology in Cervera in 1814, obtained a benefice in the Cathedral of Vic and later was named canon. In 1837 he was named Vicar General of the Diocese, which he governed with unwavering firmness and remarkable prudence given the difficult circumstances, ensuring that the ecclesiastical ministry was not lacking in any parish, even in those occupied by defenders of **Isabella II**, and in those occupied by the troops of Don Carlos. In 1849 he was consecrated Bishop of Vic. The priest and writer **Jaime Balmes**, who was always at his side and was undoubtedly his promoter to the episcopacy, praised his governance of the diocese very much. Fr. **Roothaan**, Superior General of the Society of Jesus, in a letter addressed to Casadevall, told him that God had granted three champions to the Diocese of Vic: Claret for preaching, Balmes for science, and, without naming him, he insinuated that the third was Casadevall. This bishop always appreciated and admired Claret, with whom he had a unique friendship. He died on March 11th.

WORD AND SIGNS



During the summer several children became sick, and after I had given them only one application of a certain remedy they all got well. At one o'clock one morning, I visited a young man twenty-five years old who was unconscious and on the point of dying. I applied a simple remedy, and he recovered his senses and in two days was completely cured. **(Aut 175)**

It is my conviction that these people were cured through the faith and trust with which they came, and that our Lord rewarded their faith with both bodily and spiritual health, for I would also exhort them to make a good confession of all their sins, and they did. Furthermore, I believe that the Lord did all this not because of any merits of mine—I don't have any—but to show the importance of the Word of God that I was preaching... **(Aut 181)**

Matagalls (Osona)



FOR PERSONAL REFLECTION

Father Claret's preaching, like that of the apostles, was confirmed by the signs that the Lord performed in the people (cf. Mk 16:20).

- Does the witness of your life help the effectiveness of your apostolate?
- Do you believe that your preaching awakens the faith and trust in God of the faithful?

In the exhortation *Evangelii gaudium* (156-159) Pope Francis speaks about the features that should accompany the homily.

- Discuss them in your parish community.

"Everything you've ever wanted is sitting on the other side of fear."
(George Addair)



1858. Claret has been the royal confessor for almost a year and is still not sure if he will continue; he writes to **Currius**: *This assignment has me very fed up and if I could leave it today, I would not wait until tomorrow.*

1859. Claret, very concerned about the health of Fr. **Dionisio Gonzalez**, administrator of the Archdiocese of Santiago, considers some names to replace him and for him to be transferred to the Peninsula. Fortunately, he will hold out for a few months.

1868. Claret begins the mission preached in the Saladero prison (Madrid).



GROWTH OF THE VISITORSHIPS

THE CONSOLIDATION (1899-1906)

The Visitorships of South America and North America continued, as such, a process of growth until the extraordinary General Chapter of 1904.

In Chile, there were many foundations during this period. Houses were founded in Andacollo (1900), with its great treasure: la Virgen del Rosario, a shrine of national and international excellence; Temuco (1901), promoted by Fr. Dalmau; Coquimbo and Talca (1903), foundations somewhat contrived; Antofagasta (1903), by the initiative of Fr.

Claparols. The planting was hard, but the fruits were extraordinary thanks to the tireless work of missionaries like Fr. Tomas Sese, promoted by Fr. **Ramon Genover**, Visitor from the Province of Castilla, to which the Visitorship belonged. We must remember here Fr. **Mariano Avellana** and Fr. **Cristobal Soteras**, extra-ordinary missionaries, the former in the Hospital of Carrizal Alto in 1904 with a reputation for holiness, and the latter in La Serena in 1908. In Brazil a house was founded in Pouso Alegre (1901), also thanks to Fr. Genover.



LORENZO BARILI

Apostolic Nuncio (1801-1875)



Ancona (Italy). He studied in Rome in Colegio Capranica, the Roman College and San Apolinar. He was Archpriest of the Cathedral and Rector of the Seminary of Ancona. Then he was Internuncio in Brazil and Apostolic Nuncio in Colombia and later appointed as Archbishop in 1857. He was appointed Apostolic Nuncio in Spain in October of 1857, shortly after Claret arrived from Cuba. He remained in this position until March 1868, the year in which he was promoted to cardinal. He received the cardinal's hat from the hands of **Isabella II**. Father Claret always appreciated him. On a certain occasion Claret wrote of him: *He is an educated man, experienced and pious.* He died in Rome on March 8, 1875. Claret always acted in agreement with the Nuncio, who faithfully transmitted the instructions received from Rome. Barili said of Claret on one occasion: *He is truly a tireless apostle, full of zeal and charity. It is a true blessing for Madrid that this outstanding archbishop has come here ... the clergy who wish to fulfill their ministry have a guide and a teacher.*

PASTORAL DISCERNMENT



Another kind of infirmity that caused me even greater trouble and took a lot of my time was the cure of those who were possessed or obsessed by the devil. When I began preaching missions, I saw a large number of people who claimed to be possessed. Their relatives would ask me to exorcise them and, since I was duly authorized, I did so. Only one in a thousand could be called a genuine case of possession. There were other causes, physical or moral, that I won't go into here. **(Aut 183)**

Seeing that so many people had no such demons and that, besides this, they made me lose a lot of time I needed for hearing the confessions of those who had been converted through my preaching, I said to myself, It is far more necessary for you to be casting the devil out of souls in mortal sin than it is from bodies, even when there really are demons there. I thought that even this might be a snare of the devil, so I resolved to give up exorcisms and try another approach... **(Aut 184)**



FOR PERSONAL REFLECTION

Claret did not let himself get ensnared by the work of exorcisms, which were very typical of his time; on the contrary, he knew how to discern cases with clarity and be free to preach.

- *Are there activities that distract you from your evangelizing mission?*
- *Do you carefully discern how you spend your time?*

“I took great care and worked energetically,
as if everything depended on my work and, at the same time,
I put all my trust in God because everything really does depend on Him.”
(Aut 274)



1859. On Ash Wednesday, Claret preaches in the collegiate church of San Isidro (Madrid), and begins Spiritual Exercises for the Mercedarians known as *the Gongoras*.

1868. Claret personally asks the Queen if she could ask the minister to finally give Vic's missionaries that wing of the residence and orchard that has not yet been given to them.

1868. These days Claret is suffering a lot because of a large sore in his mouth; today they perform an operation on his gums.



THE CONGREGATION IN ARGENTINA

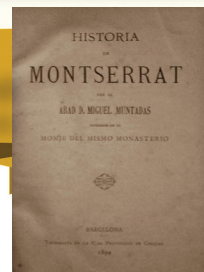
THE CONSOLIDATION (1899-1906)

After unsuccessful attempts, some of them as late as 1877, Fr. **Ramon Genover**, by order of Fr. **Isaac Burgos**, finally moved from São Paulo to Buenos Aires in 1900 to try out what would be the first foundation in Argentina. At the end of 1901, after the Provincial Chapter, the foundation of the community was carried out in a rental house in Buenos Aires and with a priority of attending to the parish of La Concepcion and a Correctional House for women. At the head of the foundation was

Fr. Zacarias Iglesias. It did not take long to expand the number of houses in the Republic; they founded one in Tucuman (1902), which was personally investigated by Fr. Genover despite the distances. Catamarca (1903) was also managed by Fr. Genover. And Rosario (1904), this time at the request of the missionaries themselves, also under the initiative of Fr. Genover and with the collaboration of Fr. Lucinio Martinez. But the most outstanding figure in Argentina in this period was Fr. Zacarias Iglesias.

MIGUEL MUNTADAS

Founder of the Colegio de Ultramar (1808-1885)



Capellades (Barcelona, Spain). He took the Benedictine habit and professed in 1826. Exclaustrated in 1835, he returned to the monastery of Montserrat in 1844, where he led the community of those who had been exclaustrated, first as President and then as Abbot, working on restoring the monastery and organizing their monastic life. In 1867 he published *Montserrat, su pasado, su presente y su porvenir* [Montserrat, its past, its present and its future]. Two months before his death, accepting the invitation of Bishop **Rosendo Salvado**, he founded a College for Overseas Missionaries, which would be so fruitful in monastic vocations, and with which Montserrat and the other Benedictine monasteries of Spain could be rebuilt. He died in Montserrat on March 8th. He maintained a close friendship with Father Claret and with Saint **Micaela of the Blessed Sacrament**, foundress of the Sisters Adorers (Handmaids of the Blessed Sacrament and of Charity). He had the opinion of Claret as a truly holy bishop, full of zeal for the glory of God and the salvation of souls, as well as wise and prudent, with humility and unwavering meekness.

THE NEED TO BE SENT



I had come to realize that a missionary must never thrust himself into an assignment. He should offer his services to the bishop, saying, Ecce ego, mitte me. But he should not go until his bishop sends him, because when he is sent, it will be by God's sending. All the Old Testament prophets were sent by God. Jesus Christ himself was sent from God, and Jesus in turn sent his Apostles. Sicut misit me pater et ego mitto vos. **(Aut 195)**

This need for being sent to a particular place by a bishop was something that God himself helped me understand from the

very beginning. Thus, no matter how evil and demoralized the towns I was sent to, great fruits were always obtained, because it was God who sent me to them and prepared them and predisposed them for me. Missionaries may rest assured, then, that they should go to no town, however good, unless they go under obedience; but that under obedience they should not hesitate to go to any town, however bad. As far as any possible difficulties or persecutions are concerned, let them have no fear: God has sent them through obedience and He will take care of them. **(Aut 198)**



FOR PERSONAL REFLECTION

Claret discovered the value of being sent as a missionary by the competent ecclesiastical authority and recommends it to his missionaries.

- What place does obedience occupy in your missionary life?
- Are you free and available to go out to evangelize wherever they send you?

“Following Jesus means accepting and making our own the new order of values that he sets forth as the ‘Kingdom,’ the absolute reality in view of which all the rest acquires its proper relativity.”

(MCT 143)



1853. Fr. **Joseph Caixal** is appointed as Bishop of Urgel; Claret laments how the *Libreria Religiosa* may suffer.

1859. In a letter to Fr. **Joseph Xifre**, Claret is pessimistic about the attitude of the Government towards the Church and skeptical about the civil approval of the Congregation of missionaries.

1865. Claret is optimistic about the operation of El Escorial despite the opposition it experiences. He had just published *Consuelo de un alma calumniada* [*Comfort for a Slandered Soul*].



FOUNDATION IN THE UNITED STATES

THE CONSOLIDATION (1899-1906)

The foundation in San Antonio in 1902, established by Fr. Ramon Prat, was the fruit of the missions that were previously preached in Texas and California by Fr. Mariano Lusilla and Fr. Camilo Torrente from Mexico, at the initiative of the Apostolic Vicar of Brownsville, Pedro Verdaguer, who had known Fr. Founder. First from the Bishop's residence and then from their own residence, they began tireless missionary work throughout the region. It was not easy to adapt to the

new environment, including the way of dressing and the style of pastoral work. At the same time the first steps were taken for the foundation in San Marcos, a small town of 2,000 inhabitants about 100 km from San Antonio, a foundation which materialized in 1906. It was born from the preaching of Fr. Eugenio Sugrañes and due to the ailments and almost blindness of the only priest in the city. In these foundations, they had to accept the parish work but without renouncing their missionary character.



ANDRES MARTINEZ DE NOVOA Catechist and Priest (1804-1871)



Madrid (Spain). He was an exemplary, pious and very charitable priest. He held the positions of Vicar in Navalcarnero (1835) and later as Visitor of religious sisters in the Diocese of Toledo and Chaplain and Confessor of the school of the Sisters Adorers. He published several works, including a *Catecismo breve de la Doctrina Cristiana por preguntas y respuestas* [*Brief Catechism of Christian Doctrine through Questions and Answers*]. He made the arrival possible of the Redemptorists to Spain and founded the House of Charity with the **Vicuña** brothers. He died of a stroke in Madrid on March 11, 1871. He was one of the two priests who brought Claret the bull of his episcopal appointment and Claret said they were very exemplary priests. He was also one of the four who, at Claret's house in Madrid, took charge of his Novitiate project of the Tertiary Sisters of Carmel, since they were owners of the school for orphans in the Plaza de San Francisco, where the Sisters served.

FREE OF WORLDLY MOTIVATIONS



Whenever I went to a town, I did so without any worldly goal in mind; my only aim was to glorify God and save souls. I was often forced to remind people of this because I knew that it was the most convincing argument for good and bad alike. I would tell them: **(Aut 199)**

You know that men nearly always do whatever it is they do for one or another of the following reasons: (1) for gain or money, (2) for pleasure, (3) for fame. I have not come to preach a mission in this town for any of these three reasons. Not for money, because I don't want a penny from anyone and I won't take one. Not for pleasure, for what pleasure could I get out of wearing myself out from early in the morning until night? ... **(Aut 200)**

Maybe I do it for fame? Hardly. You must be well aware of the calumnies I'm exposed to. One person may praise me, but another makes all sorts of charges against me, as the Jews did against Jesus, speaking ill of his person, his words, and his actions until finally they seized Him, scourged Him, and put Him to death on a most painful gibbet of shame... **(Aut 201)**



FOR PERSONAL REFLECTION

- Are the true motivations of your apostolate always clear to you?
- Are you aware of the dangers of "worldliness" in your missionary service?
- Do you think that one of the three aims that Claret avoided could be present in your life?
- What motivates your evangelizing action?
- Do you let yourself be evangelized?

"It is not enough for candidates to want to be 'priests' in order to let them enter the Congregation. They must ardently desire 'to be missionaries' and to accept all the consequences that this vocation entails."
(Josep M. Abella Batlle, *Witnesses and Messengers of the God of Life*, 39)



1854. Claret begins a mission in the Church of San Francisco, in Santiago, Cuba.

1856. Claret travels from Holguin to Santiago, after the attack, passing through Naranjo (Cuba).

1863. Claret is preaching the novena to Saint Joseph in the Church of Montserrat, (Madrid) which began the day before.



IX EXTRAORDINARY GENERAL CHAPTER

THE CONSOLIDATION (1899-1906)

From April 24 to May 18, 1904, the IX Extraordinary General Chapter was held in La Selva del Camp, where it was decided to transfer the General Government to Aranda de Duero, and it was brought about so that the Provinces could have their own Scholasticate, creating the Colegio Central (called the *Aranda Year*) for those who finished their studies. Three independent General Vicariates were created: Mexico, Chile and Argentina-Brazil, separating them from the Provinces of Spain, in addition to Fernando Poo, which would be

elevated to Vicariate shortly after, with Fr. Armengol Coll, first Bishop of the Congregation after Father Claret, being named Apostolic Vicar. There were six Major Organisms at this time with their respective Major Superiors: two Provinces in Spain (Catalunya and Castilla, which in their day would have lacked members to form a third) and four General Vicariates or Quasi-Provinces: that of Fernando Poo with Fr. Armengol Coll, those of Mexico and North America with Fr. Ramon Prat, that of Chile with Fr. **Tomas Sese** and that of Argentina-Brazil with Fr. Zacarias Iglesias.

ATILIO PARUSSINI, CMF Witness of Martyrs (1913-1938)



Rosario de Santa Fe (Argentina). He entered the postulancy in Rosario after he had almost organized his admission to the Franciscan novitiate. According to the report of his Novice Master, *he was obedient, submissive, rooted in his vocation, pious, formal, with an excellent memory, talented, skilled for manual and artistic works, frank, charitable and diligent.* In 1931 he professed and in 1936 he was sent to Spain, where he was caught by the revolution while in the school in Barbastro. There he had to suffer persecution with his brother martyrs, his life being saved after 23 days thanks to his condition as a foreigner, along with his fellow countryman **Pablo Hall**. In Barbastro he witnessed, and later testified about, the admirable example of his companions: *My eyes wept bitterly and my lips deposited a kiss on the forehead of those Martyrs and my hands shook theirs and we said goodbye.* He wrote many letters to Claretians and relatives about the martyrs where he showed their desire for martyrdom.

ANOINTED BY THE LOVE OF THE FATHER



No, I repeat, I have no mere earthly aim but a far nobler one. My aim is to make God better known, loved, and served by everyone. If only I had all human hearts, with which to love God! My God, people do not know you! If they did, you would be loved far more than you are... (**Aut 202**)

Another of my aims is to prevent all the sins and offenses that are being committed against God—that same God who is loved by seraphim, served by angels, feared by powers, adored by principalities—that God who is offended by a vile earthworm, man. Be astonished at this, you heavens! ... (**Aut 203**)

If you saw your father being beaten and stabbed, wouldn't you run to defend him? Wouldn't it be a crime for you to look on indifferently at your father in such a plight? Well then, wouldn't I be the greatest criminal in the world if I didn't try to prevent the outrages that men are perpetrating against God, who is my Father? My Father, I shall defend you, although it should cost me my life... (**Aut 204**)



FOR PERSONAL REFLECTION

- Like Claret, is the purpose of your life to make God known, loved and served?
- Are you aware that with your evangelizing work you collaborate with others so that the plan of God the Father is realized in humanity?
- Read and pray with the Gospel Lk 4:14-19.
- Write a prayer for evangelizers.

“Faith is not a light which scatters all our darkness, but a lamp which guides our steps in the night and suffices for the journey.”
(Francis, *Lumen Fidei*, 57)



1846. Claret concludes the mission in La Selva del Camp (Tarragona).

1865. Claret sends Mother Paris the booklet *Tardes de verano* [Summer Evenings], a small book of apologetics aimed at Protestants, which he had recently published.

1867. The Abbess of Las Huelgas (Burgos) has asked Claret to go preach to them, but the Queen, *paying attention to the current circumstances of the times we are in*, does not think he should leave Madrid.



CREATION OF THE PROVINCE OF BETICA

THE CONSOLIDATION (1899-1906)

In that General Chapter of 1904, the creation of the third Province of the Congregation was also determined, that of Betica. The resolution would be carried out on October 7, 1906, with Fr. Candido Catalan being named Provincial and Fr. Jose Bruned and Fr. Antonio Sanchez as Consultors. Fr. Agustin Arnal was appointed Secretary. The Local Superiors of the twelve houses that constituted it were also named and two General Consultors of the new Province: Fr. Lucio Nuns and

Fr. **Antonio Pueyo**. All the superiors met in Ciudad Real with the new Provincial Government on October 8th, under the direction of Fr. **Martin Alsina**, for a few days of retreat, and to receive instructions, warnings and guidance. The Provincial Government established its residence in Zafra, where it would also establish the Novitiate. But soon the plans were changed and the Novitiate was inaugurated in Jerez de los Caballeros, along with the Postulancy and Philosophy studies, and the Provincial Government moved there.

JAIME SOLER RAGUER Bishop of Teruel (1791-1851)



Sant Joan de les Abadesses (Girona, Spain). He entered the seminary in Vic in 1814. In 1823 he was appointed professor of Philosophy of the Seminary and in 1824 professor of Theology and Vice Rector. He received his doctorate at the University of Cervera, where he was a professor. He was magisterial canon of the Cathedral of Vic and Rector of the seminary in 1844. Appointed as Bishop of Teruel in 1850, he was consecrated along with Claret on October 6th of that year in the Cathedral of Vic by Bishop **Luciano Casadevall**, Bishop of Vic. When he was about to move to Valencia for treatment, he died during the trip in Gerica (Castello) on March 19th. He was buried in the Cathedral of Segorbe (Castello). In 1843 he was among those attending the first Spiritual Exercises that Claret gave for the clergy in Campdevanòl (Girona). Bishop Jaime commented that the angels had visibly accompanied the path of Mons. Anthony Claret and that he considered him a saint.

URGED BY LOVE OF HIS NEIGHBOR



Matagalls (Osona)

I am also driven to preach without ceasing by the sight of the throngs of souls who are falling into hell—for it is a matter of faith that all who die in mortal sin are damned. It is estimated that about eighty thousand die each day, and how many of them die in mortal sin and hence are damned... “*talis vita, finis ita—your death will be as your life has been.*” (**Aut 205**)

I tell you quite frankly that whenever I see sinners, I grow restless, I cannot quiet down, I cannot be consoled, my heart goes out to them... (**Aut 211**)

Charity urges and impels me; it makes me run from town to town shouting, “My son, sinner, look where you’re heading; you’re about to fall into hell. Stop! Don’t take another step! ... (**Aut 212**)

Another force that drives me to preach and hear confessions is my desire to make my neighbors happy. Oh, what great joy there is in healing the sick, freeing the prisoner, consoling the afflicted, and cheering the sad. All this and much more is done in bringing one’s neighbors to the glory of heaven... (**Aut 213**)



FOR PERSONAL REFLECTION

- What do you feel in the face of the throngs of people who live without the light of the Gospel?
- What relationship do you think there should be between tolerance as a value of social living and apostolic zeal?
- In a society of many cultures and religions, what should be understood as happiness for your neighbor?

“The soul can picture itself in the presence of Christ, and accustom itself to become enkindled with great love for His sacred Humanity.”
(St. Teresa of Avila, *Life*, 12. 2)



1856. Claret arrives in Santiago, where he receives a large crowd to celebrate that he has recovered from the attack. Along the way there have been many snares, which leave him more perplexed about whether to continue on the Island or leave.

1860. Claret concludes some Spiritual Exercises for the Augustinian Sisters of St. Mary Magdalene who run the women's prison center on Hortaleza Street (Madrid).

1864. Claret attends the consecration of Gregorio Lopez, Bishop of Plasencia.



STATISTICS AND APOSTOLATE DURING THIS PERIOD

THE CONSOLIDATION (1899-1906)

In this period the Congregation went from 1,368 Claretians in 1899 to 1,490 in 1907, with 84 houses, 23 more than when Fr. Xifre died. The main ministry was still preaching, but without so much attachment to the exclusivity of Missions and Spiritual Exercises. As we have seen, other ministries were accepted, such as parishes, especially in America, where the first parish of the Congregation was accepted in Andacollo (Chile) in 1902. Schools with secondary education were also accepted, both residential and day students, (previously only primary

education had been accepted.) Also, in this era a rudimentary Publishing House (1903) was born, seed of the future *Corazon de Maria*. In the same way publications were extended throughout the Congregation, like *La Guinea Española* (1903). And it was at this time that the pastoral work was extended to seminaries and universities. In July 1903 that select list of Roman students (Manuel de Arrandiaga, **John Postius** and **Felipe Maroto**) opened doors to the Roman University of Saint Apollinare and in the Diocesan Seminary.



CRISTOBAL FERNANDEZ, CMF Missionary and Historian (1898-1969)



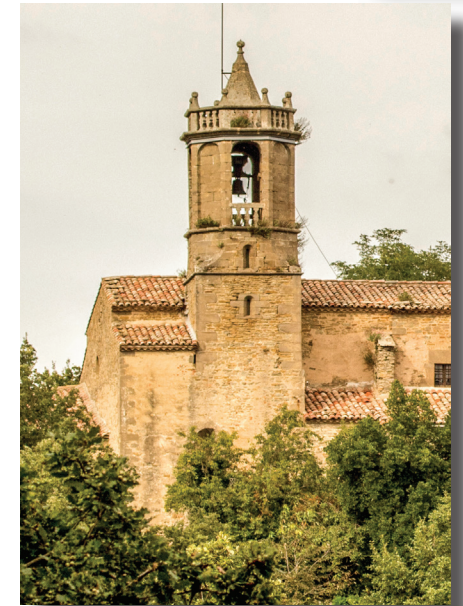
Pradanos de Ojeda (Palencia, Spain). He received a Bachelor's in Classical Languages in Madrid, then moved on to be a professor in Santo Domingo de la Calzada. Soon he was responsible for writing about the life of the then Blessed Father Claret and the *History of the Congregation*, without a doubt, the main works of his life and a continuous reference for all Claretians who want to know about our past. In April 1935, while in Zamora, he received an unexpected letter from Rome in which he was entrusted with writing a broad, critical and complete account of the life of our Blessed Father. It needed to be a new work, not a copy of others. In 1939 he had finished the work of about 2,000 pages. It had to go through censorship. After numerous changes, in 1947 the work was published with the title: *El Beato Padre Antonio M^a Claret. Historia documentada de su vida y empresas* [The Blessed Father Anthony Mary Claret. Documented History of his Life and Enterprises.] Later he would complete this publication with *El Confesor de Isabel II* [The Confessor of *Isabella II*]. In the year of Claret's canonization (1950) he extended this account of his life with minor works: *Flores Claretianas* [Claretian Flowers], *Un Apostol Moderno* [A Modern Apostle], etc. He died in Madrid on March 19th.

THE EXAMPLE OF THE PROPHETS



Besides my unfailing love for poor sinners, another force that has driven me to work for their salvation is the example of the prophets, of Christ himself, of the Apostles, and of the many men and women saints whose lives and histories I have often read, noting down some of the more salient passages for my use and profit and as a stimulus... (Aut 214)

The prophet Isaiah, son of Amos, of the royal house of David, was a prophet and preacher. His main objective was to confront the inhabitants of Jerusalem and Israel with their infidelities and to announce the chastisement that God would visit upon them through the Assyrians and Chaldeans, as He did, indeed. His brother-in-law, the impious King Manasseh, put him to death by having him sawn in half. (Aut 215)



Church of Sant Andreu de Pruit (Pruit)



FOR PERSONAL REFLECTION

- What biblical figures and biographies of saints or other people have most marked your missionary life?
- What does it mean for you to live in prophetic mission?

“Hardships often prepare ordinary people for an extraordinary destiny.”
(CS Lewis)



1848. Claret arrives in Las Palmas, Canary Islands with Bishop **Codina**.

1852. From Cuba, Claret sends a congratulatory letter to the French writer, Abbe Jean-Joseph Gaume, for some of his publications, which deserve high regard.

1868. In letter to Fr. **Joseph Xifre**, Claret approves the foundation in La Selva del Camp (Tarragona) if the Jesuits leave the convent of San Agustin. Claret wants the communities of his missionaries to have independence and intimacy.



DEATH OF FR. SERRAT AND NEW SUPERIOR GENERAL

EXPANSION (1906-1922)

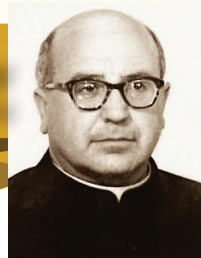
On January 6, 1906, Fr. **Clement Serrat** died unexpectedly in Segovia, therefore a new General Chapter, the 10th of the Congregation, had to be convened. It was held in Aranda de Duero (Burgos) from June 5th to 17th. Fr. **Martin Alsina**, who was elected as the new Superior General (1906-1922), had been Sub-Director General up until that point. The only change in the Government was the inclusion of Fr. **Antonio Naval**, brother of Fr. **Francisco Naval**, which required a certain legal discernment in favor of the

election of the two brothers within the same General Government. They took advantage of the Chapter to modify some points of the *General Rule*. Norms were given for the election of Major Superiors as well as for the representatives to the General Chapter. In June, the new Father General wrote his first Circular letter requesting everyone to observe the norms and provisions of the Rule and asking for prayers and collaboration in his new position. The headquarters of the General Government remained in Aranda de Duero until 1913.



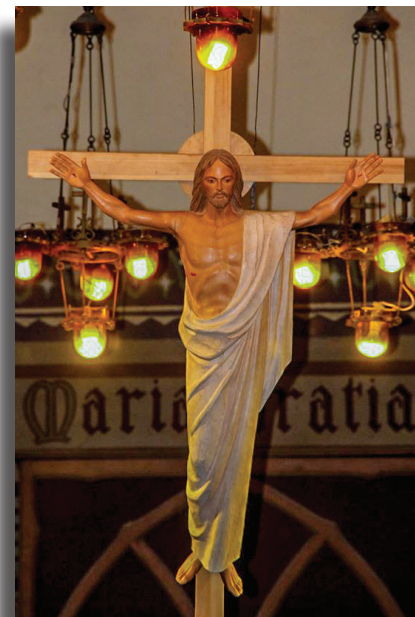
ANTONIO PEINADOR, CMF

Missionary and Moral Theologian (1904-1978)



Valoria de Alcor (Palencia, Spain). He dedicated his life fundamentally to teaching as a moral theologian. He taught in the center of theology in Zafra, in the International College of Albano, Italy, and the Pontifical University of Salamanca, where he became Vice Rector. He published several volumes and wrote frequently in the magazine *Vida Religiosa*, of which he was director for six years. He was a peritus in the Second Vatican Council, which altered his discourse somewhat, but did not stop it entirely. He died on March 14th in Loja (Granada). He was the author of *Cursus Brevior Theologiae Moralis* which, despite the qualification of *brevior*, consisted of five volumes. It was an obligatory citation in subjects of morality, of ecclesiology and of states of perfection. He knew how to spice up his classes with the joy of knowledge and timely speech. He was an observant religious and a community brother who was simple and open to dialogue. He always tried to preserve the spirit before the letter of the law. In his classes his tone was simple, colloquial, open and spontaneous.

THE EXAMPLE OF JESUS CHRIST



Risen Christ image hanging above the altar of the Santa Maria Parish Church (Sallent)

I am ever more deeply impressed at the thought of Jesus moving from town to town, preaching everywhere -not just in big cities, but in little villages and even to a single woman. When he spoke to the Samaritan woman, he was tired and thirsty from traveling, and the moment was as inconvenient for him as it was for the woman. (**Aut 221**)

From the very beginning I have been thrilled by the preaching style of Jesus. What comparisons! What parables! I decided to imitate him with comparisons, similes and a simple style. And how He was persecuted! He was a sign of contradiction, persecuted for his teaching, his works, and his very person. Finally, they took his life amid affronts, torments, and insults, making Him suffer the most shameful and painful death imaginable. (**Aut 222**)



FOR PERSONAL REFLECTION

- Is Jesus Christ really the center of your life?
- What impacts you most about the missionary life of Jesus Christ?
- Can you say, as Saint Paul did, that the love of Christ impels you? (Cf. 2 Cor 5:14).
- What has helped you most in your adherence to Jesus Christ?
- To whom have you made him known?

“Knowledge of the catechism is the foundation for the whole edifice of religious and moral instruction.”

(**Aut 275**)



1853. Claret begins his pastoral visit in Mayari (Cuba).

1854. Claret asks the Governor of Cuba to raise the church of Baracoa to a parish, since it is the first point of the island where the faith arrived, and the first bishopric.

1866. Claret begins a novena to Our Lady of Sorrows in the Church of Montserrat (Madrid).



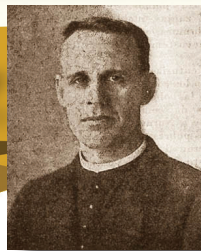
EXPANSION (1906-1922)

THE REVISION OF THE CONSTITUTIONS

As soon as the new General Government was elected, it began to work on preparing an improved text of the *Constitutions*. The new draft was ready in April 1910, to be studied at the XI General Chapter, in 1912. Fr. **PantaLeon Casanueva** was the one who worked the most on its improvement. It was his draft that Fr. **Francisco Naval** used to present at the Chapter. It was intended to anticipate the *Code* that was expected to be published shortly. There was a precise presentation of the idea of temporary vows and the elimination of the Provincial General

Consultors. Nothing was said about the election of the Quasi-Provincials, first because it was already decided and second because they did not want to cause alarm in the participants of the Chapter with the danger that, in turn, they would also take opposing positions. This project of revising the *Constitutions* was authorized by a letter-prologue from the Superior General, Fr. **Martin Alsina**, who presented it as the main subject of study and subsequent chapter deliberations, together with other points that were listed as an integral objective of the impending Chapter.

MODESTO ARNAUS, CMF Martyr of Choco (1896-1947)



Orista (Barcelona, Spain). On May 21, 1921, he was ordained a Claretian priest in Zaragoza. In 1925 he boarded a ship in Barcelona bound for Venezuela in the company of Fr. Cervello and Fr. Adern, who were going to Colombia and subsequently worked and died in that country. Because of his great practical talent and his zeal as an authentic Claretian, he was considered very appropriate for the mission in Choco and he joined it in 1937. March 15, 1947 was the eve of elections in Choco, a region of the Colombian jungle in the northwest of the country. The Claretian Missionaries had taken on, among other responsibilities, defending the indigenous people against economic and political exploitation. Fr. Arnaus saw that a chief was returning from picking up some indigenous people to vote. The missionary, asserting his title of protector of the indigenous as representative of the central government, confronted the chief. A shot sounded. Fr. Arnaus fell to the ground without even a sigh.



THE EXAMPLE OF THE APOSTLES

I am also much encouraged by reading the Acts of the Apostles. St. Peter in his first sermon converted three thousand men, and in his second, five thousand. With what great zeal and fervor he preached! And what shall I say of St. James, St. John, and the other Apostles? With great concern and zeal they rushed from one kingdom to another, preaching zealously and without human fears or concerns, considering that God must be obeyed rather than men! This was their answer to the scribes and Pharisees when the latter forbade them to preach! Scourging could not intimidate them into giving up their preaching; on the contrary, they counted themselves... (**Aut 223**)

Also the zeal of St. Paul has always awakened my deepest enthusiasm. He went from place to place, a chosen vessel, carrying the teaching of Jesus Christ. He preached, wrote, and taught in synagogues, prisons—everywhere. He worked and made others work, in season and out of season. He suffered scourgings, stonings, persecutions of all sorts, as well as the fiercest calumnies, but he was never daunted; on the contrary, he so rejoiced in tribulations that he could say that he did not wish to glory, save in the cross of Jesus Christ. (**Aut 224**)

*The Crucified Christ
at the entrance of the Church of
Santa Eugenia de Berga (Osona)*



FOR PERSONAL REFLECTION

- What does it mean for you to proclaim the Gospel in the style of the Apostles?
- Are the Apostles an example and a motivation for your apostolic zeal?
- What excites you about the apostle St. Paul?

“A community is evangelized, to the extent
that it maintains itself in a state of permanent *conversion*.”
(MCT 148)



1862. Claret gives First Communion to the Princess **Isabella**.

1859. The government approves the Rule of the **Academy of St. Michael**, which was created the previous summer. It will be published in May.

1870. Thanks to Claret's efforts and trips, today the decree is signed to approve the Constitutions of the Carmelite Sisters of Charity. A few days later Claret sends word and congratulates the Mother General and the whole congregation.



PIOUS DEVOTIONS AND THE SONG OF THE MISSIONARY

EXPANSION (1906-1922)

In 1906 the new General Superior wrote his first Circular Letter to the Congregation *Remedios del descontento en la Religion* [Remedies Against Discontent in Religious Life]. He had observed that discontentment is one of the main evils that affect Missionaries and their vocational fidelity. As a remedy he proposed *pious devotions*, which was not a matter of the intellect but of the will, to practice fidelity and dedication to the vocation. It was a call to joy and happiness in the vocation and mission.

Although we do not know the exact

date we do know that the lyrics to the *Song of the Missionary* (*Jesus you know that I, your soldier ...*) were composed by Fr. Agapito Ajuria, who died in Corisco (Equatorial Guinea) in 1908; and the music was composed later, in 1912, by Fr. Vidal Bandres, Missionary in Choco (Colombia). This song acquired great fame among the seminarians and served the Martyrs of Barbastro as spiritual motivation in the last days of their martyrdom. In the 1950s, it was frequently sung because of the profound feeling about martyrdom.



RAFAEL BENJUMEA
Court Painter (1820-1888)



Seville (Spain). He was a Spanish painter of history, a portraitist of small format and paintings of Sevillian themes of Costumbrismo. From the beginning of his studies he was protected as an artist by the Duke of Montpensier, for whose family he made some works. In 1850 he was summoned as a second chamber painter of **Isabella II**. In two of the compositions made in this period (*The Baptism of the Princess Concepcion* and *The Presentation and Baptism of Alfonso XII*), you can see Father Claret. These paintings led him to resort to a complaint against Queen Isabella II in 1873 for not paying the artist for these works. These paintings were esteemed for their great resemblance in the portraits and by the richness in the details. He was awarded the title of Royal Knight and distinguished Order of Charles III and of the Holy Sepulcher and appointed Commander of the American Order of Isabella the Catholic.

THE EXAMPLE OF THE SAINTS



I frequently read the lives of those Saints who were distinguished for their zeal in saving souls, and I felt the good effect of it, for I applied to myself those words of Augustine: *Tu non eris sicut isti et istae?* Will you not be like these men and women and work as they did at saving souls? The lives of the saints that most moved me were those of St. Dominic, St. Francis of Assisi, St. Anthony of Padua, St. John Nepomucen, St. Vincent Ferrer, St. Bernardine of Siena, St. Thomas of Villanova, St. Ignatius Loyola, St. Philip Neri, St. Francis Xavier, St. Francis Borgia, St. Camillus de Lellis, St. Charles Borromeo, St. Francis Regis, St. Vincent de Paul, and St. Francis de Sales. (Aut 226)

In the course of meditating on the lives and works of these saints, I used to feel such a burning within me that I couldn't sit still. I had to get up and run from one place to another, preaching continually. I can't describe what I felt inside me. Nothing tired me; I wasn't terrified at the awful calumnies being leveled against me, or afraid of the greatest persecutions... (Aut 227)



St. Anthony of Padua image at the Claretian Museum (Vic)



FOR PERSONAL REFLECTION

- Are there figures of saints who motivate your apostolic zeal in a special way?
- Are there other Christian figures that are an example for you?
- What is a saint for you today?

Pope Francis talks about the "saints next door".

- Do you know them? Do they live with you? Who are they?

"The experience of God is the only force capable of arousing that hope that never dies, in spite of the many difficulties and of giving impetus to our commitment towards life."

(Josep M. Abella Batlle, *Missionaries*, p. 40)



1841. During this month, during his stay in the parish in Pruit (Barcelona), Claret gives philosophy conferences to two seminarians, the Serra-Mias brothers.

1849. Claret continues the mission in Santa Brigida (Canary Islands), where people come from all around. The next day it will end with general communion.

1853. Claret continues his pastoral visit to the parish in Mayari (Holguin, Cuba), with which he will end his first pastoral visit to his archdiocese.



THE VICE-PROVINCES OF CHILE AND ARGENTINA-BRAZIL

EXPANSION (1906-1922)

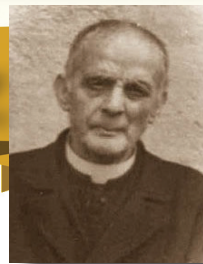
From 1905 to 1912 Chile was a Vice-Province *ad experimentum*. It had two Major Superiors in this period: Fr. **Thomas Sese** until 1909 and Fr. Anselm Santesteban until 1912. During the first term the new foundation of Ovalle was made (1907). During the second, the direction was changed and there was a fundamental focus on the consolidation of the communities. With Fr. Zacarias Iglesias at the head, the Vice-Province of Argentina-Brazil, created in 1904, continued until 1908, when it was divided in two, during a climate of

expansion. In Argentina houses were founded in Cordoba (1906), Transito (1907) and in Bahia Blanca y Rioja (1908). In Brazil, foundations were made in Curitiba (1906), Rio de Janeiro and Porto Alegre (1907).

The Vice-Province of Argentina-Brazil created the first foundation in Uruguay in 1908, specifically in Peñarol, a suburb of Montevideo. The General Government accepted the offer of the Archbishop by sending a mixed group of six Fathers and four Brothers to the new community. Fr. Luis Lusilla, a famous preacher, went as Superior.



JOACHIM BESTUE, CMF
First Provincial of Italy (1872-1959)



Palo (Huesca, Spain). Ordained in 1895, he was sent to the new foundation of San Felice di Giano, in Italy. Shortly after his return to Spain he went to several communities, among them Aldeia da Ponte, the first community in Portugal, in 1904, later founding the one in Lisbon the following year. From there he went to Campinas (Brazil) in 1907. The following year he was elected Quasi-Provincial Superior of Brazil. He founded the communities of Bahia, Belo Horizonte, Livramento and Rio de Janeiro. He went to the General Chapter of 1912, from which he did not return, staying in the house in Madrid. He organized this house, which in 1913 would be the new headquarters of the General Government. He continued working there until he was assigned to Rome in 1919 as Superior of the house of Via Giulia. When the Province of Italy was created in 1930, he was named its first Provincial Superior. He founded the communities of Naples, Catania and Palermo. Once the crypt of the Church del Corazon de Maria was opened for worship, he remained at its service until his death.

THE EXAMPLE OF TWO MISSIONARY SAINTS



Before ending this chapter, I would like to present two models of truly apostolic zeal... The first is the Venerable Joseph Diego of Cadiz; the second, the Venerable Master Avila. Of the former, we read in his Life: "The servant of God, moved by zeal to win souls for Jesus Christ, consecrated his whole life his whole life tirelessly in the apostolic ministry. He continually undertook long, tiresome journeys, always on foot, without regard for the inclemencies of the season as he went from place to place to announce

God's Word and attain the results he longed for... (Aut 228)

From the Life of the Venerable Avila. His baggage train was a little burro. On it, he and his companions piled their cloaks and saddlebags. The latter contained a supply of hosts for celebrating Mass at hermitages, as well as cilices, rosaries, medals, holy cards, and some wire and pliers for making rosaries. He never carried food but trusted in God's providence. It was a rare day when he ate meat; most of the time he ate only bread and fruit. (Aut 229)



FOR PERSONAL REFLECTION

- Who do you consider to be your main models of missionary life?
- What aspects of their lives encourage you most?

"When we fail to acknowledge as part of reality the worth of a poor person, a human embryo, a person with disabilities – to offer just a few examples – it becomes difficult to hear the cry of nature itself; everything is connected."

(Francis, *Laudato Si'*, 117)



1857. While Claret preaches a mission in San Francisco (Santiago), he receives the order to move to Madrid.

1866. Two days before Palm Sunday, Claret moves to El Escorial with the two brothers who live with him to give a few days of Spiritual Exercises for the priests and seminarians and then preside over the events of the Paschal Triduum.

1869. Claret concludes the Lenten conferences that he has given, during six Thursdays, in the Parisian church of Saint Nicolas.



THE VICE-PROVINCE OF MEXICO-NORTH AMERICA

EXPANSION (1906-1922)

In 1904 Mexico, already a Vice-Province, founded in Monterrey. Fr. Raymond Prat, Vice-Provincial Superior, was in charge of making the foundation a reality. A house was also founded in Celaya (1905). It was at this time that Fr. **Felix A. Cepeda**, in Mexico once again, would found the magazine *La Esperanza*. Until the Provincial Chapter of 1909, Fr. Raymond Prat continued as Vice-Provincial, who was then replaced by Fr. Cepeda. In this period the houses of Queretaro (1908) and Tepic (1910) were founded.

The foundations that Mexico was carrying out in California deserve special attention since they were three of the great missions founded in the eighteenth century by Fray Junipero Serra (1713-1784): San Fernando (1907), San Gabriel (1908) and Los Angeles (1910), the location of *La Placita [The Old Plaza Church]*, a place venerated and loved among Hispanics for its character and its history, in the heart of the great metropolis, and was served until 2015. At that time, other foundations such as Santa Fe, San Francisco and Houston remained as simple offers.



FOUNDATION OF THE CORDIMARIAN MISSIONARY SISTERS



On March 19, 1921, Miss Carmen Serrano y Rugama, a very humble woman with great love for God and the Heart of Mary, founded this Congregation in Mexico. She had received inspiration in 1913 through Fr. **Julian Collell**, CMF, an intrepid and tenacious man, an exemplary priest of the Congregation of the Missionary Sons of the Immaculate Heart of Mary. Both were tireless catechists and very zealous of the glory of God. The mission of the Congregation is to transmit the Gospel message, with great and ardent zeal, to all those in need of it, especially the most humble: peasants, indigenous people, prisoners and disabled people, with a preference for women, youth and children, through catechesis, education and the media. The spirituality of the Congregation is rooted in that of St. Anthony Mary Claret, lived and experienced by the founders. It is characterized by a deep intimacy with the Heart of Mary, following Christ the Missionary.

THE EXAMPLE OF FEMALE SAINTS



If I was moved by the example of men saints, as I have said in the preceding chapter, I was moved still more by the example of women saints. How deeply they impressed me! I would ask myself, "If a woman has such feelings and desires and does so much to save souls, what ought I, a priest, however unworthy, be doing?" The reading of their lives affected me so much that I copied out excerpts of their words and works, some of which I wish to quote here. (**Aut 234**)

From the Life of St. Catherine of Siena. "She had a singular devotion and love toward those saints who spent their lives working for the salvation of souls..." (**Aut 235**)



Sketch of Claret's face - Claretian Museum (Vic)



FOR PERSONAL REFLECTION

- Are there female saints whose lives are inspiring to you?
- Are there women who, with their lives, have helped you to grow more in faith?

"I shall speak of certain things which those who attempt to walk along the way of prayer must of necessity practise...

One of these is love for each other; the second, detachment from all created things; the third, true humility, which, although I put it last, is the most important of the three and embraces all the rest." (St. Teresa of Avila, *The Way of Perfection*, 4. 3-4)



1840. Claret sails from Civitavecchia (Rome) to return to Spain.

1845. Claret is preaching during Lent in Mataró (Barcelona), and recruiting priests for the Spiritual Exercises that he will lead for them during the week of Easter.

1859. Claret begins to preach a mission in Chamberí (Madrid); some former Cuban collaborators help him as confessors.



THE PREFECTURE DEL CHOCO (COLOMBIA)

EXPANSION (1906-1922)

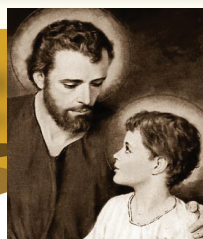
A cluster of circumstances made Fr. **Martin Alsina** assume the missions of Choco, trusting in the Congregation's missionary dedication. It was the year 1909. It was an extensive territory with two Provinces: San Juan and Atrato, whose capitals were Istmina and Quibdó. Fr. **Juan Gil**, from Segovia, was appointed the first Apostolic Prefect and Superior of Plasencia. The difficulties were enormous at first and only men of tireless zeal could overcome them, although some had to pay with their lives for the tremendous endeavor,

among them the Apostolic Prefect himself, who died shortly after writing his first report. He was replaced by Fr. **Francisco Gutierrez**; something similar to what had previously happened in Cuba and in Equatorial Guinea.

Soon they saw the need to found a community that would serve as bridge and the Office of the Mission Procure. Cartagena was chosen in 1909. With the same objectives, the community of Bogotá was founded in 1912, with Fr. **Antonio Pueyo** assuming responsibility for the Church of the Voto Nacional.



SAINT JOSEPH Co-patron of the Congregation



Fr. Claret received a divine illumination: *On May 7, 1865, at 3:30 in the afternoon, the feast of the Patronage of St. Joseph, Jesus told me to be very devout to St. Joseph and to approach him with confidence* - (Aut 831). For the Congregation, this trust continues to be valid, which affects the evangelizing mission. His patronage should be invoked as encouragement in the renewed effort of evangelization in the world and of new evangelization in those countries and nations in which the Christian life was flourishing and which are now facing difficult trials. To bring the first proclamation of Christ and to take it back where it has been neglected or forgotten, the Church needs a special power from on high. A gift certainly of the Spirit of the Lord, not detached from the intercession and example of Saint Joseph. In 1870 a pamphlet of Claret's was published about *La devoción a San José [The devotion to St. Joseph]*, which was later expanded.



THE EXAMPLE OF TWO WOMEN SAINTS WITH MISSIONARY SPIRITS

From the Life of St. Rose of Lima... "She cried continually over their misery and asked God to convert all sinners. She even used to say that she would gladly suffer all the torments of hell herself alone, as long as she could do so without sinning, if by doing so no one would be damned. For this reason she had a great desire to see the Gospel preached to unbelievers and penance preached to sinners..." (Aut 239)

From the Life of St. Mary Magdalen of Pazzi. "It would be hard to find any apostolic man with a more burning zeal for the salvation of souls. She had a lively and most tender concern for their welfare, and it seemed to her that she had no love at all for the Lord unless everyone else loved Him, too. On learning of the great strides that the faith was making in the Indies in her day, she would say that if her vocation allowed, she would travel throughout the world to save souls and would envy the birds their wings that she might fly about everywhere to accomplish the task. 'If only it were possible for someone to take me to the Indies,' she used to say, 'so that I could take those little Indian children and instruct them in our holy faith...' (Aut 259)



FOR PERSONAL REFLECTION

- Do you know some women who with their missionary commitment challenge you to give yourself more in the mission?
- Are there women who, with the simple experience of their faith, are authentic examples of evangelical life?
- Search for and pray with some writings of holy women.

"I have learned that courage was not the absence of fear, but the triumph over it. The brave man is not he who does not feel afraid, but he who conquers that fear."
(Nelson Mandela)



1849. Claret enters Las Palmas, Canary Islands *in procession* (accompanied by thousands of people).

1853. Claret concludes his first pastoral visit to the archdiocese, in order to celebrate Holy Week in the capital, in its provisional cathedral, because the real one is not yet rebuilt after the earthquakes.

1860. Claret travels to El Escorial to meet with Fr. **Pages**, former head of the monastery, about various organizational matters and to preach for three days to the budding community; the seminary is starting to function.



IN BOLIVIA AND PERU

EXPANSION (1906-1922)

Fr. **Martin Alsina** was commissioned by Fr. **Thomas Sese**, Vice-Provincial of Chile, to explore the possibility of founding in Bolivia and Peru. Almost unexpectedly the foundation of Bolivia began in 1910, from an invitation of the Vicar General of Cochabamba, in which he offered them the direction of the seminary and to attend to the best church in Cochabamba. It was a hectic foundation, first due to the obligatory commitment to a school that was not part of the missionaries' plans and the radical opposition of the clergy of the diocese.

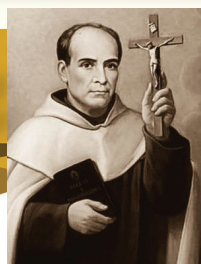
This presence did not last long, although it would not be a final farewell since the missionaries returned again in 1919.

The General Government approved the foundation in Lima (Peru), at the request of Fr. Sese, in 1909, at the same time as Cochabamba. There were two fronts: the seminary and the shrine of Cocharcas. It was an important challenge for the Congregation, which is why Chile devoted itself to assigning the best available missionaries there, Fr. Thomas Sese, Fr. Juan Nacenta and Fr. **Mariano Aguilar**, among others.



BLESSED FRANCISCO PALAU

Founder (1811-1872)



Aitona (Lleida, Spain). He entered the Order of the Discalced Carmelites in Barcelona in 1832. He suffered excommunication in 1835, and was ordained a priest the following year. He carried out remarkable apostolic activity in Catalonia. Then he went to France, returning to Spain in 1851. There he created the *Escuela de la Virtud* [School of Virtue] in 1853 for catechetical teaching. The following year he was confined to Ibiza. He was released in 1857 and then confined again. In 1859 he asked **Isabella II** to release him from the penalty of exile. After a trial, the Queen decreed his innocence, and he returned to mission in Catalonia. He founded the *Teresian Missionary Carmelite Sisters* and the *Missionary Carmelite Sisters*. He died with a reputation for holiness in Tarragona on March 20, 1872 and was beatified in 1988. In 1859 he wrote to Claret describing the *Escuela de la Virtud* and consulting with him about the direction of his ideas. At the same time, he asked him to influence the Queen to free him from exile.

THE MEANS OF PRAYER



The first means I have always employed and still do is prayer. In my opinion, this is the greatest means that can be used for the conversion of sinners, the perseverance of the just and the relief of the souls in purgatory. Hence in my meditations, Masses, recitation of the breviary (prayers) and other devotions, as well as in my aspirations, I always asked God and the Blessed Virgin Mary for these three intentions. (**Aut 264**)

I not only prayed myself but asked others to pray... (**Aut 265**)



Altarpiece of the Monastery of St. Therese (Vic)



FOR PERSONAL REFLECTION

- What place does personal prayer occupy in your missionary life?
- How do you live the communal dimension of your prayer?
- Do you encourage others to be people of prayer?

Our life's fruitfulness depends on the union we have with the Master. Vine and branches. Everything with him. Nothing without him.

- Discuss this reflection.
- Is prayer your first means of action?

"I would say that the apostolic missionary should be a model of all the virtues: he should, in fact, be virtue personified."

(**Aut 340**)



1857. Claret names Fr. **Dionisio Gonzalez** administrator of the archdiocese during his absence, with all the faculties *without any limitations*. He will govern for three years.

1858. Claret begins directing personalized Spiritual Exercises for the Queen; they are of great importance, after the very recent disorder.

1859. Claret had an extraordinary experience in praying with the passage of the Samaritan woman, especially in the expression: *Ego sum*.



EQUATORIAL GUINEA DURING THIS TIME

EXPANSION (1906-1922)

It would be an endless task to relate the work of the Missionaries in Guinea over time, but we cannot fail to mention here names of places that will remain forever in the history of this great Claretian endeavor: Batete-Maria Cristina, San Carlos, Musola, Concepcion, Basile, Banapa and Santa Isabel, without forgetting the islands of Corisco and Annobon. More important would be to put here the names of those who gave their lives in this generous undertaking, but it would not be fair to select some names and definitely too long a list to name them all. Many of them arrived and very soon fell

ill and died. Suffice it to say that all these efforts were compensated in a way in 1912 with the inauguration of the Seminary and the development of the magazine *La Guinea Española*.

In October of 1909 Mons. **Armengol Coll** founded in Equatorial Guinea, together with Sr. Imelda Makole, the Institute of the Missionary Sisters of Mary Immaculate, at that time called Auxiliary Sisters of the Missions. Their mission was to evangelize Africa, collaborating with all the missionary agents who sought the transformation of the world according to God's designs.



SIERVO GOYENECHÉ, CMF

Missionary and Canon lawyer (1886-1964)



Falces (Navarre, Spain). After two years as professor of rhetoric at the school in Vic (Barcelona), he was assigned by his superiors to Rome in 1915, where he lived until his death in a Claretian community in which he established an efficient and prestigious law school for canonical procedural law and for men religious. At the Pontifical Lateran University of Rome he obtained his doctorate in 1918 *in utroque iure*. From then on, he developed all his work as a canonist as a professor, writer and consultant in various areas of the Church. Deserving special mention is the initiative that he undertook in 1920, along with his companions from his religious community and professors (the canonists **Felipe Maroto** and **Arcadio Larraona**), the magazine *Commentarium pro Religiosis*. His talents as advisor led him to participate as a Consultor in four Congregations of the Roman Curia. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Spain granted him the title of Mitred Abbot of the Royal Church of Santiago of the Spaniards in Naples.

MARY'S SON AND MINISTER



Claretian Museum (Vic)

The prayer I said at the beginning of every mission. O Virgin Mother of God, mother and advocate of poor and unhappy sinners, you are well aware that I am your son and minister, formed in the forge of your mercy and love. I am like an arrow poised in your mighty hand. Release me, my Mother, with the full force of your arm, against the impious, sacrilegious, and cruel Ahab, wed to the base Jezebel. I mean to say: release me against Satan, the prince of this world, who has made an alliance with the flesh. (Aut 270)



FOR PERSONAL REFLECTION

- What does it mean to you to be Mary's son and minister?
- What does Cordimarian spirituality contribute to your apostolic life?
- What missionary characteristics of Mary in the Gospel do you find most encouraging?

"May all our actions begin in you as their source and tend towards you as their end."

- Is Mary a source of inspiration in the mission?

"I knew that if I was to acquire the virtues I needed in order to become a truly apostolic missionary, I would have to begin with humility, which I regard as the foundation for all other virtues."
(Aut 341)



1853. Claret writes to the Bishop of Havana to consult with him about a series of issues related to slavery.

1854. Claret publishes a Pastoral Letter denouncing the bad faith with which the biblical societies have introduced Protestant New Testaments on the Island, disguising it with the covers of the Catholic Bible from Scio.

1870. Claret sends Fr. **Joseph Xifre** the Holy See decree approving the Constitutions.



OTHER MISSIONS OFFERED TO THE CONGREGATION

EXPANSION (1906-1922)

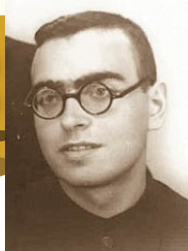
During these years many expeditions were made to America and Africa. The Congregation was fully missionary. Another mission field was expanding, which we have called the missions *ad gentes*. *Propaganda Fide* assigned the Congregation the missionary task of Baja California (Mexico) and the territories of Rio de Oro, in Africa. Although there were many foundations, there were even more plentiful offers which were received but had to be refused: the Prefecture of Arauca, the Apostolic Vicariate of Para (Brazil), the Islands of

Providencia and of San Andres, etc. All these expansions were due to the huge emphasis Fr. **Xifre** gave, especially to the foundation of Seminaries in Spain, which continued to function at full capacity. With the division of Provinces and the consequent distribution of the seminarians into smaller formation centers, numbers decreased, but this did not slow down the increasingly accelerated rhythm of the steady and vigorous expansion of the Institute through so many countries. The next two successors of Fr. Xifre maintained this emphasis.



JAVIER OCHOA, CMF

Missionary and Canon Lawyer (1923-1989)



Santo Domingo de la Calzada (La Rioja, Spain). He graduated *in utroque jure* from the Pontifical Lateran University of Rome in 1954, with the qualification of *summa cum laude*. In 1955 he obtained the title of Rotal Advocate. He taught at the Pontifical Lateran University and other Roman centers such as the Institute *Regina Mundi* and the Urbaniana University. His recognized competence made him worthy of the appointment to high curial positions in the Tribunal of the Apostolic Signatura and in the Pontifical Council for Legislative Texts, as well as for the position of Dean of the Faculty of Law of the Lateran University, etc. He collaborated in multiple magazines such as *Commentarium pro religiosis* of which he was secretary, *Apollinaris* and *Monitor Ecclesiasticus*. Among his publications are his *Leges Ecclesiae post Codicem Iuris Canonici* and *Index verborum cum documentis Concilii Vaticani Secundi*. The Lord called the illustrious canonist to his Kingdom in Santa Pola, Alicante, this day of 1989.

THE MEANS OF CATECHIZING CHILDREN



Statue of Claret at the Claret School of Quezon City (Philippines)

Second Means. Catechizing Children. The first thing I saw to was the instruction of children in Christian doctrine—not only because I have always felt a strong inclination toward this kind of education but also because I have come to realize its prime importance. Knowledge of the catechism is the foundation for the whole edifice of religious and moral instruction. Moreover, children learn readily and are deeply impressed. Catechism preserves them from error, vice, and ignorance... (**Aut 275**)

One of the things that has moved me most to teach children is the example of Jesus Christ and the saints. Jesus said, “Let the little children come to me and do not hinder them. It is to just such as these that the kingdom of God belongs” (Mark 10:14)... (**Aut 276**)

Because I love children and want them to be educated in Christian doctrine, I have written four catechisms: one for small children, from the time they begin talking until they reach seven; one for country folk; another, more extensive one; and one fully explained and illustrated. (**Aut 285**)



FOR PERSONAL REFLECTION

- What is your apostolic relationship with children?
- Are you aware of the importance of placing good Christian principles in the hearts of children?
- What can be done to bring the Gospel closer to children?
- Tell about your experience of evangelization in the context of children and families.

“Our consecration becomes for us
our first and primordial form of evangelizing.”
(MCT 149)



1860. From El Escorial Claret travels to Valdemorillo (Madrid), where he will preach a mission until the 31st.

1861. Fr. **Currius** leaves Claret in Madrid and moves to El Escorial with different responsibilities.

1862. Claret participates in the episcopal consecration of Gregorio Martinez, Archbishop of Manila.



NEW FOUNDATIONS IN SPAIN AND PORTUGAL

EXPANSION (1906-1922)

Meanwhile in Spain the Congregation continued to spread: In Seville (1906), the work of the sleepless nights of a man who would shine so brightly in the origins of the Province of Betica, Fr. **Antonio Maria Pueyo** (future Bishop of Pasto, Colombia), Cartagena (1906), San Fernando (1908), Berga (1909), Beire y Baltar (1910), El Ferrol, Salvatierra, Jativa, etc.

In 1906 the Buen Suceso house was founded in Madrid, and soon after the church was built. There the activities of *El Iris de Paz*, *La Buena Prensa* [The Good Press], etc. were established. And

from there they attended to the spiritual direction of the new diocesan Seminary of Madrid, inaugurated that year. At that time, the section dedicated to priests in *El Iris de Paz* grew to the point that they decided in 1906 to create a specific magazine for them: *Ilustracion del Clero*. Its acceptance, from the beginning, was great both in Spain and in Latin America. Later it became *Mision Abierta* [Open Mission].

In Portugal, however, the revolution in 1910 expelled the missionaries, who would return in 1920, this time to Freineda.



NICOLAS GONZALEZ, CMF
Apostolic Vicar of Fernando Poo (1860-1935)



La Nuez de Arriba (Burgos, Spain). Ordained a priest in 1893, he spent a few months in Spain. In January of 1894 he arrived at the mission of Equatorial Guinea. Batete, Annobon and Elobey were the great fields of action of his youth. In 1912 he went as a delegate to the General Chapter of Vic, being named that same year Quasi-Provincial of Guinea. At the death of Fr. **Coll** in 1918 he was elected Apostolic Vicar. Following a motion of the General Chapter of 1922, he created the mission magazine *El Misionero* [The Missionary]. He raised more than seventy reductions (missions) with a chapel, a house for the priest, a school, etc. He created the Seminary of Santa Isabel, ordaining Fr. **Joaquin Sialo** and many others. He established the missions of Ebinayong and Nkuefulan. He moved the mission from Elobey to Kogo. He established the association of Oblates of Mary Immaculate. He was able to see the Santa Isabel Cathedral finished. He cooperated in the Missionary Exhibitions of Birmingham, Cologne, Barcelona and Rome. He died in Santa Isabel.

THE MEANS OF CATECHIZING ADULTS



The Third Means. The most productive means I have used has been adult instruction. It has helped me rescue adults from an ignorance that is greater than one might imagine, even in the case of persons who hear sermons frequently. Preachers often take it for granted that their listeners are well instructed, while the fact is that instruction is precisely what most Catholics lack. The use of instruction has the further advantage of informing adults of their respective obligations and teaching them how to go about fulfilling them. (Aut 287)

During a parish mission I gave these instructions every day except the first...the subject was always the Commandments of God's Law, which I explained at greater or lesser length...For the occasion I brought along a portfolio containing explanations of the commandments in general, as well as leaflets on individual commandments with topics related to each commandment. I used these materials on the basis of the number of days I had to preach in the town and also on the basis of particular local customs or vices that needed to be corrected and virtues that needed to be cultivated or fostered. For it was my practice, before I went to a town, to make inquiries in advance, and in view of what I was told or discovered on my own, I applied the proper remedy. (Aut 288)



One of the small prayer pamphlets Claret reproduced during his time
- Claretian Museum (Vic)



FOR PERSONAL REFLECTION

- What place does adult Christian formation occupy in your apostolic life?
- Do you think that there are large gaps of formation in the people who frequent our centers of apostolate?
- Do you try to contextualize the content of your evangelization to the reality in which you find yourself?
- From your ministerial experience, what are the evangelizing challenges in working with adults?

To answer any questions, a round table composed of believers and non-believers could be organized.

“Consecrated Life wishes to express its commitment to justice through a style of life and an apostolic action that go to the very root of domination and oppression, in the attempt to create and consolidate a truly inclusive world, in which no-one is marginalized from human fraternity.”

(Josep M. Abella Batlle, *Missionaries*, p. 44)



1835. Claret asks the bishop to allow him to take the exam for the Order of Presbyterate.

1854. Claret transfers the Most Holy Eucharist to the Cathedral of Santiago, Cuba, which was repaired after the earthquakes two years before. Claret wishes to do it with the utmost solemnity.

1855. In a series of instructions on how to organize the farm in Puerto Principe (Cuba), it is perceived that Claret is also concerned about the aesthetic aspects: *in addition to captivating beauty, the farm would provide a great benefit.*



ARGENTINA-URUGUAY AND BRAZIL, VICE-PROVINCES

EXPANSION (1906-1922)

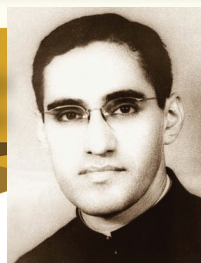
In the year 1908 two independent Vice-Provinces were erected: Argentina-Uruguay and Brazil. In Argentina, Fr. Mariano Sahun was elected Major Superior in 1909. He devoted himself mainly to consolidating the previous foundations. His aim was to curb the push for external expansion and to concentrate more on strengthening religious life and observance, something that had been affected by so much dispersion, not always carried out with the necessary guarantees. However, foundations were also made in Goya (1911) and Mendoza (1912).

In Brazil, Fr. **Joachim Bestue** from Lisbon, was elected Vice-Provincial Superior, who soon promoted foundations in Bahia (1909), Belo Horizonte and Livramento (1911). They were very interested in extending to the north of the country, even though illnesses cut the first team that moved there in half. Fr. Joachim Bestue was unable to carry out his recognized capacity for governance for a long time, due to the illness that forced him to leave office at the General Chapter of 1912. Fr. **Ramon Genover** was again entrusted to replace him.



SAINT OSCAR ARNULFO ROMERO

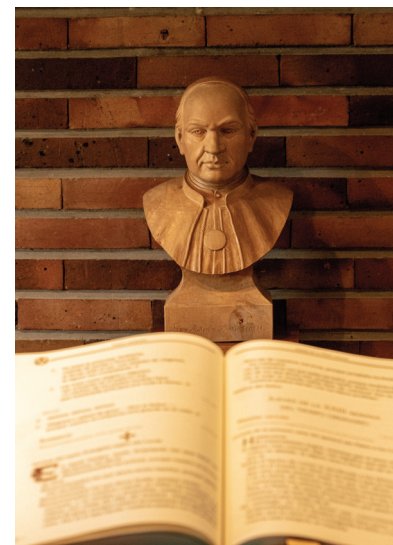
Bishop Martyr (1917-1980)



Ciudad Barrios (El Salvador). Fourth metropolitan archbishop of San Salvador (1977-1980), he is famous for his defense of human rights and for having been assassinated while celebrating Mass. He had a great appreciation for the Congregation. In 1962 he described his first seven years of seminary with the Claretians: *The Claretian Fathers and the seminarians were under the mantle of the Heart of Mary, a family whose spirit was that of the founder himself, Saint Anthony Mary Claret. The pages of that famous seminary manual El Colegio instruido [Well-Instructed Seminarian] were not only read, but lived.* On his last trip to Rome, ten months before his murder, Mons. Romero visited the General Curia, where he wrote: *Today I returned to my origins: I did my minor seminary in San Miguel (El Salvador) with the dear Claretian Fathers and celebrated my first Mass here on April 5, 1942. Thanks and blessings. May 3, 1979. Oscar Arnulfo Romero, Archbishop of San Salvador.* He was canonized on October 14, 2018 by Pope Francis.



THE MEANS OF SERMONS



Bust of Claret in the chapel of Los Negrals (Madrid)

The Fourth Means: Sermons. Explaining points of doctrine serves to instruct the people; sermons serve to move them. Sermons should be chosen with the listener in mind. St. Alphonsus Mary Liguori calls some sermon topics, such as the last things, necessary, while he calls others optional. (**Aut 294**)

From the very beginning, the style I aimed at was that of the Gospel: simple and clear. To achieve this aim I made use of comparisons, likenesses, and examples from history and experience, most of them from Scripture. I had observed that one of the best attention-getters with all sorts of people, whether learned or ignorant, believers or unbelievers, was the use of comparisons drawn from things in nature. (**Aut 297**)



FOR PERSONAL REFLECTION

- Do you spend time preparing your homilies with prayer, reflection and appropriate reading?
- Are simplicity and clarity part of your preaching style?

“The entire material universe speaks of God’s love, his boundless affection for us. Soil, water, mountains: everything is, as it were, a caress of God.”
(Francis, *Laudato Si'*, 84)



1846. Claret concludes the mission in Falset (Tarragona). He has written the booklet *Catecismo de los principales deberes de un militar cristiano* [Catechism of the Main Duties of a Christian Soldier] and it is about to appear.

1853. Claret publishes his great Pastoral Letter, fruit of the visit he recently concluded. He will send it to the Pope and to many bishop friends.

1858. Bishop **Joseph Caixal** has already accepted a foundation in his diocese of the nuns from Cuba. Claret gives various guidelines for creating the document for the Government, among others, those concerning the subsidies required by the Concordat.



XI GENERAL CHAPTER (1912)

EXPANSION (1906-1922)

In this year 1912, there were 112 houses throughout the Congregation with a total of 1,633 professed and 120 novices. Since the death of Fr. **Xifre**, the number of houses had almost doubled, but not that of professed, which in 1899 was 1,368. The formation centers had stabilized and there was already a Plan and Order of Studies. Finally, the General and Provincial Organisms had consolidated.

On April 28, 1912, the XI General Chapter began in Vic. In it, Fr. **Martin Alsina** was again elected Superior General. In this Chapter, the elimination

of the Provincial General Consultors was requested, the Vice-Provinces were definitively formed, the rules of the Provinces were discussed, the coat of arms of the Congregation was changed and the abbreviated name of *Missionaries* was adopted. The following year, the *Constitutions* were translated into Spanish.

The General Chapter asked the new General Government to move the headquarters of the General Curia from Aranda de Duero to Madrid. In September of 1913 the transfer was made to Buen Suceso.

JOSE ANTONIO ORTIZ
Guatemalan Priest (1822-1877)



Guatemala City (Guatemala). Son of a Spaniard and a Guatemalan. He had a law degree and was a notable lawyer. He attended the First Vatican Council on behalf of his brother Mariano, Bishop of Teya, who was sick. Another brother of his, Isidro, was Consul of Costa Rica in Seville and Cadiz. We know that he personally spoke to Claret during his visit to Seville in 1862. He was a notable writer and ardent polemicist. In some of his works he alludes to Claret. In 1888 he commented about Claret: *An apostolic and exemplary man, whose life has just been written, rightly calling him Servant of God, who after his zeal in the missions, his selflessness and humility as a Bishop, the integrity of his habits in the midst of a corrupt court, his love of poverty and his continual mortification; if he lacks something to be sanctified and increase his glory, he has been the target of the viciousness, calumny and shamelessness of the ungodly.* He died on March 19th.



THE MEANS OF THE SPIRITUAL EXERCISES



Fifth Means: the Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius. As I have already mentioned elsewhere, I have made the Spiritual Exercises every year of my life since I was a student. I first made them following the text of St. Ignatius when I was in Rome—once by myself, upon arriving in that city, and again in the Society of Jesus, before I had to leave it because of illness. The Jesuit Fathers themselves conducted these, which were the ones that made the most lasting impression on me. (Aut 306)

The Exercises of St. Ignatius are one of the most powerful tools I have used in the conversion of priests, which is without doubt one of the most difficult of undertakings. Nevertheless, I have seen the most gratifying results in a great number of priests who have been truly converted, and not a few of them have turned out to be very zealous and fervent preachers... (Aut 308)

I have also given them several times to the laity, to men and women separately, each in turn, and I have noticed that the results have been more solid and lasting than those of missions. For this reason I published a book entitled The Exercises of St. Ignatius, explained by me... (Aut 309)



The statue of Claret on the middle section of one of the side altarpieces at the Collegiate Basilica of Santa Maria de la Aurora - La Seu (Manresa)



FOR PERSONAL REFLECTION

- Do you practice the Spiritual Exercises each year, in a special way and with due care? (cf. CC 52).
- Do you give Spiritual Exercises to different types of audiences?

“Falling in love with God will happen if we just let life happen to us. When we stop struggling to find God and instead allow ourselves to experience life, we will be drawn into the Divine presence and essence.”
(Paul Coutinho, *Just as You Are*, p. 7)



1847. Claret tells Fr. **Joseph Caixal** about a series of donations he received for the dissemination of good books. He emphasizes the collaboration of Mons. **Stephen Sala**. What will become the *Libreria Religiosa* is underway, still as a Spiritual Brotherhood of Good Books.

1856. Advised by others, Claret asks the Queen for authorization to spend time in the Peninsula to restore his health, since he has had a continuous pain in his arm that *impedes him a lot in the performance of his ministry*.



FOUNDATION IN THE UNITED KINGDOM

EXPANSION (1906-1922)

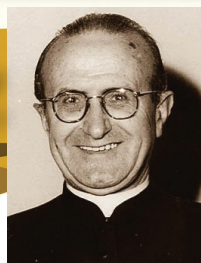
The first to attempt a foundation in the United Kingdom was Fr. **Ramon Genover** from Gibraltar in 1901, but the auspicious occasion came when Fr. **Antonio Maria Pueyo** was commissioned to represent the Spanish Nocturnal Adoration at the International Eucharistic Congress in September of 1908. Two years later, there was still nothing concrete. Finally, in April 1912 the first expedition arrived from Gibraltar aboard the steamboat *India*. Fr. Pueyo was waiting for them. They were initially accommodated in a

temporary home to attend to the parish of *Immaculate Heart of Mary* in Hayes-Harlington, in Greater London. The number of Catholics at that time was 150. Soon the pastoral work began, with an added commitment: to teach the son of the Ambassador of Spain in London. After tireless efforts of Fr. Ramon Genover, the foundation was finally carried out in London (Hayes), due to the efforts of Fr. Pueyo; a foundation that still exists. With this foundation, Fr. **Martin Alsina** he saw his aspirations fulfilled with the hope of getting vocations.



IRENEO DIEZ, CMF

Secretary and General Econome (1905-1983)



Santervas de la Vega (Palencia, Spain). In 1918 he entered the Claretian postulancy. Before his priestly ordination, which took place in 1932, he carried out some pastoral activities in Salvatierra, Bilbao ... until Fr. **Nicolas Garcia** appointed him as his personal secretary, moving him to Madrid. He accompanied Fr. Garcia on his visits to Spain, Equatorial Guinea, Chile, Argentina and Brazil. In 1946 he was named Provincial Consultor of Castilla. But his most significant period was that of General Secretary, a position he held from 1949 to 1967. He combined it with the position of General Archivist. Everyone considered him the ideal Secretary because of his prudence and scrupulous respect for the secrecy that his office demanded. He was a teacher when the *Chronicles* were written. From 1967 to 1973 he was also General Econome. Other activities of Fr. Diez were that of peritus of the Sacred Congregation for the Clergy and member of the Administrative Commission of the Spanish College in Rome. Although he was not very gifted for pastoral work, he always remained active as a chaplain of women religious.

THE MEANS OF BOOKS AND PAMPHLETS



Sixth Means: books and pamphlets. Experience has taught me that one of the most powerful forces for good is the press, although when abused it can also be one of the most potent weapons for evil. By means of the press so many good books and pamphlets are circulated that God should be praised for it. Not everyone wishes to or is able to hear the Word of God, but everyone can read or listen to the reading of a good book. Not everyone can go to church to hear God's Word, but a book can go to a person's house. The preacher can't always be preaching, but a book is always delivering the same message tirelessly... (**Aut 310**)

Reading good books has always been considered highly useful, but nowadays it is a real necessity... because there is such a passion for reading that if people don't have good books they'll read bad ones. Books are the food of the soul, and just as the body is nourished by wholesome food and harmed by poisonous food, so it is with reading and the soul... (**Aut 311**)



Books and pamphlets published by Claret - Claretian Museum (Vic)



FOR PERSONAL REFLECTION

- Do you read books of a certain depth for your permanent formation?
- What religious books do you usually recommend to people?

"There is only one thing that makes a dream impossible to achieve:
the fear of failure."
(*Paulo Coelho*)



1853. Claret sends the governor of Cuba the document for the authorization of the establishment of the Sisters of the Company of Mary (future Claretian Sisters) in Santiago.

1855. Claret writes to **Currius** about some details of the farm in Puerto Principe (Cuba).

1867. Claret tells Fr. **Xifre** he will finance the edition of the Meditations, Talks and Sermons for the Congregation, which is the project that will lead to the Directory, the *Espíritu de la Congregación* [Spirit of the Congregation] and *El Auxiliar de los Misioneros* [The Assistant of the Missionaries].



TRIESTE, THE FIRST FOUNDATION IN GERMANY

EXPANSION (1906-1922)

It was a very distinct path that led to the foundation in Trieste, a city belonging to the Austro-Hungarian Empire, and which led to the birth of the Congregation in Austria. In 1908 a young German from Italy requesting admission to the Congregation had arrived in Spain. An admission that took place in the Novitiate of Cervera. There had been a *Report* written there about the Institute that, translated into German, was sent to some centers in Germany. The requests were immediate, reaching 22 German Postulants in 1912.

This accelerated the desire to begin a foundation in Germany. That is why the experienced Fr. **Ramon Genover** was sent, who after traveling to Germany and Austria arrived in Trieste, where a house was founded in 1912.

In this way around 1907-1908 the first German, Austrian and Silesian Postulants arrived in Cervera. Between 1908 and 1924 more than 70 candidates came through, among them were Fr. **Peter Schweiger**, future Superior General (1949-1967), Fr. Andres Back and Fr. Alejandro Schwientek.

DAMIAN JANARIZ, CMF
Missionary Preacher (1870-1947)



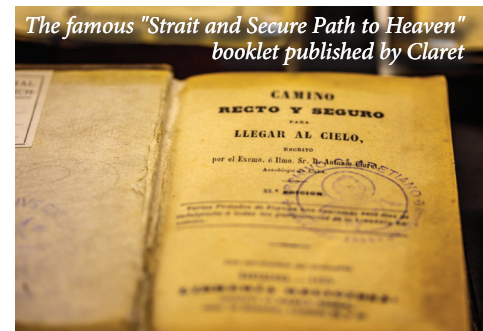
Miranda de Arga (Navarre, Spain). He entered the Claretian seminary at age 12. He enjoyed exceptional health all his life. We could say that he was a gifted man not only in health but also in speech, understanding and compassion. He was a great worker and loved the Congregation and the Heart of Mary. Ordained a priest in 1894, he was sent to Chile where he dedicated himself to the popular ministry and the development of Marian devotion. Returning to Spain in 1898, he established the Home Visits, which ended up serving more than 150,000 families. In 1904 he arrived in Aranda de Duero, where he would develop a tireless activity throughout the Ribera del Duero area. He created many associations and led innumerable vocations to religious life. He said: *I have more than 37 martyrs in heaven, whose vocations I awoke for the Congregation.* He went on to admire the Heart of Mary Museum put together in Aranda de Duero. He died on March 3rd in Valladolid.



GOOD BOOKS WITHIN EVERYONE'S REACH



The famous "Strait and Secure Path to Heaven" booklet published by Claret



Thanks be to God, all my books have had happy results, but the ones that I think have converted more people have been The Straight Path and The Catechism Explained. I meet a great number of people who attribute their conversion to reading these two books. Even here in the royal court, not a day goes by but that I meet someone who has resolved to change his life as a result of reading one of these books. (**Aut 323**)

In our day, then, there is twice the need for circulating good books. But these books must be small because modern people rush about so much and are pressed on all sides by a thousand different demands...and travel everywhere—so that a thick tome is just not going to be read. It will merely sit around gathering dust on the shelves of bookstores and libraries... (**Aut 312**)

In all the books I have published I have sought no financial gain, but only God's greater glory and the good of souls. I have never made a penny's profit from the works I have seen through the presses. On the contrary I have given away thousands upon thousands of free copies. I am still doing so today and hope to be doing so until I die; for I consider this to be the best alms one could possibly give nowadays. (**Aut 328**)



FOR PERSONAL REFLECTION

- Do you facilitate the promotion of evangelization materials?
- Do you use new social communications media to evangelize?
- Do you continue to value the Word and care for its proclamation?

"I have recognized quite clearly that all that I can call truly my own is sin.
If I am or have anything else, I have received it all from God."
(**Aut 344**)



1853. Claret reports to the governor of Cuba about Spaniards who have wives in the Peninsula and are living together with another or several women there.

1857. Claret arrives in Havana, on his way to the Peninsula; the Bishop and the civil authorities receive him with great honors. He will be in Havana until April 12th, carrying out an intense apostolate.

1859. The Queen appoints Claret as the protector (supreme authority) of the Montserrat hospital. At the end of the summer he will move there.

IN FRANCE AGAIN

EXPANSION (1906-1922)

To speak of the Congregation in France was to speak of its origins in Prades and Thuir up to the moment when the Province of Castilla set its sights on Paris, a city of so many Claretian reminiscences. The Spaniards missed having a Spanish-language chaplaincy in Paris. The tenacity of Fr. Gabriel Palmer, Chaplain and Auditor in the Royal Chapel, and the good management of Fr. **John Postius** convinced King Alfonso XIII (1886-1941) and the Government to take advantage of the Claretian Missionaries being the ones chosen

for such a commitment. So, Fr. **Martin Alsina** traveled to Paris in November 1913, accompanied by the community that was to take charge of the mission, with Fr. Emilio Martin as Superior. At first, after a time of uncertainty, they stayed in Rue de Mesnil, carrying out ministry in a chapel of the parish of *Saint Honore*, and after intense negotiations in Rue de la Pompe, where we still reside. Let us remember that Claret, when he was exiled in Paris (1868-1869), gave conferences to the Spanish speakers and founded a charitable association for the poor.

JOSE MARIA GIRABAL, CMF Missionary and Artist (1916-1996)



Artes (Barcelona, Spain). He studied in Barbastro, Cervera and Solsona, where he was surprised by the 1936 revolution. He fled to France. After the war, he finished his studies in Zafra (Badajoz) and was ordained a priest. He worked in various communities in his Province, Catalonia, especially as a formator in Cervera and as a professor in Barcelona and Sabadell. In 1949 he was assigned to Sallent, dedicating himself to preaching. Then he was in Lleida, Sant Boi de Llobregat and Tarragona. For many years he served in the clinic of Nuestra Señora del Redel. He was a great painter and writer, published in magazines like *El Benjamin* [The Benjamin], becoming director. He published several successful books with illustrations, including *La Vida ilustrada de San Antonio Maria Claret* [The Illustrated Life of St. Anthony Mary Claret] and *Leyendas de Montserrat* [Tales of Montserrat]. He adorned cloisters, like that of Gracia (in Barcelona), and painted murals. He excelled as a priest and artist. He was tested a lot by his health, especially in the last stage of his life. He died in Vic.

THE RELIGIOUS PRESS



In order to be able to give books away or to sell them as cheaply as possible, I planned on setting up a Religious Press under the protection of our Lady of Montserrat, patroness of Catalonia, and that of the glorious St. Michael. I shared my plans with Fr. Caixal and Fr. Palau, who were then canons of the cathedral at Tarragona and are now Bishops of Urgel and Barcelona, respectively. They are still running it under the immediate direction of an administrator. (Aut 329)



Claretian Museum (Vic)

Through the offices of the Religious Publishing House, both clergy and laity have been and are still able to purchase good books, the best available and at the lowest prices. In fact, no press in Spain offers books printed as correctly or with the same quality of type and paper as those printed by the Libreria Religiosa... (Aut 331)

FOR PERSONAL REFLECTION

- What does it mean for you today to continue the missionary work of an Apostle of the Press like Claret was?
- How do you think your Province or Delegation could commit itself to the apostolate in various communications media?
- How are you doing that?

“The Claretian community should live in a permanent state of acceptance of the gift of God that transforms us at each moment, and thus launches us into mission.” (MCT 222)



1863. Claret begins some brief Spiritual Exercises for the community of El Escorial, where he will then solemnly celebrate the Paschal Triduum.

1865. Claret is greatly disappointed: a woman has given birth and the father, apparently, is one of the chaplains of El Escorial. She wants Claret to give her the salary of said chaplain. Claret orders that he be expelled.

1868. With the return of the part of the house in Vic still pending, Claret advises Fr. **Joseph Xifre** to write to the Senator **Santiago de Tejada**, who greatly favored the Congregation.



POLITICAL AND CONGREGATIONAL EVENTS

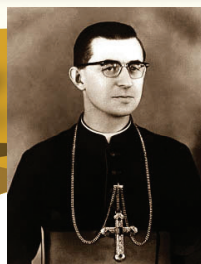
EXPANSION (1906-1922)

The main political events that affected the Congregation during this time period took place in Mexico and Europe. In 1914 the Constitutionalist Army triumphed in the Mexican Revolution, making the missionaries flee. This revolution gave the Congregation the opportunity to offer its second martyr, Bro. **Mariano Gonzalez**, who was shot to death in Toluca on August 22, 1914. The first martyr had been Fr. **Francis Crusats**. In Europe, World War I broke out, which only affected the Congregation in the economic sense.

In 1914 the new *Coat of Arms* and *Seal* of the Congregation was established. The following year the *Pia Union Mariana de Sufragios* [*The Pious Marian Union of Suffrages*] and the *Historical Archive of the Congregation* are created and for the first time the Autobiography of Father Claret is published. Also published for the first time was the *Cronica de la Congregacion* by Fr. **Xifre** in 1893. In 1916 the publication of the magazine *Tesoro Sacro Musical* began in Madrid. In 1918, the *General Rule* was published to adapt the *Constitutions* to the new Code of Canon Law of the Church of 1917.



GERALDO FERNANDES, CMF Bishop and Founder (1913-1982)



Contagem (Brazil). He entered the Claretian Missionaries and was ordained a priest in Rome in 1936. He returned to Brazil where he was a professor and Provincial Consultor. In 1957 he was appointed Bishop of Londrina (Brazil) and later promoted to Archbishop. He also served as vice president of the National Conference of Bishops of Brazil. He was a dynamic and fervent apostle. He was a Claretian convinced of his vocation and mission, full of zeal for the expansion of the Kingdom of Christ, who showed a special concern for the poor. With **Leonia Milito** he founded the Congregation of *Missionary Sisters of St. Anthony Mary Claret* in 1958. He was the father and spiritual guide of the Congregation. Like a father he accompanied its development for 25 years, guiding it and showing his concern as a shepherd. He spent his life for the people, whom he loved and guided, aware that *this world could still be happier*, as he affirmed in his spiritual testament.

THE ACADEMY OF ST. MICHAEL



Diploma of the Academy of St. Michael signed and originally designed by Claret himself - Claretian Museum (Vic)

While I am on the subject of books, I must mention the support given the Libreria Religiosa by the Academy of St. Michael, approved by His Holiness, Pius IX and by royal charter. Their Majesties, the Queen and King are, in fact, members of its first ranks. The Academy's board of directors meets in Madrid every Sunday to carry out the objectives of its bylaws. There are a number of branches in Madrid and in all the major cities of Spain, and the amount of good they are doing is incalculable. (**Aut 332**)



FOR PERSONAL REFLECTION

Claret was committed to the evangelization of culture through bringing together artists, writers and professionals of his time.

- What commitment do you have to the evangelization of culture?
- Does your lack of commitment to your formation make you look for excuses not to get involved in this difficult apostolate?
- What possibilities and difficulties do you find?

“We should ask ourselves whether the place that we have come to occupy is due to a lack of the creativity that is needed to give new expressions to the charism of the Institute, and to thus let it continue to enrich the life of the Church and foster its mission in the world.”

(Josep M Abella, *Missionaries*, p. 49)



1850. Claret will commission canon **Jeronimo Usera** to furnish the episcopal palace. Meanwhile in Madrid, Fr. Antonio Tolosa, relative of the Bishop of Vic, is taking care of things for his episcopal consecration.

1861. Claret wanted to spend Holy Week in El Escorial, but the Queen forces him to spend it in Aranjuez with the royal family. There he preaches a sermon about the passion for two and a half hours.

1862. Claret is an attending bishop at the consecration of **Francisco de Sales Crespo**, Auxiliary Bishop of Toledo.



IN CUBA AND PORTUGAL AGAIN

In 1918 the Claretian missionaries in Cuba were established again; this time in Palma Soriano. By then, most of the memory of Father Claret had been lost, even though the Saint had visited that town twice. The Archbishop admired the work of the missionaries; in 1920 he gave them another foundation: the Church of la Trinidad in Santiago, Cuba.

As soon as the slightest chance was perceived, the attempts at founding in Portugal began. The occasion came from the Bishop of Guarda Jose Alves Mattoso,

who invited the missionaries to found a house in Freineda. It was the year 1920. The following year, in October, part of the missionaries of Freineda were transferred to Tortosendo, within the same diocese, where, in addition to preaching, they took on spiritual direction and other teaching commitments in the diocesan seminary. This foundation was needed not only because of the need for missionaries in the area but because of the laws of the Government that prevented the communities from having more than three individuals.

EXPANSION (1906-1922)



EZEQUIEL VILLARROYA, CMF General Consultor (1877-1945)



Miravete de la Sierra (Teruel, Spain). He was Superior and Prefect of the Claretian seminarians in Cervera, Barbastro and Alagon. Later he was assigned to Colombia. When he arrived, he was 38 years old and had been a priest for 12 years. He spent 19 years in Colombia and 11 in Italy. Since the Claretians had arrived in Colombia in 1909, there were already eight communities and in 1915 the Quasi-Province began. He was its first Superior, and he served for two terms. During his terms the houses of Pereira and El Libano and the seminary in Bosa were founded. He remained in this position until the General Chapter of 1934 when he was elected General Consultor and Prefect of the Fathers of the Claretian International College. He was subsequently appointed Sub-Director General at the death of Fr. **Felipe Maroto** in 1937. He also held this last position under the generalship of Fr. **Nicolas Garcia**. Fr. Villarroya was sent from Rome to Brazil, Uruguay, Argentina and Chile as Visitor. While serving as Sub-Director General, he died on March 21st in Rome.

THE MEANS OF FAMILIAR CONVERSATIONS



Another very effective way of doing good is taking part in familiar conversations with people. A great many benefits can be accomplished by this means! Among the early Jesuits there was a lay brother who went shopping every day, and as he made his rounds, the conversations he held with people were so effective that he converted more souls than any other missionary. I read this story as a student and liked it so much that I have followed the same practice as often as circumstances have permitted. (Aut 334)

If the subject of death came up or if a funeral bell was tolling, I seized the opportunity

to talk about our human frailty and the uncertainty of our life and how we will have to render an account of our life to God when we die. Thunder and lightning would suggest the Judgment and I would speak of that great day. Standing by a blazing hearth, I would allude to the fires of hell... (Aut 335)

...I have personally witnessed the great value of conversations like these; their effect was like that of the conversation Christ held with the two disciples on the road to Emmaus. I also found that they had the further advantage of avoiding useless talk and grumbling. (Aut 336)



FOR PERSONAL REFLECTION

- Do you take advantage of everyday conversations when they lend themselves to convey the message of the Gospel?
- What do you usually talk about with people?
- Do you avoid useless or even vulgar gossip and comments?

Two synods have been celebrated about the family.

- What follow-up have you been able to carry out?
- How do you face the challenges faced by families today?

“In calling to mind the figure of Saint Francis of Assisi, we come to realize that a healthy relationship with creation is one dimension of overall personal conversion, which entails the recognition of our errors, sins, faults and failures, and leads to heartfelt repentance and desire to change.”

(Francis, *Laudato Si'*, 218)



1852. Claret arrives in Santiago, Cuba, from Gibara and Holguin, for the events of Holy Week.

1856. The missionaries in Vic write to Claret once they find out about the attack. The letter is received at the end of May.

1857. Claret gives orders to Fr. **Paladio Currius** not to spend more on the farm-school in Puerto Principe for now.



THE CORDI-MARIAN MISSIONARY SISTERS

EXPANSION (1906-1922)

The Institute was founded in Mexico City on March 19, 1921, by Miss Carmen Serrano y Rugama, a very humble woman with great love for God and the Heart of Mary, who had received the inspiration in 1913; and by Fr. **Julian Collell**, intrepid and tenacious man, an exemplary priest of the Congregation. Both were tireless catechists and very zealous of the glory of God. The mission of the Institute is to transmit the Gospel message, with great and ardent zeal, to all those in need of it, especially the

most humble: peasants, indigenous people, prisoners and disabled people, with a preference for women, youth and children, through catechesis, education and the media. The spirituality of the Congregation is rooted in that spirituality of St. Anthony Mary Claret, lived and experienced by the founders. And it is characterized by a profound intimacy with the Heart of Mary, to learn from Her to live in intimacy with the Lord, following Christ the Missionary, who offers himself to the Father as a living host.



FRANCISCO BENAVIDES Y NAVARRETE

Bishop of Zaragoza (1810-1895)



Baeza (Jaen, Spain). He studied in Salamanca and Granada. He took the habit of the Order of St. James of the Sword in 1834 and was ordained a priest in 1836. He was Rector of the seminary of Baeza and then Archdeacon of Jaen and Dean of Cordoba. He was consecrated Bishop of Sigüenza in 1858 in the Church of the *Comendadoras de Santiago* in Madrid. He was Patriarch of the West Indies and Titular Cardinal of San Tommaso in Parione. Later, in 1895, he was appointed Bishop of Zaragoza. His testimony about Claret's holiness was: *The customs of this enlightened archbishop did not detract from those common to the first Christians. Son of modest parents, he did not deny his origins, nor boasted as he rose in the ranks; rather, his humility grew in proportion to his position in the hierarchy, distancing himself with consideration from all that fosters human greatness, and persistently striving for contempt itself. Educated in the holy fear of God, he tried effectively to serve Him by obeying His holy Law with joy.*

THE MEANS OF OBJECTS OF DEVOTION



I found that another powerful means for doing good was giving away rosaries and teaching people how to use them. I also gave away medals and told people to wear them and kiss them morning and night. I did the same with scapulars, explaining their meaning and how they are to be worn. (Aut 337)

I also found that I could encourage piety by obtaining faculties to bless pictures, rosaries, medals, and scapulars. When people knew that I had these faculties, they would buy religious objects and, on the appointed day, bring them to the mission where I would bless them from the pulpit. Besides encouraging their fervor, this would also give them a souvenir of the mission and a reminder of all that was said and done there. (Aut 338)



Cross used by Claret
- Claretian Museum (Vic)



FOR PERSONAL REFLECTION

- What is your attitude towards popular piety and religiosity?
- Do you try to evangelize those of simple faith with patience and understanding?
- What popular means do you use to evangelize the faithful?

Popular religiosity provides values such as: a sense of community, of celebration and of symbols.

- Do you observe these?

“To be seduced by God is actually an invitation to die - it is an invitation to let go and an invitation to give up. God is calling us, wooing us, into a new relationship, and for this relationship to deepen, our old selves and our identity as we know it must die.”

(Paul Coutinho, *Just as You Are*, p.28)