

*F*ather, we thank you
for anointing us with your Spirit
and giving us a share
in the fullness of Christ, your Son.

*Blest are you for having called us to follow you
and to share with Jesus the work you entrusted to Him.*

*We ask you that, permeated by the Holy Spirit,
it may no longer be we who live,
but Christ who truly lives in us,
so we may be effective instruments
in proclaiming the Kingdom of Heaven.
May we conform ourselves ever more closely to Him
in our missionary community,
according to our special charism in the Church.
He who lives and reigns forever and ever.
Amen.*



April



1854. Claret ordains eight priests and one deacon. They are seminarians who arrived from Catalonia on January 15th, with well advanced studies.

1862. Claret directs Spiritual Exercises for Princess Isabella in preparation for her first communion.

1863. Claret proposes to Fr. **Joseph Xifre** that a Brother of the Congregation live with him to function as a cook, starting next September. It will be the beginning of a community of the Congregation with the founder in Madrid.



MISSION IN RUSSIA

EXPANSION (1906-1922)

The Holy See organized in 1922 a charitable mission of material assistance in order to remedy the hunger and the disastrous effects in the south of Russia as much as possible. First the Nuncio of His Holiness in Spain and then the Secretary of State went to the Congregation, insisting on their cooperation and the provision of personnel for the Pontifical Mission. The Superiors, always eager to support the wishes of the Holy See and grateful for the honor given to the Congregation in requesting their collaboration for such a great work, generously offered their

determined cooperation and presented the Holy See with Fr. Pedro Voltas and Fr. Angel Elorz. These priests joined the Pontifical Mission and arrived in Russia on August 21st, where they worked heroically in providing relief for the needy. The pontifical work had five centers: Crimea (Divine Word), Krasnodar (Jesuits), Moscow (Salesians), Orenburg (a Jesuit) and Rostov (Claretians). Each center was independent. They opened orphanages, soup kitchens for students, workers, children and the sick, helping colonies of Polish, Lithuanians, Germans and Assyrians.



BLESSED MANUEL DOMINGO SOL Founder of the Pontifical Spanish College (1836-1909)



Tortosa (Tarragona, Spain). Also known as Mosen Sol. He was born on April 1st. He was a founding priest of the Brotherhood of Diocesan Labour Priests and of the Pontifical Spanish College of St. Joseph in Rome. He was beatified by John Paul II in 1987. Until the founding of the Pontifical Spanish College in 1892, the Claretian Missionaries were responsible for the so-called Hispanic-Roman Seminary. This College was the first inspiration of a presence in Rome, due to the efforts of the Bishop of Santander, Bishop **Vicente Calvo Valero**. In 1884 the bishop offered the Claretians the responsibility of their seminarians in Rome. At the beginning it was called the Spanish Ecclesiastical College. A few other bishops joined this initiative. This assignment made it possible for the Congregation to settle in Rome for the first time to create the Mission Procure Office there and be able to send its students. In 1889 the Claretians were still promoting their College, but the seed had been planted. Fr. **Jeronimo Batllo** and Fr. **Antonio Naval** were made responsible for the College.

THE VIRTUE OF HUMILITY



The First Virtue I Strove for: Humility. Thus far, I have been speaking of the ordinary means I made use of to produce fruit. Now I would like to say something about the virtues I know are necessary for any missionary in order to bear fruit... (**Aut 340**)

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**)

I have come to know that the virtue of humility consists in this: in realizing that I am nothing, can do nothing but sin, and depend on God in everything—being, conservation, movement, and grace—and I am most happy to be dependent on God rather than on myself. (**Aut 347**)



FOR PERSONAL REFLECTION

- What are the apostolic virtues that you consider most important at this time in your life?
- Why is humility the foundation of the other virtues?
- What does humility consist of for you?
- Describe a humble person in five traits. Indicate the one that you think you should develop more in yourself.

“Start by doing what’s necessary; then do what’s possible; and suddenly you are doing the impossible.”
(*St. Francis of Assisi*)



1857. Claret preaches to the cloistered Dominican Sisters of St. Catherine of Siena in Havana.

1866. Today is Easter Sunday. Claret has celebrated Holy Week in El Escorial, as usual: three days of Spiritual Exercises for the seminarians and the solemn liturgies of the Paschal Triduum.

1869. Claret arrives in Rome. He has already completed his obligations as Royal Confessor and will now dedicate himself to preparations for the Council, preaching and writing.



BRIEF STATISTICS (1922)

EXPANSION (1906-1922)

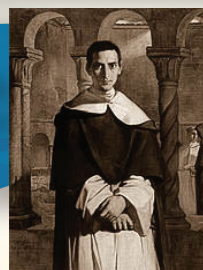
The growth of the Institute was, above all, in personnel. In 1922 the Congregation had 1,943 members (not counting the 834 postulants); among them, 3 Bishops and an Apostolic Prefect. At that point 2 Bishops, 388 Fathers, 244 Students and 283 Brothers had died. In total 917 missionaries. And there were 10 Provinces and Vice-Provinces, with 154 houses: Catalunya, Castilla, Betica, Chile, Mexico, Brazil, Colombia, Argentina, Guinea and the United States. The resolution to open postulancies and novitiates in Chile, Mexico, Brazil, Argentina, Colombia,

Peru, the United States and Guinea was significant. It had already been arranged by the XII General Chapter held the same year. This allowed for different Organisms to be elevated to Provinces shortly after. In this way the expansion of the Congregation was consolidated.

The publications continue. Numerous weekly and monthly papers are appearing, some noteworthy ones are: the weekly magazine *Iris de Paz*; the biweekly magazine *La Ilustracion del Clero*; the monthly magazine *Commentarium pro Religiosis* and *El Misionero*.

SAINT FRANCISCO COLL

Founder (1812-1875)



Gombren (Girona, Spain). In 1822 he went to the seminary in Vic as a professed of the Order of Preachers. He received the priestly ordination in Solsona in 1836. He dedicated himself fundamentally to preaching. He collaborated in the *Apostolic Brotherhood* that Saint Anthony Mary Claret started. He was appointed as *Apostolic Missionary* by the Holy See. After 1850 Fr. Coll was appointed by his Dominican superiors as Director of the Third Order of Saint Dominic in Catalonia. In Vic he exercised much influence in the renewal and promotion of new forms of religious life, especially Dominican ones. Determined to carry out his project, with the consent of the Bishop of Vic and the Superior of the Order, he joined seven young women who felt called and on August 15, 1856, the Congregation of *Dominican Sisters of the Annunciation of the Blessed Virgin* was born. He was canonized in 2009. In several letters written by Claret to Fr. Coll we can collect data of Claret's invaluable interventions in the new foundation.

CULTIVATING HUMILITY



From the time I entered the seminary at Vic to study philosophy, I began to make a particular examination of this virtue of humility, and I really needed to because I had been so preoccupied in Barcelona with sketches, machines, and other such foolishness that my head was quite swollen with vanity and my tainted heart was flattered at hearing all the praises and compliments I received... (Aut 341)

I understood quite clearly that our Lord wanted me to be humble and that He was helping me greatly in this direction by supplying me with motives for humbling myself. During my early years as a missionary, I was very much persecuted everywhere I went, and to tell the truth this can be very humiliating. All sorts of ugly calumnies were spread about me. People said I'd stolen a mule, and who knows what other nonsense. In every town I went to, the only things to be heard about me during the first half of the mission or other service were silly stories, lies, and calumnies... (Aut 352)

This lasted throughout the first half of the mission, and it was the same wherever I went. But from the middle of the mission to the end, everything changed completely. Then the devil would try the opposite approach. Everyone would say that I was a saint and thus I would be tempted to become puffed up with vanity. But our Lord took good care of me. During the closing days of the mission... the Lord allowed me to feel a sadness so great that I can only explain it by saying that it was a special providence of God... (Aut 353)

FOR PERSONAL REFLECTION



- Do you try to have an objective knowledge and a positive acceptance of your qualities and your limitations?
- How do you respond to possible slander, defamation and murmuring in your community life and apostolic activity?
- How do you react to the praise and congratulations for your missionary work?
- What would you say to a person who confuses humility with self-deprecation and self-criticism?
- How should praise and congratulations be accepted?

"I have come to see that a truly humble man must be like a stone that, even if it is hoisted to the very top of a building, always gravitates toward the bottom."

(Aut 350)



1847. Unable to preach for political reasons in Vic, Claret is dedicated to working hard in the Spiritual Brotherhood of Good Books (prelude to the *Libreria Religiosa*).

1856. Even though it has been two months since the attack, the swelling of Claret's cheek has not yet disappeared, and the air irritates it and numbs it more. This, and the awareness that the persecution continues, have him confined to the palace.

1859. Claret writes a letter to the Pope as an introduction-recommendation of the Constitutions of the missionaries.



MAIN INTERNAL EVENTS

NEW EXPANSION (1922-1934)

On March 2, 1922, Fr. **Martin Alsina** died in Zafra. In August of that same year the XII General Chapter was celebrated in Vic (August 15 - October 12). In it, Fr. **Nicolas Garcia** was chosen. In this Chapter the *Constitutions* were adapted to the new Code (1917), the observance in the Congregation was revised, the transfer of the General Curia to Rome was recommended and the topics of liturgy, missions, seminaries and teaching were discussed.

In 1923 the following were elevated to

the category of Provinces: Fernando Poo (Equatorial Guinea), Chile, Mexico, Brazil, Argentina, Colombia and the United States. In 1924 the Vice-Province of Italy was created and that of Peru in 1925.

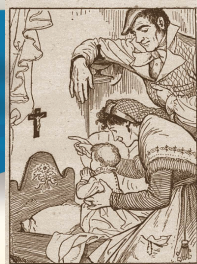
On July 16, 1924, the *Constitutions* that were adapted to the Code were finally approved. Pope Pius XI, through the Decree *Inter Familias Religiosas*, approved the Congregation fully and solemnly and congratulated the Institute. That year the 75th anniversary of the Congregation was celebrated.

JOHN CLARET XAMBO

Claret's Father (1774-1854)



Sallent (Barcelona, Spain). He married Josefa Clara. There were eleven children from the marriage, six sons and five daughters. They lived in a rented house as a working-class family and their father was a manufacturer of cotton fabrics. They spent their lives pretty well off in times of prosperity for commerce. They had a small factory with workers of both sexes, some in charge of weaving and others in preparing the cotton before putting it in the loom. He raised funds for the church through the Bull of the Crusade in Sallent and collected rents for the episcopal properties in Sallent. Fr. John Arumi accompanied him once to Barcelona observing his great humility and modesty. The priest said that Anthony's submission to his requests was perfect and that's why he proposed him as a model to the other children. He died on April 11, 1854. On August 1st, Fr. **Paladio Currius** wrote to Claret giving his condolences.



THE VIRTUE OF POVERTY



I see that we live in a century that not only adores the golden calf as did the Hebrews but also worships gold so avidly that it has pulled down the most generous of all virtues from their sacred pedestals... (**Aut 358**)

I believed that this dreadful giant, which worldlings call all-powerful, had to be confronted with the holy virtue of poverty. So wherever I encountered greed, I countered it with poverty. I had nothing, wanted nothing, and refused everything. I was content with the clothes I had on and the food that was set before me. I carried all I had in a bandanna. The contents of my luggage were a full-year breviary, a sheaf of sermons, a pair of socks, and an extra shirt—nothing more. (**Aut 359**)

I had no money, but then I had no need of it. I didn't need it for horses, carriage, or train because I always traveled on foot, even though I did have to make some quite long little journeys, as I shall tell later. I didn't need it for meals because I begged for them wherever I went. Nor did I need it for clothes because the Lord preserved my clothes and shoes almost the way he did the clothes of the Hebrews in the desert... (**Aut 361**)



FOR PERSONAL REFLECTION

- Do the people who live around you consider you to be a poor person?
- How do you think you should live poverty in your environment?
- What is the hardest thing for you to let go of?
- In the context of where you live, what is the clearest sign of poverty we could give as missionaries?
- Stop to think about three things you have that are not necessary for you. Could you let go of them?

"The Congregation's richest resource is its members. Each of them is precious for the gift of his unique selfhood."
(CPR 49)



1850. Claret travels from Vic to Girona to lead Spiritual Exercises for priests; in them he makes a decisive acquisition for Cuba: Fr. **Paladio Currius**. He also gives a mission for the people.

1859. In the church of the convent of La Encarnacion (Madrid), Claret solemnly baptizes an adult Moor, whose godparents are the King and Queen.

1868. Claret goes to El Escorial to celebrate what will be his last Holy Week in the monastery.

IN PANAMA

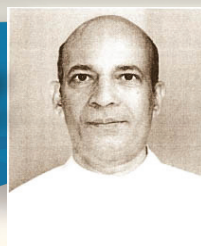
NEW EXPANSION (1922-1934)

In December of 1923, Fr. Antonio Angles arrived in Panama from Colombia to take charge of the Santo Domingo chapel in the old historical center of the capital. He also looked for a residence for the sick or fatigued Missionaries from Choco. Soon the activity of the Missionaries spread to other places in the country, such as the city of Colon. Fr. Angles and the two companions who accompanied him immediately took charge of several churches, prisons, hospital, leprosarium, and the Cathedral itself. Bishop Guillermo Rojas was like a true

father to them from the beginning. The first house in Santo Domingo was so poor that the Internuncio, during a visit, had to advise them: *Find another house; you cannot live here.* However, after some improvements, the Missionaries lived there until 1946, when they moved definitively to the house and church of Cristo Rey. It was the beginning of a flourishing presence in the area of Central America, which in 1927 became a Visitorship dependent on the United States, despite the fact that Colombia had founded it and provided Missionaries.



GEORGE NEDUMPALAKUNNEL, CMF General Consultor (1943-2007)



He was one of the first Claretians of Indian nationality, fruit of the work of Fr. **Dirnberger** and Deutschland Province. In 1962, with five companions, he left Cochin for Germany to begin his Claretian formation. He professed in 1964 and was ordained in Rome in 1974. He completed his theology studies in the *Claretianum*. After receiving his Doctorate in Spiritual Theology, he returned to India, where he began as Administrator of the Claretian Seminary in Malleswaram in Bangalore and later as Superior of Kuravilangad. In 1982 he succeeded Fr. Dirnberger as Superior Delegate of the new Province. In 1991 he was elected General Consultor of the Congregation, the first Asian to be part of the General Government. He later traveled to the United States, where they found in him the brain disease that would prematurely end his life. His last days were spent in the house of Kuravilangad (Kerala, India) where he died on April 4th. He had a clear vision and a great sense of duty and dedication. He gave stability to the Congregation in India and knew how to consolidate it firmly.

THE JOY OF THE MOST BELOVED POVERTY



I always remembered that Jesus had become poor Himself; he chose to be born, to live, and to die in the utmost poverty. I thought of how Mary, too, had always wanted to be poor. And I thought, too, of how the Apostles left everything to follow Jesus Christ. Sometimes the Lord made me feel the pinch of poverty but only for a short time. Then He would console me with whatever I needed, and the joy I experienced in feeling poverty was so great that the rich could never enjoy all their riches as much as I

enjoyed my most beloved poverty. (Aut 363)

I had observed that the holy virtue of poverty not only edified people and upset the idol of gold but also helped me greatly to grow in humility and advance in perfection. I can sum up what I learned by experience in the following comparison: The virtues are like the strings on a harp. Poverty is the shortest and thinnest chord and hence gives the highest sound. The shorter we are in life's conveniences, the higher we reach on the scale of perfection... (Aut 370)

FOR PERSONAL REFLECTION



- Are there times when you experience the effects of apostolic poverty? How do you react?
- Does consumerism have power over you?
- Do you agree with Claret when he affirms that poverty is the chord that keeps missionary life in tune?
- place themselves on the geographical, social and cultural front lines of the work of evangelization." (Josep M. Abella, *Missionaries*, p. 57)

"Those who have placed everything in God's hands in order to be effective tools for the building of his kingdom should not hesitate to place themselves on the geographical, social and cultural front lines of the work of evangelization."

(Josep M. Abella, *Missionaries*, p. 57)



1854. Claret begins the Spiritual Exercises for the foundation of the Teaching Sisters of Mary Immaculate in Santiago, Cuba.

1858. No longer having prospects of returning to Cuba, Claret has presented his resignation to the Office of the Archbishop and has proposed Fr. **Stephen Sala** as his successor.

1866. Claret delivers to the Queen the project, prepared by Fr. **Dionisio Gonzalez**, of the university in El Escorial; the Queen is enthusiastic and the next day she gives it to the Minister of Development for processing.



IN VENEZUELA FOR THE FIRST TIME

NEW EXPANSION (1922-1934)

During the 20th century, Venezuela was going to be a place sought out by many immigrants, who were looking for an economic solution for their families in the wealth that the country offered, especially with the exploitation of its oil. When the Congregation decided to found a house in Venezuela, the claim of *black gold* did not exist yet, but there were the needs of many people who implored the presence of priests to keep their Christian faith alive. The Congregation settled there in 1923, recommended by the Nuncio in Caracas, Mons. Felipe Cortessi,

to attend to a difficult and very extensive mission: the parishes of San Casimiro and San Fernando de Apure, both at the same time, and with a different population. The first had 12,000 parishioners, 2,000 in the city and the rest divided into 94 little towns or villages. The presence of the Congregation will remain there until 1960. The second, in the Venezuelan plains, was at that time a city with 7,000 inhabitants, and another 11,000 more scattered throughout many villages of the surrounding area with lush vegetation and unbearable heat.



JESUS BERMEJO, CMF Claret Scholar (1942-2013)



Tornavacas (Caceres, Spain). He professed in the Congregation in 1960. After his ordination as a priest in 1968, he exercised various ministries in formation until he was assigned to Rome as head of the Claretian Secretariat in 1976. He carried out important research and prepared, in collaboration with Fr. **Joseph Maria Viñas**, the edition of the *Autobiography and the Pastoral Writings of St. Anthony Mary Claret*. He published all the letters of the Holy Founder in *Selection of Letters, The Spiritual Writings and The Marian Writings*. In 2010 he was assigned to the Claretian Spirituality Center in Vic (CESC). One of his main tasks was the cataloging of all the material on the life and ministry of Archbishop Claret in the Archdiocese of Santiago de Cuba, which was collected during the three years that Fr. Bermejo spent on the island. He was one of the greatest experts on the life and work of Saint Anthony Mary Claret. He died on April 2nd in Vic.



THE VIRTUE OF MEEKNESS



I knew that the virtue an apostolic missionary needs most, after humility and poverty, is meekness. That's why Jesus told his beloved disciples: Learn from me, for I am meek and humble of heart, and you will find rest for your souls. Humility is like the root of the tree, and meekness is its fruit. St. Bernard tells us that we please God by humility and our neighbor by meekness. In the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus said: Blessed are the meek, for they shall possess the land.—and not just the promised land of those living in heaven but also the earthly hearts of men. (**Aut 372**)

Meekness is one sign of a vocation to be an apostolic missionary... Jesus Christ was meekness itself, and because of this virtue He is called the Lamb. The prophets foretold that He would be so mild that He would neither break the bruised reed nor quench the smoking flax; that he would be persecuted, calumniated, and covered with reproaches and yet remain as one without a tongue and say nothing... Yes, by his labors, his suffering, his silence and death on the Cross, He redeemed us and taught us how we must act to save the souls He has entrusted to us. (**Aut 374**)



FOR PERSONAL REFLECTION

- What is your way of treating people?
- Do they consider you patient and understanding or rigid and intolerant?
- Is your meekness the fruit of being at peace with yourself? Meekness is a way of looking at others with compassion.
- During the day today, treat the people you encounter with meekness. Examine what changes within you.
- What would you recommend a missionary do whose personality is harsh and aggressive? How would you tell it to them with meekness?

“There can be no ecology without an adequate anthropology. When the human person is considered as simply one being among others, the product of chance or physical determinism, then *our overall sense of responsibility wanes*.”
(Francis, *Laudato Si'*, 118)



1858. With complicated diligence, Claret managed to get the nuncio to allow three nuns of Mother **Paris** to move from Cuba to the Peninsula and for Bishop **Caixal** to receive them in his diocese; they await civil authorization.

1861. Congressman Figuerola attacks Claret strongly in Congress because of a print about prisoners in which someone put his name. The persecution is unsettling for Claret.

1862. Claret is the attending bishop for the new Archbishop of Santiago, Msgr. Calvo y Lope.



IN THE DOMINICAN REPUBLIC

NEW EXPANSION (1922-1934)

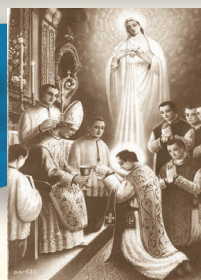
The Diocese of Santo Domingo boasts, with good reason, to be known as the Primate See of America, since the Eucharist was celebrated here for the first time when the New World was discovered by Columbus. The Congregation wished to go there, and in 1923 it accepted the direction of the diocesan Seminary Santo Tomas de Aquino, in Santo Domingo. Along with that direction the Archbishop also offered them the church adjacent to the old Dominican convent and another parish in which the six missionaries in charge of the Seminary could exercise

their ministry. It was a very honorable task with a lot of responsibility which the Congregation accepted, and, as always when it came to Seminaries, the Superiors did not hesitate to send men who were competent and of great missionary spirit. In 1938 the foundation of Puerto Plata was opened, and that of Altamira in 1942. In 1930 a hurricane completely destroyed the Seminary. With great sacrifices, its material reconstruction had to be added to a variety of difficulties that had appeared. In 1946 they abandoned the Seminary to accept responsibility of the Church of Altagracia.



JOSE VALL

Ordination Companion (1803-1876)



Alpens (Barcelona, Spain). He did his priestly studies in the seminary in Vic. His pastoral life developed attending to the villages of the area. He was ordained a deacon on December 20, 1834, the same day as Claret, in the church of la Presentacion of the Discalced Carmelites, which was destroyed during the Spanish Civil War in 1937. The letter from this priest, Claret's ordination companion, written years later, in 1838, is oddly enough the first letter sent to Claret that has been preserved. It said: *This is the first time I have had a chance to write to you, telling you that we cannot rejoice in my promotion, because I fear it will be a descent. But may God bless everything. I have not heard from my schoolmate Mosen Jaime [Balmes?] or anyone else. If you know something, you can tell me. If you have Masses that you can send me without harming anyone, do so, because I see that they are very scarce.*

A STRONG AND GENTLE MISSIONARY



The first time I read these words of the Apostles I was horrified to learn that he called knowledge without meekness “devilish.” Jesus! devilish! ... Yes, it is devilish, for experience has taught me that a bitter zeal is a weapon that the devil uses, and that the priest who works without meekness serves Satan, not Christ. When such a man preaches, he frightens away his listeners; when he hears confessions, he frightens away his penitents (and if they do confess their sins they do so badly because they are embarrassed and hide their sins out of fear). I have listened to many general confessions of penitents who had hidden their sins because of so-called confessors who had harshly reprimanded them. **(Aut 376)**

My God, give me a zeal that is discreet and prudent so that I may do everything...strongly yet sweetly, meekly yet thoroughly. I hope to act in all things with a holy prudence, and to this end I shall try to remember that prudence is born in man along with his natural reason, is nurtured by study, strengthened by age, clarified by consulting those who are wise, and perfected in daily experience. **(Aut 383)**



FOR PERSONAL REFLECTION

- Is your missionary zeal discreet and prudent or impulsive and bitter?
- Do you know if you have ever distanced someone from the Church or even from the faith because of your zeal that was misunderstood?
- Do you seek for meekness to inform your missionary zeal with patient love?
- Do you think you have a non-violent style in your language and in your relationships with others? What can you do to improve?

“When we are so closely attached to God, we cannot see God as God is. We do not even see ourselves in this relationship. It is a clinging that destroys God and us and the relationship.”
(Paul Coutinho, *Just as You Are*, p. 50-51)



1852. In a letter to the Governor of Cuba, Claret complains that some couples are cohabitating because the authorities do not let them get married since they are of different races. Claret asks him to abolish such a prohibition; otherwise he will take it to the Government of Madrid.

1859. Claret informs the Nuncio that, in the fourth attempt, he has found a successor for the Archdiocese of Santiago Fr. **Manuel Negueruela**, from Valladolid.

1859. Claret begins a novena to Our Lady of Sorrows in the Church of San Fernando (Madrid).



THE PROVINCE OF THE UNITED STATES

NEW EXPANSION (1922-1934)

July 17, 1923, the United States ceased to belong to the Vice-Province of USA-Mexico and was constituted as an Independent Province, acquiring then the name of United States. The Provincial Curia was placed in San Gabriel and Fr. Andres Resa was named the first Provincial. The Missions and Houses of Panama became dependent on the new Province, where the Missionaries would develop intense activity. They had the appreciation of the Cardinal and Archbishop G. W. Mundelein who would facilitate the magnificent foundations in

Chicago. Fr. Domingo Zaldivar and Fr. Jaime Tort were its founders. It was a time of new foundations: Phoenix (Arizona, 1925), Sweetwater and Fort Worth (Texas, 1926). During the first 25 years they would have few missionaries but they were very dedicated. Cardinal Mundelein blessed the Church of Guadalupe in 1929. There the Perpetual Novena to St. Jude Thaddeus was instituted, who would attain such popularity, and in 1932 the same Cardinal approved the League of St. Jude, with which the devotion to the Apostle began to spread providentially.



CANDIDO BAJO, CMF

Sub-Director General (1894-1969)



Fuentenebro (Burgos, Spain). From a family of shepherds, his mother saw his father die by lightning. This fact obliged him to dedicate himself to shepherding with little time for study. At the age of thirteen he entered the seminary in Santo Domingo de la Calzada thanks to the preaching of the missionaries and his uncle, Fr. Ceferino Pecharroman. Of brilliant intelligence, he was ordained a priest in 1920. His assignments were professor in Segovia and Beire, until his appointment as the Provincial of Castilla in 1938. The division of the Province of Castilla in 1950 entailed economic ruin and it was he who promoted and consolidated the new reality with foundations such as the Claret School in Madrid and the construction of the future Provincial Curia on Victor Pradera Street. In 1955 he was appointed Sub-Director General, a post he held until 1961, an era of great works being carried out in Rome and Salamanca. He governed the Province of Castilla again before his death on April 21st in Madrid.

THE VIRTUE OF MODESTY



The missionary, I would tell myself, is a spectacle to God, the angels, and men. Hence, he must be very circumspect and guarded in all his words, actions, and bearing. And so, I resolved both at home and away, to speak very little and carefully weigh the words... (**Aut 384**)

I was convinced, too, that a missionary should be at peace with everyone, as the Apostle Paul tells us. Thus I never quarreled with anyone but strove to be kind with all... (**Aut 386**)

It is well known that modesty is the virtue that teaches us to do all things in a fitting manner. Because we should do all things just as Jesus Christ did, I used to ask myself in every situation, and still do, how Jesus would have acted. How carefully and with what purity and rightness of intention He did everything: preaching, eating, dealing with all sorts of people, praying! Thus, with the Lord's help, I resolved to imitate Jesus Christ in all things so as to be able to say by my actions, if not in so many words like the apostle, Be imitators of me as I am of Christ. (**Aut 387**)



FOR PERSONAL REFLECTION

- Are you aware that your most important preaching comes from your life itself?
- Do you try to have peaceful relationships with everyone?
- Is Christ really the model you try to follow?
- Try to complete these sentences carefully:
- The opposite of missionary modesty is ...
- Exhibitionism and ostentation usually provoke ...
- Excellence is not perfectionistic narcissism because ...

“Every renewal of the Church essentially consists in an increase of fidelity to her own calling... Without new life and an authentic evangelical spirit... any new structure will soon prove ineffective.”
(Francis, *Evangelii gaudium*, 26)



1845. Claret finishes the Spiritual Exercises for the clergy of Mataro (Barcelona).

1865. Claret travels to El Escorial to lead the customary Spiritual Exercises during the Triduum and the solemnities of Holy Week.

1866. Claret meets with the Minister of Development to talk about the school that is planned for El Escorial.



NOW IN GERMANY

NEW EXPANSION (1922-1934)

The first house in present-day Germany was Spaichingen, where Fr. Leonardo Aubele arrived with the German missionaries from the group in Cervera. It was opened on June 14, 1924, one month before the Congregation celebrated its 75th anniversary, as the most valuable tribute on this diamond anniversary. Fr. Andreas Back, who spoke and wrote Spanish perfectly, left in *Annales* the chronicle of that first foundation: *a Shrine consecrated to the Most Holy Trinity on a mountain peak with a house attached, which was very*

popular with Catholics of the region. It was a magnificent entry into Germany, which would soon be separated from Catalunya, with its own postulancy, although it would continue to send its students for a few more years to the mother Province. Since then the missionaries have been responsible for the Shrine of the Holy Trinity (Dreifaltigkeitsberg), a place of frequent pilgrimages. During this period, other houses were founded: Weissenhorn (1925), Würzburg (1930), Heudorf (1932) and Frankfurt am Main (1934). World War II would stop that hopeful progress.

SAINT CARMEN SALLES

Foundress (1848-1911)



Vic (Barcelona, Spain). She entered the novitiate of the Sisters Adorers. Then, taken by her concern for the recovery of women, she transferred to the Dominicans of the Annunciation. In 1892 after a time of purification, with the support of Bishop Manuel Gomez de Salazar, she founded, together with three sisters, the Conceptionist Sisters of Santo Domingo, later called the *Missionary Sisters of the Immaculate Conception of Mary*. Arriving in Burgos in 1892, they founded their first school there. In 19 years of work she founded 13 houses. She died on April 9, 1911 and was canonized in 2012. Her connection with the Congregation of Claretian Missionaries, for which she received the Fraternal Charter in 1954, is due to the fact that they have Father Claret as Protector of the Institute and also because of the fraternal relations that have always existed between the two Congregations. Her residence in Burgos became the residence of the Claretian Missionaries until 1935, when they acquired the Palace in Angulo.

THE VIRTUE OF MORTIFICATION



Iknew that I could not practice modesty without the virtue of mortification, so with God's grace, I bent all my forces on acquiring that, cost what it might. (Aut 390)

In the first place, then, I strove to deprive myself of every pleasure in order to give pleasure to God. Without knowing how, I felt obliged to fulfill what was a mere proposal. My mind was faced with choosing between my pleasure and God's, and because my mind saw the glaring inequality between the two, even in the slightest matter, I would be forced to choose what then seemed more pleasing to God. I would joyfully abstain from the pleasure in question, to please God. This is still the way it is with me in all things: eating, drinking, resting, talking, looking, hearing, going somewhere, etc. (Aut 391)



Discipline of Claret on display at the Claret Museum Chapel of the General Curia (Rome)



FOR PERSONAL REFLECTION

- What mortifies you most in your missionary life?
- Do you consider it something that helps teach you to grow in your spiritual life?
- Do you willingly accept the mortifications that may come from your apostolic life?
- Read Claret's words closely. And today deprive yourself of something (a drink, a meal, a break, a favorite program, a visit, a reading, a show...). Before doing so, become aware of the motivation that drives you.

"In our day the thirst for material things is drying up the heart and bowels of modern societies."

(Aut 357)



1845. Claret concludes his Spiritual Exercises in Mataro, and repeats the previous year's resolutions.

1861. Bishop **Alameda** goes to El Escorial to found a Convent of Conceptionist Sisters, leaving Sister **Patrocinio** as the Abbess. Claret refrains from going.

1867. In confidence, Claret reveals to Mother Paris that he has an intense yearning to go to heaven, and to finish the journey of sorrow and disappointment through which God is taking him.



THE INTERNATIONAL VOTIVE CHURCH IN ROME

NEW EXPANSION (1922-1934)

On July 15, 1925, the construction of the International Votive Church began in Rome, in the Parioli neighborhood. The idea of this great monument was thanks to Pope Pius XI, who wished for the Heart of Mary to have a Church in the Eternal City worthy of the capital of the Catholic world. He entrusted it to the sons of Father Claret. There were enormous difficulties, since the land, due to the infiltration of water from the Tiber River, was not firm enough to uphold the immense mass;

but the interest of the Popes maintained the project. On December 7, 1952, the Basilica was finally inaugurated with the presence of Cardinal Clemente Micara. The 28-year dream was realized, from that distant June 1, 1924 date when the first stone was placed. Since then it has been – in Parioli, and for all of Rome – a strategic sign of the presence of the Claretian Missionaries. The title of the Basilica and of the Congregation gives the street its name: Via del Sacro Cuore di Maria.



ISABELLA II Queen of Spain (1830-1904)



Madrid (Spain). The first born of Ferdinand VII and his fourth wife, Maria Christina. She was proclaimed Queen of Spain in 1833. Due to her young age, first her mother and later General Espartero were Regents of the Kingdom. The Cortes proclaimed her to be of age in 1843, when she was 13 years old. In 1846 she married her cousin **Francisco de Asis Bourbon**. Ten children were born from their marriage. Her reign was characterized by the struggles and intrigues between moderates and progressives. There were numerous revolts that led to the revolution of September 1868, which dethroned the Queen and forced her to take refuge in France. Among those who accompanied her during this exile was Claret, her confessor, for whom she had great appreciation. Her written testimony about the Saint is very beautiful. She died in Paris. Claret exercised the ministry of Confessor of the Queen from 1857 to 1868. The King also had his own Confessor and both had a Chaplain Bishop who celebrated the Eucharist for them.

THE FRUITS OF MORTIFICATION



*Our Lady of the Rosary Church
La Granja de San Ildefonso (Segovia)*

I was in Segovia on September 4, 1859 and while I was making my meditation, at 4:25 in the morning, Jesus told me, You must teach your missionaries mortification in eating and drinking, Anthony. A few minutes later the Blessed Virgin said, If you do, you will have great results, Anthony. (**Aut 406**)

A man who is base, vile, stingy, and cowardly never sacrifices—nor can he because he never resists the slightest whim or urging of his concupiscence. All that his concupiscence asks for—if it is within his power to grant or refuse it—he grants, refusing nothing to his passion. Because he is a cringing coward, he lets himself be overcome and gives in to it. In a fight between a brave man and a coward, the brave man wins. In a fight between vice and a man of vice, vice wins and pins the man down. This is why continence and chastity are praised so highly: because they enable a man to abstain from the pleasures and delights that nature and passion offer him. (**Aut 417**)



FOR PERSONAL REFLECTION

- Do you have self-discipline or are you governed by your emotional ups and downs?
- Do you complain about food, health, time, the way others are, etc.?
- How do you apply self-discipline in your emotional-sexual life?
- At present, there are not many Claretians who fast regularly. On the other hand, many other people fast today for reasons of aesthetics, health, solidarity, protest, etc.
- Is there a higher reason to fast? How can you control your desires, cravings and whims? Is voluntarism enough?

“We want to enable each and every Claretian to be fully involved,
with his whole worth and responsibility,
in the mission of our community, and thus achieve personal growth.”
(CPR 50)



1847. Confined in Vic, unable to preach missions, today Claret begins the conferences for boys and girls to prepare them for first communion.

1858. Claret travels with the King and Queen to Aranjuez, and there he will preach a mission to the people.

1861. Claret sends Fr. **Dionisio Gonzalez** the method for expelling Fr. **Pages**, formerly responsible for the monastery, from El Escorial as he sows discord and hinders the common life of the chaplains.



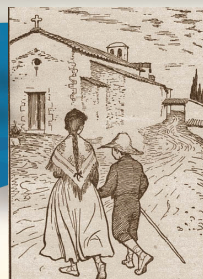
NEW EXPANSION (1922-1934)

THE VICARIATE OF THE DARIEN (PANAMA)

In 1925 the Holy See granted the Claretians an Apostolic Vicariate composed of the province of Colon, along with the San Blas region (Kuna Yala), the Darien province and the Pearl Islands, all on Panamanian soil. Belen is found there, which, according to tradition, has the honor of being the first Christian altar of the New World. The conditions were difficult for the first Missionaries due to the tropical climate and the almost total lack of infrastructure: Very dense tropical jungles, very difficult communication routes, small and scattered settlements

of Indians, an extreme climate due to very high heat and heavy downpours. Its people were good, simple believers, but with little religious practice. A description from Fr. Angles ended in this way: *With hard work and perseverance you can receive much spiritual benefit; the inhabitants do not have bad dispositions, but rather suffer from ignorance and abandonment.* In 1927 the Province of the United States took charge of the Vicariate and of all the houses in Panama, and Fr. **Juan Jose Maiztegui** was appointed the first Apostolic Vicar.

ROSE CLARET CLARA Claret's Sister (1800-1874)



Sallent (Barcelona, Spain). She was the oldest sister of Anthony Claret. She married Joseph Muntanola and had six children. Her brother said of Rose: *She has always been hard-working, upright, and pious. She is the one who has loved me the most* (Aut 6), and as a small child *I and my sister Rose, who was very devout, made frequent visits...* (Aut. 49). Anthony loved her very much because as a child he accompanied her to the shrine of the Virgin of Fussimanya. In 1868 he wrote: *I often remember the visits I used to make there with you, and that is the reason I have always loved you more than my other brothers and sisters, because you were always ready to accompany me to visit the holy statue of Mary Most Holy.* She was widowed in 1848. Both she, being widowed, and her brother John received, while they were alive, the monthly pension of 50 duros, which the Archbishop assigned them. She died in the month of April 1874.

IMITATION OF THE VIRTUES OF JESUS



1. Humility, obedience, meekness, and love are the virtues that shine in a special way through the Cross and the Blessed Sacrament of the Altar. O my Jesus, help me imitate you! (Aut 428)
2. Clothing. Throughout his life, He had only a coarse tunic, woven by his mother, and a cloak. They even stripped Him of these so that He died naked, unshod, and without hat or cap. (Aut 429)
3. Food. He took only bread and water during the entire 30 years of his hidden life. In the desert, at the end of 40 days of rigorous fasting, the angels brought Him bread and water, as they had done to Elijah. During the remaining years of his public life, He ate what was set before Him and conformed to custom. The meal that He and the Apostles shared was barley loaves and broiled fish, and sometimes they didn't even have this because they plucked ears of grain to ease their hunger and were criticized for it.

On the cross He said "I thirst," but they only gave Him gall and vinegar, to his greater torment. (Aut 430)



St. Anthony Mary Claret used to pray before this crucifix in the Royal Monastery of El Escorial (Madrid)



FOR PERSONAL REFLECTION

- What are the features of Christ that most stand out to you?
- What are the Gospel texts that challenge you most?
- Go to your bedroom, open the closets and drawers... and look at your belongings. Let the Christ of Claret speak to you about them. Listen to the echoes that his words leave in your conscience.

"Our Congregation was born as a missionary Community. Our Congregation will only be faithful to the original inspiration as long as it continues existing as a *missionary community*."
(Josep M. Abella, *Circular Letter of Announcement of the XXV General Chapter*, 9)



1862. Claret communicates to Fr. **Joseph Xifre** that he will not be able to travel to Rome for the canonization of Saint Michael de Sanctis, patron of Vic, due to the Queen's pregnancy and imminent birth.

1867. Claret concludes the novena to Our Lady of Sorrows in the church of Montserrat (Madrid).

1869. Claret attends the priestly jubilee mass of **Pius IX** in Rome.



1925, YEAR OF PRELATURES

NEW EXPANSION (1922-1934)

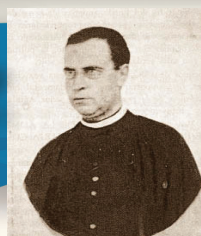
That year there were several appointments of Prelatures in America, in addition to Darien. The Prelature of San Jose de Tocantins in Brazil was entrusted to the Congregation by the Holy See in 1925. That Prelature consisted of 13 parishes spread over an area of 160,000 square kilometers; none of the them had priests except San Jose, and were visited, in the best of cases, by a Dominican of a neighboring Mission only once a year. While rich in minerals and agriculture, the region's biggest problem was the lack of communication

channels. Fr. **Francisco Ozamis** was named the first Bishop (November 14th).

In the same year, two other dioceses of Bolivia were entrusted to two Claretians: the Diocese of Oruro to Fr. **Abel Antezana**, who became the first Archbishop of La Paz, and the Diocese of Tarija to Fr. **Ramon Maria Font**, later proposed for the Diocese of Cochabamba and then for Archbishop of Sucre, although he preferred to continue until his death in his first Diocese of Tarija. Both exemplary sons of Archbishop Claret.



MARIANO AGUILAR, CMF Missionary and Historian (1867-1931)



Calasanz (Huesca, Spain). At the end of 1888 the Congregation decided for the first time to send missionaries to Rome to specialize in Civil and Canon Law. Fr. Mariano was one of the four elected. He obtained his Doctorate in both disciplines and in Philosophy. He returned from Rome and was ordained a priest in 1891. He was assigned to Madrid, where he collaborated in the writing of the magazine *El Iris de Paz*. He published a complete biography of Father Claret in two volumes. As an historian, he assumed the difficult task of writing the first history of the Congregation. He also published the biographies of several Missionaries. In 1909 he was assigned to Lima to be one of the founders of the Congregation in Peru and to lead the Diocesan Seminary. He actively participated in the intellectual life of Lima. He remained in Lima until the end of 1922 when he went to Chile. He lived in Santiago, Valparaiso and in 1931 he was transferred to La Serena, where, after three months, he died.

A LIFE IN THE STYLE OF MISSIONARY JESUS



4. House. He had none. The birds have nests and the foxes have lairs, but Jesus doesn't even have a stone on which to lay his head. For his birth, He had a manger; for his death, He had a cross. To survive, He had to flee to Egypt as an exile. For the rest, He lived in Nazareth or any place He happened to be. (**Aut 431**)
5. Travels. He always went on foot. The only time He rode on an ass was at his entry into Jerusalem, in order to fulfill the prophecies concerning Him. (**Aut 432**)
6. Money. He had none. To pay the tribute tax He performed a miracle, taking what was needed from the mouth of a fish. If pious people offered an alms, not He, but Judas, the only wicked Apostle, kept it. (**Aut 433**)
7. By day He preached and cured the sick, and by night He prayed... (**Aut 434**)
8. Jesus was the friend of children, the poor, the sick, and sinners. (**Aut 435**)
9. He sought not his own glory, but that of his heavenly Father. Everything He did was done to fulfill his Father's will and to save souls, the beloved sheep for whom He, their Good Shepherd, gave his life. (**Aut 436**)



FOR PERSONAL REFLECTION

Claret tried to imitate Jesus Christ according to the religious understanding of his time.

- According to your current understanding of Jesus of the Gospel, what traits do you think are best suited to configure yourself to him as a missionary?
- What aspects of your life need to be more enlightened by the style of Jesus?

"[Ecclesiastical studies] are called to be a sort of providential cultural laboratory in which the Church carries out the performative interpretation of the reality brought about by the Christ event and nourished by the gifts of wisdom and knowledge by which the Holy Spirit enriches the People of God in manifold ways."
(Francis, *Veritatis Gaudium*, 3)



1853. Claret concludes the Spiritual Exercises with his close companions in Cuba and drafts his resolutions; he insists on indifference, due to the desire that assails him to renounce the miter.

1857. From Havana, Claret begins the return trip to the Peninsula, aboard the steamboat *Pizarro*.

1858. Claret is an attending bishop in the episcopal consecration of Pedro Lucas Asensio, Bishop of Jaca.



THE CODEX IURIS ADDITICII (CIA)

NEW EXPANSION (1922-1934)

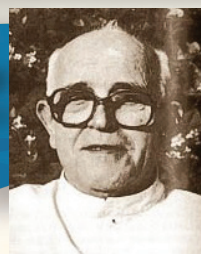
On the occasion of the 75th Anniversary of the founding of the Congregation, the Constitutions adapted to the current *Code of Canon Law* and also the commonly called CIA were promulgated.

The CIA was a compilation of all the ordinances and rules given by the Chapters and General Governments up until the General Chapter of 1922. It was published in 1925. It had several subsequent revisions and adaptations (1940 and 1953). In 1955, in its summary translation into Spanish, it received the name *Epitome del Derecho Adicional*

[*Summary of Additional Law*]. In 1967 it began to be called the *Directory*, in order to abide by the norms of the motu proprio *Ecclesiae Sanctae* of Paul VI, to distinguish between Rules or Constitutions and Directories. It was the work of the General Chapter of Vic and Fr. **Antonio Naval**, Fr. **Maroto**, Fr. **Larraona** and Fr. Arrandiaga. The latter made the final edits, reducing it to a brief and comprehensive form and putting it in a classic and elegant Latin. The CIA was a tool to guide governance and missionary life in both the personal and community spheres.



FRANZ DIRNBERGER, CMF Missionary in India (1916-1993)



Flischberg (Bavaria, Germany). He was the 13th child of a peasant family made up of 13 children. He first entered the diocesan seminary in Regensburg, which he left due to illness. In 1938 he entered the Claretian novitiate. He participated as a soldier in World War II, and was then ordained a priest. After serving as a formator, he was appointed Provincial of Deutschland. He was the one who planned the foundation in India. When he went to that country, during Holy Week of 1970, he was already 55 years old, sick and did not speak any English. His first assignment was Kuravilangad (Kerala); then he went to Bangalore (Karnataka). He was in a car accident in 1980 in Germany and when he returned to India and Mother Teresa of Calcutta saw him walking with two crutches, she said: *That is what the Claretians need today. Not spectacular activities, but prayer and patient suffering.* Thanks to the testimony and perseverance of Fr. Dirnberger, the Congregation in India was extraordinarily developed, being the promoter of multiple foundations. He died and was buried in Karumathur (Tamil Nadu).



THE MOST NECESSARY VIRTUE



Statue of St. Peter at the St. Peter's Square (Vatican City)

Love is the most necessary of all the virtues. Yes, I say it and will say it a thousand times: the virtue an apostolic missionary needs most of all is love. He must love God, Jesus Christ, the Blessed Virgin Mary, and his neighbors. If he lacks this love, all his talents, however fine in themselves, are for nothing. But if, together with his natural endowments, he has much love, he has everything. (Aut 438)

Love in a man who preaches the Word of God is like fire in a musket. If a man were to throw a bullet with his hands, he would hardly make a dent in anything; but if he takes this same bullet and ignites some gunpowder behind it, it can kill. It is much the same with the Word of God. If God's Word is spoken only naturally, it does very little; but if it is spoken by a priest who is filled with the fire of charity—the fire of love of God and neighbor—it will wound vices, kill sins, convert sinners, and work wonders. We can see this in the case of St. Peter, who walked out of the upper room afire with the love he had received from the Holy Spirit, with the result that through just two sermons he converted 8,000 people, three in the first sermon and five in the second. (Aut 439)



FOR PERSONAL REFLECTION

- Why do you think Claret considers that love is the most necessary virtue for a missionary?
- What is love for you at this stage of your life?
- Do you consider that your way of living affectivity is healthy and mature?
- Write your personal definition of love. Highlight its three most important characteristics.
- Is human love different from evangelical love?

“Our deepest fear is not that we are inadequate. Our deepest fear is that we are powerful beyond measure. It is our light, not our darkness that most frightens us.”
(Marianne Williamson)



1850. Claret preaches to the seminarians of Girona and invites them to go to Cuba, an invitation that will be concrete when he arrives to his diocese and has the finances for the project.

1867. Claret travels to El Escorial for a few days of Spiritual Exercises and the liturgies of the Paschal Triduum. He is going through a bout of edema.

1868. During these days Bishop **Rosendo Salvado**, Benedictine, Bishop of Puerto Victoria, arrives at El Escorial. Within a few months he will be Claret's successor to lead El Escorial.



NEW PERSECUTIONS IN MEXICO

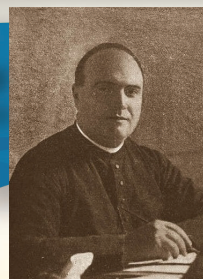
NEW EXPANSION (1922-1934)

As a result of statements that a journalist attributed to the Archbishop of Mexico, Jose Mora y del Rio, in which he protested against the unfair laws that oppressed the Church, the Government, supported by the current Constitution, deported 18 foreign priests, almost all Spaniards, including four Claretians. Fr. **Andres Sola** was killed in this persecution in 1927, together with Fr. Jose Trinidad Rangel and the layperson Leonardo Perez. All

three were beatified on November 20, 2005 in a beatification that took place in the Jalisco Stadium, and was presided over by the Claretian Cardinal Jose Saraiva. Mr. Leonardo Perez and Fr. Jose Trinidad Rangel died instantly. Fr. Sola, with bullets in his body, tried to get up twice, but then fell motionless on the dirt mixed with petroleum unable to move, because the officer who was supposed to deliver the *coup de grace* only barely nicked his head.



LUIS IRUARRIZAGA, CMF
Missionary and Musician (1891-1928)



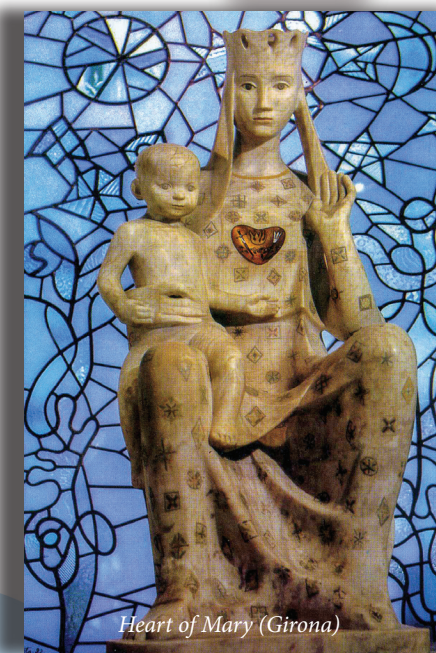
gorre-Yurre (Biscay, Spain). He began to study music in his hometown. He professed in the Congregation in 1908. He developed his musical composition with great zeal and without the direction of any teacher. After his priestly ordination he was assigned to Madrid as an organist in the Shrine of the Corazon de Maria. He founded the magazine *Tesoro Musical*, where he published a large part of his compositions. In 1919 he gave a series of sacred concerts at the Teatro Real in Madrid. The foundation of the School of Sacred Music in the Seminary of Madrid was his initiative. He organized two concerts at the Westminster Cathedral in London in 1919. He died at 37 years old. He was a prominent sacred music professional and a specialist in polyphonic composition. He was an organizer of choirs, a singer and an organist. He began composing in classical style, but later he evolved towards new forms and elements. Critics and illustrious composers qualified him as a great innovator and creator in the field of modern sacred music composition.

GOD AND MARY AS THE SOURCE OF LOVE



Lord, I want to know nothing but your holy will, that I may do it, and do it, Lord, as perfectly as possible. I want nothing but you yourself, Lord, and in you-and only through and for you—all other things. For you are all I need. You are my Father, my friend, my brother, my spouse, my all. I love you, my Father, my strength, my refuge, and my consoler. Make me love you, Father, as you love me and wish me to love you. I know, my Father, that I do not love you as I ought, but I am quite sure that a day will come when I will love you as much as I desire to because you will grant me this love I ask through Jesus and Mary. **(Aut 445)**

Mary, my Mother, Mother of Divine Love, I can ask for nothing more pleasing to you, nor anything that you are more ready to grant, than the love of God. Grant me this, my Mother and my love. My mother, I am hungry and thirsty for love; help me, satisfy my need. O Heart of Mary, forge and instrument of love, kindle in me the love of God and neighbor. **(Aut 447)**



Heart of Mary (Girona)



FOR PERSONAL REFLECTION

For Claret, the sources of love are God and the Virgin Mary.

- What inspires love for you in your missionary life?
- Do you live your Cordimarian spirituality as a source of apostolic love?
- Throughout today, repeat to yourself Claret's phrase like an echo: "For you are all I need." Repeat it especially in the face of any annoyance, loss or failure.

"I am not a product of my circumstances.
I am a product of my decisions."
(Stephen Covey)



1846. Claret arrives to L'Espluga de Francoli (Tarragona) and immediately begins a mission and Spiritual Exercises for the clergy.

1847. During these days a supposed brother of Claret has appeared, *swindling well-off people*; Claret is angry and writes to a friend and tells him to do what he can get that impostor arrested.

1870. In a letter to Fr. **Dionisio Gonzalez**, Claret seems very pleased with the progress of the First Vatican Council: *at this point the work has been perfect.*



IN EL SALVADOR FOR THE FIRST TIME

NEW EXPANSION (1922-1934)

All the records put the arrival of the Missionaries to El Salvador in the year 1955. But it must be taken into account that some Claretians expelled from Mexico during the persecution of Plutarco E. Calles, had already arrived in El Salvador to take charge of the San Miguel Seminary, together with Fr. Lino Hernando, who transferred from the Seminary of Santo Domingo in the Dominican Republic in 1930. In 1926 the invitation was received from the Bishop of San Miguel to found a house

in his diocese, taking over the direction of the diocesan seminary. There were many difficulties, especially materially speaking, faced by our Missionaries who came from the Province of Mexico, on which the foundation depended. Finally, it had to be abandoned in 1936 in order to strengthen our presence in Cuba. One remarkable outcome of this was that one of the seminarians under our responsibility in those years was the future Bishop Martyr of El Salvador, Msgr. **Oscar A. Romero**, canonized on October 14, 2018 by Pope Francis.



AGAPITO GOMEZ, CMF *Claret's Page (1845-1901)*



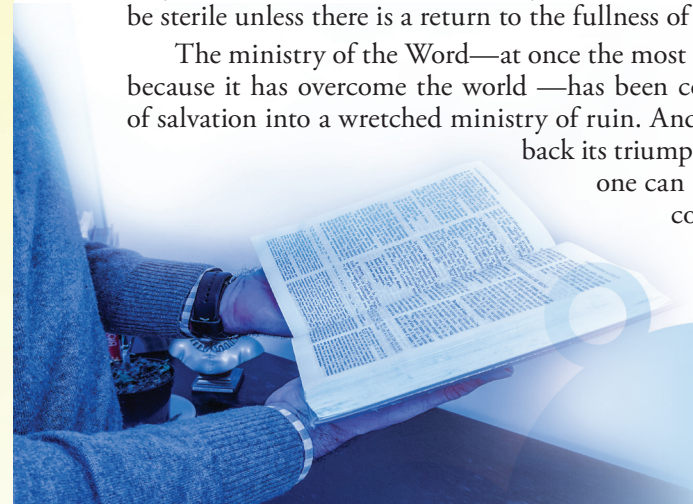
Rocamundo (Santander, Spain). Brother Agapito entered the Congregation in 1865. He lived as a page in Father Claret's house in Madrid and then was assigned to Algiers, Alfaro and finally to Mexico. He was distinguished everywhere for his simplicity, respect for Superiors and love for the Congregation. He died with a reputation for holiness in Mexico on April 14th. At the outbreak of the revolution of 1868, Father Claret, who held him in great esteem, gave him several orders and entrusted him with some secrets; that is how a funny altercation came to be between him and the Carmelite Mother Ana Maria de San Luis, when she objected to him opening a small drawer of Father Claret's desk. Once the drawer was opened, they found two bags. In one there was a tag that said: *This is for the poor or for good books*; in the other there was no tag. Both had been entrusted to him to save from what Claret left in his house in Madrid.

THE MINISTRY OF THE WORD



The Word of God brought all things out of nothingness. The divine Word of Jesus Christ restored all things. Christ told his Apostles, *Euntes in mundum universum, praedicate evangelium omni creaturae* (Go out to the world and preach the Gospel to every creature). St. Paul told his disciple Timothy, *Praedica Verbum*. Society is perishing for no other reason than that it has withdrawn from the Church's Word, which is the Word of life and the Word of God. Societies have become weak and are starving because they have ceased to receive the daily bread of God's Word. Every plan of salvation will be sterile unless there is a return to the fullness of the great, catholic Word. (**Aut 450**)

The ministry of the Word—at once the most exalted and invincible of all ministries because it has overcome the world —has been converted everywhere from a ministry of salvation into a wretched ministry of ruin. And just as nothing or no one could hold back its triumphs in apostolic times, so nothing or no one can hold back its ravages today unless it is confronted by the preaching of priests and a flood of good books and other holy and wholesome writings. (**Aut 452**)



FOR PERSONAL REFLECTION

Claret makes these phrases his own, originally from the Catholic philosopher Donoso Cortes, to emphasize the importance of the ministry of the Word.

- What role does the Word of God play in your personal and apostolic life?
- What means do you use to transmit the Word of God to the people?
- Pay attention today to a radio or television newscast. Notice what it is that makes the newscaster's speech credible and intelligible. Can you learn something from him or her for your missionary life?

"I was content with the clothes I had on and the food that was set before me."
(**Aut 359**)



1847. In Vic, Claret goes through a time of bad health, with swelling in his knee, leg and foot, as well as lethargy and lack of appetite.

1848. Claret concludes the mission of Las Palmas in the Canary Islands.

1854. Claret complains to the Captain General of Cuba about the impediments that, in order to put an end to the cohabitations, the subordinate authorities put on him, and warns him that if they do not support him ... *I will renounce a miter that I cannot wear on my head without greatly aggravating my conscience.*



CASTILLA ESTABLISHES MINISTRIES IN SÃO TOME AND PRINCIPE

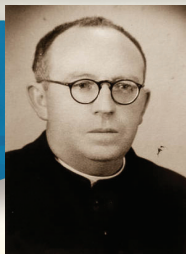
NEW EXPANSION (1922-1934)

We remember how the Missionaries were expelled from Portugal in 1910 when the persecution was unleashed against the Church. But the day would come when the Congregation would return to such a promising nation. The resurgence of the foundations of Portugal did not begin with the metropolis, but with one of its colonies: São Tome and Principe. As a strategy to stabilize and consolidate the Claretian presence in Portugal, in 1927 the Province of Castilla accepted the mission of Villa Trinidad in the Portuguese colonies of São Tome and

Principe. In this foundation they were following the guidelines of the Holy See, whose intention was to restore the episcopal See of those islands. With this, important benefits were obtained for the Missionaries from the Portuguese Government, which recognized the *Association of Missionaries of Mary*, the official name of the Congregation in Portugal. Apart from other apostolic ministries they were entrusted with the parish in the capital and the direction of a trade school. In return, the Congregation could establish itself in the territory of Portugal.



NARCISO GARCIA GARCÉS, CMF Missionary and Mariologist (1904-1989)



Ojos Negros (Teruel, Spain). Ordained a priest in 1928, he carried out his first teaching activity in Chascomus (Argentina). He received his doctorate in Theology at the *Athenaeum Angelicum* in 1939. He was appointed professor at the Claretian International Theologate in Albano (Italy). He returned to Spain in 1940. That same year he founded, with other theologians, the *Spanish Mariological Society*, being appointed its first President. He promoted the creation of the magazine *Ephemerides Mariologicae*, a publication of which he was first director (1951). Distinguished people of the time would collaborate on it: J.A. de Aldama, **J. M. Alonso**, C. Balic, J. M. Bover, H. Barre, J.F. Bonnefoy, D. Fernandez, R. Laurentin, M. Peinador, G. Philips, G.M. Roschini, **F. Sebastian**, C. Straeter, etc. He was part of the Preparatory Theological Commission of the Second Vatican Council (1962-1965). He continued teaching in diocesan seminaries, in the Central University and in the School of Sacred Sciences in Madrid. He participated in the organization of International Mariological Congresses. R. Laurentin considered him, along with Balic and Roschini, a great figure of a brilliant Mariological age of the Church.

AUDACITY AND COURAGE TO PREACH



From early in 1840, after my return from Rome, until early in 1848, when I left Madrid to go to the Canary Islands... I preached... (**Aut 454**)

At each town I preached in, the first half of the service was marked by persecutions and calumnies by the wicked of the town. Halfway through the mission these people would be converted... Then the government and the higher officials would begin persecuting me. This is why my bishop made me go from one town to another town far away. In this way, the government's persecution of me became something of a joke because by the time a warrant had been put out against me in one province of Catalonia, I had already finished the mission there and gone off to another province. And by the time they got around to persecuting me there, I was already off to yet another... (**Aut 457**)

General Manzano himself told me later, when we were both in... that he had been commissioned to arrest me... because they were worried at the crowds that gathered from all over whenever I preached. Furthermore, they were afraid that, because of the immense prestige in which I was held, my least insinuation might cause a general uprising... (**Aut 458**)



FOR PERSONAL REFLECTION

Because of the serious political conflicts of Claret's time, preachers ran the risk of being jailed or exiled.

- What kind of misunderstandings do you think can hinder your preaching of the Word?
- How can you overcome them?

“Our spirituality must be rooted even more deeply
in the perspective of mission.”
(CPR 52)



1844. Claret is leading Spiritual Exercises for the clergy of Manresa (Barcelona).

1851. It is Holy Wednesday. Claret prepares for his first celebration of the Paschal Triduum as Archbishop of Santiago; He will do all in accord with those rites to be performed by

bishops.

1859. The Government approves the **Academy of St. Michael**.



THE ORDO STUDIORUM GENERALIS (OSG)

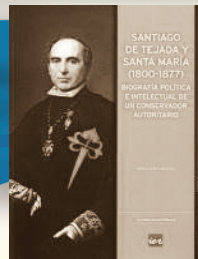
NEW EXPANSION (1922-1934)

The XII General Chapter of 1922 had requested a more up-to-date order of studies in the Congregation. A commission, under the direction of Fr. **John Postius**, worked on this matter until 1929, when Fr. **Nicolas Garcia** promulgated it, and it was named the OSG. This plan of studies included, in addition to the guidelines of the Chapter, the proposals of the Congregation, channeled through the Prefectures of Studies, and other documents of the Holy See, of Institutes and Religious Congregations, of Seminaries and

Ecclesiastical Universities. This OSG was applicable throughout the Congregation until the 1959 adaptation. On May 31, 1956, Pope Pius XII promulgated the Constitution *Sedes Sapientiae* with the accompanying *Statuta Generalia*. In it he asked the congregations and the religious institutes to accommodate their plans of study to the norms and guidelines of that Apostolic Constitution. The Congregation made the requested adaptation, which was promulgated on March 7, 1959. In the XVIII General Chapter of 1973 it was definitively abolished.



SANTIAGO DE TEJADA Spanish Canon Lawyer (1800-1877)



Alfaro (Spain). He was a Spanish canon lawyer and academic of Moral and Political Sciences. He was a representative of moderate liberalism with **Jose Gutierrez de la Concha**. He founded the newspaper *El Pensamiento de la Nacion* [The Thought of the Nation] with Fr. **Jaime Balmes**. He left the Senate after the revolution of 1868. Bishop **Aguilar** says that Santiago visited Father Claret in Rome in 1869 and that he spoke with admiration about the poverty and the convent in which Claret lived: *I visited him there living in the convent of San Adrian. There I saw him living, despite his high status, like the least of the religious community, attending to its functions, eating in the refectory the same ration that was given to all the religious, in a modest cell, attending to the confessional every morning, in the greatest of poverty, deprived during the Council, sometimes, even of what was necessary.* And he tells how the Prince of Asturias, in Rome to make his First Communion, gave him alms to attend to their needs.

THE DIFFICULTIES OF THE MISSION



During that whole seven years, I was on the go from one town to another. I traveled alone and on foot. I had a canvas-backed map of Catalonia that I always carried with me, and on it I would mark the distances I traveled, as well as any resting places. I would walk for five hours in the morning and another five in the afternoon. Sometimes I had to walk through rain, other times through snow, or under the broiling sun of a summer's day. Summer caused me the most suffering because I always wore the same cassock and raincoat in summer as I wore in winter...Furthermore my shoes and heavy woolen socks caused my feet to blister... (**Aut 460**)

Because I always went on foot, I would fall in with mule-drivers and ordinary folk, and so I had a chance to talk with them about God and instruct them in their religion. This had the added advantage of helping take our minds off the road... (**Aut 461**)

I have always wanted to die a poor man in some hospital, or on the scaffold as a martyr, or to be put to death by the enemies of the holy religion we profess and preach, thus sealing the virtues and truths I have preached and taught with my blood. (**Aut 467**)



View of Sallent from a distance



FOR PERSONAL REFLECTION

During his missionary trips, Claret met with all kinds of people, showing no partiality. He always took advantage of these occasions to fulfill his purpose of evangelization.

- Are you partial to certain people in your life for social, racial, cultural or religious reasons?
- What do you think of Claret's aspirations for the end of his life?
- Today take a walk around your house and start a conversation, an exchange of words, with someone you don't know well.

"A religious knows that no suffering or setback may rob him of this joy, although in some moment of his life he may feel it to be far off or strange.

He knows that he is in God's hands and in his brothers' heart."

(Josep M. Abella, *Circular Letter of Announcement of the XXV General Chapter*, 47)



1852. Now that Holy Week is over, today Claret begins the annual Spiritual Exercises with his close companions, which will conclude on the 26th.

1856. Claret tells Fr. **Paladio Currius** that, for the time being, he should not spend any more on the farm-school of Puerto Principe, since he has had many expenses in medical care, and, in addition, if he is told by Rome to resign, he needs money for the trip to the Peninsula.

1859. Claret celebrates the Holy Week liturgies in the Italian Church of Madrid in accord with those rites to be performed by bishops.



EL NOVICIO INSTRUIDO [THE WELL-INSTRUCTED NOVICE]

NEW EXPANSION (1922-1934)

Over time, the publication of the new Code (1917) and the development of particular law required the writing of a new work for the novices that would reflect the original and proper spirit of the Founder. Thus, the idea of the manual *El Novicio Instruido* was born, written by Fr. **Ramon Ribera** in 1931, a work commissioned by the General Government. The work had abundant references to the Word of God, to the Heart of Mary and to the Congregation. Of course, that document used other similar works of ancient Orders and

well-accredited modern Institutes. Fr. Ribera, at the end of the initial chapter in which he develops an instruction on the Congregation, emphasizes the importance of the *Definition of the Missionary*, and says expressly that the ideal of the Missionary is contained in the *Definition* which our holy Father Founder wrote by his own hand and sent to the first Fathers. Until then the model in which the generations of Claretian novices and students had been formed was that of the *Practicas Espirituales* [Spiritual Practices] by Fr. **Pablo Vallier** from 1888.



FRANCISCO DE ASIS BORBON King Consort (1822-1902)



Aranjuez (Madrid, Spain). Son of the Prince D. Francisco de Paula and Princess Luisa Carlota. He became Prince, Duke of Cadiz by Fernando VII's concession. He married Queen **Isabella II**, his first cousin, in 1846. His influence on Spanish politics was very limited. The two were separated in 1847 due to incompatibilities in their marriage; after various alternatives they were reconciled in 1858. After the revolution of September 1868, he separated definitively from the Queen, devoting the rest of his life to reading and works of charity. Claret comments in his Autobiography that, after the birth of the Prince of Asturias in 1857, both the King and Queen gave him the Cross of Charles III: *I did not say a word, because they were both together, and since the King did not inspire my confidence then as he does now, who now likes me very much, I kept my mouth shut.* The King had his own confessor, Fr. Fulgencio.

APOSTOLIC ASTUTENESS



In all of the towns I mentioned in the last chapter, and in others I have not mentioned, I preached various services under different titles. Although they weren't called "missions," because we weren't allowed to call them that, nevertheless the subjects I preached on were really mission topics. The services were labeled, variously, Lent, Month of Mary; Fortnight of the Rosary; Novena for All Souls; Octave of the Blessed Sacrament; Septenary of the Seven Sorrows; etc. Such were the titles we usually gave these services, and although they were

nominally a "novena," we lengthened the number of days if we needed to. (Aut 468)

In each of the towns I mentioned, one or more of these services had been held that year or some recent year and had always been quite fruitful. There had been conversions of all sorts everywhere—mass conversions, great and extraordinary conversions. At the beginning of the mission everyone would come to hear me: some in good faith, others out of curiosity, and others out of sheer malice, to see if they could trap me in my speech. (Aut 469)

Multi-peaked mountain range of Montserrat (Barcelona)

FOR PERSONAL REFLECTION



- How do you pave the way for evangelization in the environment in which you live?
- How do you embody "use all means possible" in your environment (cf. CC 48)?

"The autobiography of the Father Founder has always been considered in the Congregation, not only as a personal testimony, but above all as a pedagogical document that, together with the Constitutions, is the best instrument to discern and transmit the charismatic identity of Father Claret." (Jesus Alvarez)



1847. Claret's knee and leg continue to be very swollen. Fortunately, he is semi-confined in Vic and does not go on walks.

1849. Claret has completed his missionary service in the Canary Islands, and in the afternoon, he boards a ship to return to the Peninsula.

1858. Fr. **Stephen Sala** dies in Barcelona, and Fr. **Pedro Naudo** communicates it to Claret immediately.



MISSION IN CHINA

NEW EXPANSION (1922-1934)

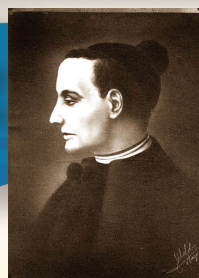
As early as 1927, there was talk of implanting the Congregation in China at the request of the Holy See and with the commission to found a centralized seminary in Hong Kong. But it was in 1928 when the formal request arrived to found a seminary in the area of Honan, northern China. In October of 1929 Fr. **Anastasio Rojas** and Fr. **Joseph Fogued** sailed towards Shanghai. Fr. Rojas had to return ill and the plan had to be changed. Fogued received a new offer to take over part of the Wuhu Vicariate. In 1933 new

missionaries were incorporated. The Congregation, through the letters that were received, experienced a moment of special missionary euphoria. In 1937, the Apostolic Prefecture of Tunki was created and entrusted to the Congregation. Fr. Joseph Fogued was named first Apostolic Prefect. There were great difficulties: the language, the disdain with which people treated foreigners and the religious abandonment. But soon they began to rebuild the Christian community. It was the first time that Asia was open to our missionaries.

STEPHEN SALA, CMF Co-founder (1812-1858)



San Martin de Sescorts (Barcelona, Spain). In 1839 he was ordained a priest. He met Father Claret in 1843, during Spiritual Exercises that he gave in Gombreny for the priests and they caused a radical change in him. Fr. Sala shared a room with Fr. **Benito Vilamitjana**, future Archbishop of Tarragona, who witnessed his conversion. Since then he accompanied Father Claret in many of the missions. He was the first one Claret counted on at the time of founding the Congregation, in which later a brother of his joined, **Bernardo Sala**. When Father Claret went to Cuba as Archbishop, he was appointed as Claret's successor as General Superior of the Congregation. He also directed the newly founded Congregation of the Carmelite Sisters of Charity. Claret was successful in having him named his successor in the Archdiocese of Santiago, Cuba, but the illness and death of Fr. Stephen Sala, at the age of 47, did not allow that desire to become a reality.



THE METHOD OF THE SNAILS



During the opening service I never made a frontal attack on the vices and errors of the town I was visiting. Instead I always talked to them about the Blessed Virgin, the love of God, etc. As the wicked and corrupt saw that I was not attacking them, but was all love, sweetness, and charity in my speech, they were interested and felt like coming again... Finally, they underwent a complete change of heart. During the last days of the mission I was able to speak with complete freedom about their predominant vices and failings. (Aut 470)

I believed that a certain class of sinners must be caught after the fashion of a man cooking snails. He puts them in a pot of cold water, which they like, and hence they come out of their shells as far as they can. The cook, in the meantime, has to see to it that the water heats up only a little at a time so that the snails die without sensing it and thus are cooked. If the cook were careless enough to throw the snails directly into hot water, they would withdraw into their shells and nobody would be able to get them out. It is much the same with sinners... (Aut 471)



FOR PERSONAL REFLECTION

- What methods and strategies do you use so that the Gospel may illuminate the lives of the faithful?
- Do you try to enter and understand the situation of the faithful in order to bring them closer to Christ little by little?

“Theology and Christian culture have lived up to their mission whenever they were ready to take risks and remain faithful on the borderline.”
(Francis, *Veritatis Gaudium*, 5)



1843. In Igualada, where Claret has finished his Lenten preaching, he preaches the famous *Sermo del Sant Crist*, which was always done by a prestigious preacher, in commemoration of the battle of Bruc (against the French invasion).

1849. On his return trip from the Canary Islands to the Peninsula, Claret disembarks in Lanzarote, where he will preach for several days. To please his companion, he travels to Teguiuse by camel, which means he is not recognized by the people.



ACTIVITY IN THE UNITED STATES

NEW EXPANSION (1922-1934)

In 1928 the two houses of England, Hayes and Loughton, were incorporated into the Province of the United States. A good number of Claretians were sent there. This dependence lasted until 1936 when the Independent Visitorship of England was created.

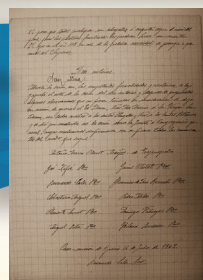
Following these years, pastoral activity increased in the United States, especially in the Chicago area. In 1928 they took on the parish of Our Lady of Guadalupe, where in 1929 the Perpetual Novena to St. Jude was inaugurated

through the initiative of Fr. Jaime Tort, who created the League of St. Jude that same year and in 1932 the Saint Jude Police League. Other foundations of this era were: El Paso (Texas, 1932), La Palma (Panama) and the minor seminaries of Walnut, California and of St. Jude in Momence (Illinois, 1932). In 1935 the Publishing House *Claretian Publications* was also created in Chicago. With the depression of the 30s, the Spanish Civil War of 1936 and after the World War II, the Province had to stop projects.



BERNARDO SALA

Brother of Fr. Stephen Sala (1810-1885)



San Martin de Sescorts (Barcelona, Spain). In 1827 he took the Benedictine habit. After exclausturation, he took refuge in the monastery of San Martin de Scalas (Palermo, Sicily), where he was a librarian and a professor. Due to the revolution of 1848 he had to leave the monastery and returned to Spain. Through his brother Stephen he learned of the newly founded Congregation and entered it the same year. He was part of the second General Chapter. He succeeded his brother in the direction of the Carmelite Sisters of Charity in 1854. He helped the first Claretians a lot with his conferences. In 1875, once the Benedictine community of Montserrat was reorganized, he returned to that monastery, where he was Novice Master and professor. He was first of all a scholar, a specialist in liturgy and an excellent professor. He wrote and published fourteen original works and had great editorial success in his lifetime. He died on April 18th.

MISSIONARY IN THE CANARY ISLANDS



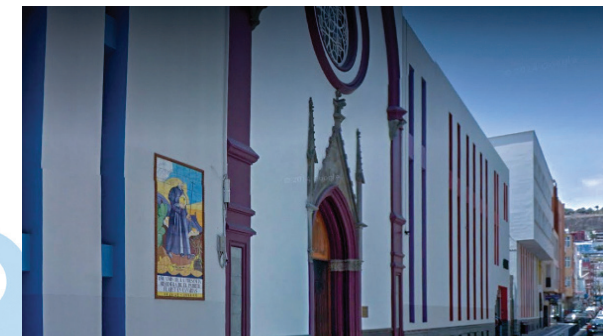
We left Madrid for Seville, Jerez, and Cadiz, where I preached. From there we set sail for the Canary Islands. Around the beginning of February, we arrived at Tenerife, where I preached on Sunday, embarking from there on Monday for Grand Canary Island. Here I conducted the Spiritual Exercises for the priests, in a drawing room of the Episcopal residence, with the bishop presiding at all the sessions. I also gave a retreat to all the seminarians and preached missions in all the parishes of Grand Canary Island. **(Aut 480)**

I often had to preach in public squares because the crowds who gathered for the mission in every town were too large to fit in the churches... **(Aut 481)**

My most time-consuming task was hearing all the confessions because everyone wanted to make a general confession. To be able to do this, I asked the other priests to help me and explained to them

a procedure for doing the job both quickly and thoroughly... **(Aut 482)**

Whenever I finished a mission, all the townspeople would accompany me on my departure; and the people from the next town would come out to receive me—one group bidding me farewell amid tears and the other welcoming me with joy... **(Aut 483)**



Parish of the Heart of Mary
(Las Palmas de Gran Canaria)



FOR PERSONAL REFLECTION

For fifteen months, Claret had the opportunity to evangelize the Grand Canary Island. He was able to do it without any political obstacles and with the joyful reception of the residents.

- Remember one of your most satisfying and rewarding mission experiences: What happened? How did you feel? What did that mean for your vocation?

“We were born to manifest the glory of God that is in us.

It's not just within some of us; it's in everyone.

When we let our own light shine,
we unconsciously give to other people permission to do the same.”

(Marianne Williamson)



1861. In a letter to Fr. **Joseph Xifre**, Claret asks him to take care of several people, including his nephew in seminary whose vocation he has serious doubts about.

1861. Claret writes a memorable letter to Fr. Domingo Ramonet, insisting that he obey the call to be made a missionary.

1866. Claret writes to the Pope asking for the approval of the Congregation of Sisters Adorers and their Constitutions.



THE FIRST PRESENCE IN PUERTO RICO

NEW EXPANSION (1922-1934)

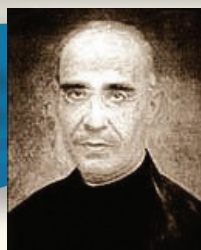
In 1929 the Province of Mexico assumed the parish in Carolina, which was to be the first Claretian foundation in Puerto Rico, followed by that of Canovanas. In the beginning, the Missionaries of Carolina attended to the Bishop, accompanying him in his pastoral visits, but soon they took charge of the parish in Carolina, with 5,000 parishioners in the city along with another 10,000 scattered in the countryside. There the Claretians maintained a truly missionary lifestyle: among good but very abandoned people;

many of whom reserved the practice of religion only for the two extremes of life: baptism and burial, without being careful to fill the time in-between. In addition, they had to attend to other nearby parishes, all in need of priests. In 1951 that mission had to be abandoned, although the Congregation maintained another important house, Rio Piedras, with parish and a school, another foundation which would not last until current times. But they would recover their presence in Puerto Rico ten years later, in 1960.



LUIS MARTIN

Superior General of the Society of Jesus (1846-1906)



Melgar de Fernamental (Burgos, Spain). He was the 24th Superior General of the Society of Jesus, governing the Order from 1892 to 1906. In 1884 he was assigned to Bilbao to direct the magazine *El Mensajero del Corazon de Jesus* [The Messenger of the Sacred Heart]. In 1885 he was appointed Superior of the Centre of Superior studies of Deusto-Bilbao, the future University of Deusto. In 1886 he was appointed Provincial of the Province of Castilla until 1891. He wrote his memoirs, published in 1988. He was fortunate to see Father Claret in Loyola, when Claret visited the Jesuit novitiate in 1866. In his autobiographical memoirs he left a record of his presence and alludes to the mark that that fortuitous event left in his interior life. He was going through a difficult moment. Claret's presence helped to dispel the clouds that loomed over his vocation. As a young seminarian in Burgos, he had already read *El Colegio Instruido*. And then, as Rector in Salamanca, he had that same book of Claret's read in the dining room. He died on April 18th.

POOR AND ON FOOT



After I had finished giving missions on Grand Canary Island, the bishop asked me to go to Lanzarote. He decided that his brother...should accompany me there to help with confessions because there were very few clergy on the island. Well, it happened that the priest in question was very fat, and as it was a trip of some two leagues inland from the port to the capital, he asked me, "How are we ever going to make it? Do you want to walk or ride?" I answered, "You know I never ride, but always go on foot." "Well," he said, "If you won't ride, neither will I." I told him, "You can plainly see what a burden it would be for you to walk that far. I can't permit it. Since you won't ride unless I ride, then I'll ride so that you can, too." (Aut 484)

Presently they brought us a big camel and the two of us got up on it. Shortly before we arrived at the town, we got down and walked the rest of the way into town, where I started preaching the mission. As we were saying our goodbyes after the mission, a man asked me, "Are you the missionary who preached on Grand Canary Island?" I said that I was. "Well," he said, "people here were saying it couldn't be you because that missionary said he always went on foot and you came here on camelback. That's why I heard someone say, I'm not going to hear him talk because he's not the missionary from Grand Canary Island." (Aut 485)

Timanfaya National Park (Lanzarote)



FOR PERSONAL REFLECTION

- Have you ever had to sacrifice part of the good image that people had of you to adapt to the difficulties of a fellow missionary?
- What image do you think people have of your way of acting? Do you discern about it critically in the presence of the Lord?

"Life is 10% what happens to me and 90% of how I react to it."
(Charles R. Swindoll)



1855. Claret concludes the Spiritual Exercises with his close companions; Fr. **Paladio Currius** does not attend since he is leading the construction of the farm-school in Puerto Principe.

1857. On Claret's trip to the Peninsula, they are detained in Cayo Sal to repair the ship.

1858. After receiving the news of the death of Fr. **Stephen Sala**, Claret gives his condolences to Fr. **Xifre** and he tells of his great desire to visit the missionaries.



IN SILESIA (GERMANY - POLAND)

NEW EXPANSION (1922-1934)

In 1932 the foundation was made in Miedary, then located in Germany, with the Silesian Claretians who had been in formation in the seminaries in Cervera, Solsona and Alagon since 1904. Since 1929 Fr. Johannes Mehl, Fr. Johannes Buhl and Fr. Vinzenz Hollik had been working in parishes in Poland. In Miedary the beginnings were promising. You can read the memoir of its foundation in *Annales* to appreciate the excitement of our Missionaries and the people of that place. When the parish priest of the place was going to give the

Missionaries the key to the parish church in May 1932, everything was prepared with German meticulousness, even so, the enthusiasm of the people surpassed the limits of their organization. There was a solemn procession presided over by the authorities, accompanied by the young people of the Marian Congregation, along with children surrounding the person who carried the key of the church on a silk cushion. Since many Polish people crossed the border, the Missionaries were required to speak both Polish and German.



ARMENGOL COLL, CMF

Apostolic Prefect of Fernando Poo (1859-1918)



vars d'Urgell (Lleida, Spain). From a simple family of farmers, he entered the diocesan seminary of Solsona. Later, in 1876, he entered the Claretian novitiate in Thuir (France). In 1890, when **Pedro Vall-Llovera**, the second Apostolic Prefect of Equatorial Guinea died, Fr. **Joseph Xifre** did not hesitate to propose the then superior of Alagon to succeed him. In seven years, 18 missionaries had died, most of them young. He promoted agriculture as well as linguistic, geographical and ethnological studies. He edited grammar books, dictionaries and devotionals in native languages. He published geographical maps of the territories of the then Spanish colony. He created the first magazine *La Guinea Española* in 1903. He managed to recover the Muni territories for Spain, which were occupied by the French in 1900. He built many missions and on January 23, 1916 inaugurated the Cathedral of Santa Isabel. In 1909 he founded, with the Guinean Imelda Makole, the first indigenous African female religious congregation, *Auxiliary Sisters of the Missions*, the current *Missionary Sisters of Mary Immaculate*. He died in Santa Isabel.

THE INSPIRATION OF A MISSIONARY COMMUNITY



Toward the middle of May I arrived in Barcelona and returned to Vich where I discussed with Canons Jaime Soler and Jaime Passarell my plan to form a congregation of priests who would both be, and be called, Sons of the Immaculate Heart of Mary. Both of them approved of my plan... (**Aut 488**)

I presented the same plan to the Bishop of Vich... He was enthusiastic in his praise of the idea and agreed that we should live in the seminary during the summer vacation, while he, in the meantime, could have the Monastery of Our Lady of Mercy rehabilitated because the government had left it at his disposal. And so he did. While the bishop was in the process of putting the monastery in order, I talked with a number of priests whom the Lord had given the same spirit that motivated me. These were Fathers Stephen Sala, Joseph Xifre, Dominic Fabregas, Manuel Vilaro, and Jaime Clotet. I, Anthony Claret, was last of all. And, indeed, they were all better educated and more virtuous than I so that I felt happy and content to consider myself their servant. (**Aut 489**)



La Merced Convent in 1849 (Vic)



FOR PERSONAL REFLECTION

The foundation of our Congregation was not improvised. There were previously various attempts to create priestly associations.

- How did you learn about the Congregation?
- Do you identify with its history, charism and mission?
- Think about the Claretians who most influenced you in your vocation and those who you identified with the most.
- Give thanks to God and the Heart of Mary for your vocation.

"Humility is like the root of the tree, and meekness is its fruit."
(**Aut 372**)



1846. Claret concludes the mission in L'Espluga de Francoli (Tarragona).

1859. Claret preaches the Sermon of the Seven Words in the Collegiate Church of San Isidro (Madrid).

1863. In Aranjuez, Claret began to compose *La Colegiala Instruida* [The Learned Female Student], for which he requests some information from Mother **Paris**. It will take four months to publish the booklet.



THE BEATIFICATION OF FATHER CLARET

NEW EXPANSION (1922-1934)

On February 25, 1934, the first fruit of the efforts of the Claretians was obtained when they saw their Fr. Founder beatified. There were many decrees, speeches and congratulations that came from everywhere in the wake of the Beatification. Claret was publicly presented to the Church and to the world as a man who fully lived out his Christian vocation as an apostolic missionary, and from that moment on he could be counted on as an intercessor and encouragement to live in Christian holiness. But the most expressive pronouncement was

undoubtedly the address of Pope Pius XI and his words addressed to the people and the Congregation on this occasion. Here are some of these words: *Congratulations to Spain... for this hero of holiness who so well knew his Spain, to which he consecrated his entire life under all circumstances, even in the midst of the turbulence and dangers of the preludes of a revolution.* For the Claretians, celebrating this date was a good opportunity to remember that everyone, like him, was called to follow Jesus the missionary in a total, integrated and passionate way.



JAIME PASSARELL
Claret's Advisor (1803-1864)



Moya (Barcelona, Spain). He got a degree in Theology from the University of Cervera. He was a relative of the Bishops **Corcuera** and **Casadevall**. He was professor of Philosophy of the seminary in Vic. He was a man of great talent, firm and tireless in the performance of his duties. He was a friend and special advisor to Father Claret. He was one of the two people whom Claret consulted about his idea of founding a Congregation, along with Fr. **Jaime Soler**, later Bishop of Teruel. The two approved the project. He also consulted both of them, together with Fr. **Bach** and **Stephen Sala**, about the acceptance of the miter as Archbishop of Santiago, Cuba. Claret also consulted him, as an elder, about whether to put the Spiritual Exercises in writing that he had given for some nuns in Vic so that they could copy it. The answer was: *I would have it printed to save the nuns the work of copying it.* Fr. Jaime died on April 23rd in Vic.

THE FOUNDATION OF THE CONGREGATION



Original painting by Conti depicting the foundation of the Congregation (General Curia - Rome)

with all exactness and fervor. Because July 16 is the Feast of the Holy Cross and of Our Lady of Mt. Carmel, I based my first sermon on those words of Psalm 22: *Virga tua et baculus tuus ipsa me consolata sunt* (Your rod and your staff give me courage) (v. 4), alluding to the devotion and confidence we should place in the Holy Cross and the Blessed Virgin Mary and applying it also to the project we were beginning. We left those Exercises full of fervor, bound and determined to persevere, and, thanks be to God and Mary Most Holy, all have persevered. Two have already gone to the glory of heaven, enjoying God and the reward of their apostolic labors and praying for their brethren. (**Aut 490**)

On July 16, 1849, after we had gathered together in the seminary with the approval of the bishop and the rector, we commenced our own Spiritual Exercises, which we followed

Thus we had begun and thus we continued, living together strictly in community. All of us were going out regularly to work in the sacred ministry... (**Aut 491**)



FOR PERSONAL REFLECTION

- What does it mean for you to celebrate the day of the foundation of our Congregation?
- What attracts you the most to our missionary Congregation?
- How do you commemorate the day of your first profession and, after some years, your final commitment?

“The study, meditation and contemplation of the Word should occupy a fundamental place in our lives, since our vocation among the People of God is to be ministers of the Word.”
(CPR 54)



1846. Claret arrives in Vinaixa (Tarragona), where he preaches a triduum.

1850. Claret begins Spiritual Exercises in Vic for the Missionaries of Mercy and those who are preparing to go with him to Cuba; Fr. **Joseph Caixal** also participates.

1866. Claret meets again with the Minister of Development; he has very good perspectives on El Escorial.



NEW MAJOR ORGANISMS AND STATISTICS 1935

NEW EXPANSION (1922-1934)

It would be impossible to note the number of foundations made in the Congregation during this time. It is worth highlighting the new Major Organisms: In 1925 the Vice-Province of Peru was erected, in 1930 the Province of Italy was formed and in 1932 the Visitorship of Deutschland. In 1935 the Congregation already had 10 Provinces, 2 Vice-Provinces and 1 Visitorship.

In the same year of 1935 the professed in the Congregation were 2,435, plus 134 novices and 821 postulants, with 204 houses. Since 1921 the Congregation

had grown significantly: it had 561 more professed, 307 more novices and 56 more postulants. The number of houses had also grown by 53 more. We could say that the future looked promising, although at that moment no one could have imagined what would happen precisely the following year with the Spanish Civil War and the persecution of the Church and the Congregation, which would lose a large number of promising young men and which would make continuity difficult in a great number of projects and works that had just started.



INFANTA ISABELLA Princess of Asturias (1851-1931)



Madrid (Spain). She was Princess of Asturias twice. Princess Isabella had Claret as a tutor and spiritual teacher. She made first communion from his hands in 1862 and Claret officiated her marriage with Cayetano Maria Federico de Borbon, Count of Girgenti, of the Naples branch, in the Royal Palace of Madrid in 1868. The saint left these lines written about the Princess: *I take pleasure in the Lord when I see that she has become such a learned woman, so religious and so virtuous, that she honors her parents and the entire Spanish nation and is the admiration of foreigners.* And she will say many years later of Father Claret: *He was my confessor, whom I loved so much.* She died without succession in Paris on April 23, 1931. The people of Madrid know her affectionately by the nickname of *La Chata*. Until 1991 she was buried in our church on Rue de la Pompe in Paris.

A SON OF THE IMMACULATE HEART OF MARY



Most Blessed Mother, may the courtesy of your Immaculate Heart, in accepting us as your Sons, be praised a thousand times! Mother, make us cooperate with such kindness by becoming daily more humble, fervent, and zealous for the salvation of souls. (**Aut 493**)

I tell myself: A Son of the Immaculate Heart of Mary is a man on fire with love, who spreads its flames wherever he goes. He desires mightily and strives by all means possible to set the whole world on fire with God's love. Nothing daunts him; he delights in privations, welcomes work, embraces sacrifices, smiles at slander, and rejoices in suffering. His only concern is how he can best follow Jesus Christ and imitate Him in working, suffering, and striving constantly and single-mindedly for the greater glory of God and the salvation of souls. (**Aut 494**)



Painting of the Immaculate Heart of Mary in the chapel of the Motherhouse (Vic)



FOR PERSONAL REFLECTION

- What role does the so-called "definition of the missionary" play in your life?
- It was Claret's self-portrait; can you say that you try to make it yours?
- Take the opportunity to recite the Memorial of a Claretian very slowly and out loud, pausing after each sentence. Afterwards, give thanks to the Heart of Mary for your Claretian vocation.

"I prefer a Church which is bruised, hurting and dirty because it has been out on the streets, rather than a Church which is unhealthy from being confined and from clinging to its own security."

(Francis, *Evangelii gaudium*, 49)



1844. Claret arrives in Molins de Rei (Barcelona); it is probably during this trip that a poor man paid for his food.

1862. Claret communicates to the Pope that he is sorry he will not be able to attend the great gathering in Rome with his brother bishops for the occasion of the canonization of Saint Michael de Sanctis, which will be on June 8th. However, he hopes to celebrate the feast in Vic, on July 5th.

1869. Pius IX receives Claret in an audience with such fondness that it leaves a distinct impression on him.



THE XIII GENERAL CHAPTER (1934)

PERIOD OF THE MARTYRS (1934-1937)

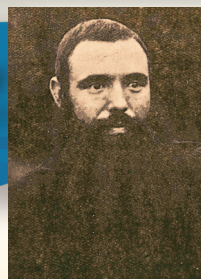
In 1934, shortly after the Beatification of Father Claret (February 25, 1934), the XIII General Chapter was held in Rome (March 15 - April 30). In it, Fr. **Felipe Maroto** was chosen as the new Superior General. He was well known in Rome for his spiritual and intellectual gifts. His aptitude for law was exceptional. So much so that at times the Claretians were even called *Marotinos*. The problem was that Fr. Maroto did not know the situation in Spain well. This was the reason for his attitude before

the Spanish Civil War (1936-1939), and his reaction when he learned about the tragedy; and this also undoubtedly contributed to his premature death: he could not endure the drama and died in 1937.

In this Chapter, the topics discussed were the government of the Congregation, observance, ministries, studies and administration. Also, the different Provincial Bulletins began to be published. The erection of an International College in Rome was also decided.

JOAQUIN JUANOLA, CMF

Missionary in Equatorial Guinea (1853-1912)



Maia de Montcal (Girona, Spain). In 1872 he entered the Congregation, then was exiled in France, receiving the priestly ordination from the Bishop of Perpignan. In 1884 he was assigned to Equatorial Guinea. He contributed to the foundation of many missions such as Annobon, San Carlos, Concepcion and Basile. He was the right-hand man for all the Apostolic Prefects. He distinguished himself as a linguist. His *Bubi* grammar book is considered a masterpiece. He took an active part in all the scientific excursions that took place in his time which resulted in some important discoveries. He was superior of all the houses. He was Superior of Santa Isabel from 1888 to 1912. He made an expedition to Monrovia, Liberia, to see the possibility of establishing a mission there. He defended the island of Annobon against the ambitions of Germany. He died on April 2nd as Delegate Vicar; just a few hours before his death, Fr. **Coll** had left for Spain to attend the General Chapter of 1912.

DISCERNING GOD'S WILL



On August 11, as I was coming down from the pulpit after the closing service, lo and behold, I was told that His Excellency, the Bishop, wanted me to go to his palace. When I arrived there, he handed me a letter dated August 4, containing my royal appointment as Archbishop of Cuba. I was struck dead by the news... (Aut 491)

Overwhelmed by the appointment, I had no desire to accept it because I considered myself unworthy and incapable of such a great dignity...I concluded that, even if I had the required knowledge and virtue, it would be wrong for me to abandon the Religious Publishing House and the Congregation, which were just coming into being. Therefore I forcefully rejected all the overtures... (Aut 495)

This order shook me deeply: on the one hand, I didn't dare accept; on the other, I wanted to obey. I begged the bishop to allow me a few days of... Then I called together Fathers Jaime Soler, Jaime Passarell, Pedro Bach, and Stephen Sala... and begged them to commend me to God. I told them that I hoped they would be good enough to tell me, on the last day of the retreat I was about to begin, what I should do... they concluded that it was God's will that I accept the nomination... (Aut 496)



*Miter of St. Anthony Mary Claret
(Claretian Museum - Vic)*

FOR PERSONAL REFLECTION

- When you discern God's will in difficult times, do you ask for advice?
- Are you able to accept God's will when it goes beyond what you consider reasonable or appropriate?



"In the Constitutions there should not be any 'dead letters'; it is necessary to observe the Constitutions in their entirety; the transgression of one opens the door for the relaxation and non-observance of the others."
(Jesus Alvarez)



1849. On his way back to the Peninsula, Claret begins a few days of preaching in Arrecife (Lanzarote).

1860. Claret feels he is approaching the time of martyrdom; he has felt that Jesus has told him: *Anthony, prepare yourself.*

1870. Senator **Santiago Tejada** visits Claret in the convent of St. Adrian at the Roman Forum (Rome). He tells Claret that he has bought an old Franciscan convent in Alfaro (La Rioja) and that he would gladly give it to some missionaries. Claret tells Fr. **Joseph Xifre** about it.



THE GENERAL CURIA IN ROME

PERIOD OF THE MARTYRS (1934-1937)

The XIII General Chapter of 1934 held in *Via Giulia*, Rome, expressed its recommendation about the residence of the Superior General in this way: *Upholding the right that the holy Constitution grants to the Superior General to choose the General House of the Congregation that best suits him and reside in it, the General Chapter puts forth, without intending to restrict that right and by a great majority of votes, its vehement desire that the residence of the Superior General and his Curia be established in*

Rome. Following these indications Fr. **Felipe Maroto**, in the Decree of May 10, 1934, decided to move the seat of the General Government from Madrid to Rome, on *Via Giulia: the most straight and longest street in the world*, as Miguel de Cervantes (1547-1616) had written. At that time the house on *Via Giulia* was the seat of the Provincial Government of Italy, which moved to the so-called *Villino*, in the area of Parioli, where the great Basilica of the Immaculate Heart of Mary was being built, becoming the new Provincial Curia.



JERONIMO PAGES

Hieronymite Monk (1807-1891)



Badalona (Barcelona, Spain). He took the Hieronymite habit in El Escorial in 1827. In 1847 he was named chaplain of San Lorenzo in El Escorial; in 1854 Prior of the community; in 1859 Vice President of the ecclesiastical corporation and Royal Chaplain in 1860. In 1861 he presented his resignation to the Queen, who accepted it, and he was assigned to Seville. After the revolution of 1868 he was appointed Director of the school in El Escorial and Honorary Chaplain of His Majesty in 1879. He died in Seville on Saturday, April 25, 1891. In 1858 Father Claret was named President of the Royal Monastery, leaving Fr. Pages as Vice President. Both maintained an abundant correspondence between 1859 and 1860. On June 22, 1868, Father Claret finally presented the Queen with his resignation from the Presidency of the Monastery due to the disagreeable moments he had to endure. One of the fundamental reasons was the disagreement with Fr. Jeronimo Pages.

EPISCOPAL CONSECRATION



Once I had accepted Her Majesty's choice of my humble person, the customary formalities were immediately set in motion and the dispatch was sent to Rome... (**Aut 497**)

...My election was proclaimed in consistory, the Papal Bull from Rome was delivered to Madrid and duly dispatched, and it was brought from Madrid to Vich by two exemplary priests, Fathers Fermin de la Cruz and Andrew Novoa. Meanwhile, I prepared myself by a retreat of several days, during which I drew up a plan of life that I would follow in my new assignment. Thus prepared and, disposed, I was consecrated... (**Aut 498**)

October 6, 1850—the feast of St. Bruno, founder of the Carthusian order I had once wished to join — was also the first Sunday in October and the Feast of the Most Holy Rosary, which has always been one of my favorite devotions. On this day I was consecrated Archbishop, together with Don Jaime Soler, Bishop of Teruel, in the cathedral of Vic. The local ordinary, Don Luciano Casadevall, was the consecrating bishop, assisted by their Excellencies, Bishops Dominic Costa y Borrás and Fulgencio Lorente, of Barcelona and Gerona, respectively. (**Aut 499**)



Cathedral of St. Peter of Vic



FOR PERSONAL REFLECTION

Claret, who always wanted to live “in an apostolic way,” received the grace of being a successor of the apostles.

- *What does it mean for you to be “steadfast helpers of [the Church’s] Shepherds in the ministry of the word” (cf. CC 6)?*
- *Call to mind some Claretian bishops with whom you have had a relationship. Pray for their ministry and for their people.*
- *Comment on the meaning of the sentence: “Obedience leads to true freedom.”*

“A human being is always sacred and inviolable, in any situation and at every stage of development. Human beings are ends in themselves and never a means of resolving other problems.”
(Francis, *Evangelii gaudium*, 213)



1852. Claret concludes Spiritual Exercises with his close companions in Cuba and signs his resolutions; which are of great importance, since they respond to a year of experience as archbishop.

1859. Since yesterday until May 20th, Claret goes through very great hardships.

1861. In Aranjuez Claret has concluded the second volume of *El Colegio Instruido* and on this day he sends the corrected proofs.



THE CLARETIAN INTERNATIONAL COLLEGE

PERIOD OF THE MARTYRS (1934-1937)

One of the decisions of the General Chapter of 1934 was the start-up of the International College in Rome, leaving the Superior General with his Council to determine its nature, function and other conditions. The International College effectively began operating that same year in the rooms of *Via Giulia*, while looking for another place to accommodate it. In 1937 it moved to Albano until 1953 when it moved to the famous *terzo piano* (third floor) of the new General Curia located in the neighborhood of Parioli. In 1959 the so-called *Claretianum* was

inaugurated in Via Aurelia. In 1969 it was closed as a Congregational Center of Study. In 1971 it began as a department of Theology of Religious Life, within the Faculty of Theology of the Pontifical Lateran University (Rome). In 1975 it was approved by the Holy See as an Institute of Religious Life. In 1996, keeping in mind the Post-Synodal Exhortation *Vita Consecrata*, fruit of the 1994 Synod on Consecrated Life, it changed its name to the Institute of Theology of Consecrated Life. Currently it continues to function with much vitality.



CARMELO SALA Claret's Chaplain (1833-1900)



Xativa (Valencia, Spain). He remained Claret's chaplain for more than six years. In 1862 he accompanied Claret on his trip through Andalusia with Queen Isabella II. The letters he wrote to Fr. Xifre about Father Claret's activities were published by the *Revista Catolica* [Catholic Review]. Apparently, he wanted to be a Claretian missionary. In 1866 he was appointed canon of Cadiz. From 1875 he held the position of Rector of the seminary. In 1879 he became canon of Tarragona. He was the proofreader of some of Claret's works. He testified in the informative process of 1889. In his statement he claimed that Claret was for me, a Superior as well as a loving father on earth, as I hope he will be my protector in heaven. He also said he had been Claret's ordinary confessor. Claret declared about Fr. Carmelo: *He is a very good person, wise and virtuous, who likes our Congregation; but I do not think he'll be able to stay by my side, because that way he can help his parents.* He died in Tarragona.



FAITHFUL TO HIS MISSIONARY IDENTITY



La Moreneta
Our Lady of Montserrat



Shrine of Our Lady of
Fussimanya

On Tuesday, the eighth, I left Vic for Barcelona and Madrid, where the Papal Nuncio, Msgr. Brunelli, invested me with the pallium...I was presented to Her Majesty and the Ministers of State. During the time it took to arrange all my credentials, I busied myself preaching and hearing confessions in Madrid. When all was in order I returned to Catalonia. I arrived in Igualada...and preached there for All Saints' Day. The following day I visited Montserrat...I preached there in the evening... (Aut 500)

That afternoon I went to my home town, Sallent...In the evening I preached to them from a balcony overlooking the town square because the church wasn't large enough to hold the crowd. Next day we celebrated a Solemn High Mass, and in the afternoon I left for Sanmarti. The following morning I traveled to the shrine of Our Lady of Fussimanya...I said Mass in the shrine and...From there I went on to Artes, where I also preached, as I did at Calders, as well. I ate at Moya and preached there that night. The following morning I was off to Collsuspina, where I preached; then I went on to Vic where I had dinner and preached that night. Next I went to Barcelona, where I preached every day in various churches and convents... (Aut 501)



FOR PERSONAL REFLECTION

In this short account, Claret remembers eleven times that he stopped to preach. Once consecrated archbishop, he remained faithful to his missionary identity.

- How do you express your desire to be faithful to your missionary identity in all kinds of apostolic activity?
- Do you take advantage of every opportunity that God offers you to evangelize?
- Search the Internet for a map of Catalonia and see Archbishop Claret's missionary itinerary.
- Review the complete text of Aut 501 and try to find some detail that indicates the reason for which he preached.

"Consider it the greatest of crimes to prefer survival to honor and, out of love of physical life, to lose the very reason for living."
(Juvenal)



1854. In order to favor agriculture, Claret proposes to the Captain General of the Island the creation of parish savings banks.

1858. Claret leaves Madrid for Aranjuez, from where he will then travel with the King and Queen to Alicante and Valencia. It is the first real trip in which he participates; he has many opportunities to preach.

1868. Claret gives his approval to Fr. **Joseph Xifre** for the foundation of the Selva del Camp (Tarragona) and offers to pay the cost of repairing the property.



THE SERIOUSNESS OF THE EVENTS IN SPAIN

PERIOD OF THE MARTYRS (1934-1937)

The events of the Spanish Civil War were the most relevant throughout this period, which influenced the quick death of Fr. **Felipe Maroto**. The Congregation began to turn red with the blood of its martyrs starting in July 1936. Everything happened following the so-called National Uprising on July 18th. All ministry came to a stop, 271 professed Priests, Students and Brothers died. We also suffered enormous material losses. Even so, this painful loss became glory for the Congregation that had in its

bosom so many martyred sons, many of them already beatified. In that period, overseas missionary expeditions were canceled almost entirely.

What happened in 1936 in the Republican zone in Spain in order for almost 7,000 people to be killed for the mere fact of being bishops, priests, and religious men and women? Certainly, the times that Spain was living through foreshadowed a dramatic outcome for believers, and more particularly for priests and religious. And that is what happened.



MARCOS CASTAÑER Founder (1815-1878)



Mataro (Barcelona, Spain). In 1838, because of the Spanish political situation, he decided to go to Rome where he was ordained a priest in 1839. He remained in Italy until 1845, exercising the ministry of preaching and expanding studies. In these years he made contact with the Oratorian Fathers in Rome and was captivated by the life and doctrine of St. **Philip Neri**. He was Director of two Congregations of Religious Sisters in Mataro from 1846 to 1856, establishing various Marian Congregations. He died in Barcelona on Thursday, April 25, 1878. In 1858 he founded the Congregation of *Sisters of St. Philip Neri* with his sister **Gertrudis**. Father Claret aided in the foundation, consolidation and propagation of this Institute. Ever since his Lenten preaching in Mataro in 1845, he maintained a great friendship with the two siblings. In 1859 he supported the foundation and in 1870, in Rome, he had occasion to motivate them in their work, despite the persecution in Spain, encouraging them to extend beyond Mataro.

MAKING THE MOST OF A TRIP



We continued our voyage to Cuba...The ship's cabin space was divided into two parts: I and my companions were quartered in the space between the main mast and the poop; the nuns were quartered all to themselves in the space between the main mast and the bow...My group got up every day on schedule; I washed, and made a half-hour's meditation together. The nuns did the same in their quarters. After meditation I celebrated Mass in our quarters, where an altar had been set up... (**Aut 506**)

After our first set of devotions, we went up on deck to take tea, during which each of us studied what he wished. We met again at eight in our quarters, recited the minor Hours in common, and held a conference on moral theology until ten, when we went to take lunch. Afterwards we were free to rest and study until three, when we gathered to recite Vespers, Compline, Matins, and Lauds. Then we had another conference lasting until five, when we went to dinner. At eight we assembled again to say the rosary and other devotions. We had a conference on ascetical theology and finally, after taking a cup of tea, all retired to their berths. (**Aut 507**)



FOR PERSONAL REFLECTION

Claret seeks to make the most of his time, apostolically speaking, even during his travels.

- How do you organize your time each day?
- Do you have the feeling you are wasting time?
- Draw a clock with 24 hours and try to design the distribution of time of a "missionary day." Try to be realistic.

"Remember that sometimes not getting what you want is a wonderful stroke of luck."
(Dalai Lama)



1849. Claret continues preaching in the city of Arrecife, on the island of Lanzarote, on his trip back to the Peninsula.

1864. Father Claret receives word from Fr. **Clotet** that his great friend, canon of Vic, Fr. **Jaime Passarell** has died in Vic.

1866. Claret sends the Pope a copy of his catechism, which includes some observations made in November of the previous year. It will not be printed until the approval arrives.



RELIGIOUS PERSECUTION

PERIOD OF THE MARTYRS (1934-1937)

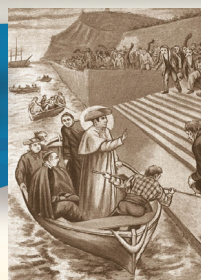
Just to get an idea of how terrible the religious persecution was in Spain in the historical context of the Spanish Civil War (1936-1939), suffice it to say (and the numbers are incomplete) that the following were martyred for Christ: 13 Bishops, 4,184 diocesan priests (177 just in the diocese of Vic), 2,365 men Religious (Priests, Students, Brothers) and 383 women Religious. In total: 6,832, plus tens of thousands of lay people, only because they were known to be good Catholics. In addition, there was a systematic burning and destruction of churches, burning and looting of

convents, along with the destruction of a large part of the religious artistic heritage and archives. Where the revolution reached, very little was saved. In 1937, more than 20,000 churches had been destroyed and looted. As an example, in the Diocese of Vic, 20 churches were totally destroyed; 502 were partially destroyed, looted or desecrated, among them the cathedral and our church and convent of La Merced; and 97 percent of the liturgical ornaments and furnishings were destroyed. The interpretation of the origin and causes of these events are still subject to strong controversy.

FAUSTO LEGARRA, SJ Jesuit from Cuba (1826-1901)



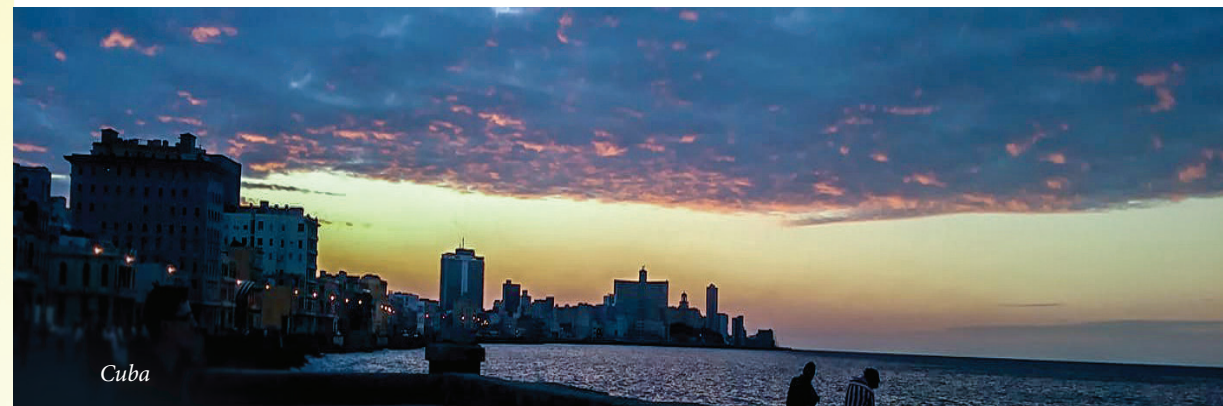
Zarautz (Gipuzkoa, Spain). A professed Jesuit, he was in Havana when Father Claret had a conflict during the mission in El Cobre. In 1880 he wrote about Father Claret's good work this way: *I think it would be a great demonstration of his ability to seek and publish the defense he presented to the Regent of the Hearing in Havana in justification of his behavior during the mission in El Cobre, Cuba. I know from a competent judge in the matter that it was such a well-written plea that, in addition to leaving the Regent astonished (even though he was hostile towards Claret), the Regent also asked its author for permission to copy it as a model. He said that it deserved to be considered a masterpiece, for by its virtue, Bishop and missionaries were found to be absolved..* When he saw Claret on his way through Havana to Spain, Fr. Legarra noted: *I observed that the Lord had endowed him with a great gift of quieting very agitated and extremely scrupulous consciences.* He died on April 29th.



A TRIP CONVERTED INTO A MISSION



On reaching the Gulf of Damas, I began conducting a mission on deck. Everyone on board attended it, passengers and crew, from captain to cabin boy, and everyone went to confession and received Communion at a general Communion service. We were on friendly terms with the crew, and on every voyage they would make to Cuba they used to come and visit us. We landed on February 16, 1851, in good spirits, and were received with demonstrations of joy and good will. On the day following our arrival, we made our official entry into the capital city, in accordance with the established local custom. (**Aut 509**)



Cuba



FOR PERSONAL REFLECTION

Following the Pauline advice "proclaim the word; be persistent whether it is convenient or inconvenient" (2 Tim 4:2), Claret made the trip to Cuba a mission.

- Are you apostolically available even at times that may seem unexpected?
- Have you had the chance to turn an unexpected situation into a moment of mission?

"Meekness is one sign of a vocation to be an apostolic missionary."
(**Aut 374**)



1856. Claret is filled with great sorrow when he finds out on this day that the enemies have burned the hacienda in Santo Domingo (where he stayed when he returned from Holguin after the attack); before they had burned Altagracia by mistake. He is convinced that he must leave, he feels that the Virgin tells him *leave Anthony*. He tells himself: *We would have cured Babylon, but she is not healed: let us forsake her, and let us go every man to his own land: because her judgment has reached even to the heavens.* (Jer 51:9)



THE CLARETIAN MARTYRS OF 1936

PERIOD OF THE MARTYRS (1934-1937)

The Congregation has 271 martyrs from the Spanish Civil War. 183 of them have been beatified successively in three groups: The first group was made up of the 51 martyrs of Barbastro beatified in Rome by Saint John Paul II on October 25, 1992. The second group of 23 were beatified in Tarragona on October 13, 2013 (Fr. **Candido Casals** with 6 companions of Tarragona-La Selva together with the 16 martyrs of Sigüenza-Fernan Caballero – 14 Students, one Brother and Fr. **Jose Maria Ruiz Cano**).

Finally, the 109 martyrs of Cervera-Mas Claret and other communities, beatified on October 21, 2017, Pope Francis' mandate, in the Basilica of the Sagrada Familia in Barcelona. This last group was headed by Father **Mateu Casals**, Student **Teofilo Casajus** and Brother **Ferran Saperas**. Another 88 Claretians were also sacrificed in other places in Spain, such as Jaen, Don Benito, Madrid, Ubeda, San Vicente de la Barquera, etc. It was the Congregation with the largest number of martyrs during that civil war.



SAINT CATHERINE OF SIENA Co-patroness of the Congregation (1347-1380)

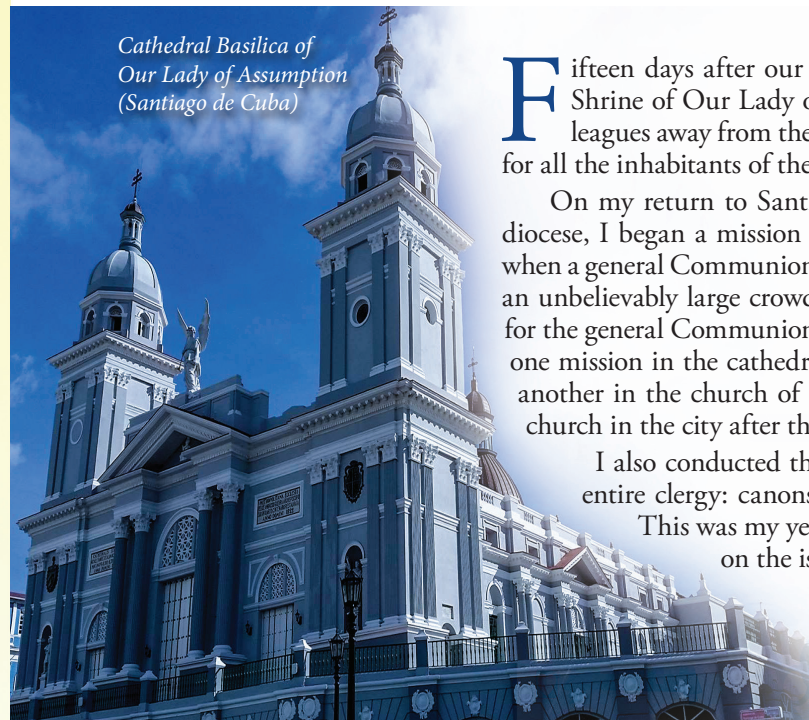


Born in **Siena (Italy)** on March 25, 1347. Despite there being resistance, she entered the Sisters of Penance of St. Dominic at seventeen. With them she developed extraordinary spiritual and charitable activity in the service of the sick and the poor. Moved by her ardent love for the Church, in 1376 Catherine undertook her famous trip to the pontifical court of Avignon (France). Her efforts convinced Gregory XI to return to Rome on September 13th of that same year. From his youth, our Fr. Founder professed a deep devotion to Saint Catherine of Siena for her condition as a consecrated lay person, for her profound mystical life, for her love for the Church and the Pope and for her apostolic commitment in favor of the Church and of sinners. She is cited in several places in the *Autobiography* and in the personal library of Father Claret several volumes of her life and works are preserved. He chose her as a companion of the Congregation.

A MARIAN AND MISSIONARY BEGINNING



Cathedral Basilica of
Our Lady of Assumption
(Santiago de Cuba)



Fifteen days after our arrival we went to visit the Shrine of Our Lady of Charity at El Cobre, four leagues away from the capital, a center of devotion for all the inhabitants of the island... (**Aut 510**)

On my return to Santiago, the capital city of the diocese, I began a mission that lasted until March 25, when a general Communion service was held. There was an unbelievably large crowd, both for the sermons and for the general Communion service. While I was giving one mission in the cathedral, Father Vilario was giving another in the church of St. Francis, the next largest church in the city after the cathedral... (**Aut 511**)

I also conducted the Spiritual Exercises for the entire clergy: canons, pastors, beneficiaries, etc.

This was my yearly practice as long as I was on the island... (**Aut 512**)



FOR PERSONAL REFLECTION

As soon as Claret arrives in Cuba, he visits the Our Lady of Charity of El Cobre and names her "the Prelate." Immediately, he begins a mission in Santiago.

- What place does the Virgin Mary occupy in your apostolic activity?
- On what occasions do you think of Mary most? What do you usually do? What do you call her?
- What is the first significant thing you do when you are assigned to a new place?

"The living of the mystery of the Eucharist throughout the day, as our Founder did, will nourish our identification with Christ and with his Spirit, and will empower us to confront the presence of Evil in our history."

(CPR 55)



1845. Claret arrives in Vilanova i La Geltru (Barcelona), where he will preach during the month of May.

1846. Claret arrives in Lleida, where the next day he will begin preaching for the month of Mary.



REPERCUSSIONS IN THE MISSIONS

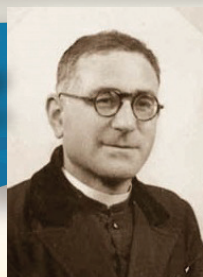
PERIOD OF THE MARTYRS (1934-1937)

The aftermath of the Spanish Civil War began to be felt very soon in the missions, especially those in Equatorial Guinea and China, and in the sources of mission-related literature and funding in Spain. Added to the difficulties caused by the scarcity of economic means, was the lack of missionaries to help to remedy the innumerable needs in the missions entrusted to the Congregation at that time. Let us not forget the high number of students whose lives were cut short because of those sad events. The magazine *El Misionero*

was also suspended, the funds of the *Pio Union Misionera* were stolen, the Cervera Philatelic Circle disappeared, etc. In this context, Fr. **Felipe Maroto** tried to encourage solidarity of the whole Congregation through his circular letter *Misiones de infieles* [*Mission to Nonbelievers*] that was published in the year 1937, precisely on the eve of his death, which occurred at age 62. He was a victim of the troubles and sorrows he suffered because of the very high price the Congregation paid in the Spanish Civil War.



JOSE MARIA MIR, CMF
Missionary and Latinist (1912-2000)



Bellvis (Lleida, Spain). At the age of 11 he entered the Claretian seminary located in the famous former University of Cervera. It should be noted that a true passion for Latin was awakened in him. He continued his studies in Philosophy and Theology, collaborating at that time with the Latin magazine that Fr. Manuel Jove started, first with the name of *Candidatus Latinus* (1928) and later *Palaestra Latina* (1930). On March 28, 1936 he received the priestly ordination in Lleida. A few months later the Spanish Civil War broke out. In 1943 he settled in Barbastro and assumed the direction of the magazine *Palaestra Latina* until 1964, helping it to increase greatly. With a team he revised the *Diccionario ilustrado latinoespañol y español-latino* [*Illustrated Dictionary Latin-Spanish and Spanish-Latin*] of Spes-Vox (Barcelona 1944) which reached numerous editions. In 1965 he was called to Rome as Professor in the *Pontifical Institute for Latin*. He also taught at the *Lateran University*. He died in Barcelona on April 29th.

THE FRUITS OF THE SHARED MISSION



A picture of Claret in Cuba and his companions

When the missions were over and the Holy Week and Easter services completed, I divided my companions into three groups. I sent Fathers Manuel Subirana and Francisco Coca to the city of El Cobre, and Fathers Paladio Currius and Stephen Adoain, a Capuchin, to the town of Caney, two leagues from Santiago...I distributed the third group as follows: Father John Lobo in the chancery...Fathers Philip Rovira and John Pladebella in the seminary, to teach Latin grammar and moral theology, respectively; and Fathers Lorenzo San Marti and Anthony Barjau to the city of

Puerto Principe to teach catechism until I arrived there. (Aut 514)

I remained in the capital, where I inaugurated the pastoral visitation, starting in the cathedral and then going through the parishes... (Aut 515)

After this I went to the city of El Cobre, where Fathers Manuel Subirana and Francisco Coca were giving the mission, as I had said. They had worked very hard, with excellent results. Suffice it to say that when they got there only eight couples were properly married; and by the time the mission was over, 400 couples who had been living together illicitly were married... (Aut 517)



FOR PERSONAL REFLECTION

What is your attitude towards working as a team?

- Do you volunteer or refuse to work with others?
- Do you avoid taking a leadership role in favor of simple collaboration?
- Indicate three of your personal qualities that facilitate and favor teamwork. And give thanks to God for them.

“[The Claretian martyrs] are human beings who know how to pardon because they themselves feel infinitely pardoned by God.”
(Mathew Vattamattam, *Missionaries to the End*. n. 18)