

*O Virgin Mother of God,
you know that we are your sons and ministers,
formed by you
in the forge of your mercy and love.
We are like arrows poised in your mighty hand.
Release us, our Mother,
against what opposes the Kingdom of God.
Trusting in your protection,
we proclaim the Gospel
armed only with the Word of God,
and the title of Sons of your Immaculate Heart.
Mother, yours will be the victory.
Amen.*



May



1844. Claret preaches during the month of May in Santa Maria del Mar (Barcelona).

1858. Fr. **Joseph Xifre** is elected Superior General of the Congregation and Claret sees it as a wise choice.

1863. Claret advises Fr. Joseph Xifre to take charge of the church of La Merced, where new vocations can be trained to preach.



FR. NICOLAS GARCIA'S NEW TERM

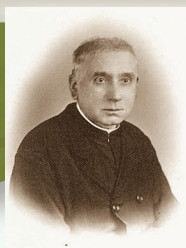
On July 11, 1937, **Felipe Maroto** died suddenly in Rome. His death was part of the collateral consequences that the Spanish Civil War left in our Congregation; it is not difficult to imagine the strong impact and pain that the news of the deaths of so many missionaries in Spain would cause the Superior General, especially that of so many young seminarians. The XIV General Chapter was announced, which was held from November 22nd to December 7th in Albano Laziale (near Rome). There were 40 participants.

Fr. **Nicolas Garcia**, who had already governed the Congregation from 1922 to 1934, was elected as Superior General. He was accompanied by Fr. **Ezequiel Villaroya** as Sub-Director and Fr. Manuel Arriandiaga, Fr. Anselmo Santesteban and Fr. **Arcadio Larraona** as Consultors; the Secretary was Fr. **Ramon Ribera** and the Econome, Fr. Antonio Soteras. During this new term the Congregation was involved in the whirlwind of disorder produced by the continuation of the Spanish Civil War (until April 1, 1939) and World War II (1939-1945).

THE FIRST 100 YEARS (1937-1949)

RAMON RIBERA, CMF

Consultor and General Secretary (1877-1949)



Berga (Barcelona, Spain). Brother of **Luis Ribera**. After years in the diocesan seminary, he entered the Congregation and professed in 1896, being ordained a priest in 1900. Professor of postulants in Barbastro, he went with them to Vic in 1906. In 1909 he became Prefect of Discipline in Alagon. In 1913 he went to Cervera to succeed Fr. **Mariano Fernandez** in the novitiate in Vic until 1930 when he was elected General Consultor for four years. 132 of his students were killed for Christ in the 1936 revolution. From 1934 to 1949 he was General Secretary. He died in Rome on May 6, 1949, at the age of 72, offering his life for the success of the General Chapter held in Castel Gandolfo. He was an excellent, pious writer. Among his works are: *Los Primeros Viernes y Sabados de Mes* [The First Friday and Saturday of the Month], *Señor Dadme Almas* [Lord Give Me Souls], *La Escala Blanca* [The White Scale], *Misterios y Glorias de la Cruz* [Mysteries and Glories of the Cross], *Una Promesa Consoladora* [A Consoling Promise], and, above all, *El Novicio Instruido* [The Well-Instructed Novice].



UNPLEASANTNESS AND PERSECUTIONS IN THE MISSIONS



National Shrine Basilica of Our Lady of Charity of El Cobre (Cuba)

It was in the city of El Cobre that the unpleasantness and persecutions began...I had not yet left town and there were still some couples who wanted to get married because they hadn't been able to before. I wanted to be sure of my cases, and so I called on the major in charge of the town and said to him, "You know the people of this town better than anyone else. Could you tell me which of the people on this list of couples living together can contract a good marriage, or whether they have some legal impediment of race..." (Aut 518)

That very night the major brought charges against the parish priest, to the effect that he had been performing illicit marriages between racial classes...I summoned the major and told him that in acting as he did he was taking steps not against the parish priest, but against me...I made it clear to him that on my part I had been extremely careful not to announce the banns of anyone's marriage without first consulting him, to avoid any unpleasant surprises; whereas he had now started spreading this slanderous misstatement...the Governor General, acting on nothing more than the allegation of the major at El Cobre and the bad advice of the secretary of government, instigated a series of wild investigations that only resulted in arguments and trouble. (Aut 520)



FOR PERSONAL REFLECTION

In Cuba, Claret faced the problem of cohabitation, which caused family instability. He had to fight against laws that were easily compromised.

- What are the main social problems that you find in your apostolate?
- What place do family problems have in your apostolate?
- Remember the Claretians in your Organism who work in family ministry. Pray for them.

"How can it be that it is not a news item when an elderly homeless person dies of exposure, but it is news when the stock market loses two points?

This is a case of exclusion."
(Francis, *Evangelii gaudium*, 53)



1836. Claret raises a complaint and asks the mayor of Sallent for protection from those who disturb the normal development of liturgy and even rebuke him.

1851. Claret appoints Fr. **Manuel Vilaro** secretary of pastoral visits in various locations throughout the diocese.

1869. From Rome Claret tells Fr. **Joseph Xifre** that the two volumes of *Platicas Doctrinales* [Doctrinal Talks] have been published, which may be useful to the missionaries.



TIMES OF STRIFE

THE FIRST 100 YEARS (1937-1949)

In Spain, after many of the houses and farms were seized, they were returned at the end of the civil war in 1939. Preaching, publishing and expeditions to missionary lands began again. Likewise, the remains of the martyrs were recovered, as much as possible, and transferred with much reverence to worthy and dignified places. Despite all the difficulties, destruction and death, the Congregation experienced growth, especially outside of Spain. Five months after the end

of the Spanish Civil War, the Second World War began. This military conflict was detrimental to the Congregation because of the isolation it produced from 1941 to 1945, especially in our homes in Germany, Poland and Italy. We also suffered some loss of life on the Russian front. Despite this turbulent situation, the Superior General made many visits to the American Provinces and Equatorial Guinea and received several decorations and recognitions for the enormous work of the Claretians.



JUAN MARIA GORRICHIO, CMF

Missionary and Writer (1889-1960)



Lerin (Navarre, Spain). He was the heart of Claretian theologate in Santo Domingo de la Calzada and of the clergy in the city and its surrounding areas. In 1932 he was assigned to the General Curia in Madrid, located on Buen Suceso Street. He performed intense apostolic work there for the next 28 years. He was a prolific author. He published numerous works about public speaking and asceticism and Marian piety. In Madrid he directed the popular magazine *El Iris de Paz* for several years and was the Superior of the community at different times. He was the main architect of the Church of the Corazon de Maria located on Ferraz Street in the capital of Spain, open for worship on March 9, 1952. During the civil war (1936-1939), while detained with other prisoners, he offered to give his life in exchange for the life of a fellow prisoner: the lieutenant colonel and father of five children, Mario Gonzalez Revenga, who was going to be executed. But in the end, providentially, both were saved. He died on May 2nd.

PASTORAL PRUDENCE



I went to Puerto Principe toward the end of July of that year. As the whole city was deeply involved in the revolution of Narciso...a great many precautionary measures surrounded my arrival. At the start of the mission many people came to see whether or not I was going to talk about the political upheavals...When they observed that I didn't breathe a word about politics either from the pulpit or in the confessional, publicly or privately, they were greatly impressed and I won their confidence. (Aut 522)

Just at this time, the troops had captured four...and so they had been sentenced to death. The guilty men and their relatives had such confidence in me that they asked me to come to the prison to hear their confessions...they asked me to act as their intermediary with the general. I was to tell him that all those who were implicated in carrying firearms would, if they were pardoned, lay down their arms and return home secretly, without saying a word about the event or revealing the names of those involved. I obtained the general's agreement to these terms, with the result that the whole band was dissolved, all their guns, ammunition, and money were dispersed, and everything returned to peace... (Aut 523)



*Pulpit of the National Shrine
Basilica of Our Lady of Charity of
El Cobre (Cuba)*



FOR PERSONAL REFLECTION

Faced with the movements of independence in Cuba, Claret was careful not to get caught up in politics, but at the same time, he committed himself to defending life and social peace.

- What is your attitude towards the political problems of your country?
- Is your apostolate full of commitment for justice and peace without being caught up in political parties?

“For at one time I seem to myself to give them more honour than is seemly, feeling our minds to be more holily and fervently raised unto a flame of devotion, by the holy words themselves when thus sung, than when not; and that the several affections of our spirit, by a sweet variety, have their own proper measures in the voice and singing, by some hidden correspondence wherewith they are stirred up.”
(St. Augustine, *Confessions*, Book X, ch. 33)



1852. In Santiago, Cuba Claret ordains seminarians to Holy Orders and baptizes the Chinese doctor Dr. Sigan.

1861. Among several instructions to Fr. **Joseph Xifre**, Claret tells him to make sure that all the priests of the Congregation learn French in order to hear the confession of foreigners ... attend to the many people who travel.



VOCATIONAL CRISIS

THE FIRST 100 YEARS (1937-1949)

The events of the Spanish War resulted in a significant setback of personnel in Spain, a circumstance that was detected by the General Chapter of 1937. This encouraged Fr. **Nicolas Garcia** to write a Circular entitled *La Vocacion Misionera* in 1938 in which he invited all the Provinces to multiply their Postulancies and Pre-postulancies and to create the position of Vocation Promoters. He drafted it in the name of the General Government, which studied in depth this very serious matter of vocations,

following the guidelines of the last General Chapter and encouraged by the examples of Fr. Founder and Fr. **Xifre**. *The Congregation had suffered a drastic blow to its personnel, due to the Spanish revolution, worthy priests, professed students who constituted a beautiful hope, well-formed Brothers, in great number, have been sacrificed ... For all these reasons, the Congregation has absolute need for an increase in members, but of select members; since what makes religious Institutes progress is not precisely the number, but the quality of their members.*



RHOEL GALLARDO, CMF
Martyr in the Philippines (1965-2000)



Longapo (Philippines). He was killed on May 3, 2000, only six years after his ordination, suffering his own true Calvary being tortured by his kidnappers. His body was found with three bullets in the back and on the head. The Abu Sayyaf Muslim fundamentalist group attacked Claret School of Tumahubong in the remote town of Sumisip, Basilan, to the south of the Philippines on March 20, 2000, taking Fr. Rhoel, four teachers and 22 students as hostages. After lengthy negotiations between the rebels on the one hand and the bishop, the Provincial of the Claretians and a Muslim ulama on the other, an agreement could not be reached; the demands were totally unacceptable. The Philippine army was forced to attack the rebel camp in the jungle to rescue the hostages. They found the body of Fr. Rhoel with signs of the torture they had inflicted upon him. They also killed three teachers and five of the children.

NATURAL DISASTER



The havoc wrought by the Cuban earthquakes was truly dreadful... I left the mission at Bayamo and went to Santiago, where I was appalled at the sight of the ruins; one could hardly move through the streets, for all the wreckage and debris. The cathedral was a total disaster... The episcopal palace was a wreck, and so were all the other churches, more or less. Public squares were converted into chapels where Mass was said, the sacraments distributed, and sermons

preached. Nearly all the houses in town were in a state of greater or lesser disrepair. (**Aut 529**)

So much was destroyed; yet we hardly had time to lament our personal losses. A great number of people were praising the wonders of God's mercy for preserving them from all bodily harm when their houses were utterly destroyed... (**Aut 533**)

The quakes lasted from August 20 to the end of December, with a few brief interruptions—although there were days on which there were as many as five tremors. We offered prayers of supplication, and all the canons and other priests went in procession to the esplanade along the seashore where an outdoor chapel, made of posts covered by a large awning, had been set up. In the morning everyone gathered here, the authorities as well as the townspeople, to sing the litany and a votive Mass of supplication. (**Aut 534**)



FOR PERSONAL REFLECTION

- How do you react to the news of natural disasters even in distant countries?
- Recall some recent natural disasters that have impacted you.
- What can and should we do in these cases? What should we not do? How do we incorporate them into the life and mission of the Congregation through our Procures, NGOs, etc?

“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**)



1843. Claret arrives at L'Estany (Barcelona), where he spends a few days preaching.

1858. Claret informs the metropolitan council of Santiago of his resignation, but gravely cautions them to avoid schisms: the Pope will not accept it until the day he appoints his

successor.

1859. Claret sends interesting and friendly advice to Fr. **John N. Lobo**, his former collaborator in Cuba and a recently professed Jesuit.



THE MAGAZINE *VIDA RELIGIOSA* AND THE *INSTITUTUM IURIDICUM*

THE FIRST 100 YEARS (1937-1949)

Ever since the magazine *Commentarium pro Religiosis* came into being, many members of the Congregation considered publishing a similar magazine, but more informational and in Spanish. In 1938, Fr. **Arturo Tabera** had already submitted a project to the General Government to create a magazine about religious life, but it wasn't until 1944 that he finally managed to get the first issue published in Madrid of the magazine entitled *Vida Religiosa. Revista bimestral Hispanoamericana para las Comunidades religiosas* [Religious Life. Bimonthly Hispanic-American magazine for Religious

Communities]. After the Second Vatican Council (1962-1965) it was restructured. This magazine was a groundbreaking tool for the renewal of religious life, not only in Spain but in another 85 countries throughout the world.

In 1939, Fr. **Arcadio Maria Larraona**, Fr. **Siervo Goyeneche** and Fr. Arturo Tabera founded the *Institutum Iuridicum*, with provisional headquarters in Via dei Banchi Vecchi (Rome), for the dissemination and promotion of Canon Law at the highest level. It is currently housed in a separate residence. It is not an academic Institute as such, but a community of canon lawyers and professors.



LORENZO SANMARTI

Collaborator of Claret (1821-1864)



La Corriu (Lleida, Spain). He accompanied Father Claret to Cuba, who says of him in his Autobiography: *He started giving missions with Father Anthony Barjau, then with Father Esteban de Adoain. Later I stationed him in Puerto Principe as vicar forane, a task he performed very well. He was always very fervent and utterly detached. He eventually joined the Jesuits and is presently working in Fernando Poo. In fact, in 1857 he embarked for Spain and entered the Society of Jesus. He was assigned to the missions of Fernando Poo. He returned to the Peninsula sick, was assisted by Fr. John Nepomuceno Lobo and died in Puerto de Santa Maria (Cadiz) on the day of the Ascension, May 5, 1864. On the occasion of his death, Claret wrote to Fr. Dionisio Gonzalez: Fr. Lobo tells me that he had a happy death, the death of a just one; nevertheless he wants all of us to entrust him to God as friends and companions from Cuba.*

PASTORAL CHARITY IN THE FACE OF THE CHOLERA EPIDEMIC



A frightful epidemic of cholera broke out. There were streets in which everyone died within two days. (Aut 535)

During the cholera epidemic, all the clergy acquitted themselves admirably, day and night. I and all the priests were among the sick constantly, caring for their spiritual and corporal needs. Only one priest, the pastor of El Cobre, died and he was a victim of charity. He began to feel some slight symptoms of the disease, but he took his medicine and there was some hope of his being cured. He was in bed recuperating when word came that one of the victims needed to see a priest. At this, the pastor said, I know that if I go I'll die because it will only worsen my condition; but because there is no other priest available, I'll go. I'd rather die than fail this sick man who is calling for me. He went and on his return took to his bed and died. (Aut 537)



Painting of Claret displayed at the Delegation House of Italy in Banchi Vecchi St. (Rome)



FOR PERSONAL REFLECTION

- What testimony can you give of your commitment to helping those affected by misfortune?
- Would you be willing to take the same risks as the parish priest of El Cobre that Claret praises in this excerpt?

“Each Claretian must have his own formation plan or commitment to personal growth, which will both provide for his personal wholeness... and meet with the agreement of his community and his superiors.”
(CPR 67)



1835. During these days Claret began 40 days of retreat at the episcopal palace in Vic to prepare himself for priestly ordination. They were days filled with *sufferings and trials* probably due to the grave illness of Bishop **Corcuera**.

1844. Claret preaches at the main Mass of San Agustin Parish (Barcelona).

1855. 28 Catalan sausages arrived in Cuba from Olot (Girona). Claret's close companions ate them because Claret does not eat meat.



THE HEART OF MARY AND CLARET

THE FIRST 100 YEARS (1937-1949)

In 1940, Fr. **Narciso Garcia Garces** founded the *Spanish Mariological Society* together with a group of Spanish theologians, which initiated Mariological Weeks and published *Estudios Marianos [Marian Studies]*, followed by the still existing *Ephemerides Mariologicae*. Soon after, the consecration of the world to the Heart of Mary became a great event for the Church and for the Congregation through the immense effort that was put into this work. It was carried out by Pope Pius XII on October 31 and December 8, 1942. As a result of

this consecration many other particular consecrations were celebrated in Archdioceses, Dioceses, Congregations, etc. The Congregation contributed enormously to making this dream come true. Since 1944 these consecrations have been followed by the coronation of specific images of Our Lady.

In 1946, Fr. **Cristobal Fernandez** published his greatest work in two volumes entitled *El Beato Padre Antonio Maria Claret*, which has since become an obligatory reference when it comes to knowing about the life of Fr. Founder.

EUGENIA DE MONTIJO Empress of France (1826-1920)



Granada (Spain). She was born on May 5. Her name was Eugenia Maria de Guzman y Portocarrero. She was the Countess of Teba, Marquise of Moya, and Empress of France. After the death of her father she lived in Madrid and then in Paris, where she settled definitively in 1850. She married Napoleon III in 1853. At the outbreak of the Franco-Prussian War, she was invested into the regency in 1870. She died in Madrid on July 11, 1920. During the month of October, 1863, the Empress arrived in Madrid and, as usual, Father Claret had to attend the banquet in the Palace. Surely the Empress had no personal relationship with him, but she did with his sons, the Claretian missionaries of Algiers. The economic support of the foundation in Algiers fell on the shoulders of the Empress of France after the dethronement of Queen **Isabella II**, who promised Mons. Lavigerie she would subsidize the Claretian community with 6,000 francs per year.



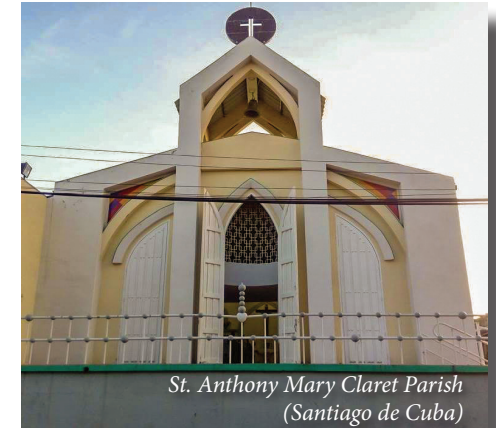
PASTORAL VISIT



During the first two years, despite the earthquakes and the cholera epidemic, we managed to visit all the parishes in the archdiocese. In every one of them a mission was led either by me or my companions, and in rural parishes with a very large territory, several missions were given. Every two or three leagues we would hold a mission in one of the many large tobacco sheds... (**Aut 538**)

I made my pastoral visit to each [parish] and administered the sacrament of Confirmation, remaining as long as it took to confirm everyone. Everywhere we went we distributed books, holy cards, medals, and rosaries, with the result that everyone was as pleased with us as we were with them. (**Aut 544**)

...The Council of Trent demands that the pastoral visitation be made every one or two years; during my six years and two months in office, I visited every parish in the diocese four times. (**Aut 550**)



St. Anthony Mary Claret Parish
(Santiago de Cuba)



FOR PERSONAL REFLECTION

- How would you judge your level of closeness with others?
- Do your pastoral attitudes foster closeness and proximity or distance and separation?

“Our missionary vocation is hewn from the same rock from which the vocation of our Founder and the heroic martyrs was hewn.”
(Mathew Vattamattam, *Missionaries to the End*, 1)



1852. Having already finished much of his pastoral visit, marrying many cohabitating couples and legitimizing their children, Claret gives instructions to modify their place in the baptismal book.

1854. Claret concludes his annual Spiritual Exercises and drafts resolutions, including not thinking about giving up the miter.

1861. He is in favor of admitting a young man as a seminarian of El Escorial who has been expelled by the Dominicans of Ocaña, apparently because of their strong reactions and because he is somewhat of a *freethinker*.



FOUNDATION IN THE PHILIPPINE ISLANDS

THE FIRST 100 YEARS (1937-1949)

It was at the beginning of 1946 when Fr. Eugenio Herran went to the Philippines for an inspection. On the ship he came into contact with military personnel, professionals, Catholic and Protestant missionaries, and they were all traveling for the same reason: to rebuild the Philippines after it had been devastated by the war. Bishop Mariano Aspiras Madriaga of Lingayen, on the island of Luzon, gave him the following reason as to why he called the Claretians: *I am calling your Congregation to establish a vocational school for boys because you have both English and Spanish speaking priests. Other*

activities will be given to you in my diocese. In January of 1947, the Asian continent was opened to the Congregation once again with the founding of the Catholic Mission of Santa Barbara, Pangasinan, Philippines. The initiative was carried out from the United States and Fr. Ramon Catalan was in charge of putting it into practice. This presence was expanded in 1951 to the Zamboanga Peninsula and the island of Basilan, but some missionaries remained in Santa Barbara until 1955, when that center was abandoned definitively. The first altar dedicated to Father Claret in Asia is preserved there.



ARCADIO MARIA LARRAONA, CMF First Claretian Cardinal (1887-1973)



Oteiza de la Solana (Navarre, Spain). The year following his priestly ordination in Aranda de Duero in 1911, he was assigned to Rome to study Canon Law at the Lateran University where he received his doctorate in 1913. He quickly became a prestigious professor for the next 40 years at the Roman Universities: Apolinar, Lateran, Urban, and the Pastoral Pontifical Institute. He was also highly regarded as a writer. In 1920 he founded the magazine *Commentarium Pro Religiosis* and wrote in numerous magazines. He entered the Roman Curia in 1929 as a Consultor to Eastern and Religious Congregations. As Secretary of the Congregation of Religious, he was named a Cardinal in 1959, the first in the history of the Congregation. Later he was appointed Prefect of the Sacred Congregation of Rites in 1962, and that same year he was consecrated bishop, participating in the Second Vatican Council. In 1968 he resigned as Prefect and was named Camerlengo (Treasurer) of the Sacred College of Cardinals. He received a large number of awards and distinctions. He died in Rome on May 7th.

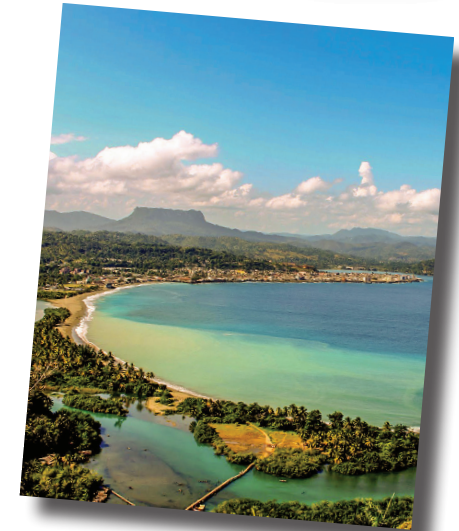
DIFFICULT TRIP TO BARACOA



I remember that in my second year on the island I wanted to go overland to Baracoa because the sea wasn't fit... (**Aut 540**)

We had to cross the river Jojo 35 times because it zigzags between two high mountain ridges, and the traveler has no course open to him other than to cross it. After we made it past the river, we had to climb a stretch of mountains called the Cuchillas de Baracoa. The name fits them perfectly because they really are like a row of knives... We had to climb and cross these mountains fasting, and the road is so steep that on the way down I slipped and fell twice... (**Aut 541**)

Around noon we arrived at a farmhouse where we were able to get something to eat, and that evening we reached the city of Baracoa... it had been 60 years since a bishop had visited this city... When I arrived, two of my mission band had already been there and given a mission; nevertheless, I preached there every day during my stay. I confirmed and visited everyone... (**Aut 542**)



Baracoa, the "First City" (Cuba)



FOR PERSONAL REFLECTION

- What have been the most difficult missionary experiences you have had to reach people far-removed from the faith?
- Is there a certain attitude of rejection or indifference to faith and the Church in your area?
- Is your community a missionary outreach community?

"People in every nation enhance the social dimension of their lives by acting as committed and responsible citizens, not as a mob swayed by the powers that be."
(Francis, *Evangelii gaudium*, 220)



1842. Father Claret's sister Maria enters the convent with the Carmelite Sisters of Charity.

1858. Claret congratulates Fr. **Joseph Xifre** for being elected director of missionaries. He tells him that it does not matter that the Congregation is small, *it is better that we are few, closely united and fervent, than many and divided.*

1859. Finally, Claret can announce to his close companions that, after three failed attempts, he has a successor for the miter of Santiago: Fr. **Manuel Negueruela**.



STATISTICS OF 1949

THE FIRST 100 YEARS (1937-1949)

In 1947, two years before celebrating the 100th anniversary of the Foundation of the Congregation, there was significant growth in membership between 1921 and 1935, especially considering the bloodshed that took place during the religious persecution of Spain from 1936-1939. The Congregation had 2,481 professed and 172 novices. Most notable was the expansion of the Congregation outside of Spain. There were 232 houses in several different continents: 93 in Europe, 8 in Asia, 11 in Africa and 120 in America.

All of them were constituted within 10 Provinces, 2 Vice-Provinces and 5 Visitorships. Publications had increased and schools were distributed across the various continents, especially in Europe and the United States. 35 new foundations were added during Fr. **Nicolas Garcia's** last term to the existing 65 houses and colleges that had been established throughout the world during his first term. Among the hierarchical ranks of the Church, the Congregation had 3 Archbishops, 8 Bishops, 1 Apostolic Vicar and 6 Apostolic Prefects.



THE CANONIZATION OF SAINT ANTHONY MARY CLARET (1950)



Once the beatification of the Founder was proclaimed on February 25, 1934, the Congregation immediately focused on continuing the process of his canonization. On January 12, 1950, after having followed the respective procedures, Pope Pius XII declared that he already had two new miracles: curing Sr. Josefina Marin of cancer in Santiago, Cuba May 11-12, 1934 and healing Mrs. Elena Flores of hemiplegia from a brain injury in Cordoba (Spain) on May 9, 1948. On May 7, 1950, Anthony Mary Claret was canonized. St. Peter's Basilica was bursting with pilgrims. The most crucial and exciting moment was when the Pope pronounced his magisterial and definitive decision: *We decree and define that Blessed Anthony Mary Claret, Bishop and Confessor, is a SAINT and his name is now inscribed in the book of saints.* Pope Pius XII described the new saint very well that day.



PASTORAL LETTERS



Copy of the printed
Pastoral Letters of Claret

From the opening to the closing days of my tenure in office, I wrote a number of circular letters; but I had no desire to write a properly pastoral letter until I had finished my first pastoral visitation of the whole archdiocese, so that my words would apply to the real situation and not be just so much idle talk. (Aut 546)

My first pastoral letter, written and signed on September 20, 1852, was addressed to the clergy... (Aut 547)

My second pastoral letter of March 25, 1853 was addressed to the laity, reminding them of what we had taught them in the missions and pastoral visits we had just completed. The third pastoral was in protest against a shipment of evil books brought in by boat. The fourth was an invitation to prayer and other pious works in order to obtain the declaration of the dogma of Mary's Immaculate Conception. The fifth was written on the occasion of the declaration of the dogma of the Immaculate Conception. This was published in Cuba, Barcelona, and Paris... (Aut 549)



FOR PERSONAL REFLECTION

- Do you usually use communications media with an evangelizing spirit?
- Do you try to make your language understandable and concrete?
- Write three practical and simple rules to organize the way you use communications media.
- If you are a priest, review how you prepare your homilies. What should you be more careful with?

"Someone should tell us, at the very beginning of our lives, that we will die. Then we would live life to the fullest, every minute of every day. Do it! That is what I say. Whatever you want to do, do it now! There are not many mornings." (Paul VI)



1851. After three months in Santiago, Cuba, Claret announces that he will begin visiting parishes throughout the diocese the following month and wants the parish priests to reprimand the couples who are cohabitating or separated, and to prepare well those who wish to marry.

1858. Aware of the fact that not all of the parish priests have the formation necessary to preach, Claret composes the *Coleccion de Platicas Dominicales* [Collection of Sunday Talks] (7 vol.), from which they can read each Sunday's homily.

1865. Claret supports Fr. **Joseph Xifre's** decision to expel Fr. Vilaseca from the Congregation.



THE FIRST 100 YEARS (1937-1949)

THE CONCLUSION OF AN ERA

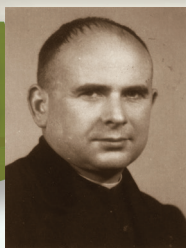
Fr. **Nicolas Garcia's** term ended in 1949. He was already ill and died in Rome on February 24th of the following year. The XV General Chapter was held from April 30 to May 28, 1949, in Castel Gandolfo (Italy), the Pope's summer residence, given in consideration to the services provided by the Congregation. There were 44 participants and it was led by Fr. Nicolas Garcia. Fr. **Peter Schweiger**, the Visitor from Germany, was elected Superior General. His election was a clear indication of the missionary

universality of the Congregation, being the only capitular member who was not of Spanish nationality except the Visitor from Portugal. One of the decisions made during the Chapter was to restructure the Iberian Organisms, which led to the creation the Province of Cantabria and the Vice-Province of Portugal the following year. On April 28th, while the Chapter was in full swing, Fr. Agustin Lobo died tragically when he fell in the church of Santa Lucia del Gonfalone (Rome). He was the Provincial of Castilla and a Capitular member.



LUIS PUJOL, CMF

Missionary and Founder (1903-1976)



Taradell (Barcelona, Spain). He entered the Congregation at age twelve and received priestly ordination in Rome in 1927. On May 25, 1951, he founded the Congregation *Missionary Sisters of the Claretian Institute*, in conjunction with Sr. Maria Dolores Sola in Vic. As a servant of the Word of God, he dedicated himself to study and prayer and to spreading both with great love and enthusiasm. He studied Sacred Scripture in Rome and completed his studies in the Holy Land. He developed his missionary work in different parishes, leading Spiritual Exercises, teaching and publishing several works. He died in Vic on May 8, 1976. Deeply aware of the human person, he wrote: *The best thing about each person is their capacity to love.* He understood that the modern age needed a new evangelization, in which the role of the laity was essential. He often repeated: *Do not tire of doing good. If things get difficult, we must be persistent and not grow weary.*

ECONOMIC DISTRIBUTION THAT IS MORE JUST AND IN SOLIDARITY



Cuban money

During my time the salaries of the cathedral and parochial clergy were adjusted and raised; my own salary was cut. Previously the Archbishop of Cuba had received a salary of 30,000 duros, plus parochial stole fees of 6,000 duros; in my time I had it reduced to 18,000 duros, minus all stole fees. (Aut 551)

Curates were earning a mere pittance. Those of Santiago were receiving only 33 duros, plus votive offerings, half of which went to the bishop and a so-called sacristan, who did nothing. During my stay in office, curates received 700 duros on commencing, 1,200 on promotion, and 2,000 on termination. They also received 200, 400, and 700 duros, respectively, for church expenses on these occasions.

I also raised the salaries of canons and provided them with a very well appointed and well endowed chapel. I brought in good musicians and organists from Spain, and some magnificent services were held. (Aut 552)



FOR PERSONAL REFLECTION

- What are the economic criteria that you use in your personal life and in your apostolate?
- If you employ workers, are they fairly compensated?
- From your personal experience, point out two or three economic criteria for your personal life and your apostolate that respect justice and the spirit of poverty.

"Follow your bliss and the universe will open doors where there were only walls."
(Joseph Campbell)



1843. Claret arrives at Santa Eugenia de Berga (Barcelona), where he will remain the rest of the month.

1859. Claret moves to Aranjuez until mid-June; the King and Queen had arrived on the 3rd. The days are very favorable for writing.

1868. The Queen appoints him a witness to the marriage agreement between Princess **Isabella** and Count Cayetano Girgenti; they will marry on the 13th.



THE CONGREGATION'S FIRST 100 YEARS

THE FIRST 100 YEARS (1937-1949)

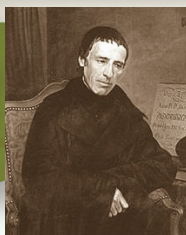
On July 16, 1949, the Congregation celebrated its 100th anniversary. There was great optimism. Celebrations abounded while the General Government published a special work in which they put together a Circular Letter of Father General and several articles on the Marian, Claretian and missionary identity of the Congregation, with various literary declarations blended in. For this reason, Pope Pius XII addressed the Apostolic Letter *Auspicato sane* to Father General and to the whole Congregation. Perhaps

the most notable fact, and one that became a sign of the universality of the Congregation, is that Father General surprisingly did not celebrate the 100th anniversary at the General Curia but rather in England. The most significant events, although very simple, took place at the Motherhouse in Vic. On July 16th all gathered in the seminary cell where the foundation occurred, made to appear as it did one hundred years ago, with the display of the painting of the *Virgin of Divine Love*, owned by Fr. **Stephen Sala**.



JAN PHILIPP ROTHHAAN, SJ

Superior General of the Society of Jesus (1785-1853)



Amsterdam (Holland). He entered the Jesuits in 1804. After working in the missions and teaching in Russia, Austria and Italy, he was appointed Provincial of Italy in 1829 and that same year as Superior General of the Society of Jesus. Fr. Roothaan showed great appreciation for Claret, judging from the letters he wrote to him and one he wrote to Bishop **Luciano Casadevall** in which he tells of a providential triumvirate from Vic, including Claret and **Balmes**. On his trip to Rome in 1839, having connected with the Jesuits, Claret was called by Fr. Roothaan. Fr. Roothaan spoke with Claret and introduced him to the Provincial, who admitted him into the novitiate. Before leaving the Society, Claret returned to meet with Fr. Roothaan. Claret comments in his Autobiography: *He listened to me attentively, and after he had heard my account of the whole matter he told me, without any hesitation: It is God's will that you go quickly to Spain. Have no fear. Courage!*

PERMANENT FORMATION OF THE CLERGY



I insisted that canons, pastors, and other priests make a ten-day retreat each year. I also insisted that they always wear the cassock and imposed a fine of ten duros for noncompliance. Only one failed to comply. I had him appear in lay garb and made him pay the fine. As he was caught in a suspicious house of the women, I withdrew his faculties and placed him in seclusion. After warning a Canon and prebendary who was proved

to be guilty of sin, I reduced a part of his incomes according to the laws of the Council of Trent... (**Aut 553**)

I established clergy conferences to meet three times a week in all towns of the diocese; one of them was on rubrics, the other two on moral theology. I always presided over those in the capital. The first conference each month was a day of retreat, consisting of reading, prayer, and a talk. (**Aut 554**)



FOR PERSONAL REFLECTION

- Are you interested in cultivating your permanent formation?
- Which means do you use to achieve it?
- How could you improve in this area?
- Remember the means of permanent formation promoted by the Congregation and by your Organism and consider whether or not you currently use them.

“The missionary...must be very circumspect and guarded in all his words, actions, and bearing.”
(**Aut 384**)



1854. Claret proposes to the civil authority that the Hospital de Caridad [Charity Hospital] in Santiago be moved to a healthier location.

1856. Claret writes to Fr. **Jeronimo Usera** about the agonizing problem of the schism in Puerto Rico; the letter has not been preserved.

1866. Claret begins his personal Spiritual Exercises in Aranjuez, which continue until the 20th.



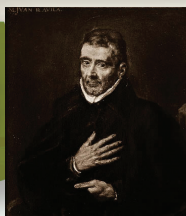
THE CANONIZATION OF THE FATHER FOUNDER

A NEW CENTURY (1949-1967)

Once the beatification of our Father Founder was proclaimed on February 25, 1934, the Congregation immediately focused on continuing the process of his canonization. In fact, on July 6, 1938, Pope Pius XI signed his agreement to resume the cause. Between 1941 and 1948 several processes were held in Cuba, Rome, Cordoba and Barcelona. In February of 1948 the Pope granted a dispensation from the discussion of the validity of these processes, a grace that has rarely been granted. On May 7, 1950, Pope Pius

XII canonized our Father Founder. It was one of the greatest moments in the history of the Congregation. Claretians from all over the world attended the canonization ceremony. The next day a papal audience was held followed by an act of tribute at the Pontifical Gregorian University, where the Spanish poet Jose Maria Peman spoke on *The historic time in which Saint Anthony Mary Claret lived. The previous year the Secretariado Claretiano [Claretian Secretariat] had been created in order to promote knowledge of and devotion to the Holy Founder.*

SAINT JOHN OF AVILA Claret's Role Model (1499-1569)



Almodovar del Campo (Ciudad Real, Spain). Saint Anthony Mary Claret was greatly influenced by his life and his writings centuries later. Claret read his works with delight, citing them directly on many occasions. What most appealed to Father Claret was St. John of Avila's apostolic and missionary zeal, in his own words he expressly stated it *always moved me deeply* (Aut 228). In his *Autobiography* Claret shares an episode that happened to the saint in Granada: *While Father Avila was preaching in Granada, another preacher, the most famous of his day, was also engaged in preaching there. People would leave this preacher's sermons crossing themselves in amazement at the many fine and profitable things that had been so beautifully said. But when they left Master Avila's sermons they all went out with bowed heads, not saying a word to one another, rapt and repentant from the sheer force of the truth, virtue, and excellence of the preacher.* (Aut. 231)

THE REORGANIZATION OF THE SEMINARY



Indertook the restoration of the diocesan seminary. More than 30 years had passed without seeing the ordination of a single resident seminarian. At the beginning of their studies they all said they had a vocation and were educated at the seminary's expense; but toward the end of their studies they would say that they didn't want to be priests, after which they were graduated and became lawyers. And so it came about that Santiago had a swarm of lawyers, all fed and educated at the seminary's expense, while the few priests there were outsiders. (Aut 555)

With God's help this situation was completely changed. I appointed Father Anthony Barjau, a priest whom heaven had endowed with a gift for educating young men and boys, as rector of the seminary. This good churchman by his winning ways put them back on course again, bringing them to practice their religion and apply themselves to their studies. Thus they finally began to show some progress, both in virtue and learning, and many of them have been ordained or soon will be. (Aut 556)



Saint Basil the Great Seminary (Cuba)



FOR PERSONAL REFLECTION

- Do you somehow feel a joint responsibility for the initial formation of our younger brothers and sisters?
- Do you pray for them and offer them witness of a joyful life?
- Could you possibly collaborate a little more in their initial formation?
- Bring to mind those currently being formed and the formators of the Congregation. Think about how you can support them through:
 - Your personal and apostolic prayer.
 - Your testimony.
 - With your presence or a tangible form of assistance.

“Proclaiming the Kingdom
without practising its values of fraternity and solidarity with the poor,
entails a loss of credibility.”
(CPR 87)



1842. Claret baptizes a girl in Pruit (Barcelona). It is possible that he also preaches a mission there during these days.

1849. On his way back from the Canary Islands, Claret stops in Tarragona to meet with Dr. **Anthony Palau**. They most likely discussed publications in the *Libreria Religiosa*.

1857. On a trip from Cuba to the Peninsula, they make a stop on the Portuguese island of Horta, where a cannon explodes and two soldiers die. Claret officiates the funerals.



THE MISSIONARY SISTERS OF THE CLARETIAN INSTITUTION

A NEW CENTURY (1949-1967)

In 1951 Fr. **Luis Pujol** founded in Vic, aided by Mother Maria Dolores Sola Carol, the Missionary Sisters of the Claretian Institute (MIC). It was May 25, 1951. Fr. Pujol, a man of prayer and mission, died in Vic on May 8, 1976, shortly before the 25th anniversary of his favorite work. *The Claretian Institute is a religious-apostolic Institute for evangelisation, in keeping with the experience of the Spirit as lived by its Founder, Fr. Pujol, in the style of Claret. In answer*

to this divine vocation, we adopt the lifestyle of Jesus, which the Blessed Virgin Mary embraced in faith, and we conform ourselves with Christ virgin, poor and obedient in the Church. (Constitutions, no. 5). In 1998 the Archbishop of Barcelona approved the work as an Institute of Religious Life of diocesan rite. From then until 2018 they have run the Spirituality Center in Vic. They also have communities in Cornella (near Barcelona), Paraguay, the Dominican Republic and Brazil.



FRANCISCO CONTRERAS, CMF

Bible Scholar and Poet (1948-2009)



Montillana (Granada, Spain). He entered the Claretian minor seminary in Loja (Granada) in 1960. His time as coadjutor of novices in Loja ended in 1975, and he was then assigned to Rome for specialized studies in Sacred Scripture at the Pontifical Biblical Institute. He finished in 1979 having obtained his degree and was sent to the community of Granada-Teologado where he remained without interruption until his death. In 1994 he was elevated to Professor of Sacred Scripture within the Faculty of Theology in Granada. He was a prolific author of books and articles related to the Word of God, spirituality and religious poetry. He also gave countless formative talks and short courses on topics almost always related to the Word of God. His testimony is one of a missionary life in which he knew how to harmoniously integrate study, piety and the apostolate from the beginning stages of his formation. He was a good and affable man.

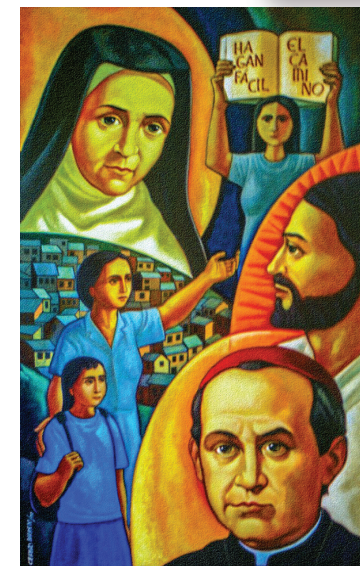
INTEGRAL EDUCATION



I increased the number of parishes and saw to it that pastors taught Christian doctrine and either preached or read to the people every Sunday. (Aut 559)

I established the Confraternity of Christian Doctrine and, from the very outset of my stay in Cuba, insisted that seminarians be sent about to all the churches of the diocese to teach Christian doctrine. Every Sunday we had a children's procession, which used to stop in the courtyard of the church, where two tables had been set up, facing each other. A child would get up on each of these tables and in their clear, high voices ask each other their catechism questions. The first two would be followed by two others, and so on. The people who crowded around just for the novelty of it would also learn some sorely needed Christian doctrine in the process. In all the towns I visited I would go to the schools for boys and those for girls and there speak with the teachers and the students. (Aut 560)

I also established a convent of nuns dedicated to teaching girls, and I bought them a house that cost me about 12,000 duros. (Aut 561)



Cerezo Barredo's 1998 painting of Mother Antonia Maria Paris and the RMI in Venezuela



FOR PERSONAL REFLECTION

- What is your commitment to the formation of future generations?
- Do you participate in the religious education of children and young people?
- If you are able, write an e-mail to the person in charge of Youth Ministry in your Organism, thanking them for their work and encouraging them to continue. Offer to help out in some way.

"We are at risk each time we refuse to enter into the dynamic of greed and power, and choose to be faithful to the Gospel. The suffering of the missionaries cannot be understood in any other way than the logic of the Gospel." (Mathew Vattamattam, *Missionaries to the End*, 13)



1840. Having just arrived from Rome, after visiting his family in Sallent and Olost, Claret presents himself to the ecclesiastical governor of Vic, who assigns him to Viladrau.

1853. Claret addresses the Superior General of the Piarists, very interested in them founding in Cuba, in accordance with the decision of the Royal Decree from the previous year. Due to the slowness of the procedures, they arrived when Claret was no longer in Cuba.

1860. Claret returns to Madrid from Aranjuez with the royal family. He continues working on *La Colegiala Instruida*.



THE FOUNDATION IN AUSTRIA

A NEW CENTURY (1949-1967)

Mother Antonia, of the Missionary Sisters of the Queen of the Apostles, attended the canonization of Father Claret in Rome, where Fr. **Peter Schweiger** expressed to her his desire to have a house in Vienna. Her Congregation had been partially founded by the Archbishop of Vienna and Cardinal Theodor Innitzer, who was seriously ill with pneumonia. The Sisters entrusted his healing to the new Saint, whose image Mother Antonia had brought from Rome. After two days his health had greatly improved.

Summoned by the Cardinal, the first missionaries arrived from Germany to the Russian sector of the Austrian capital in 1951. The goal was to take charge of parish work from the small chapel of Hirschtetten. Months later Fr. Schweiger visited the Cardinal, and in spite of the difficulty of the position offered to him, accepted the almost destroyed castle of Pirquet, which Fr. Beathalter took possession of in August of 1951. There was no church and no appropriate residence. At the beginning, a chapel was set up in the old horse stables.

SAINT LAURA MONTOYA Foundress (1874-1949)



Jerico (Colombia). Better known as Mother Laura. She began as a teacher, then decided to move to Dabeiba at the age of 39, together with six catechists, having been given approval by the bishop of Santa Fe de Antioquia to work with the indigenous Embera Katios. From that moment on, she dedicated the rest of her life to the apostolate and the missions. On May 14, 1914, she founded the *Congregation of Missionary Sisters of Mary Immaculate and St. Catherine of Siena*, popularly called *Lauritas*, with a group of catechists who accompanied her on the missions. From then on, she dedicated herself to establishing centers close to indigenous communities with the missionary sisters. She drafted the Congregation's constitutions and in 1917 she presented them to the bishop. In 1924, Mother Laura found the dependable guidance she needed to carry out her missionary project from Fr. Ezequiel Valera, a Claretian missionary. After that, she remained in constant communication, especially with Cardinal **Larraona**. She was canonized on May 12, 2013.



SOCIAL INCLUSION OF THE POOR



With the Lord's help, I saw to the needs of the poor. Every Monday of the year, as long as I was in Cuba, I gathered together the poor of whatever town I happened to be in and gave each person there a peseta; but since they were often poorer in spirit than in the flesh, I first instructed them personally in Christian doctrine... Many of them did go to confession to me, because they knew I loved them—for the Lord has indeed given me a heartfelt love of the poor. (**Aut 562**)

I bought a ranch for the poor of Puerto Principe. By the time I left Cuba I had spent 25,000 duros of my savings on it. Father Paladio Currius oversaw the construction work on the house I was building there, for the Lord had gifted him with a good head for that sort of work... (**Aut 563**)

My plan in starting this ranch was to gather together poor boys and girls, many of whom were wandering the streets begging. At the ranch they were fed, clothed, and taught their religion, as well as reading, writing, and whatever art or trade they wanted to learn... (**Aut 564**)



FOR PERSONAL REFLECTION

- What role do the poor have in your life?
- Do you have any kind of contact with the poor, immigrants, exiles, undocumented, persecuted, etc.?
- How committed are you to helping those currently excluded in some way to achieve social inclusion?
- Can you write the names of some poor people you know personally? If not, why is that?

"Today, our challenge is not so much atheism as the need to respond adequately to many people's thirst for God, lest they try to satisfy it with alienating solutions or with a disembodied Jesus who demands nothing of us with regard to others."
(Francis, *Evangelii gaudium*, 89)



1840. Claret arrives in Viladrau, where he serves as regent for only eight months. From there he goes out to preach his first missions.

1853. Claret praises the Constitutions of the Sisters Adorers that Mother **Micaela of the Blessed Sacrament** has sent to him in Cuba, and confesses that he would like to help her financially, but that now his obligations are in Cuba, where there are many poor people.

1868. Claret attends the ill-fated wedding of Princess **Isabella**.

IN COSTA RICA

A NEW CENTURY (1949-1967)

For a long time, a Claretian foundation had been desired in Costa Rica, which would serve as *medicine and relief* for the Missionaries of Darien and, at the same time, as a territory to recruit future missionaries. After difficult dialogues with the Archbishop of San Jose, in October of 1951, Fr. Antonio Roman, as Superior of the community, and Fr. **Jesus Serrano**, future Apostolic Vicar of Darien, arrived from the United States to establish the foundation in *Barrio Mercedes* of the city of Heredia, 11 kilometers from the capital. Subsequently, the Visitorship of Panama, already independent from the

United States, did not skimp on sending Missionaries for Costa Rica, in addition to the new and young priests sent by the Superior General, Fr. **Schweiger**. Fr. Mario Echeverria, a senior and prestigious writer from Madrid, went to take charge of a newly built chapel and a rural house project. The missionaries were going to devote themselves mainly to preaching. In 1953 their presence, which was already under the responsibility of Central America, was extended to the capital, San Jose, where they took over an old Retreat House, which Fr. Jesus Serrano restored.



JOSE MARIA TORRES, CMF
Missionary and Doctor (1910-1982)



Miralcamp (Lleida, Spain). He professed as a Brother Coadjutor in Vic in 1927. He was assigned to Rome to study medicine. He arrived at the mission of Tunki, province of Antwei, China, in 1935. In light of the great need for medical assistance in that area, he opened a medical clinic. In 1946 a recognition from the Chinese government thanked them for their merits and extraordinary work in favor of victims and refugees. They were profoundly grateful for the two and a half million patients who, according to the records, passed through their clinics. During the communist revolution, Dr. Torres suffered through more than fourteen public trials. Finally, on November 1, 1952, he was expelled from China. He offered to work on the island of Basilan in the Philippines. With a special permission from the President of the country, he began his medical work again and built a clinic and a small hospital where he was laid to rest in 1982: Dr. Jose Maria Torres Hospital. He was a Doctor by popular acclaim.

SOCIAL PROMOTION OF THE POOR

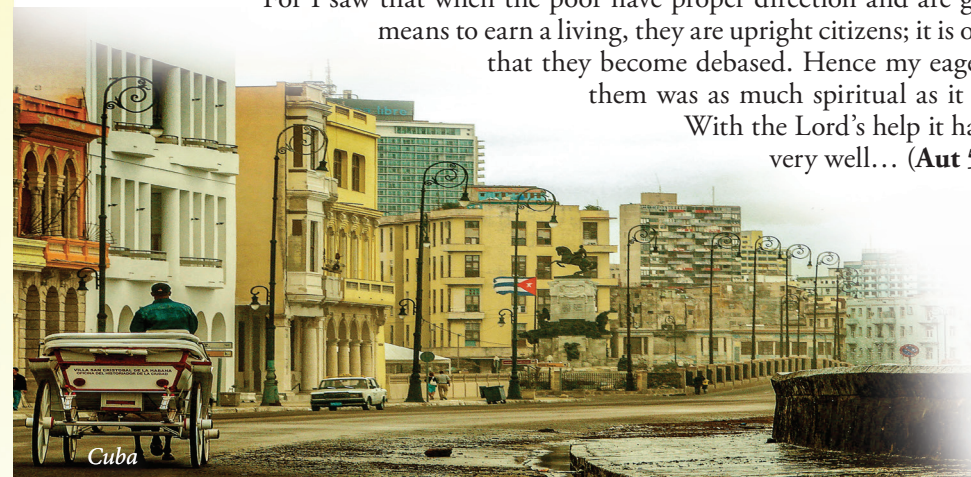


While the ranch was still being built, I wrote a little work called *The Delights of the Country*, which contained a sketch in embryo of the foundation I had started. This little book has been very helpful in Cuba, and ranch owners give copies of it to their foremen and tell them to follow it. The Generals of Havana and Santiago, whose duty it is to provide for the welfare of the country, were among the work's chief backers. General Vargas, who was then in Santiago but now is stationed in Puerto Rico, has had this book reprinted there for Puerto Rico and Santo Domingo. (**Aut 568**)

I also set up a licensed credit union in the diocese, for the use and benefit of the poor.

For I saw that when the poor have proper direction and are given a decent means to earn a living, they are upright citizens; it is only otherwise that they become debased. Hence my eagerness to help them was as much spiritual as it was material.

With the Lord's help it has worked out very well... (**Aut 569**)



FOR PERSONAL REFLECTION

Claret wrote two works dedicated to agriculture ("*Delicias del campo*" and "*Reflexiones sobre agricultura*") and with his financial help promoted the founding of a Credit Union in his parishes.

- Do you know if garbage is recycled in your community?
- Do you have any green space at home or a nearby place? How is it used?
- Are you careful with the use of water, clothes and food?
- Do you usually use public transportation to get around?

"There is always an attempt to move away from the Cross, that is, to perpetuate man's misrecognition of his violence and protect his pride from the revelation. Without the Cross, there is no revelation of the fundamental injustice of the scapegoat mechanism, which is the founder of human culture, with all its repercussions in our relationships with each other." (*Rene Girard*)



1858. Claret wishes Fr. **John N. Lobo**, his former Vicar General in Santiago, a happy birthday. He tells him that the first volume of *Sermones de Mision* [Missionary Sermons] has come out.

1859. Claret gives Fr. **Vicente de la Fuente** instructions on how to print the guidelines for the Academy of St. Michael.

1859. Around this time Claret gives Spiritual Exercises in Aranjuez to orphan girls of military personnel.



IN JAPAN

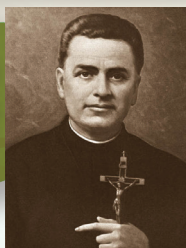
A NEW CENTURY (1949-1967)

Fr. **Peter Schweiger** proposed to the General Council the idea of founding a mission in Japan on the occasion of the 100th anniversary of the Foundation of the Congregation (1949) and the canonization of Father Claret (1950). Invited by Msgr. Pablo Taguchi, Bishop of Osaka, on September 9, 1951, the first missionaries arrived in Japan, including two who had been expelled from China. It was founded in Imaichi, and the first Local Government took office in the Seminary on November 1, 1951. They were staying at the Seminary for the time being, and in December

they were able to obtain their own house near Imaichi, in a suburb called Osaka. By the time the Missionaries were able to attend to it as their own parish, once they could manage the language, the Bishop separated it from the parish of Sekimech, with 200,000 inhabitants and 250 Catholics, although the other towns that it was responsible for attending surpassed 800,000 inhabitants with some 700 Catholics. The inauguration of the house took place on January 2, 1952. Soon they desired to build a school as well. By 1954, we had three houses there and the Visitorship of Japan was formed.



VENERABLE MARIANO AVELLANA, CMF Holy Missionary (1844-1904)



Amudevar (Huesca, Spain). In 1870 he entered the novitiate in Prades as a diocesan priest. He professed as a Claretian Missionary in the hands of Fr. **Xifre** in 1871. After two years in Thuir, Fr. Mariano was assigned to Chile, where he arrived in 1873; there he would work tirelessly for 31 years and become an exceptional witness of the first development of the Congregation outside of Spain. He was part of the communities of Santiago, La Serena, Valparaiso, Curico and Coquimbo. Fr. Avellana's apostolic activity in Chile was amazing; he preached some 540 popular missions. He joined ministry to the marginalized to the apostolate of the word. During the process of his beatification a witness affirmed that *hospitals and prisons were the main object of his priestly and missionary activities*. When he died on May 14, 1904, the Chilean people had already canonized him. They called him *Saint Father Mariano*. John Paul II officially recognized the heroism of his virtues and granted him the title of Venerable on October 23, 1987.

WORKS OF MERCY



I also visited prisoners in jail, catechizing them and preaching to them frequently. After my visits I would give each of them a peseta, and so they were happy to listen attentively to what I had to say. (**Aut 570**)

I was equally regular in visiting poor patients in the hospital and also gave them some help, especially those who were leaving as convalescents. I was president of the League of Friends of the Country. We met at my residence, and all of us took an active interest in any developments on the island. We procured a workshop for poor boys, and we saw to it that prisoners in jail were taught reading, writing, religion, and a trade of some sort. With this in mind we had workshops set up in jail; for experience had shown us that many men turn to crime because they have no trade and don't know how to make an honest living. (**Aut 571**)



The Royal Prison of La Habana (Cuba)



FOR PERSONAL REFLECTION

During Claret's visits to hospitals he consoled the sick. When he visited prisoners, he tried to fulfill the adage that says: "It is better to teach someone how to fish than to give them a fish."

- Call to mind some sick people you visit or know.
- Hold a meeting with someone committed to prison or health care ministry. Listen to them carefully.
- Accompany them one day to the centers they frequent.

"The cave you're afraid to enter contains the treasure you're looking for."
(Joseph Campbell)



1838. Since Claret is the administrator of his town, the Office of the Bishop and the government of Barcelona write to Claret begging him to work for peace and harmony. He tells the local government about his satisfaction and his willingness to work in that direction.

1842. Around this time Claret is assigned to San Juan de Olo as a substitute parish priest. The military conflict prevents further public preaching and in that parish there is an emergency situation to be resolved.

1846. In Lleida, Claret preaches in the seminary and in several convents.



THE VICE-PROVINCE OF CENTROAMERICA IS BORN

A NEW CENTURY (1949-1967)

The Panamanian houses were part of the Province of Colombia until the end of 1927. Due to the rapid spread of the English language in that area, they considered making it dependent on the Province of the United States. This was maintained until February 11, 1952 when the General Government declared Panama an Independent Visitorship. Later, on

November 9, 1953, the same Government determined that this Visitorship would be called the Centroamerica Visitorship, which would also include Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua, Costa Rica and El Salvador. At that time there were only two communities formed, both in Panama: Cristo Rey and the Cathedral of Colon. The others, in Costa Rica and El Salvador, were residences.



MARTIN JOVE, CMF Popular Missionary (1870-1947)



Vallbona de les Monges (Lleida, Spain). He professed in Barbastro in 1888 in the hands of Fr. **Joseph Xifre**. His carried out his ministerial career in Spain until 1913 when he was assigned to Colombia. It is known that during the years he resided in Bogota there was not a Cundinamarca population, where his voice would not have resonated. In the chronicle of Medellin it reads: *One of Fr. Jove's most praiseworthy virtues is his diligence to the confessional, hearing the confessions of the faithful, and his readiness to assist the sick.* He was also an enthusiastic apostle of the press. One of his most successful and popular books was *Ejercicio del Cristiano [The Exercise of the Christian]* with thirteen editions, 245,500 copies all together. Fr. Jove's life was very focused on God. He was frequently heard saying in his talks and in his conversations: *I do not aspire to anything other than doing the will of God. We are in the world only to do God's will.*

THE ATTACK OF HOLGUIN



On February 10, 1856, after arriving in Holguin, I opened the pastoral visitation. Because it was the eve of the Purification of the Blessed Virgin Mary, I preached to the people on this adorable mystery... (Aut 574)

I came down from the pulpit filled with the greatest fervor, and at the end of the service we left the church... A man stepped forward, as if to kiss my ring, when suddenly his arm flew back and he brought the razor he was holding down upon me with all his might. I had my head down and was touching a handkerchief to my mouth with my right hand, and so, instead of slitting my throat as he had intended, he slashed my face across the left cheek, from the ear to the chin. The razor also caught and wounded my right arm in passing because I was holding it up to my mouth, as I said. (Aut 575)

The razor had cut clean through the flesh and sliced into the bone of the upper and lower jaw. Blood was gushing both outside and inside my mouth... (Aut 576)



St. Isidore Cathedral (Holguin)



FOR PERSONAL REFLECTION

- Have you experienced any aggression because of your faith?
- What are the hardest setbacks you have suffered for preaching the Word of God?
- In the context of hostility and opposition, what do you feel the Lord is giving you? And what is he asking of you?

“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...”
(Aut 387)



1853. Claret blesses the chapel at the house of Mother **Paris** and her companions in Santiago, Cuba.

1862. Claret senses a divine message that confirms the grace granted by the conservation of the Eucharistic species.

1865. With the royal Court, Claret moves from Madrid to the royal site in Aranjuez.



EXPELLED FROM CHINA

A NEW CENTURY (1949-1967)

On April 27, 1949, Fr. **Salvador Alfageme**, almost blind, was expelled from China along with six young priests, Fr. M. Gonzalez, Fr. G. Sarasqueta, Fr. Marchio, Fr. Aguirre, Fr. Jarussi, Fr. Vela, Br. Caballero, a Chinese aspirant from Tunki and three Claretian Sisters. On June 7th they arrived in Shanghai after countless adventures. Meanwhile, the fleeing nationalists subjected the Tunki population to a martyrdom of blood and fire, and the Claretians who remained in Tunki were subjected to seclusion, and little by little their possessions were

seized. On October 9th, Fr. Alfageme and the others were finally able to leave Shanghai and head toward Hong Kong, all except the Chinese aspirant who was not allowed to leave. Fr. Alfageme would soon leave for Rome and Spain, and Br. Caballero soon after. In 1952, the last missionaries were expelled from China by the communist regime. Many memories remained there, as well as the bodies of two young missionaries who died shortly after arriving. The expelled members served to strengthen a portion of the missions in the Philippines and Japan.



TOMAS DE MANZARRAGA, CMF

Missionary and Musician (1908-1988)



gorre (Biscay, Spain). He maintained a great friendship with the Iruarrizaga brothers, who were from the same town. In 1934 he was appointed by his superiors to study music at the Catholic University of Paris where he earned a doctorate in Gregorian chant and a certificate in choral conducting. During his stay in Paris, which lasted until 1947, he was the organist of the Spanish Mission. In 1950 he arrived at the Buen Suceso house in Madrid as an organ teacher and director of the magazine *Tesoro Sacro Musical*. He renovated and expanded the School of Sacred Music founded by Fr. **Luis Iruarrizaga**, where he implemented the Ward Method in 1958 and the Musical Rhythm methodology in 1967. But, above all, he dedicated himself to training teachers of Gregorian chant and sacred music. From 1983 to 1988 he was the Chapel Maestro at the Cathedral of Granada. Later he was assigned to Pamplona where he passed away. He left behind many musical works and treatises on musical pedagogy.

JOY AMID THE TORMENTS



After this first-aid treatment, I was carried to my lodgings on a stretcher. I can't describe the pleasure, delight, and joy I felt in my soul on realizing that I had reached the long desired goal of shedding my blood for the love of Jesus and Mary and of sealing the truths of the Gospel with the very blood of my veins. My spirits soared at the thought that this was but a promise of what I might achieve in time-to shed my blood completely, in the ultimate sacrifice of death. These wounds reminded me of the circumcision of Jesus; in time they might lead me to the incomparable good fortune of dying on the cross of some gallows, of some assassin's dagger, or the like. (Aut 577)

This joy and delight lasted throughout the time I had to stay in bed and was itself a source of joy to all who came to visit me. It gradually left me as my wounds began to heal. (Aut 578)



Pillow used to support Claret's face after the attack against him in Holguin. (Claretian Museum - Vic)



FOR PERSONAL REFLECTION

- How do you normally react to setbacks and "torments"? (cf. CC 9)? How should you react?
- Have you ever experienced the joy of suffering for announcing the Gospel? How did you react? With fear, with resentment toward your adversaries, by fleeing, praying, or seeking help?
- Do you accept these difficulties as an opportunity to identify with Christ crucified?

"Our apostolic activity must always spring from a real conformity with Christ the Evangelizer and from a close communion and friendship with him, that will prevent it from becoming mere activism." (SW 6)



1851. Claret begins his pastoral visits to the cathedral and other parishes in Santiago, Cuba.

1854. Claret asks the Captain General of the Island to urge the Government of Madrid to dispatch the document for the formal establishment of the school of Mother **Paris** and her companions in Santiago.

1867. Claret travels from Madrid to the monastery of Guadalupe (Caceres). He arrives in Castilblanco (Badajoz), where he preaches for two days.



THE INAUGURATION OF THE VOTIVE TEMPLE IN ROME

A NEW CENTURY (1949-1967)

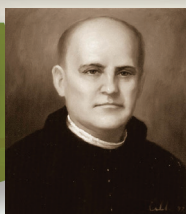
On December 8, 1952, on the solemnity of the Immaculate Conception, the Pontifical Votive Temple of the Immaculate Heart of Mary was inaugurated in Rome. The blessing ceremony had taken place the previous day with Cardinal Clemente Micara, the Pope's Vicar, presiding. The Solemn Pontifical Mass was celebrated at 10.30. Archbishop Carlo Confalonieri presided, who was the Secretary of the Holy See for Seminaries at the time. The Polyphonic Choir performed the *Mass in honor*

of St. Edward, King and Martyr, composed in 1933 by Licinio Refice. In the afternoon, the Triduum began with a Eucharistic blessing given by Cardinal Luigi Masella. All the opening ceremonies were finished by December 10 with the final blessing given by Vicar Emeritus Luigi Traglia. They were days of great and unforgettable happiness for all who participated. It is a legacy that we still enjoy today. The Superiors had refused to finish the construction of the sacristy and the dome, also designed by the famous architect Armando Brasini.



VENERABLE JERONIMO USERA

Cistercian and Founder (1810-1891)



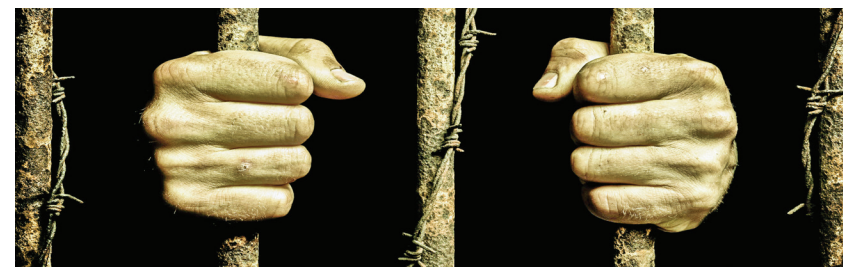
Madrid (Spain). He took the Cistercian habit in Osera (Orense). He was a professor of Greek at the Central University of Madrid. Missionary and Military Vicar General in the Gulf of Guinea. He was canon in Santiago, Cuba since 1848, rector of the seminary, ecclesiastical governor and vicar. In 1851 he set off toward the Peninsula, commissioned by Father Claret to handle the issues of liturgy and the clergy in Madrid. In 1853 he was appointed dean of Puerto Rico and ecclesiastical governor. In 1864 he founded the Congregation *Hermanas del Amor de Dios* [Sisters of the Love of God] in Toro (Zamora). He returned to Cuba as dean of Havana. On June 1, 1864, he wrote to Queen **Isabella II**: *My actions in Cuba gained the approval of the very respectable Archbishop Anthony Mary Claret. He gave me the honor, through his powers, of taking possession of the metropolitan chair there, and conferred upon me the appointment of Rector of the Seminary of Santiago, Cuba.* He died with a reputation for holiness in Havana.

MERCIFUL LIKE OUR HEAVENLY FATHER



The would-be assassin was caught in the act and sent to jail. He was tried and sentenced to death by the judge, notwithstanding the deposition I had made, stating that I forgave him as a Christian, a priest, and an archbishop. When this was brought to the attention of the Captain General of Havana, Don Jose de la Concha, he made a trip expressly to see me on this matter. I begged him to grant the man a pardon and remove him from the island because I feared that the people would try to lynch him for his attack on me... (**Aut 583**)

I offered to pay the expenses of my assailant's deportation to his birthplace, the island of Tenerife in the Canaries. His name was Antonio Perez, the very man whom a year earlier, unknown to me, I had caused to be freed from prison. His parents had appealed to me on his behalf, and, solely on the strength of their request, I had petitioned the authorities for their son's release. They complied with my request and freed him, and the very next year he did me the favor of wounding me. I say "favor" because I regard it as a great favor from heaven, which has brought me the greatest joy... (**Aut 584**)



FOR PERSONAL REFLECTION

- Do you forgive people who cause you suffering?
- What is hardest for you to forgive?
- What does it mean to forgive as God forgives us?
- Calmly reflect on the following questions: I can forgive if ...
 - Forgiving is not ...
 - Once I forgave a great offense I felt ...
 - I need to forgive this person ...

"A beatification is always a celebration of faith and of pardon, not of judgement or revenge. Therefore, it always has meaning. It is not a settling of accounts with the past, but is rather forward-looking. We are only able to live together when we learn to respect and pardon each other."
(Mathew Vattamattam, *Missionaries to the End*, 17)



1849. Claret arrives in Barcelona from the Canary Islands. He deals with problems at the *Libreria Religiosa*.

1857. Claret arrives in Cadiz from Cuba, disembarks and hands Bishop **Arboli** *Apuntes de un plan para restaurar la hermosura de la Iglesia* [Notes about a Plan to Restore the Beauty of the Church].

1859. Claret writes to Bishop **Joseph Caixal** about his next trip to Barcelona, where he wishes to meet up with him *to discuss things for the greater glory of God, the good of the Church...* Unfortunately, they will not get to see each other.



THE NEW GENERAL CURIA IN ROME

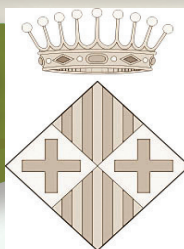
A NEW CENTURY (1949-1967)

Three months after the inauguration of the Minor Basilica of the Immaculate Heart of Mary in Parioli (December 8, 1952), on March 19, 1953, Fr. **Peter Schweiger** inaugurated the new General Curia, with the presence of important dignitaries. Until then, the General Curia was in Via Giulia 131. During the General Chapter in Castel Gandolfo (1949) the decision had been made to equip the Congregation with a modern house for the Curia, on the same property where the church was

being built. Dr. Alessandro Villa was chosen as architect. But first, *Villino Claret* was demolished, previously the Curia of the Provincial Government of Italy. On March 19, 1952, the Superior General celebrated the first Mass at 6:00am, and at 10:00am the solemn Mass was celebrated by Fr. Eduardo Fabregat. The latter was a member of the General Government and the Superior of the first Local Government. The parish priest of the church was Fr. Agostino Gregori, the first Italian parish priest.



JUAN JOSE CASTAÑER RIBAS
Bishop of Vic (1806-1865)



San Pedro de Torrello (Barcelona, Spain). He had a degree in Theology from the University of Cervera. He was a Professor at the seminary in Vic and a parish priest in several towns. He was consecrated bishop of Vic in 1858. He was very simple and a friend of evangelization through the missions. He was fervently devoted to the Pope. He established very wise rules for parochial service. The Marquis of Arco shares that one day while he was eating with him and Father Claret, he became very distressed by the inherent bitterness involved in his position and by the demands of the government of Madrid, and he went on to tell Claret about the serious conflicts he found himself in there, and he concluded that the miter sometimes caused him great tribulation. *Does the same thing not happen to you? - No, sir, Claret replied; I am always calm: at difficult and arduous times I turn to prayer, I take counsel and I act as prudence dictates; and then, I'm as calm as before.* He died in Vic.

RECOGNIZING THE VIRTUES OF HIS COMPANIONS



These were the helpers who accompanied me in my apostolic labors amid the thorns and thistles of my diocese. I owe God endless thanks for providing me such good companions. The conduct of all of them was above reproach. They never caused me a moment's pain; on the contrary, they were all a great comfort to me. All had good dispositions and solid virtue, and they were so detached from worldly cares that they never once spoke or thought of self-interest or honors. Their only concern was for God's greater glory and the conversion of souls. (**Aut 606**)

I had something to learn from all of them because they gave me such a good example in all virtues, especially humility, obedience, fervor, and a constant readiness to work. They gladly set themselves to do whatever I asked, whether it was my commonest request—

to go on missions—or something like taking charge of a parish or deanery. It was all the same to them, no matter what I asked them. They never asked for or refused anything or any task whatever. (**Aut 607**)



FOR PERSONAL REFLECTION

- How do you speak about your community brothers and your collaborators in the apostolate?
- Do you know how to recognize their virtues and abilities?
- How do you see their possible limitations?
- Call to mind two or three people you collaborate with in your apostolate. Recognize their qualities and talents. Show your appreciation for them. Thank them personally.
- Ask the Lord for patience and charity to deal with the limitations and deficiencies that you see in them. If you have an opportunity, defend them before others.

“All of the faithful, graced with gifts and charisms of the Spirit, participate in diverse forms in the mission of Christ, which is also the mission of the Church: to announce the Gospel, to worship God and to transform humanity according to God's plan toward the true image of man, which is Christ.” (CVD 20)



1849. Claret helps the Military General Vicar Dr. Pigem by hearing the confessions of the inmates in the Barcelona prisons.

1851. Claret officially begins his pastoral visit in Santiago, Cuba.

1861. In Aranjuez, on behalf of the nuncio, Claret speaks with the Queen and she appoints the bishops of Tortosa, Calahorra and Osma.



THE VISITORSHIP OF THE PHILIPPINES BECOMES INDEPENDENT

A NEW CENTURY (1949-1967)

The Santa Barbara (Pangasinan) House was suppressed. The General Government communicated the suppression through Fr. **Ireneo Diez**'s letter on October 16, 1954 and it took place on January 16, 1955. After the suppression, the General Government urged the Government of the Visitorship to found an Office of the Procure in Manila, specifically on Taft Avenue, on August 1, 1955 with the permission of the Cardinal. Fr. Mariano Gonzalez, together with Fr. **Jose Maria Querexeta** and Fr. Miguel Mialet, established the

residence on Taft Avenue. This was declared an Independent Residence on December 2, 1955. The first Government of the Visitorship of the Philippines was elected by the General Government: Visitor, Fr. Francisco Ciruana, First Consultor Fr. Arcadio Hortelano and Second Consultor Fr. Jose Mallorqui. This Government lasted three years, at the end of which they were all re-elected for another three years by the General Council on November 19, 1956. In 1959, Fr. Agustin Rebollar was elected as new Visitor.

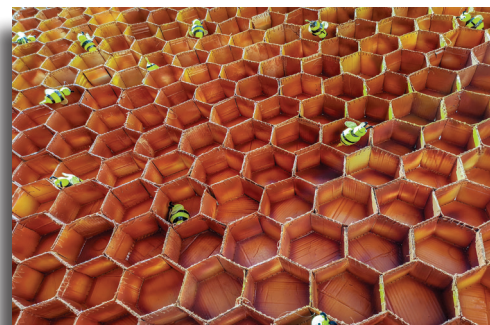


FRANCISCO GUTIERREZ, CMF Apostolic Prefect (1872-1941)



Calahorra (La Rioja, Spain). He was the Superior of the Claretian Seminary of Barbastro and Consultor of the Province of Catalunya. Fr. **Juan Gil**, first Apostolic Prefect of Choco, died prematurely so in 1912 Fr. **Alsina** suggested Fr. Francisco Gutierrez, who seldom left the Choco, to take his place. As Apostolic Prefect he was, above all, an affectionate father to his Missionaries. He seemed to be a simple Missionary, more than an Apostolic Prefect. He was a great preacher. He promoted the Mission schools. Through his initiative the Hojita Parroquial [Parish Page] was published, which later turned into an actual magazine called *La Aurora* [The Dawn]. He wrote the book *Relacion de algunas excursiones apostolicas en la Mision del Choco* [Tales of some Apostolic Excursions in the Mission of Choco] published in 1924. He was very fond of Choco, but not so much of his position. In 1930 he received word that his resignation of the Prefecture had been accepted. When he left Choco, he made his home at Jesus Nazareno in Medellin. In 1940 he celebrated the 50th Anniversary of his religious profession there where he later died.

THE COMMUNITY LIKE A BEEHIVE



from Santo Domingo was forced to resign his post because of a revolution. He came to Cuba and stayed at my residence, where he was a guest at my table for three years... They couldn't help noticing that our house was like a beehive, with every one coming and going at my request, and all of them quite content and happy... (**Aut 608**)

Thus our residence was the admiration of all outsiders who came to visit with us. I mention this because I had given orders that any outside priests who came to town were to be guests in my residence, whether I was there or not, for as long as they cared to stay. Fr. Gaspar Hernandez, a canon

I often wondered how it was possible for so much peace, joy, and harmony to reign for so long a time among such a large group. I always ended up saying the same thing, *Digitus Dei est hic* (*This is the finger of God*). This is a singular grace God has given us in his infinite mercy and kindness. I knew that God was blessing the efforts we were putting forth when He gave us such a special grace. (**Aut 609**)

FOR PERSONAL REFLECTION

Claret sees *the finger of God* in the fraternal and apostolic life he had with his collaborators at the palace.

- How does your community live fraternal love and show hospitality to guests?
- What contribution can you make to help your community become a fraternal and apostolic "beehive"?



"If [the preacher] does not take time to hear God's word with an open heart, if he does not allow it to touch his life, to challenge him, to impel him, and if he does not devote time to pray with that word, then he will indeed be a false prophet, a fraud, a shallow impostor."

(Francis, *Evangelii gaudium*, 151)



1850. Now that his episcopal consecration is eminent, Claret asks the Pope permission to delegate faculties that do not require episcopal character.

1857. Upon his return from Cuba, Claret stops in Seville, where he preaches to the people at the cathedral.

1866. Claret advises Fr. **Joseph Xifre** that a missionary is going to preach a mission in Oran (Algeria), and, incidentally, suggests that a house be founded there, which could be a useful refuge in the event of a revolution.

IN CANADA

On January 14, 1953, the first Claretians arrived in Canada from Paris and the USA. They were Fr. Jean-Marie Lemrise and Fr. Enrique Pujolras. The foundation was dependent on the Province of the United States. Its initial location was the Rectory in Victoriaville in the Diocese of Nicolet. Soon a search began to find a definitive place to found while collaborating in ministries in the area. This search paid off and a property was found near Victoriaville, which was, to make a long story short, a place of welcome for

numerous vocations that emerged just a few months after the missionaries' arrival. It was soon apparent that such high hopes were not in vain. The diocesan priests cooperated with vocations as if they were their own. And the civil authorities granted full legal acceptance of the Congregation with full rights, as *Claretian Fathers of Quebec*. Faced with so many requests from children, they had to begin construction on a school immediately. With room for one hundred Postulants, at its inauguration fifty were already admitted to begin the school year.

JERONIMO BATLLO, CMF

General Procure (1836-1913)



Barcelona (Spain). As a child he met Father Claret while he was preaching a mission in San Feliu de Guixols, where he was an altar server. From a very poor family, the Bishop of Girona allowed him to begin seminary studies.

During his visits with the Bishop, he again met Father Claret who accompanied Queen **Isabella II** on her visit to Catalonia. On this occasion Father Claret gave him the first volume of *El Colegio Instruido*. He was ordained in 1863 in Girona. In 1883 he entered the Claretian novitiate in Gracia and the following year he made his profession. Two weeks later he was assigned to Rome with Fr. **Antonio Naval** as Superior of the community, General Procure, and Director of the *Spanish Seminary*, commissioned by Bishop **Vicente Calvo Valero**. He held the position of Procure for 28 years, until 1912. He died in Rome on May 20th. He was the first member of the Congregation to die in Italy. He was known for his innocence and candor, kindness and sincerity.

THE DISAPPOINTMENT OF BEING IN THE ROYAL COURT



Queen Isabella II of Spain with her daughter Isabella by Franz Xavier Winterhalter, 1852

At the beginning of June, 1857, we arrived in Madrid, where I was presented to Her Majesty, the Queen. On the fifth of that month the royal decree of my appointment as the queen's confessor was approved and published. A few days later the queen told me that one of my duties would be to attend to the religious instruction of the Infanta Isabel... (**Aut 614**)

I have sometimes remarked that God sent me to this job as a kind of purgatory where I am supposed to pay for the sins of my past...I am always sighing to get away from it all. I'm like a caged bird that keeps looking through the bars of its cage for a way to escape, and I keep dreaming up ways to get out. (**Aut 621**)

I sometimes ask myself, "What cause have you to be so upset? Everyone in the palace respects you; the whole royal family appreciates you and values your presence; Her Majesty the Queen loves you and dotes on you. Well, then, what makes you have such violent feelings on the subject?" In truth, I have none. I can't come up with any good reason for it. My only answer to the enigma is that the repugnance I feel is a grace God has sent me to prevent me from becoming attached to the prestige, honors, and riches of this world... (**Aut 622**)

FOR PERSONAL REFLECTION

- Have you ever received an assignment that you did not like, but that has helped you to grow as a missionary?
- Do you accept the assignment in which you are now engaged?
- Do you relate to all the members of your community or are some marginalized? Why?

"What Jesus invites us to imitate is his own desire, the spirit that directs him toward the goal on which his intention is fixed: to resemble God the Father as much as possible."
(Rene Girard)



1850. Claret goes to Barcelona to give Spiritual Exercises for the clergy, until the 29th.

1858. Claret is visiting state departments to obtain quick civil approval of the missionaries' *Constitutions*. He gives Fr. **Joseph Xifre** some instructions on how to expedite the negotiations.

1858. At the request of St. **Francis Coll**, Claret works on behalf of the Dominican Sisters of the Annunciation of the Blessed Virgin, so that the ministry will authorize them to teach without meeting all the requirements asked of teachers.



THE DIVISION OF THE UNITED STATES

A NEW CENTURY (1949-1967)

On August 22, 1953, the same day of the inauguration of Villa Claret in Victoriaville (Canada), the United States Province was divided into two Organisms: East and West, thus beginning a new era. Canada became part of the USA-East Province until 1965, when Canada became a Vice-Province. The USA-East Province also had six other communities located in the cities of Chicago, Momence, Terre

Haute, Parth Amboy and Washington. In 1963 they began publishing the magazine *U.S. Catholic* out of Chicago, replacing the old *Voice of St. Jude*. The new magazine has received countless awards over the years. The USA-West Province, served in 18 communities located in the cities of Los Angeles, Compton, San Gabriel, Calwa, Yuma, Prescott, Phoenix, El Paso, San Antonio, San Marcos and Fort Worth.



TOMAS IGLESIAS BARCONES

Bishop of Madrid (1803-1874)



Villafranca del Bierzo (Leon, Spain). He was consecrated Bishop of Mondoñedo in 1850 and appointed Patriarch of the West Indies, Major Pro-Chaplain of the Palace and Military Vicar General in 1852. He died on May 8, 1874. He was one of three bishops who resided in Madrid during Father Claret's time, besides the Nuncio. They encountered each other frequently at the bishops' consecrations that took place in Madrid. An abundance of correspondence took place between them, especially when the position of rector and administrator of the church of Montserrat in Madrid changed hands from Fr. Vicente Valls to Fr. **Paladio Currius**. They also met frequently at the General Meetings of members of the *Conferences of St. Vincent de Paul*, to which they both belonged. He visited the Monastery of El Escorial, in the absence of Father Claret, and was very pleasantly surprised. He can be seen in the renowned painting by **Benjumea** in honor of the Queen's visit.

FULFILLING GOD'S WILL



I can see that what the Lord is doing in me is like what I observe going on in the motion of the planets; they are pulled by two forces, one centrifugal and the other centripetal. Centrifugal force pulls them to escape their orbits; centripetal force draws them toward their center. The balance of these two forces holds them in their orbits. That's just how I see myself. I feel one force within me, which I'll call centrifugal, telling me to get out of Madrid and the court; but I also feel a counterforce, the will of God, telling me to stay in court for the time being, until I am free to leave. This will of God is the centripetal force that keeps me chained here like a dog on his leash. The mixture of these two forces, namely, the desire to leave and my love for doing God's will, keeps me running around in my circle. (**Aut 623**)

Every day at prayer I have to make acts of resignation to God's will. Day and night I have to offer up the sacrifice of staying in Madrid, but I thank God for the repugnance I feel. I know that it is a great favor. How awful it would be if the court or the world pleased me! The only thing that pleases me is that nothing pleases me... (**Aut 624**)



Almudena Cathedral (Madrid)



FOR PERSONAL REFLECTION

- Are you aware of the true motives that move your heart?
- What criteria do you use to discern God's will?

For Claret, God's will was not a cage that prevented his freedom but rather his nourishment, as it was for Jesus. Explain this statement.

- Repeat several times in your heart throughout this day: "Fiat".

"When you want something, the whole universe conspires to help you get it."
(*Paulo Coelho*)



1850. In Barcelona, Claret attends to textile manufacturer Nicolau Tous i Carrera on his deathbed, whose son, Nicolau Tous i Soler, was one of the first to apply steam machines to the textile world in Spain.

1859. Claret boards the steamship *Alicante* at the port of Alicante on the regular line to Barcelona, where he will arrive the next day.

1867. After visiting the Shrine of Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe (Caceres), Claret arrives in Castañar de Ibor (Caceres), where he preaches and spends the night.



THE UNIVERSAL IMPULSE OF THE CONGREGATION

A NEW CENTURY (1949-1967)

The interest for vocations and for the growth in numbers of the Congregation throughout the world was one of the main concerns of the Superior General, Fr. **Peter Schweiger**, who in 1955 wrote a Circular Letter in which he observed the insufficient growth of the Congregation and the desire for its universalization: *De vocationibus cooptandis, seligendis, colendis et de dono propriae vocationis estimando*. He shared the vocational situation by referring to the recently published Catalog of the Congregation

and suggested the means to promote vocations: spiritual life and apostolic generosity. These two things would obtain the blessing of the Lord in the form of new vocations and become a source of vocational attraction. He insisted on selection, welcome and promotion of and a high regard for vocations. And, finally, he insisted on promoting care for vocational fidelity through prayer for one's own perseverance and that of their brothers and the fostering of a positive atmosphere of spirituality and family that strengthened each one's vocation.



SAINT JOAQUINA VEDRUNA Founder (1783-1854)



Barcelona, (Spain). Her father, Lorenzo de Vedruna, was a wealthy member of the Catalan nobility and a high government official. Her family was very Catholic. She married Theodore de Mas, from an aristocratic family of Vic, at age 16. She had nine children and many grandchildren. At the age of 47, she founded the Community of the *Carmelite Sisters of Charity*. When she died at age 71, she had already founded convents, schools and hospitals in several areas of Spain. She died on August 28, 1854. She was canonized in 1959 by Pope John XXIII. Her feast day is celebrated on May 22nd. Claret met her as a student in Vic. The foundress asked him to evaluate the Rules of the new Institute. He also worked on the definitive approval of their Constitutions and was director of the Institute until he was replaced by Fr. **Stephen Sala**. Three Carmelite Sisters lived with Claret at his residence in Madrid. His sister Maria and three nieces entered the Congregation founded by Saint Joaquina.



Claretian Museum in Vic

FREE FROM MANIPULATION



Because the queen likes me and thinks so much of me, I know that she would be pleased if I asked any favors of her; but so far I haven't asked her for a single thing and I have no desire to do so in the future. (Aut 625)

All those who hunger and thirst not after justice or any personal merit, but simply for the favor of some job, post, or dignity, besiege my house every day and pester me with their ambitions and pretensions. I have to tell them *all that it cuts me to the quick not to be able to please them...* Most of those who come to see me during my daily audience from 11:00 to noon are looking for jobs, positions, or preferments (not to mention the pile of letters I receive daily, asking for the same). What would have become of me if I'd ever allowed myself to get involved in that briar patch! (Aut 626)

Furthermore, I see that those who are pushing, striving, and begging for these jobs, positions, and preferments, without sparing bribes and other such wiles, are usually the very ones who least deserve them. May God deliver me from ever cooperating in a business that has such evil consequences... (Aut 627)



FOR PERSONAL REFLECTION

- In your apostolate have you sought the truth or have you let yourself be manipulated by favoritism, special privileges, nepotism, etc.?
- How do you use your ability to influence socially?

"People pay more attention to what they see in a missionary than to what they hear him say."
(Aut 388)

MAY
23



1859. Claret arrives in Barcelona at almost the same time as Fr. **Paladio Currius** and Mother **Paris'** nuns. They all eat in the palace with the bishop and Fr. **Joseph Xifre** is also present.

1859. Claret is appointed Protector of the Hospital in Montserrat (Madrid) by a Royal Decree signed on this day.

1860. Both Claret and Fr. Joseph Xifre consider Fr. **Carmelo Sala** a good candidate for the Congregation, but Claret prefers that he stay by his side for the time being, have a salary and help his parents.



IN ECUADOR

A NEW CENTURY (1949-1967)

In 1955 Fr. Angel de Maria Canals arrived in Guayaquil, the country's main port, to pioneer the Espiritu Santo Parish in an extensive and extremely poor neighborhood inhabited by some 300,000 people who lacked a church, schools and institutions of social assistance. He entered into an unpleasant situation. The people there were good natured, but far from God regarding the practice of religion. Besides that, he only had the property to build on so two missionaries carried out their duties on the streets. Everything was a matter

of faith and enthusiasm. After a short time he already had three chapels; the central post included a rectory, a church, a theater, a health clinic and parochial schools, as well as a large room for family and social parties for the poor. After the first year they were already able to present nearly astonishing statistics of the work done and results achieved. Since they did not even have a church but rather a modest chapel, many of these works were done on the streets. In 1958 the great church building was inaugurated.

GERTRUDIS CASTAÑER

Foundress (1824-1881)



Mataro (Barcelona, Spain). As a child, she watched her two brothers leave home, **Marcos** to the seminary and Segismundo to enter the Capuchins. She joined the Carmelites of Mataro when her brother Marcos returned from Italy but was forced to leave the convent due to illness. She started an apostolate in her own home, welcoming poor girls to teach them the Catechism and give them instruction. When her mother died in 1857, Gertrudis and her brother Marcos worked together in response to an urgent need in the city of Mataro. On November 21, 1858, they founded the Congregation of *Sisters of St. Philip Neri*. Father Claret intervened in the foundation, consolidation and promotion of this Institute. From the time he preached during Lent 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 the opportunity to encourage them in their work.

POLITICS AS A GAMBLING TABLE



Despite all the precautions I have taken in treading on this terrain, I have not escaped the malice of wagging tongues. Some have murmured against me for refusing to be the tool of their baseless ambitions, others out of envy... Still others, out of ignorance or mere hearsay, have invented all sorts of rogueries about me and started the ugliest rumors. But I have remained silent and rejoiced in the Lord, because He has given me a sip from the chalice of his sufferings. As for my detractors, I have prayed to God for them, after forgiving and loving them with all my heart. (Aut 628)

I have never wanted to get mixed up in politics... One of our leading politicians once asked me to recommend a certain policy to Her Majesty. "My dear sir," I answered, "you may as well know that I look upon present-day Spain as a gambling table; the players are the two political parties. Now, just as it would be utterly reprehensible for a mere onlooker to give the slightest help to one of the players in the game, it would be equally reprehensible for me, a mere spectator, to make any recommendation favoring one or the other political party to Her Majesty..." (Aut 629)



Matches with caricatures against Claret (Claretian Museum in Vic)



FOR PERSONAL REFLECTION

As impossible as it may seem to be completely disassociated of any political reference, Claret tried, from his missionary preaching in Catalonia to his presence in the Royal Court of Madrid, "not to get involved in politics."

- I think getting involved in politics could be dangerous if ...
- Given the criticism and slander I will receive by trying to be free of politics, I will have to ...
- I should not give up political options as long as...

"Without the primacy of the Word,
the Claretian community would lose its reason for being."
(SW7)



1834. Claret is ordained a sub-deacon in San Justo church at the seminary in Vic. During this same celebration, **Jaime Balmes** was ordained a deacon.

1852. Claret reminds the Queen of the urgent need to establish Jesuits and Vincentians on the Island to give consistency to the fruit that he and his companions obtain by preaching missions.

1865. Claret advises the nuncio that it would be preferable to appoint a bishop that speaks Catalan for Vic, since *many people in the countryside do not understand Spanish*. His advice will be followed.



IN EL SALVADOR DEFINITELY

A NEW CENTURY (1949-1967)

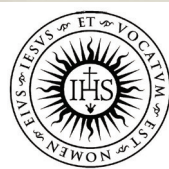
That same year, 1955, after repeated and fruitful efforts by Fr. Eugenio Lobejon, Visitor of Central America, the Archbishop of San Salvador, Mons. Luis Chavez y Gonzalez, authorized the establishment of a Claretian community in the capital of El Salvador. They had previously founded in the city of San Miguel where they directed the diocesan seminary, a foundation that was abandoned in 1932. One of the fruits of this seminary was St. **Oscar Romero**. This time their most important job was working together with the infirmed parish priest of the central

Basilica Sagrado Corazon de Jesus, the major church of El Salvador, which would later become famous for the homilies Monsignor Romero preached there. Later they thought seriously about a house and church of their own, which materialized in the Colonia Escalon that had recently begun to form. A group of nationalist priests created serious obstacles to the permanence of the missionaries, but the Archbishop's support was decisive. In May of 1968 Corazon de Maria Parish was inaugurated with one of the most original and beautiful churches in the Capital.



BARTOLOME MUNAR

Collaborator of Claret (1815-1869)



Costitx (Majorca, Spain). He entered the Society of Jesus. He was rector of the seminary of Belen in Havana. He had arrived in Santiago, Cuba in August of 1855 with the intention of founding a school there. Archbishop Claret had written to him: *It seems to me that it would be good if you, along with a companion (Fr. Jose Cotanilla), came out here, passing through Puerto Principe, and, thus, making this prelude of the composition of the place, it will be well thought over, and everything will turn out better.* Fr. Cotanilla would write in his diary: *There we had the pleasure and the consolation of meeting and talking with the holy Archbishop Claret, with whom we kept company during the days we stayed in the city of Santiago, Cuba.* It was Fr. Munar who, in a letter to his General, insinuated the possibility that Claret should enter the Society when he returned from Cuba, after the attack in Holguin, with the Rector of the Seminary and two of his young students.

THE APPOINTMENT OF SUITABLE BISHOPS



Zucchetto of Claret
(Claretian Museum - Vic)

One matter that I have been deeply involved in at the queen's insistence is in arranging a system for electing bishops...The Attorney General asks each and every bishop whether or not he knows of any priest in his diocese with proper qualifications to be a bishop, should the need for one arise. The bishop in question answers yes or no. If he knows of one, he gives whatever information he can about him...The Attorney General collects and files all these data, and when a see falls vacant, he sends the dossiers to Her Majesty, who reads them and asks God's guidance in helping her choose the right one. After this, she draws up a list of three...and finally makes her choice, basing it solely on the greater glory of God and the good of the Church. I can stand surety for the fact that, if any priest ever so much as hinted that he wanted the position, it would be more than enough to bar him from being considered eligible for nomination...There is perhaps no matter in Spain that is handled more equitably and justly...but neither is there any matter that is looked into more carefully. (**Aut 630**)



FOR PERSONAL REFLECTION

- In your ministry do you try to collaborate with the Bishops to evangelize God's people? (CC 50).
- Is your heart free of aspirations to positions of ecclesiastical government? (cf. CC 50).
- If you were consulted, would you collaborate so that the Church could have suitable shepherds?
- When you can, visit one of the nearby priests and a neighboring religious community.

"Holiness, which is an expression of the love of God for the world, for all human beings, also has a strong counter-cultural meaning. This holiness confronts the ideology of a world without God or of a God disconnected from the destiny of man."
(Mathew Vattamattam, *Missionaries to the End*, 21)



1843. During a pilgrimage Claret preaches at the Marian sanctuary of Puig-l'Agulla near Vic.

1859. Claret travels from Barcelona to Vic to preside over the general meeting of missionaries, during which seven rules of the Constitutions are clarified.

1862. Claret is an attending bishop at the episcopal consecration of Bienvenido Monzon, archbishop of Santo Domingo (Dominican Republic), in the chapel of the royal palace (Madrid).

IN HOLLAND

The first Claretian Missionaries, who came to Holland in 1955, were Fr. Albert Beathalter, as Superior, Fr. Theodore Weis and Fr. Albert Vetter and Br. Leo Hermann. They settled in Reuver, province of Limburg and in the Diocese of Roermond. It was a rural town of 6,000 inhabitants at that time, very close to the German border, with some industries. The whole population was Catholic and well-off. The area was full of vocations. On November 18th, they began their

pastoral work at a temporary house and church donated by the parishioners of Offenbeck. The construction of a large building that would serve as a future Flemish Postulancy was planned. The Claretian presence lasted only until 1970, but it was enough time to build a church and plant a seed that is still bearing fruit today, such as the publication of Father Claret's biography in Dutch, published in German by Fr. Andres Back in 1956, and a novena published by Fr. Josef Allinger.

A NEW CENTURY (1949-1967)



SAINT MARY MAGDALENE DE' PAZZI Claret's Role Model (1566-1607)



Florence, (Italy). In his *Autobiography*, Claret dedicates paragraphs to the figure of Saint Mary Magdalene de' Pazzi, whom he considers an exemplary model of missionary zeal. This saint lived out three closely united values: a lofty spiritual life, a zeal for the salvation of men and a resolute determination to undertake reform of the Church. Claret will say of St. Mary Magdalene: *It would be hard to find any apostolic man with a more burning zeal for the salvation of souls. She had a lively and most tender concern for their welfare, and it seemed to her that she had no love at all for the Lord unless everyone else loved Him, too. On learning of the great strides that the faith was making in the Indies in her day, she would say that if her vocation allowed, she would travel throughout the world to save souls and would envy the birds their wings that she might fly about everywhere to accomplish the task* (Aut 259).

FREE OF MATERIAL GOODS



There is a popular saying that contains a great lesson: *The little doggy wags his tail, not for thee, but for thy meal.* Every day I see ladies and gentlemen feting, fawning, and doing who knows what else for the king and queen, not so much for Their Majesties themselves as for what they hope to gain by their efforts. Well, I have no wish or pretension, except to get out of the court. Someone may say, "Yes, but you have been decorated with the two Great Crosses." True, indeed, but how did I get them? I didn't ask for the Great Cross of Isabel the Catholic, and I didn't want to take it when it was offered me... (Aut 632)

As for the Cross of Carlos III, I neither sought it nor wanted it; it was conferred upon me against my will... (Aut 633)

As far as anything else is concerned, I have nothing. There is no other bishop in the whole of Spain who has not received a pectoral cross, a chalice, or something else from Her Majesty on the occasion of a baptism, a visit to their cathedral, etc., but I neither have nor want anything... When I retired from the palace, I had the great satisfaction of being able to say that I had nothing from Her Majesty, not even a pin. (Aut 634)



Painting depicting the baptism of Maria de la Concepcion de Borbon y Borbon, eighth daughter of Queen Elizabeth II of Spain and King Francisco de Asis de Borbon (Rafael Benjumea)



FOR PERSONAL REFLECTION

- Do you feel free to receive gifts that may compromise the freedom you need to fulfill your mission?
- Can you say as Claret did "I do not want or expect anything"?
- Knowing yourself, imagine three simple rules about accepting or rejecting gifts that are offered to you, that protect your freedom and your austerity, without turning away charity.

"Given the urgent need for abundant vocations, we must act hopefully and lucidly, without allowing ourselves to be carried away by emotional impulses or by merely numerical calculations. The lack of candidates should not become a pretext for admitting to the Congregation persons who lack the pertinent signs, gifts, motivations or aptitudes." (CVD 238)



1857. Claret arrives in Madrid, and two hours later, is called to the royal palace to receive the position of the Queen's confessor.

1862. From Madrid Claret sends his recently completed autobiography to Fr. **Paladio Currius** telling him to return it by June 28th, since he will leave for Catalonia on the 30th and will bring it to the missionaries.

1869. In Rome, Claret finishes *Vida de San Pedro Nolasco* [Life of Saint Peter Nolasco] having finished *Triduo en obsequio de Maria Santisima* [Triduum as an Offering to Mary Most Holy] a few days prior.



MISSIONARY SISTERS OF SAINT ANTHONY MARY CLARET

A NEW CENTURY (1949-1967)

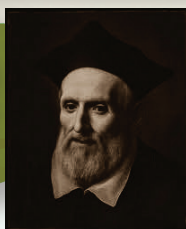
In March 1958, Mother **Leonia Milito**, under the guidance of Monsignor **Geraldo Fernandes**, Claretian Archbishop of Londrina (Brazil), founded the Missionary Sisters of Saint Anthony Mary Claret in Londrina to take care of the poor, moved by a vibrant missionary zeal. Inspired by the ideal of Saint Anthony Mary Claret, the Congregation bases its spirituality on devotion to the Eucharist, which is

the secret of its continual vitality. The life and apostolate of each member is transformed, at the feet of the tabernacle, into an oblation offered with Jesus. It was Archbishop Geraldo Fernandes' responsibility to be the Father and spiritual guide of the Missionary Sisters of Saint Anthony Mary Claret. They are present in 18 countries on five continents. In 2000, the Constitutions were permanently approved.



SAINT PHILIP NERI

Claret's Role Model (1515-1595)



Florence (Italy). Called the Apostle of Rome, he was the founder of the Congregation of the Oratory. He was canonized about twenty-seven years after his death, along with **Teresa of Jesus**, **Ignatius of Loyola**, Francis Xavier and Isidore the Laborer. His feast day is celebrated on May 26th. Claret's first contact with Saint Philip Neri was through the Oratorians in Barcelona and Vic. Since his arrival in Vic, Claret sought guidance from Fr. **Bach**, Oratorian. He was one of the four consulted about the acceptance of the archbishop's miter. As a young seminarian, Claret read the life of the Saint written by Fr. Conciencia (Aut 317). Later, as Archbishop of Cuba, Claret had a book about the life of the Saint, by Bishop **Jaime Soler** read during meals. And once in Madrid he entered the *Escuela de Cristo* [School of Christ], an association inspired by St. Philip Neri. Claret's Autobiography and other works include many quotes from this Saint. And he's always on the list of the saints that moved Claret the most.

ORDERS OF THE QUEEN TAKEN AS A MISSION



Royal Monastery of
San Lorenzo de Madrid

Their Majesties are surrounded by self-serving men who are always hunting and grasping after titles, honors, greater salaries, and sums of money; but I, as I have said, have gained nothing; rather, I have lost much. Her Majesty wanted me by all means to accept the office of Guardian of Montserrat—the church, hospital, etc.—but I declined. Both she and the Commissioner General asked me many times to take the post, and when I learned that the buildings had already been advertised for sale in the *Official Bulletin*, I finally accepted, just to save them from being sold. And what did I gain by it all? I had to pay 5,000 duros out of my own pocket for repairs on the church and the hospital. (Aut 635)

I can say much the same of the royal monastery of the Escorial, which neither is nor has ever been a source of profit to me; rather, it has brought me nothing but troubles and pains, and it has been the occasion of persecutions, slanders, and bills. Three times I tried to resign from its presidency, but failed... (Aut 636)



FOR PERSONAL REFLECTION

- If you are entrusted with administrative positions, how do you live them out from a missionary standpoint?
- Do you aspire to and try to achieve administrative positions?
- Are you willing to responsibly take on the difficulties that such positions may bring?
- Call to mind an exemplary Claretian who has an attitude of assuming an important position of responsibility with an evangelical disposition of courage and service. What can you learn from him?

"We have been called to form consciences, not to replace them."
(Francis, *Amoris Laetitia*, 37)



1844. Claret preaches a sermon about St. Isidore in San Andres de Palomar (Barcelona).

1851. Claret has already prepared a detailed report for the Queen and the government about the state and needs of the diocese. He announces to the parish priests that shortly he will send a canon to Madrid to present it.

1859. In Vic Claret celebrates mass in the Beaterio of Santa Catalina.



IN SWITZERLAND

A NEW CENTURY (1949-1967)

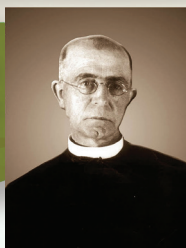
The Claretians from Deutschland were the first ones to go to Switzerland in 1958 with a Mission Procure and worked with immigrants irrespective of their nationalities. But Fr. Georg Gawenda, one of the Germans trained in Spain who had mastered the language, together with Fr. Vicente Codina, devoted themselves to the religious service of Spanish immigrants, who numbered in the thousands throughout Switzerland and in great need of spiritual assistance. In 1967 the General Vicariate of Zürich officially erected the Catholic Mission

and the Diocese of Chur entrusted it to the Missionaries of the Province of Aragon. They exercised ministries at several Churches in Zürich and the surrounding area, which were attended by 1,200 Spaniards on Sundays who were generally poor and had not received much religious instruction. An important means of information was created, the magazine *Retorno [Return]*, with 3,000 copies in circulation. In April of 1978, the Missionary Center opened new branches, where they remained until 1991, when they moved to the present site, located on 14 Brandschenkestrasse.



JULIAN COLLELL GUIX, CMF

Missionary and Founder (1868-1937)



Santa Maria de Corco (Barcelona, Spain). He entered the San Jose School in Vic and soon applied for admission to the Congregation, professing in 1887. After his priestly ordination in 1892 he remained on the Peninsula for several years until he was assigned to Mexico in 1902, dedicating himself to teaching the Catechism. In 1914 he was taken aback by the Carrancista revolution, being imprisoned and forced to go to the United States. By 1919 he was already back in Mexico. He was transferred to Puebla in 1936, where he continued to suffer poor health until cancer finally ended his life on May 26th in Toluca. In 1913, while he was in Puebla, Miss Carmen Rugama Serrano suggested to Fr. Julian the foundation of a missionary congregation dedicated to teaching the Catechism to children and indigenous people. Expelled to San Antonio (Texas), he continued to develop the idea until in 1920 the founding of the *Cordimarian Missionary Sisters* was approved, broadening the objectives to include teaching and promoting good publications.

MISSIONARY IN THE ROYAL COURT



Besides these ordinary daily occupations, there have been other extra ordinary ones, such as giving retreats to the clergy, to the men and women of the St. Vincent de Paul Society, to nuns and sisters, not to mention missions to the laity. But this is not enough work to satisfy me; what I would really like to do would be to walk through towns and villages, giving missions. This is my great dream. I have a holy envy of those missionaries who are lucky enough to be able to go from town to town preaching the Holy Gospel. (Aut 638)

I have had some consolation in the

midst of my sufferings. When I go on tour with Their Majesties and Highnesses, I get to preach to the people in the morning, before Their Majesties leave the house. Afterward I go around preaching in convents to nuns, sisters, priests, seminarians, members of the St. Vincent de Paul Society, etc., so that my whole day is spent in preaching... (Aut 639)

One of the things that has kept me most occupied since I've been in Madrid has been writing books and pamphlets, having them printed, and buying these and other books for circulation... (Aut 640)



Royal Monastery of San Lorenzo of El Escorial (Madrid)



FOR PERSONAL REFLECTION

- What is your "life's dream"?
- Are you able, like Claret, to convert any space into a missionary opportunity?
- Do you carry the mission in your heart?

"The paradox of the Cross is that it reproduces the archaic structure of sacrifice in order to stand it on its head. But this inversion is a matter of putting right side up what had been wrong side up since the beginning of the world... the Cross is the revelation of a destabilizing truth."

(Rene Girard)



1847. Claret is considering the plan to travel to preach *in the interior of Spain in autumn together with some companions*; for that reason, he advises to begin publishing things in Castilian.

1859. Claret makes several visits and preaches in Vic. At dusk he presides over the first general meeting of his missionaries.

1867. On this day Claret writes to the Pope supporting the swift beatification of Mother Agreda.



THE FIRST CLARETIAN CARDINAL

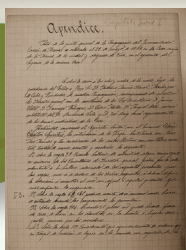
A NEW CENTURY (1949-1967)

On December 14, 1959, Fr. **Arcadio Maria Larraona** was elevated to the dignity of cardinal. He was the first cardinal in our history. It was cause for great celebration for the Congregation. Greetings and telegrams came from all over the world from Heads of State, Ministers, Nuncios, Cardinals, Bishops, General Superiors, the Navarre Regional Council, etc. Of special interest was the greetings given by Giulio Andreotti, Prime Minister of the Italian State, who addressed a

pleasant and affectionate letter by his own hand. Dozens of Institutes elected him as Cardinal Protector. As soon as he became cardinal, he was elected member of the Congregations of the upcoming Council, of Religious and of the Eastern Church. But he had been elevated to cardinal without being a bishop first, so, following the *Motu Proprio* of John XXIII *Cum gravissima* of April 25, 1962, he was ordained a bishop at the Basilica of St. John Lateran with eleven other cardinals who were not bishops.



FIRST GENERAL CHAPTER



The First Council or Solemn Meeting was celebrated on this day of the year in Vic in 1859, which was considered the First Chapter of the Congregation, under the presidency of the Father Founder. It was celebrated in the chambers of the Superior of the house of Merced in Vic, the only one the Congregation had. The Founder, who had returned from Cuba in 1857, was eager to meet with his missionaries, with all of them, and the missionaries, on their part, also wanted to enjoy the presence and company of the Founder and Father. This First Chapter was mainly devoted to the clarification and interpretation of some Rules of relative importance in those days: seven questions of government and missionary activities. It is noteworthy that all the Rules revolved around the main activity of the community at that time: Popular Missions. It lasted from 8:30 to 9:30 in the evening. The capitulars present were: Claret, **Joseph Xifre**, **Jaime Clotet**, **Dominic Fabregas**, **Pedro Alibes**, **Miguel Rota** and **Jose Reig**.

LEARNING FROM A ROOSTER



The Holy Spirit tells me, “*Go to the ant, O sluggard, study her ways and learn wisdom.*” And learn I shall, not only from the ant, but from the cock, the donkey, and the dog as well...The cock crows for me, and I, like Peter, should recall my sins and weep. The cock crows out the hours of day and night. I, too, should praise God every hour of the day and night, and urge others to do so... (**Aut 664**)

The cock defends his brood against the attacks of hawks and other birds of prey; I, too, should defend the souls the Lord has entrusted to my care against the hawks of error, sin, and vice... Before he crows, the cock first beats his wings; I, before preaching, should move and beat the wings of study and prayer. The cock is most prolific; so must I be spiritually, so that I can say with the Apostle, *Per evangelium ego vos genui* (*It was I who begot you in Christ Jesus through my preaching of the Gospel*). (**Aut 665**)



FOR PERSONAL REFLECTION

After reading the text, remember the apostolic virtues that Claret recognized in the rooster.

- Every missionary needs to “beat the wings of study and prayer”. It is true, but in what order and proportion? Why?
- Think of another animal you can learn lessons from in order to be a better missionary like Claret (e.g. ant, camel, sparrow ...).

“Remember who you are.
Don’t compromise for anyone, for any reason.
You are a child of the Almighty God. Live that truth.”
(*Lysa Terkeurst*)



1849. Ever since his arrival on the Canary Islands on the 24th, Claret is intensely occupied in Vic preparing individuals for the foundation of the Congregation of missionaries.

1854. Claret wants to start up the farm-school in Puerto Principe, and promises the governor of Cuba that he will do it with his income. All he asks is that they allow him to act freely, and he will take care of the rest.

1859. Claret preaches on Sundays in Vic, in convents and a house of charity, to the people in the crowded cathedral, and to the clergy in the church of La Merced.



THE CENTERS OF THEOLOGY IN ROME AND SALAMANCA

A NEW CENTURY (1949-1967)

In 1959 the *Claretianum* of Rome was inaugurated as an Interprovincial Center for Theological Studies, affiliated with the Pontifical Lateran University; a building with capacity for 80 students, located on Via Aurelia. Its objective was to give the Students of the Congregation an opportunity to complete their Theology studies. In 1969, the Center was closed, which had been in operation since 1934, although it remained open until 2004 as the residence for the students who frequented the Roman universities. Currently, a good part of the building

has been transformed into a hotel. It houses the headquarters of the Institute of the Theology of the Consecrated Life, founded in 1971, and is the residence of the community in charge of it.

In 1960 the new Interprovincial Center of Theology in Salamanca was also opened. After eleven years in operation, it was closed in 1971 for reasons unrelated to the academic institution, leaving behind a generous group of Professors and Students from several Provinces. After that, the Province of Leon sold the building to the University of Salamanca.



EUSEBIO SACRISTAN, CMF
Missionary and Publicist (1866-1923)



Bernardos (Segovia, Spain). After several assignments in Spain, he left for Equatorial Guinea in 1892, where he remained only two years due to health problems. In 1895 we see he set off once again, this time to Brazil, where he went as a Consultor of the house to be founded in São Paulo with Fr. **Ramon Genover**. Soon he would begin to collaborate with *Ave Maria* magazine. In 1899 he would found the house of Campinas; in 1906 the new Quasi-Province of Brazil-Argentina elected him as delegate to the General Chapter in Aranda de Duero. In 1908 he was called back to Spain. He traveled through several communities until he remained in Madrid to manage the magazine *El Iris de Paz* in 1912. From there he devoted himself to the promotion of the missions of Equatorial Guinea, creating the magazine *Apostoles de Guinea* [*Apostles of Guinea*] and the *Almanaques* [*Almanacs*], opening the way for the future magazine *El Misionero* [*The Missionary*]. He died in Madrid.



LEARNING FROM A DONKEY

The donkey is by nature the humblest of beasts. His name is an insult; his place is the lowest in the yard; his food is poor and so are his trappings. I, too should see to it that my room, food, and clothing are poor... (**Aut 666**)



The donkey is a very patient beast; he carries men and their burdens and suffers beatings without complaint. I, too, must be very patient in bearing the burden of my duties and in suffering meekly all the pains, trials, persecutions, and slanders I am subject to. (**Aut 667**)

The Blessed Virgin Mary rode upon a donkey, both when she went to Bethlehem to give birth to Jesus, her Son, and when she fled with Him into Egypt to deliver Him from Herod. I, too, offer myself to Mary, to be the joyful bearer of devotion to her... (**Aut 668**)

Jesus rode upon a donkey when He entered Jerusalem in triumph. I, too, gladly offer myself to Jesus to make use of me in his triumphant march over his enemies, the world, the flesh, and the devil, as He makes his way into the souls and towns of those who are converted to Him... (**Aut 669**)



FOR PERSONAL REFLECTION

- Which of the donkey's qualities strikes you the most?
- How could you better cultivate the apostolic virtues of humility, poverty and meekness?
- What does it mean to you that God counts on you to be a listener and servant of His Word?
- What kind of patience and self-denial does Claret refer to with this example of the "little donkey"?
- How is it different from resignation or conformism?

"Jesus, love of my heart,
I love you and want to draw everyone to your most holy love!"
(**Aut 389**)

MAY
30



1856. Claret writes to his missionaries in Vic thanking them for the letter they wrote him on the occasion of the attack and expressing his joy for having a foretaste of martyrdom.

1859. Claret returns to Barcelona from Vic. He stops in Granollers (Barcelona), where he preaches.

1861. In Madrid Claret presides over the Corpus Christi procession, which starts at the church of Santa Maria, goes down the Calle Mayor, etc.



IN NICARAGUA

A NEW CENTURY (1949-1967)

It was the intention of the Provincial Government to establish houses in the five Republics of Central America as well as Panama. Just Nicaragua was left, until 1960 when this item was jubilantly published in the Provincial Bulletin: *We are pleased to inform our brothers that the General Government of the Congregation has accepted this promising foundation in Jinotepe, capital of the Department of Carazo.* It was a good foundation, but due to adverse circumstances, when the diocesan clergy saw that the Missionaries directed it with such skill, they coveted

it, and finally, in 1979, the Congregation gave it up and returned it to the diocese. But the Province had taken preventative measures, and by then they already had another parish in Managua, the capital. It was a very special neighborhood. One part of it, which was accepted first, was and still is poor; the other part, which was just beginning to urbanize, was residential and upper middle class. The church of Guadalupe was built first, in the poor neighborhood, the only one inhabited at that time. After that came the Church of the Corazon de Maria.

MISSIONARIES OF THE CLARETIAN INSTITUTION



Father **Luis Pujol Tordera**, a Claretian missionary born in Taradell (Barcelona), founded the Congregation of the *Missionary Sisters of the Claretian Institute* on May 25, 1951 assisted by the future Superior General, Mother Maria Dolores Sola Carol, in the new retreat house in Vic. Fr. Pujol, a man of prayer and mission, went to the house of the Father in Vic on May 8, 1976, shortly before the 25th anniversary of his favorite work. *The Claretian Institute is a religious-apostolic Institute for the evangelisation, in keeping with the experience of the Spirit as lived by its Founder, Fr. Pujol, in the style of Claret. In answer to this divine vocation, we adopt the lifestyle of Jesus, which the Blessed Virgin Mary embraced in faith, and we conform ourselves with Christ virgin, poor and obedient in the Church. (Constitutions, no. 5).* In 1998 the Archbishop of Barcelona approved the work as an Institute of Religious Life of diocesan right.

LEARNING FROM A DOG



The dog is so faithful an animal and so constant a companion to his master that neither misery, poverty, hardship, nor anything else can separate them. I should be the same: so faithful and constant in serving and loving God... (Aut 670)

The dog is more loyal than a son, more obedient than a servant, and more docile than a child. Not only does he willingly do what his master orders, but he scans his master's face to tell from his looks what he wants, so that he can do it without being told to... becoming a friend of his friends and an enemy of his enemies. I should practice all these beautiful traits in serving God, my beloved Master... (Aut 671)

The dog watches by day and redoubles his vigilance by night. He guards the person and the property of his master. He barks at and bites all those he knows or suspects are planning to harm his master or his master's interests. (Aut 672)



FOR PERSONAL REFLECTION

- Which of the dog's qualities helps you the most?
- Is your missionary zeal an expression of your love and fidelity to the Lord?
- Is the Lord and the proclamation of his Gospel really the center of your life?
- I understand that apostolic zeal is something like ...
- The opposite of apostolic zeal would be ...
- In the light of the intriguing image of the dog, ask God for the gifts of fidelity, loyalty, obedience and the docility to serve God.

"Although our forces may be small, when the Word takes power of us and we are docile to it, it acts mightily within those who hear it and fulfill it."

(SW 10)



1848. Claret begins a mission in Agüimes (Canary Islands).

1851. Before the end of this month, Claret publishes a *Carta que contiene las principales leyes de Indias* [Letter Containing the Main Laws of the Indies], a document that, according to Fr. **Anthony Barjau**, sweetened the lives of the slaves quite a bit.

1868. Claret formally presents his resignation to the presidency of El Escorial.



IN PUERTO RICO ONCE AGAIN

A NEW CENTURY (1949-1967)

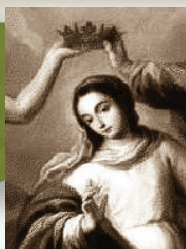
The Congregation entered Puerto Rico in 1936 with a house that would last only fifteen years. The missionaries from Carolina worked closely with the Bishop from the very beginning accompanied him on Pastoral Visits. Soon they took charge of the Parish in Carolina, with 5,000 parishioners in town and another 10,000 scattered through the countryside, in addition to other neighboring parishes. This immense missionary field had to be left in 1951. The Congregation continued in Rio Piedras, where there was a parish and school; however, this foundation also had

to be left. Ten years after the departure from Carolina, the missionaries returned to Puerto Rico in 1960. Some Claretians who were expelled from the Dominican Republic by the Trujillo regime, including Fr. Angel Abad and Fr. Francisco Martinez took over the recently created Parish of the Corazon de Maria, in one of the capital's neighborhoods. In 1964, they created a second foundation. They took over another newly created parish, San Jose, in Bayamon, with some 35,000 inhabitants. Little by little, missionary perspectives opened up in this country for the Congregation.



MARTIN ROURE, CMF

Missionary and Artist (1880-1919)



Manresa (Barcelona, Spain). As a child he frequented the community of Vic drawn to its Marian devotion. He entered the postulancy in Barbastro. Ordained a priest in Santo Domingo de la Calzada, he went to Jerez de los Caballeros (Badajoz). He was not particularly gifted for the ministry of preaching. He was a professor, Prefect of the school and administrator. In all these functions he distinguished himself by his prudence, activity and interest. After a brief time in 1917 as Prefect of the Major Seminary in Aguas Santas, he went to his assignment in Seville where he was able to develop the art of painting, a skill with which God had endowed him with extraordinary talents. There his artist's soul was immersed in the atmosphere of light, colors and scents of Andalusia. Many rooms and halls of the houses in that area are adorned with his paintings. His last painting represents the Heart of Mary at the moment she was crowned by the angels. He died on May 26th in Seville.

SPIRITUAL CONSOLATION



1857. On January 15, 1857, at 5:00 in the afternoon, while I was meditating on Jesus, I said, *What do you want me to do, Lord?* Jesus answered, *You'll have work to do, Anthony; your hour has not yet come.*

For several days since this happened I have been feeling many spiritual consolations, especially during Mass and meditation. (**Aut 675**)

On December 21 that same year, I was advised on four points: (1) more prayer, (2) writing books, (3) directing souls, (4) more tranquility at being in Madrid. God wants me here. (**Aut 678**)

1859. January 6, 1859. The Lord made me understand that I am like the earth; in fact, I am earth. The earth is trampled on and is silent; I should be trampled on and be silent. The earth is raked; I should be mortified. Finally, the earth needs to be watered if it is to be productive; I need grace if I am to produce good works. (**Aut 680**)



FOR PERSONAL REFLECTION



- Remember a consolation from God in your apostolate.
- When I experience the absence of God I should ...
- I need grace just like the earth needs water, especially when ...

“The merciful love of the Father is at the core of our call and our mission is the flow of God’s merciful love through the love of Christ that urges us.”

(Mathew Vattamattam, *Called to Radiate the Joy of the Gospel in the World Today*, 5)