O Virgin Mother of God,
I surrender myself to you as your son.
I trust your maternal love
that you may form Jesus in me,
the Son sent by the Father,
and anointed by the Holy Spirit
to proclaim the Good News to the poor.
Teach me to treasure the Word in my heart, as you did,
until it transforms me into a living Gospel.
Ask the strength of the Spirit
that I may be a witness of Christ among men.
Instill in me your maternal love
that I may reveal the Father to them
and they may feel the joy of being children of God
in fraternal communion with the Church.
Mother, behold your son. Mold me.
Mother, behold your son. Send me.
Mother, behold your son. Speak through me. Love through me.
Keep me in your Heart,
That having proclaimed the Gospel to others,
I may not be excluded from the Kingdom.
In you, my Mother,
I have put my trust.
Let me never be put to shame.
Amen.



June

JUNE

1



1851. Claret is making a pastoral visit in Santiago, Cuba, and on this day he preaches at the church of Los Dolores and at the church of Belen.

1859. After returning from Vic, Claret celebrates in the Church of the Sisters of St. Mary Magdalene in Barcelona.

1867. Claret travels from Madrid to Burgos, where he begins a triduum before presiding over the election of the Abbess of the Royal Monastery of Las Huelgas.



A NEW CENTURY (1949-1967)

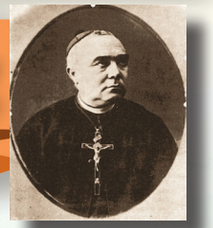
XVI GENERAL CHAPTER (1961)

The XVI General Chapter was celebrated in Rome from April 23 to May 16, 1961 with the announcement of the upcoming Ecumenical Council, which put the brakes on some aspects of renewal pending the conclusions of said Council. Fr. **Peter Schweiger** was re-elected as Superior General. In this Chapter the use of the adjective *Claretians* was confirmed and the *Claretian Secretariat* was created. The *Claretian Collaborators* were born and the *Fraternal Charter* of the Claretian Family was written. It was also considered appropriate to extend the temporary vows by two more years. During this Chapter there was an awakening interest in the expansion of the mission fields, so some projects were presented in the Provinces of France, the USA, Deutschland and continental Africa. The number of Assistancies was extended to 5: 1st Catalunya, Cantabria, Italy and France; 2nd Castilla, Betica and Guinea; 3rd Chile, Argentina, Brazil, Portugal and Uruguay; 4th Mexico, Colombia, Antillas, Centroamerica, Peru-Bolivia and Venezuela; and 5th USA, Deutschland, England, Philippines and Japan. The Assistancies did not coincide with the Consultors.



HILARIO BROSSOSA, CMF

Missionary and Preacher (1830-1905)



Sant Hilari Sacalm (Barcelona, Spain). He asked to enter the Congregation when he was almost ready to be ordained a priest. He was the first Novice Master of the Congregation. He was sent to Huesca, the only house that did not suffer the consequences of the revolution of 1868. Called by Fr. **Xifre** to France, a few months later he was sent to Algiers. He is credited with the opening of a school and the missionary activity that took place in Oran. He returned to the Peninsula, where he intervened in the foundation of the Cordoba house, until he was sent to the Canary Islands, where he worked intensely. From there he returned to Catalonia again, but his strength was greatly diminished. He was a great preacher and also a great debater. He could easily make an argument in favor of religion or of people who were criticized or defamed. He always knew how to come to their defense. He participated in the first General Chapters of the Congregation. He died on June 7th.

THE SPIRIT OF YOUR FATHER AND YOUR MOTHER





On September 24… the Lord gave me an understanding of another passage in the Apocalypse (10:1): "Then I saw another mighty angel come down from heaven wrapped in a cloud, with a rainbow about his head; his face shone like the sun and his legs like pillars of fire. In his hand he held a little scroll that had been opened. He placed his right foot on the sea and his left foot on the land [first in his diocese of Cuba and later in other dioceses], and then he gave a loud cry like the roar of a lion. When he cried out, the seven thunders raised their voices too." Here come the sons of the Congregation of the Immaculate Heart of Mary… **(Aut 686)**

The Lord told me both for myself and for all these missionary companions of mine, *Non vos estis qui loquimini sed Spiritus Patris vestri, et Matris vestrae qui loquitur in vobis (You yourselves will not be the speakers; the Spirit of your Father [and of your Mother], will be speaking in you).* So true is this that each one of us will be able to say: *Spiritus Domini super me, propter quod unxit me, evangelizare pauperibus misit me, sanare contritos corde (The Spirit of the Lord is upon me; therefore he has anointed m. He has sent me to bring glad tidings to the poor, to heal the broken hearted).* **(Aut 687)**



FOR PERSONAL REFLECTION

- *Is the apocalyptic character that Claret attributes to the Congregation naivete? Is it prophecy? Is it conceit? How should we see it today?*
- *In what signs do you recognize the presence of the Spirit of the Lord in the Congregation?*
- *Who are the poor and the contrite of heart to whom the Spirit sends you?*

"Freedom does not consist in the ability to say "no"
to that call or in the ability not to say, at a given moment in life,
the commitment we made before God in response to His call.
Freedom consists of voluntarily carrying out God's plan."
(*CVD*, 352)

JUNE

2



1854. Claret requests the convent of La Merced in Puerto Principe to house the Piarists when they go there.

1859. Claret visits and celebrates at the Shrine in Montserrat (Catalonia).

1865. Claret writes to Fr. **Joseph Xifre** from Aranjuez, consulting him about a suitable individual to be the Bishop of Vic; he is working on this matter with the nuncio.



A NEW CENTURY (1949-1967)

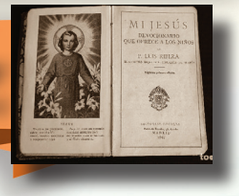
THE FIRST VOCATIONS IN INDIA

During the summer of 1961 Msgr. Sebastian Vayalil, Bishop of Palai (Kerala, India) was in Rome for the preparation of the Council. In September, before returning to India, he visited the communities of Würzburg and Weissenhorn, where he noticed the Claretians' desire to establish a mission in India, but they encountered insurmountable difficulties due to the country's laws which prevented foreign missionaries from entering. He promised Fr. Back and Fr. **Franz Dirnberger** he would encourage his seminarians to enter the Claretian Congregation. When he returned to his Seminary, he chose five of the older seminarians who volunteered, who on October 21st set out for Europe. On November 5, 1961, a group of five young Indians, sent by their Bishop, arrived at the General Curia in Rome. These young people were going to continue their studies in Europe and some of them were the seed of the Congregation in their home country. In 1964, five more arrived, and another seven in 1966. Out of all them, nine completed the course and were ordained priests.



LUIS RIBERA, CMF

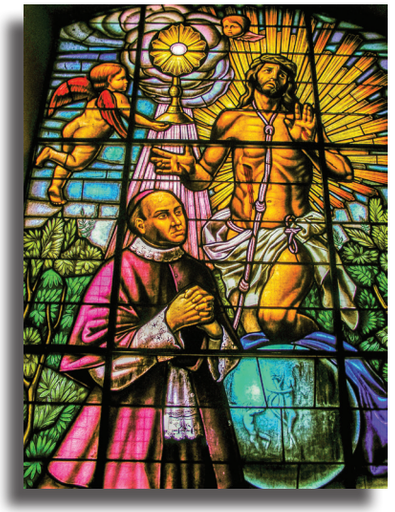
Popular Missionary (1880-1958)



Berga (Barcelona, Spain). Brother of **Ramon Ribera**. He was one of the most popular and widely accepted preachers and pious writers in Catalonia in the first half of the 20th century. He studied for the priesthood at the seminary in Vic and entered the Congregation in 1908 already ordained a priest. He was first assigned in Vic, then Lleida and then several years in Barcelona where he founded *La Fiesta Santificada [The Sanctified Party]*. He also published his famous *Jesuset* or *Mi Jesus [My Jesus]* among other books. During the civil war from 1936 to 1939 he was called to Italy as Superior of the house of Frascati. He returned to Barcelona, where he resumed publishing books and became fully involved in the work of the Regina Publishing House. He died in Barcelona on June 2nd. He had a great artistic sense and left copious, mostly popular, religious writings. He adapted himself to the needs of the people and, above all, to the publishers. He was deeply pious, humble, sacrificial and hardworking.



EUCHARISTIC CONFIGURATION



Stained glass at the Church of Our Lady of the Rosary depicting the great grace of the conservation of the sacramental species (La Granja)

On August 26, 1861, at 7:00 in the evening while I was at prayer in the church of the Rosary at La Granja, the Lord granted me the great grace of keeping the sacramental species intact within me and of having the Blessed Sacrament always present, day and night, in my breast. Because of this I must always be very recollected and inwardly devout. Furthermore I must pray and confront all the evils of Spain, as the Lord has told me…*Glorificate et portate Deum in corpore vestro (Glorify God and carry him always in your body.)* (1 Cor. 6: 20). **(Aut 694)**

On the morning of May 16, 1862, at 4:15 while I was at prayer, I thought of what I had written down the day before concerning my experience of the Blessed Sacrament the previous August 26. I had been thinking of erasing it and was still thinking of it today, but the Blessed Virgin told me not to erase it. Afterward, while I was saying Mass, Jesus Christ told me that He had indeed granted me this grace of remaining within me sacramentally. **(Aut 700)**



FOR PERSONAL REFLECTION

- *The most special moment of grace I remember in my life was when … Describe it like a newspaper headline.*
- *By participating in the Eucharist every day, I …*
- *Without the Eucharist I would miss …*
- *I feel that, for me, the most essential thing about the Eucharist is, above all…*

"Love needs time and space; everything else is secondary."
(Francis, *Amoris Laetitia*, 224)

JUNE

3



1853. Santiago Lopez de San Roman, an exclaustrated Dominican and pastor in Havana, turns to Claret, in his rank as Archbishop, to defend him from the injustices of his bishop. Claret does not side with him, and San Roman will become his enemy, to the point of writing libel against him.

1865. Claret writes to Dr. **Joaquin Masmitja** congratulating him on the expansion of the Congregation of the Daughters of the Most Holy and Immaculate Heart of the Blessed Virgin Mary and recommends his work *La Colegiala Instruida.*



A NEW CENTURY (1949-1967)

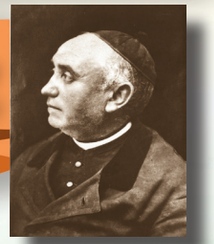
THE PROVINCE OF ARAGON IS CREATED

By this time the Congregation, having overcome the rough patch of the Spanish Civil War, had more than one hundred years in existence and ecclesial experience in apostolic service. Leading up to the Second Vatican Council, our Institute maintained its expansive dynamism. The XVI General Chapter made a call to avoid letting the expansion become harmful to the balance required between works and people. For this reason, on April 22, 1962, Fr. **Peter Schweigwer**, Superior General, erected the new Province of Aragon in Spain, joining several scattered houses of the Organisms of Catalunya and Betica. The new Province's territory included the local communities of Alagon, Barbastro, Calatayud, Caravaca, Cartagena, Jativa, Requena, Valencia-Ermita, Valencia-Fuensanta, Zaragoza and Zaragoza-finca. The first appointed Provincial Government included Fr. Eleuterio Briongos (Provincial Superior), Fr. Evencio Zubiri, Fr. Macario Lopez de Zubiria and Fr. Martin Solaesa (Consultors) and Fr. Enrique Arenas (Minister).



ISAAC BURGOS, CMF

First Provincial of Castilla (1850-1920)

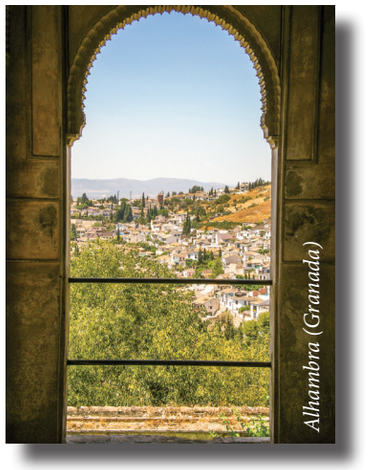


Perorrubio (Segovia, Spain). He was born on today's date. He began studying in the diocesan seminary in Segovia, but later entered the Congregation drawn by its missionary style. He went to Thuir, together with future missionaries **Heredero** and Delgado. In 1877 he was elected by Fr. **Xifre** to found the house on Toledo Street in Madrid. And he was soon Superior of important houses like Pamplona, Calahorra or Bilbao. He attended the General Chapter of 1895 where it was decided to divide the Congregation into two Provinces, being elected First Provincial of one of them, Castilla, with jurisdiction over the communities of South America, which he visited. During his term foundations were made for the first time in Portugal and Argentina. He participated in the creation of the Betica Province, broken off from that of Castilla. After completing his term, he was elected Sub-Director General in the General Chapter of 1912. He died while working in this position in Madrid. He had great qualities and great knowledge. He excelled in the field of administration and missionary preaching.

A Tireless Preacher



May the Lord be blessed for stooping to use such a miserable person as myself to do such great things…He has given me health, energy, words, and all the rest besides. I have always known that the Lord was my fuel; but on this trip [to Andalusia] all the rest knew it too. They could see that I hardly ate or drank anything all day, except a potato and a glass of water. I never ate meat, fish, or eggs, or drank wine. I was always happy and they never saw me tired, despite the fact that some days I preached as many as 12 sermons. **(Aut 703)**



Alhambra (Granada)

I cannot tell the number of sermons God has preached through me, his unworthy minister and useless servant, in the course of the 48 days of this tour. One member of our company was curious enough to list them, and he says that they came to 205: 16 to the clergy, 9 to seminarians, 95 to nuns, 28 to the Sisters of Charity, 35 to the poor in charitable institutions, 8 to the men of the St. Vincent de Paul Society, and 14 to the general public in cathedrals and large churches. **(Aut 704)**



FOR PERSONAL REFLECTION

- *Do you recognize that your life is a constant gift from God?*
- *Do you feel happy and joyful in your mission?*
- *Does fatigue overcome you at times or do you know how to prudently rest in order to resume the mission with greater enthusiasm?*
- *List two or three adequate and possible ways for a missionary to rest.*

"The truth of God cannot be revealed without being excluded.
In order to truly be repentant about their past,
what Peter and Paul did was to understand their personal participation
in rejecting God."
(*Rene Girard*)

JUNE

4



1852. Claret arrives in Santa Cruz del Sur for a pastoral visit, which Fr. **Esteban de Adoain** and Fr. **Lorenzo Sanmarti** have prepared for with a mission.

1855. Claret addresses a pastoral letter to the clergy reminding them of previously set rules about some devotional practices that must be done during Mass, warnings about the saints of the week, etc., with a fine of 25 pesos for those who fail to carry them out.

1859. In the morning Claret preaches in Arenys de Mar (Barcelona) and in the afternoon in Mataro (Barcelona), preaching eight times all together.



A NEW CENTURY (1949-1967)

IN BELGIUM

Leuven is a true *university city*. During the academic year most of downtown's population is made up of students. The university environment is so strong that outside Belgium it is known as the *European Salamanca*. The Catholic University of Leuven, founded in 1425, is one of the oldest Catholic universities that still exist in the world.

In 1962 the establishment of a small community or house of studies in the city of Leuven (Belgium), from Angers (France), became a reality. Fr Felix Alba was named Superior, with Br. Jesus Camara as his companion. On August 4th Fr. Felix Alba wrote: *We just spent our first night in the house. We arrived in Leuven on the first in the car from the College of Angers.* The first missionaries established themselves in two spacious, newly built and unused flats in the center of the city, with space for ten to twelve individuals. They rented it. The purpose of that foundation was to make academic access to the University more accessible for the Claretians.



JOSE GUTIERREZ DE LA CONCHA

Governor of Cuba (1809-1895)



Cordoba of Tucuman (Argentina). He was born on June 4th. In 1814 he moved to Spain. He was Captain General of Vascongadas and Deputy in 1845, then Vice-President of the Congress in 1847. He was Captain General and Governor of Cuba for the first time from 1850 to 1852; for the second time from 1854 to 1859; and for the third time in 1874. In Cuba General Concha and Father Claret were in contact frequently. Upon returning to the Peninsula in 1857, the holy Archbishop, on his way through Havana, administered First Communion to the general's youngest daughter. In Madrid, Claret married the two daughters of General De la Concha in the church of San Sebastian: Vicenta and Maria del Carmen. The letters that crossed between the two of them while in Cuba are interesting, especially those related to a request for pardon for some convicts and in defense of the behavior of Fr. **Esteban Adoain** regarding the matter of mixed marriages.



Alhambra (Granada)



GREAT CONVERSIONS

There were great conversions… I would like to cite just one of the many letters delivered to me at this court. It goes: "Most Excellent Sir and Dear Father: The person who is so bold as to be writing your Excellency these lines is a very great sinner…With all the madness of my corrupt heart, I threw myself into the revolution of 1834-35 and had not entered the holy tribunal of the confessional in all that time…But, thanks be to God and the Blessed Virgin Mary, I finally came around and yesterday, December I of this year 1862, I made a general confession of my life. **(Aut 706)**

My heart is filled with joy…His first call came to me as follows: I sailed from Barcelona on the same boat with a priest who gave me a holy card of the Immaculate Conception with some Christian maxims printed on it. I took it, and though I attached little importance to it, I put it in my wallet and said a Salve for the priest. Her Majesty came to Andalucia and your Excellency came with her. When I saw you I thought of the picture of the Blessed Virgin. But how did I see her? I saw her asking that justice be done against me! I heard that your Excellency was going to be preaching and ran to hear you. I left church terrified and went into my house saying, *It's all over now.*"**(Aut 707)**



FOR PERSONAL REFLECTION

- *Do you live your conversion as an uninterrupted process of evangelizing yourself?*
- *What should a missionary do to promote the conversion of a person and what should they never do?*
- *The best predispositions for the permanent conversion of a missionary are, above all, …*

"If you can't fly then run, if you can't run then walk,
if you can't walk then crawl,
but whatever you do you have to keep moving forward."
(*Martin Luther King, Jr.*)

JUNE

5



1857. Claret is officially appointed royal confessor, which he acknowledges receipt of the following day. And he writes to his collaborators in Cuba, and will continue to do so every month, in order to maintain effective government of the diocese in his absence.

1859. Claret preaches eight sermons in Barcelona: in Valldonzella, House of Charity, Santa Clara, two in San Felipe Neri, to the Religious Sisters of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, in the parish of Sarria and the convent of the Sisters of St. Mary Magdalene.

1865. Claret asks the Pope for the approval of the missionaries' *Constitutions*.



A NEW CENTURY (1949-1967)

IN ZAIRE

In 1962, the Province of Deutschland took over responsibility for the Kingandu Mission (Zaire), founded by the Jesuits in 1929. The beginnings were difficult because Zaire (now the Democratic Republic of Congo), independent since 1960 after having been a Belgian colony, was in a chaotic situation: riots, secession movements (Katanga), rebellions and degradation at all levels that made missionary work extremely difficult. The country found a certain calm after the army took power under General Mobutu. The missionaries had just arrived at their assignment in Kingandu and were already writing on October 11th, the day the Council was inaugurated: *We feel very united with the intentions of the Church and offer our prayers and sacrifices for the joyful success of the Council.* They felt more connected to the Church than ever. The Jesuit who had organized the solemn reception with 1,500 students from the College, said to them: *Do you wonder why I have done this? Because this way you can have contact with the people from these lands.*



CASIMIRO MORALES, CMF

Bolivian Missionary (1874-1968)



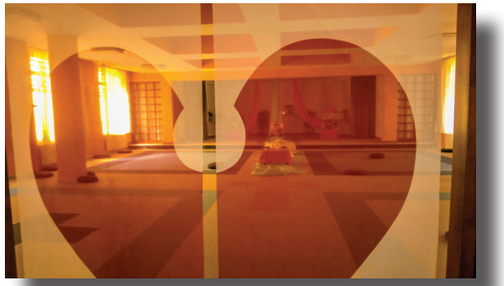
Mohoza (La Paz, Bolivia). He decided to become a priest on one of his visits to the Virgen de Copacabana in 1901. He was ordained a diocesan priest in 1904. He met the Claretian missionaries **Tomas Sese** and Herrero when they first arrived to Cochabamba in 1909. He already knew Father Claret because he used some of his books as a guide for preaching. He entered the Congregation and was sent to Spain, professing in 1911 in Cervera. He was assigned first to Lima (Peru), where he founded the house of Huacho. In 1920 he returned to Bolivia, devoting himself to the itinerant missions from Cochabamba. But above all, he excelled in the exemplary nature of his life. He spoke Quechua perfectly. In 1953 he was still serving as Superior in Tarija, and was sent to Cochabamba again from there in 1955. When he was 90 years old, he was granted Bolivia's highest award, *El Condor de los Andes [The Andean Condor]*, in the presence of the Bolivian episcopate gathered in Cochabamba.

PROMOTION OF CONSECRATED LIFE



In all the towns we passed through where there were nuns, I went to preach to them, and not to lose time while I was at the convent I sent a priest ahead to have them gather within the enclosure before the main altar. Thus, when I got there I could start giving my talk immediately, and when I had finished I could go directly to another convent without their detaining me as they always liked to do. Although I had a prelate's freedom to enter the cloister, I never wanted to for fear of talking and wasting time, which would be contrary to the silence and diligence I always exhorted them to observe. I used to tell them sometimes that if all nuns were mute they would be holier than they are now. **(Aut 709)**

I made them see that they needed to seek to be perfect if they were going to be saved, and that just being nuns was not enough to save them; for many of them, like the foolish virgins, will have to hear from the lips of Jesus, their Spouse, the words, *Nescio vos (I know you not).* I told them how necessary common life is for perfection… **(Aut 714)**



Session Hall of Aliatar House (Loja)



FOR PERSONAL REFLECTION

- *Do you live your religious consecration as a way to grow in love?*
- *What place does the promotion of consecrated life hold in your apostolate?*
- *Are there testimonies of certain religious men and/or women that you realize you have learned a lot from in your life?*
- *You can often tell that a missionary is consecrated and not just a volunteer because …*
- *Pray for the fruits of the tremendous work that the Congregation carries out with Consecrated Life in several continents.*

"I now know that mortification has been an essential need for me in working effectively for souls and in praying as I ought."
(*Aut* 392)

JUNE

6



1859. Claret accompanies the King and Queen from Barcelona to Tarragona. He preaches to the seminarians and the people in the cathedral.

1865. Together with Fr. **Joseph Xifre**, Claret addresses the Pope requesting approval of the *Congregation of Missionaries* and their *Constitutions*.

1866. Most likely on this day Claret meets with the Queen to encourage Fr. **Dionisio's** project of establishing university studies at the baccalaureate level in philosophy and literature, in the physical and natural sciences, and in the Hebrew, Arabic, Greek languages, etc. at El Escorial, as a branch of the Central University.



A NEW CENTURY (1949-1967)

THE SECOND VATICAN ECUMENICAL COUNCIL

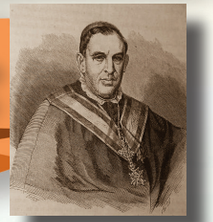
The year 1962 was a year of unsuspected transcendence for the whole Church and, therefore, also for the Congregation: the Second Vatican Ecumenical Council (1962-1965) had begun. During the Council the Church drew lines of renewal, which also affected Consecrated Life. Following in the footsteps of St. Anthony Mary Claret, the only canonized saint among the Fathers of Vatican I (1869-1870), 9 Claretians took an active part in this Council: **Arcadio Maria Larraona**, Cardinal Prefect of the Congregation of Rites. **Abel Antezana**, Archbishop of La Paz (Bolivia); **Arturo Tabera**, Bishop of Albacete (Spain); **Francisco Prada**, Bishop of Uruaçu (Brazil). **Geraldo Fernandes**, Bishop of Londrina (Brazil); **Pedro Grau**, Apostolic Vicar of Quibdo (Colombia). **Jesus Serrano**, Apostolic Vicar of Darien (Panama). **Francisco Gomez**, Apostolic Vicar of Fernando Poo (Equatorial Guinea); **Peter Schweiger**, Superior General.

Another 4 Claretians are added to this number as conciliar experts: Fr. **Siervo Goyeneche,** Fr. **Anastasio Gutierrez,** Fr. **Gregorio Martinez de Antoñana** and Fr. **Antonio Peinador.**



FERNANDO BLANCO LORENZO

Archbishop of Valladolid (1812-1881)



Pola de Lena (Oviedo, Spain). He entered the Order of Preachers at a young age. He was professor and spiritual director of the seminary in Salamanca and then Secretary of the Archbishop of Santiago de Compostela. He was named the Bishop of Avila in 1857. **Saint Maria Micaela** wrote of him: *He is a gem of virtue, talent and zeal.* After Vatican I, he was appointed Archbishop of Valladolid in 1875 and he died there. As bishop of Avila, he invited Father Claret to give a mission in the city in 1860. After the mission, he wrote a fervent pastoral letter to the diocesan faithful. Shortly afterwards he wrote to Nuncio **Barili**: *I am full of so much joy, I have cried with joy and I think out of gratitude to see the fruits (which are still being harvested) of the mission of His Excellency Archbishop Claret, and his life of sacrifice has edified me greatly. I have met many men who have edified me but I do not recall having dealt with anyone of such high perfection. Blessed be God who still allows us to see such excellent role models.*



THE URGENCY OF PREACHING DURING TUMULTUOUS TIMES



Loja (Granada)

For some years now, there has been a great deal of apathy in this region, both on the part of the government and that of the clergy, and the socialists and Protestants have been quick to take good advantage of the opportunity…Everyone knows about the uprising at Loja and the large numbers that joined it—it had the support of no less than 80 thousand enlisted men. We also know that quelling it involved great bloodshed and exile for many. Thanks to Her Majesty's visit and the general amnesty she proclaimed, many of the latter have been able to return to their families… **(Aut 717)**

A great variety of means was used to stir up this trouble, but the main ones were money, books, hate-sheets, and quack propagandists. And the instigators resorted to violence; they persecuted those who refused to join them by preventing them from working and trying to starve them out… **(Aut 718)**

When I learned of all this in Madrid, it broke my heart and I wanted to go there to preach, but Her Majesty told me to wait and that I could preach when we went there, and so I did. But this is not enough; missionaries must be sent there… **(Aut 728)**



FOR PERSONAL REFLECTION

- *Which realities of our world affect you most?*
- *Are you willing to go into difficult situations to give witness to the Gospel?*
- *How can you help current social networks with missionary awareness?*
- *Recall some books that have helped you the most in your missionary life.*

"Welcoming the Word that makes us disciples,
announcing it and witnessing to it,
is the core of our spirituality."
(*SW* 13)

JUNE

7



1846. Claret preaches at the founding of the Archconfraternity of the Immaculate Heart of Mary at the Hospital's church in Lleida.

1851. Claret is about to leave the diocesan capital for a while so he delegates all his extraordinary faculties to the Vicar General, Fr. **John N. Lobo.**

1858. Claret arrives in Madrid, after accompanying the Queen on a two-week trip to inaugurate the Almansa-Alicante-Valencia railway. It is the first of many trips, with abundant preaching.



A NEW CENTURY (1949-1967)

THE PERSECUTION CONTINUES

During Fr. **Peter Schweiger's** term of government, signs of persecution closely besieged the Congregation in various parts of the world.

From 1949 to 1952, the Congregation suffered relentless persecution from Mao-Tse-Tung in mainland China. It was perhaps the most violent persecution of this time. The Church was considered extinct in that country and the few remaining Missionaries, among them Fr. **Joseph Fogued**, had to flee, some to Spain and the majority to strengthen the missions in Japan and the Philippines. Fr. Agustin Rebollar was imprisoned.

In 1956 religious persecution broke out in Argentina, and the Congregation also suffered there.

A few years later, following the revolution of Fidel Castro in 1959, the Claretians were expelled from Cuba and our assets were confiscated there, an island that meant so much to the Congregation.

In 1964 the Democratic Republic of Congo was struggling with revolts and the missionaries managed to come out of them without major damage.



FELIX JUATON, CMF

Filipino Student (1954-1981)



Ayala (Zamboanga, Philippines). In 1971 he was already studying in the seminary as a missionary aspirant. Since the Filipino Claretians did not yet have their own seminary at that time, they spent their *college* years at the Franciscan Seminary of Our Lady of the Angels. Soon his missionary spirit began to bear fruit by converting five Muslims to the faith. In 1979 his life would change when he was chosen to participate as a student in the General Chapter. From there he would go to Colmenar Viejo, in Spain, to finish his degree. There he made his perpetual profession. With full spiritual maturity, while preparing himself for his diaconate ordination and his return to the Philippines, he died in a car accident. It was June 7, 1981. His personal report for perpetual profession summed up these longings: *I want to live in the radical life-style of the obedient, poor and chaste Jesus, in this Congregation of Sons of the Heart of Mary, so as to be faithful to the charism that sacramentalizes the saving mission of the Church.*



FORMATION AS THE KEY TO RENEWAL

Impious men and socialists are doing incalculable harm by such teachings, as well as by their actions and the contempt with which they treat the priesthood, the Mass, the sacraments, and other religious services. To all this they add the mockery and jeers they hurl at those who profess their religion. This is how they swell their ranks daily with new proselytes and quicken the pace of society along the path that leads to perdition. (**Aut 734**)



I have often, or rather constantly, wondered what remedy there might be for such an evil. After much thought I have come to the conclusion that the remedy consists, on the one hand, of training a good, learned, virtuous, zealous, and prayerful clergy and, on the other, of catechizing and preaching to both children and adults and circulating good books and pamphlets. For those who really want to work, there is still faith in Israel and the land is ready to yield of itself. Don´t lose hope, I tell myself, don´t be upset. At the sight of the virtue and fortitude of good priests, the irreligious will lose their boldness and daring. (**Aut 735**)



FOR PERSONAL REFLECTION

- *What are the main challenges the Church encounters in your area of apostolate?*
- *Do you cultivate your formation as a missionary?*

Our world puts up resistance to the Gospel, certainly, but it also offers many opportunities for encounter and dialog.

- *Do you recognize them in your environment?*
- *Enter into a dialogue with a committed layperson about your position. Listen carefully to their concerns and desires.*

"[Clericalism] tarnishes the beauty of priestly vocation by using it to augment self-glory and superiority over other forms of life in the Church rather than laying down one's life in the service of others."
(Mathew Vattamattam, *Called to Radiate the Joy of the Gospel in the World Today*, 61)

JUNE

8



1835. Claret gets an internal passport in the municipality of Vic to travel to Solsona, where he will be ordained a priest.

1850. As a guest, Claret attends mathematics exams at the municipal establishment of mathematics and drawing located in a part of the Convent of La Merced (Vic).

1851. Claret becomes aware of Cuba's climate: he asks Fr. **Pedro Naudo** to send him *at least two bishop's vestments because everything gets ruined by sweat and dust.*



A NEW CENTURY (1949-1967)

NEW VICARIATES AND PRELATURES

The expansion and consolidation of the Local Churches in different parts of the world continues throughout these years, as different Claretians are chosen for the service of promotion and government in various missionary enclaves.

In 1952, the Prelature of Quibdo (Colombia) was created, and Fr. **Pedro Grau** was later appointed the first Apostolic Vicar. Three Claretian Apostolic Prefects had ruled Choco until 1953 when the division of Istmina and Quibdo into two Vicariates left the former to the Fathers of the Foreign Missions of Yuramai and the latter to the Claretians.

In 1963 the Territorial Prelature of Isabela (Philippines) was created, and Fr. **Jose Maria Querexeta** was named the first Prelate. With him the Claretian Provinces of the USA-West and the Province of Betica collaborated for a few years.

And in 1965 the Vicariate of Rio Muni (Equatorial Guinea) was constituted, and Fr. **Rafael Maria Nze** was appointed the first Apostolic Vicar. Later he would be named Bishop of Bata and Archbishop of Malabo.



FRANCISCO BARNADA AGUILAR

Archbishop of Santiago, Cuba (1835-1913)



Santiago (Cuba). He entered the seminary in Santiago and received the tonsure, minor orders and the sub-diaconate at the hands of Father Claret. He was a Doctor of Theology in Salamanca and ordained in Havana in 1858. He was the pastor of Matanzas and penitential canon in Santiago, Cuba. In 1899 he was consecrated Archbishop of Santiago, Cuba. During the beatification process of Father Claret, he declared: *I profess a great deal of devotion and affection for the Servant of God for the many benefits that my diocese and I received from him both in the temporal and spiritual order; I wish with all my soul that he be beatified...In the reform of the clergy he displayed prudence and gentleness worthy of mention...and I can confirm that in Cuba he was regarded as virtuous and extraordinary*—Mons. Francisco Barnada was the first Cuban archbishop of Santiago, Cuba and the first successor of the Apostles in the local Cuban church, appointed directly by the Holy See without the ties and presentations of Royal Patronage.



Statue of Claret outside the Almudena Cathedral (Madrid)



PRACTICE WHAT YOU PREACH

On arriving here at court I felt as happy and rested from my labors as if I had been loafing all the while, and so I went straight to El Escorial to begin a novena mission to Our Lady of Perpetual Help… **(Aut 736)**

After closing the novena, I began to preach the Spiritual Exercises to the community of priests and students at the seminary. Some visiting priests also attended… **(Aut 737)**

Back in Madrid, I busied myself with giving the Spiritual Exercises to the Sisters of Perpetual Adoration… **(Aut 738)**

During the Christmas season I gave a retreat to the French Teaching Sisters… **(Aut 739)**

Resolutions I made during my retreat at El Escorial, from November 10 to 19 inclusive, this present year of 1862:

1. Every year I will make the Spiritual Exercises.
2. Every month I will keep a day of strict recollection, without speaking to anyone.
3. Every week I will confess my sins.
4. Every week I will fast on three days…On Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays, I will take the discipline or something equivalent to it; on Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Saturdays, I will wear the cilice. **(Aut 740)**



FOR PERSONAL REFLECTION

- *Does the authenticity of your life reflect the mission you carry out?*
- *Do you have time to do the annual Spiritual Exercises and the monthly retreat?*
- *Do you remember the resolutions you made during your last Spiritual Exercises?*
- *Recall some of the best retreats you have ever been on. What was the most useful to you?*

"A process of ongoing formation that is carried out seriously and responsibly is the greatest guarantee of promoting fidelity to vocation. Because he has received the gift of vocation, each Claretian should have an attitude of constantly growing in fidelity to it."
(*CVD* 372)

JUNE

9



1848. Claret writes to Bishop **Codina** from Agüimes (Canary Islands) requesting that he send him the books that have just arrived from Barcelona, since he needs them to distribute during the missions.

1853. Claret begins his second pastoral visit, perhaps with the uncertainty of how far he will go, since he plans to present his resignation.

1857. The Bishop of Cadiz, **Arboli**, tells Claret that his *Apuntes para restaurar la hermosura...[Notes to Restore the Beauty...]* are very accurate, exactly what's needed, and it encourages Claret to edit them right away.



A NEW CENTURY (1949-1967)

WITH THE LEBANESE MARONITES

In 1964 Fr. **Severino Maria Alonso** was assigned to Lebanon as Spiritual Director of the Maronite Seminary where Fr. Aquilino Bocos would later also collaborate. It belongs to a branch of the Maronite Church that takes the name of St. Maron († 410), the founder of a spiritual and monastic movement. It is the only Eastern Church that remains in full communion with Rome, despite the tremendous trials it suffered in ancient times. Its name was *Congregation of the Lebanese Maronite Missionaries* and commonly known as *Kreimists Fathers* because the Order's first convent was established in a previously Armenian Catholic convent in Kreim. Founded in 1865 by Archbishop John Habib, who led a rather languid life. Today there are about 4 million of them in a dozen countries, being especially numerous in Brazil, Argentina, Canada, the United States, Australia and Europe. The Congregation's service to the Maronite Seminary began from its contact with this Institute in Salamanca and continued until 1967 when it was abandoned permanently.



SALVADOR ESPINA, CMF

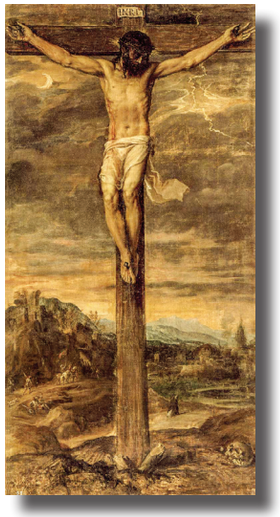
Provincial of Italy (1886-1967)



La Riera (Tarragona, Spain). He entered the Claretian Postulancy in Barbastro in 1898. His brother Paulino would enter later. He professed in 1902. He was ordained a priest in 1911. At the end of that year he accompanied Fr. **Martin Alsina** to Rome and stayed there, along with Fr. **Larraona**, to pursue higher studies. He returned to Spain in 1914 having obtained his doctorate *in utroque jure*. From 1922 to 1934 we see him in the famous *Año de Aranda [Year of Aranda]* as a professor and holding other positions of responsibility, in addition to the apostolate of preaching and the creation of the local newspaper *El Eco de Aranda [Aranda's Echo]*. In 1934 he returns to Rome as Prefect of the International College in charge of 15 students. In 1936 he was appointed Provincial of Italy, a position he held until 1943. He was the founder of the magazine *Bolettino Interno della Provincia Italiana*. He also still held the positions of Superior of Frascati and Procurator General during World War II. He died in Rome.



LIVING BY JESUS' OWN LIFE



During the half hour after Mass, I feel that I am totally annulled. I desire nothing but his holy will. I live by Jesus' own life. In possessing me He possesses nothing, while I possess everything in Him. I tell Him, *Lord, you are my love. You are my honor, my hope, and my refuge…* **(Aut 754)**

Lord, I do not seek or wish to know anything but how to fulfill your holy will. I want nothing but you, and in you and for you alone all other things. You are more than enough for me. I love you, my strength, my refuge, and comfort. You are my Father, my Brother, my Spouse, my Friend, and my All. Make me love you as you love me and as you would have me love you. **(Aut 755)**

My Father, take this poor heart of mine and devour it as I do you, so that I may be changed totally into you. At the words of consecration the substance of bread and wine are changed into the substance of your body and blood. Almighty Lord, consecrate me; speak over me the words that will change me totally into you. **(Aut 756)**



FOR PERSONAL REFLECTION

- *Can you say, like Claret did, that you live by imitating the life of Jesus Christ?*
- *Do you seek to deepen your knowledge of Jesus Christ?*
- *Dedicate some prayer time today to listen to the question that Jesus asked Peter and that he now asks you: "Do you love me?"*
- *Today at Mass, after communion, tell Jesus: "Consecrate me; speak over me the words that will change me totally into you."*

"Few human joys are as deep and thrilling
as those experienced by two people who love one another
and have achieved something as the result of a great, shared effort."
(Francis, *Amoris Laetitia*, 130)

JUNE

10



1851. Claret leaves Santiago, Cuba and goes to Caney, where he will make a pastoral visit that Fr. **Esteban de Adoain** and Fr. **Paladio Currius** have prepared for with a mission.

1853. Under the direction of Fr. Paladio Currius, repair work begins on the episcopal palace which had been badly damaged by past earthquakes.

1858. Claret communicates with Fr. **Joseph Xifre** about his very hopeful proceedings with the Government and with Rome for the approval of the *Constitutions* that had been written a year prior.



A NEW CENTURY (1949-1967)

IN GUATEMALA

The Province of Centroamerica began its first foundation in Guatemala in 1966 from Mercedes de Heredia (Costa Rica), specifically in Antigua and Santa Maria Jesus, in an area known as Hunahpu, halfway between Antigua and Volcan de Agua's summit, inhabited by indigenous Cachiqueles.

In February of the same year the Missionaries took possession of the Palace of San Juan de Obispo, in a small rural village of 600 inhabitants near Antigua, the city of Saint Peter de Betancur *(Hermano Pedro)*, destroyed by the earthquake of 1773, and today one of the richest colonial treasures in the Americas. They also took over the indigenous parish of Santa Maria de Jesus, a town at an elevation of over 2,200 meters on the slopes of the impressive Volcan de Agua.

The Province of USA-East also founded a new mission in Izabal (Guatemala) in 1966: Santo Tomas de Castilla, El Estor and Livingston. The Missionaries carried out a great work among the indigenous population there around Lake Izabal. Other Claretians from England joined them.



JESUS ERICE, CMF

Missionary in Kuna Yala (1911-1990)



Muskitz (Navarre, Spain). After a short time in San Vicente de la Barquera, he was sent to the San Blas Islands (Panama) in 1940, and on one of those islands his body rests, just like that of a *Shaila* (mayor, main leader of a village) does. He developed an incredible missionary ministry, founding houses and building churches, plucking coral stones with a simple lever to reclaim land from the depths of the Caribbean sea and build missionary centers there. He was the inspector of the island's schools. He wrote a Kuna language manual for the missionaries and later one for grammar and a dictionary. He translated the Gospel and other celebrations into the Kuna language. He baptized Nele Kantule, chief of the region and recruited priestly and religious vocations from among the natives: 4 priests, 1 brother and 3 sisters. He was the first non-Kuna buried with their exclusive song of the dead and next to a *Shaila* who gave his life in defense of a Catholic missionary.



Asceticism with Food



My greatest struggle is with eating. My body is like a stubborn mule that often conquers me and mocks me. It is hungry when it sees food on the table. I make it fast three times a week… Every day of the year I forbid it to eat meat or fish, even on major feast days. But I see to it that these dishes are prepared for the others in the house. They eat them, but I do not… (**Aut 759**)

When it comes to abstaining from meat, fish, and wine, the body conforms, although this takes a little work; it puts up the most resistance in abstaining from other foods. It always wants more than I'm willing to give it, and at best it makes me commit the fault of taking a little more than I'd planned. I have a worse fault than this, namely, I eat faster than I want to and had resolved to…I want to slow down my eating so that we finish at the same time, but there's the rub… During the day, outside mealtimes, I never take food or drink. **(Aut 760)**



FOR PERSONAL REFLECTION

- *Do you try to eat enough and eat healthy food for the good of the mission?*
- *Do you think you sometimes go overboard with food and drink?*
- *How do you react when a meal is not pleasing to your taste?*
- *Find a religious reason - not just an aesthetic or medical one – to fast.*

"Where there is danger some salvation grows there too."
(*Friedrich Hölderlin*)

JUNE

11



1846. Claret preaches the sermon on the feast of *Corpus Christi* at the Cathedral of Lleida and shares a place of honor in the procession.

1853. Claret begins a mission with a novena to the Heart of Mary in Gibara (Cuba), where he blessed the city's new church.

1859. After returning from Cuba Claret arrives in Aranjuez on his way back from his first trip to Catalonia.



A NEW CENTURY (1949-1967)

SECOND HISTORY OF THE CONGREGATION

In 1967, Fr. **Cristobal Fernandez** published the *Compendio Historico de la Congregacion [Historical Compendium of the Congregation]* in two volumes. Earlier, in 1941, he had published the life of Blessed Anthony Mary Claret. Fr. **Nicolas Garcia** and the General Chapter of 1949 had suggested this work that the author had refused. Later, at the insistence of Fr. **Peter Schweiger**, he accepted, limiting the extension of his work from 1849 to 1912. He continued the History of Fr. **Mariano Aguilar**, the first historian of the Congregation. In the Prologue, the author warned about the lack of adequate sources and uniform criteria. The publication was accepted by the General Government with some urgency, given the author's reluctance, due to his fear that some selection criteria could be questionable. A large part of the literal documentation had to be eliminated from the original text to make it easier to read. The six volumes the author originally conceived for the History were reduced down to two. The maps that illustrate the publication are attributed to Fr. **Jose Girabal**.



FRANCISCO PRADA, CMF

First Bishop of Uruaçu (1893-1995)



Priaranza del Bierzo (Leon, Spain). He was sent to Brazil in 1918, where he began to work pastorally in diverse communities. Finally, he docked in San Jose del Alto Tocantins, located in present-day Niquelândia. From 1937 he acted as Apostolic Administrator of the Prelature until he was appointed Titular Bishop of Bisita in 1946. The Diocese of Uruaçu was created in 1956. Fr. Prada was appointed the first bishop of that diocese, which replaced the Prelature of San Jose de Tocantins. There he exercised his episcopal ministry until 1976. He then resided in Goiânia with his Claretian brothers for many years, dying at the age of 102 on June 7th. He wrote several books, especially about his missionary area. He fought for justice and for the establishment of the Kingdom. He left a thank you note before dying: *I want to express my deep appreciation and gratitude to the dear Congregation for all you have done for me in the material and spiritual order.* He was buried in the crypt of the cathedral.

AN INTENSE PRAYER



Vocal prayer suits me better than strictly mental prayer, thank God. At each word of the Our Father, Hail Mary, and Glory, I glimpse an abyss of goodness and mercy. Our Lord has granted me the grace of being very attentive and fervent when I say these prayers. The Lord in his goodness and mercy also grants me many graces during mental prayer, but in vocal prayer I have a deeper awareness. **(Aut 766)**



When I am before the Blessed Sacrament, I feel such a lively faith that I can't describe it. Christ in the Eucharist is almost tangible to me; I kiss his wounds continually and embrace Him. When it's time for me to leave, I have to tear myself away from his sacred presence. **(Aut 767)**



FOR PERSONAL REFLECTION

- *What method or methods of prayer do you follow?*
- *Are you satisfied with the prayer level you have?*
- *How could you improve your prayer to help you live more focused on God?*
- *One of my best moments of prayer was when ...*
- *I use the Word of God in my personal prayer in this way ...*
- *In ten years I would like my prayer to be ...*

"Our greatest fear should not be of failure
but of succeeding at things in life that don't really matter."
(*Francis Chan*)

JUNE

12



1852. On a pastoral visit to Manzanillo, Claret baptizes, confirms and gives first communion to a 33-year-old Englishman.

1858. Claret travels with the Queen from Aranjuez to Toledo to inaugurate and bless this section of railroad.



A NEW CENTURY (1949-1967)

INTENSE CONSOLIDATION

Throughout this period, foundations continued in different parts of the world and new Organisms were created.

Initial foundations were made in: Costa Rica and Austria (1951), Japan (1952), Canada (1953), Ecuador and Holland (1955), El Salvador (1956), Switzerland (1958), Nicaragua (1960), India (1961), Zaire and Belgium (1962), and Guatemala (1966), in spite of the fact that many other foundations were rejected due to the Missionaries' lack of material means.

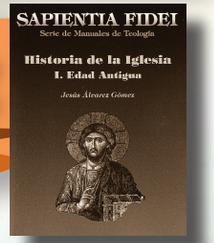
New Organisms were created: Deutschland and France (1949), Cantabria (1950), Centroamerica (1952), Central Brazil and the current Delegation of East Asia (1954), Portugal, United Kingdom - Ireland and the USA-East (1956), Antillas (1957), Philippines and Venezuela (1960), Aragon and Bolivia (1962), Colombia Occidental (1964), and Canada (1965).

In 1966 the Congregation reached a total of 3,607 missionaries, without counting the postulants; including 2,017 Priests, 1,026 Students and 564 Brothers. To date, it is the moment of the greatest amount of professed Claretians in the history of the Congregation.



JESUS ALVAREZ, CMF

Missionary and Historian (1934-2001)



San Pedro de Trones (Leon, Spain). He completed his theological studies at the *Claretianum* in Rome, later specializing in the History of the Church at the Gregorian University in 1967. He devoted himself, all his efforts and work, to this field and achieved widely recognized authority. He focused his attention and research on the Church, the Congregation and the Institutes of Consecrated Life. In addition to being a historical writer he was also a speaker. He was a History professor at the *Institute of Consecrated Life in* Madrid for more than 30 years and a Church history professor in the Diocesan Seminary in the same city for over 20 years. *Historia de la Iglesia y de la Vida Religiosa [History of the Church and Religious Life]*, in several volumes, and *Misioneros Claretianos [Claretian Missionaries]* (Return to Origins) stand out among his many books. His last published work was *Carisma e Historia [Charism and History]* (Keys to interpreting the History of a Religious Congregation). He died in Madrid on June 12th.



THE GOOD SHEPHERD'S GAZE



Mosaic with the Traditio Legis in one of the apses of the Mausoleum of Santa Costanza (Rome)

I hardly know what to say on this topic; God only knows whether or not I have done my duty here. Although it's true that Her Majesty appreciates and sets great store by my advice, her position holds her back from doing all that she knows would be the better thing, especially when it comes to externals. But she is always well disposed to do everything she can when it is a question of herself alone and her inner self. Every day she reads the life of the saint of the day, says the rosary, attends Mass, prays before an image of the Blessed Virgin, and receives the sacraments with great fervor and devotion. Every year she makes the Spiritual Exercises…She never tires of pious things. She is most charitable and gives away a great deal with a right good will…Her greatest trials have to do with external conduct, either because of her courtly training or because she hates to clash with worldly people. She tries to correct external abuses prudently, and although they are not terribly grave, she knows that it would be better if they were otherwise… **(Aut 768)**



FOR PERSONAL REFLECTION

- *The faithful that the Lord has entrusted to me help me to …*
- *The faithful hope that a missionary will …*
- *Considering the limitations and deficiencies of the people in my apostolate, the best thing for me is …*

"Thoroughly convinced that to be a good missionary
it is both useful and essential to have love,
I have searched for this hidden treasure
and would sell everything in order to find it."
(*Aut* 442)

JUNE

13



1835. Claret is ordained a priest in Solsona by Bishop Fray Juan Jose Tejada, a Mercedarian.

1843. Claret helps the faithful of San Juan de Olo Parish obtain permission to ring the bells three times a day since he is acting as substitute pastor there.

1865. Claret suffers a few days of poor health, so on this day (his birthday and the anniversary of his ordination) doctors do not allow him to exercise his episcopal functions. He gets better in a few days.



A NEW CENTURY (1949-1967)

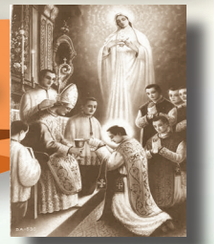
VIGIL OF CRISES

The necessary renewal promoted by the Second Vatican Council, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, also led to confusion. In the Church, and also in the Congregation, a considerable number of Claretians, especially young students and priests, suffered various crises during those years, many of which could not be overcome. Later, gradually, and above all thanks to the new vocations in Asia and Africa, the Congregation's numbers as a whole recovered.

Of the 3,607 professed and Novices in 1967, there were 2,760 professed in 1997; and 2,892 professed plus 117 Novices in January 2018. There were 2,017 Priests in 1967; 1,917 in 1991; and 2,234 in January 2018. Students went from 1,026 in 1967 to 721 in 1970; 378 in 1973; 488 in 1997; and 423 in January 2018. There were 564 Brothers in 1967; 271 in 1997; and 135 in January 2018. In total: in 1967 there were 3,607 Professed and Novices; and 3,009 in January 2018.



CLARET'S PRIESTLY ORDINATION



Father Claret's ordination took place in Solsona, a city in the province of Lleida. The ordaining bishop was Fray Juan Jose de Tejada. Claret was 27 years old at the time. Although he had not finished his studies, the Bishop of Vic wanted to move up his ordination because he saw something unique in him. He could not be ordained in his own diocese of Vic because the Bishop was ill. *Before my priestly ordination I made a forty-day retreat. I have never made a retreat so full of sufferings and trials but neither, perhaps, so replete with great graces. I realized this on the day I said my First Mass, June 21, the feast of St. Aloysius Gonzaga, a patron of the Congregation, as well as on my ordination day, the feast of St. Anthony, my own patron saint.* (Aut 102). His ordination to the priesthood was the fulfillment of Claret's childhood dream. But above all it was a starting point in his vocation as an apostolic missionary.



A FRUITFUL APOSTOLATE IN THE ROYAL COURT

This year the royal family…has remained either in Madrid or at the residences of Aranjuez or La Granja… **(Aut 775)**

…I gave a retreat to the ladies and gentlemen of the court, and it did a great deal of good…I also preached at a novena to St. Joseph on the occasion of the dedication of a new altar and statue in the church of Montserrat. This novena was well attended and very beneficial. I also preached retreats to the Sisters of Perpetual Adoration, the Piarists, the Tertiaries, to young girls, and to servant girls. **(Aut 776)**

I hear confessions every morning in Madrid from 7:00 to 11:00, after which I receive visitors… **(Aut 777)**

This year during our stay at the royal country estates, I have stationed myself in the confessional every day after Mass because I hear the confessions of all the royal maids and servants… **(Aut 778)**

While at Aranjuez I wrote the second volume of The Well-Instructed Seminarian, as well as various leaflets. At La Granja I wrote The Well-Instructed Schoolgirl… **(Aut 779)**



Aranjuez Gardens (Madrid)



FOR PERSONAL REFLECTION

- *I recognize God in my apostolate, especially when …*
- *I was surprised to see the apostolic fruits of …*
- *Relying on the strength of the Word of God when difficulties arise it is possible if …*

"In the depths of Mary's Heart we discover and learn the way to listen."
(*SW* 15)

JUNE

14



1844. After preaching the whole month of May in Barcelona at Santa Maria del Mar and continuing on there for a few days, Claret goes to Vic, where Bishop **Luciano Casadevall** tells him where he should preach.

1851. Claret begins his pastoral visit in El Cobre (Cuba), with great initial success in arranging marriages for cohabiting couples. But almost immediately there will be complaints of him having married people of different races.

1860. The Pope writes Claret a thank you letter for the gift of 5,000 duros that he sent him on May 23rd.



THE RENEWAL (1967 - 1979)

THE CHAPTER OF RENEWAL (1967)

The XVII General Chapter in 1967, inspired by the Second Vatican Council, was the driving force of renewal. It lasted from September 1 to November 14, 1967 and took place in Rome. There were 61 Capitulars presided by Fr. **Peter Schweiger**.

The Capitulars elaborated a set of documents that signified a dramatic change in the direction of the Congregation. Our missionary spirit was especially emphasized as the *most efficacious, opportune, and urgent,* and our religious and apostolic life, our charism and spiritual heritage were renewed in depth, going back to the inspiring sources of our Fr. Founder. Fr. Antonio Leghisa (1967-1979), Italian-Slovenian, was elected Superior General. One of the most important undertakings was beginning to adapt the *Constitutions* to the norms and the spirit of the Council, as well as the renewal of the *CIA*, which from that moment on was called the *Directory*. From this Chapter a new bulletin of information was born in the Congregation in 1968, called *NUNC (Nuntii de Universa Nostra Congregatione*).



ARTURO TABERA ARAOZ, CMF

Bishop and Cardinal (1903-1975)



Barco de Avila (Avila, Spain). He entered the postulancy of the Claretian Missionaries in Don Benito (Badajoz) at only 12 years old. He was sent to Rome to study canon and civil law and was ordained a priest in 1928. He moved to Madrid as assistant director of the magazine *Ilustracion del Clero*. Soon after, he was assigned to Rome to collaborate with Fr. **Arcadio Larraona** on the magazine *Commentarium pro Religiosis*. He founded the new magazine *Vida Religiosa* in 1944. In 1946 he was appointed Apostolic Administrator of Barbastro. In 1950 he was appointed the first Bishop of the Diocese of Albacete. In 1968 he was promoted to Archbishop of Pamplona. Less than a year later, Paul VI elevated him to the dignity of Cardinal. In 1971 he was appointed Prefect of the Congregation for Divine Worship and in 1973 Prefect of the Congregation for Religious and Secular Institutes. He died on June 13th. His body rests in the Minor Basilica of the Immaculate Heart of Mary in Rome.



THE DIFFICULT PRACTICE OF MEEKNESS



Painting of Claret converting four prisoners sentenced to death (General Curia, Rome)

I will continue making my particular examen on the virtue of meekness. I will remember the meekness of Jesus, my model and master… **(Aut 782)**

I will never lose my temper; I will be silent and make an offering to God of all that causes me pain. Poverty, humiliations, pains and despising, etc **(Aut 785)**

I will never complain but resign myself to the will of God, who tries me for my own good. **(Aut 786)**

I will always be pleasant with everyone especially those who annoy me. The thing that has cost me the greatest trouble has been remaining meek in the face of the crowd of people who come to ask for favors at court or for some government post. Despite all the excuses I give them for not being able to help them, they simply will not be convinced, and this has been a source of great torment to me. Before receiving visitors in audience, which I do from 11:00 to noon, I ask God for the grace not to get angry. Between visitors I lift my eyes and heart to a picture of the Blessed Virgin Mary, asking for the grace I need to make it more bearable. I have given people financial aid or a book, and they have gone away less disheartened than when they came. **(Aut 792)**



FOR PERSONAL REFLECTION

- *Search your albums for some photos of your missionary journey. Try to remember the names of the people you see … and bring to mind one positive thing about each one of them.*
- *Thank God for all the good this chain of people linked to your history has done for you.*
- *What is most costly for you in your dealings with others in your apostolate?*
- *Are there people who are particularly annoying to you?*
- *Do you try to be meek?*

"In a community in which common life is not observed there can be no real perfection."
(*Aut* 711)

JUNE

15



1843. Claret preaches the sermon on the Feast of *Corpus Christi* in Castellterçol (Barcelona), where he is preaching a mission.

1857. Claret begins to work with **Caixal** on transferring nuns from Cuba to the Peninsula. The tedious process will keep him busy for two years.

1861. Claret receives an interior message from Jesus: *You'll have work to do, Anthony*



THE RENEWAL (1967 - 1979)

NEW PROVINCES AND NEW MISSIONARY EXPANSION

As a result of the program of renewal outlined by the Second Vatican Council, the Congregation experienced structural changes and the awakening of missionary desire.

In April of 1968 the Province of Leon was created and the Provinces of Castilla and Cantabria were reorganized. The latter would take the name Euskal Herria. The Visitorship of Austria was also created.

Enthusiasm for the missionary ideal and a renewed interest in new vocations were aroused. After the 1967 Chapter, many Organisms sought out their own areas for missionary expansion. That is what Catalunya did in Japan and Brazil, Castilla in Panama and Honduras, Euskal Herria in Bolivia, Betica in Argentina and the Philippines, Aragon in Brazil and Paraguay, Leon in Peru, USA-East in Guatemala, USA-West in Nigeria and the Philippines, Italy in Gabon, Canada in Cameroon, Deutschland in India and Zaire, Portugal in Angola, and Mexico and Western Colombia in their own territories of Guerrero and Choco respectively.



SAINT MICAELA OF THE BLESSED SACRAMENT

Foundress (1809-1865)



Madrid (Spain). Her secular name was Micaela Desmaisieres Lopez de Dicastillo y Olmedo, Vizcountess of Jorbalan. Directed by the Jesuit Fr. Carasa, she had her most decisive experience at the hospital of San Juan de Dios in Madrid, when she first came into contact with prostitutes. That visit was decisive and led her to found the *Sisters Adorers (Handmaids of the Blessed Sacrament and of Charity)* in 1856, thanks to the help and advice of St. Anthony Mary Claret. Father Claret met Mother Micaela of the Blessed Sacrament as a royal confessor. He helped her both spiritually and materially. He even touched up the Constitutions of her Institute in order to obtain their approval. They lived across from each other at the Plaza de Anton Martin in Madrid and visited each other frequently. Affected by cholera, she died on August 24, 1865 in Valencia. Pius XI canonized her on March 4, 1934. Her memorial is celebrated on June 15th.

PRAYING FOR MISSIONARY VOCATIONS



On November 14, 1863 I had to preach a sermon on the Blessed Virgin Mary during a retreat I was giving in the novitiate to the sisters, students, and servants at the convent of the Carmelite Tertiaries in Madrid. It was a Saturday, the day on which I do spiritual reading on the Blessed Virgin… In the course of my reading I ran across this passage: "The Carthusian Order was in dire straits for vocations because no one wanted to enter such an austere, lonely, and silent way of life. The best remedy they hit upon was to dedicate themselves to the Blessed Virgin by taking a public vow to recite her office (the Little Office) daily. This plan brought them such an excellent stock of vocations that from that year, 1084, to the present, they have never had to mitigate their severe rule… **(Aut 793)**

On this day it occurred to me that if the Congregation said the Little Office of the Blessed Virgin as well as the Divine Office, Mary would provide the Congregation with all the vocations it needs in order to grow, spread, and endure. **(Aut 794)**



Santa Maria del Carmen School - Convent of the Carmelite Tertiaries (Madrid)



FOR PERSONAL REFLECTION

- *Do you pray for vocations?*
- *Does your life attract future missionary vocations?*
- *Do you feel that the Congregation's and your own Organism's vocational ministries are also your responsibility?*

"Your potential is the sum of all the possibilities
God has for your life."
(*Charles Stanley*)

JUNE

16



1858. Claret presents his resignation as Archbishop of Cuba to the minister and to the Pope. He clearly realizes he will not be returning to Cuba.

1864. Claret informs Fr. **Xifre** that he will be able to travel to Catalonia to preside over the General Chapter of the Congregation.



THE RENEWAL (1967 - 1979)

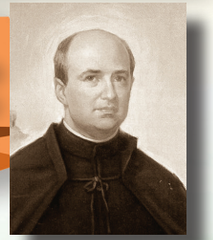
IN HONDURAS

During the First Vatican Council, while Claret was speaking with the only bishop of Honduras, he told him about the missionary deeds of the late Fr. **Manuel Subirana**, one of the Archbishop's team members in Cuba. Later, Claret will write to Fr. **Joseph Xifre** that famous and very prophetic letter: *They say America is a vast field and very fertile, and that in time many more souls will go to heaven from there than from Europe. This part of the world is like an old vine that doesn't bear much fruit; America is the young vine*. In 1967 the Provincial Superior of Centromerica asked the Province of Castilla for Missionaries to take charge of some parishes in the Department of Paraiso (Honduras). After this project failed, the Bishop of San Pedro Sula offered them the two parishes of Tela and La Ceiba, in the northern part of the country, which were accepted by the Provincial, Fr. **Candido Bajo**, and a first group of Missionaries were sent there in November 1967. Castilla made these foundations powerful centers of evangelization, contributing many members in the following years.



SAINT HENRY DE OSSO

Founder (1840-1896)



Vinebre (Tarragona, Spain). He was a Spanish priest and founder of the Congregation of the *Society of St. Teresa of Jesus*, commonly known as the *Teresian Sisters*. For a time he studied at the Seminary of Las Ramblas in Barcelona. Bishop Anthony Mary Claret was the Director of the session of Spiritual Exercises in preparation for his subdiaconate. Henry de Osso consulted with him, went to confession with him and received from his lips confirmation of his priestly vocation. *I had the great joy of doing Spiritual Exercises with Father Claret (House of Gracia), confessing to him and deciding that yes, it was God's will that I be a priest, with great joy and peace, without ever having been tempted, by the mercy of God, against my vocation.* We are not sure if the intense interaction these two men of great spirit had during this week can be called a deep friendship or not. The bishop and the seminarian had a 33-year age difference, but the connection between them, both with souls of an apostle, is unquestionable.



COMFORT FOR A SLANDERED SOUL



An Auca (cartoon) against Claret entitled "Father Clareinete" (National Library (Madrid)

This year I have been much slandered and persecuted by all sorts of persons. I have been attacked by journalists and lampooned in pamphlets, parodied in books, in touched-up photographs, and in many other ways-even by the very demons. At times my nature rebelled a little, but I at once calmed myself in resignation and conformity to God's will. I considered the example of Jesus and realized how far I was from suffering what He suffered for me, and so I kept calm. This year, too, I wrote a little book entitled *Comfort for a Slandered Soul.* **(Aut 798)**



FOR PERSONAL REFLECTION

- *What comforts you the most in times of greatest difficulty?*
- *Do you resent criticism, slander and defamation?*
- *Where do you find peace, tranquility and harmony?*
- *When I am praised the most convenient thing to do is ...*
- *If someone criticizes and defames me, it would never occur to me to ...*
- *It calms me down a lot when I go to ...*

"Jesus wants a Church attentive to the goodness
which the Holy Spirit sows in the midst of human weakness,
a Mother who, while clearly expressing her objective teaching,
always does what good she can, even if in the process, her shoes get soiled by the mud of the street."
(Francis, *Amoris Laetitia,* 308)

JUNE

17



1856. Claret writes to Fr. **Pedro Naudo** expressing dissatisfaction about what the *Libreria Religiosa* is doing, and especially about the need for notes on the *Historia Eclesiastica de Alzog [Ecclesiastical History of Alzog]* so that it does not fall into Protestantism.

1867. Claret delivers a petition to the Queen from the Bishop of Vic addressed to the Ministry of Development requesting that the local government of Vic vacate the north wing of La Merced convent and hand it over to the Missionaries.

1867. Claret proposes to Fr. **Joseph Xifre** that Fr. **Jaime Clotet**, or Fr. **Pedro Alibes**, or Fr. **Clement Serrat** accompany him as chaplain during his trip to Rome.



THE RENEWAL (1967 - 1979)

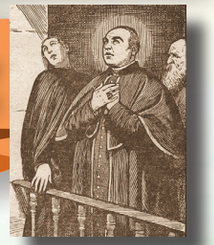
INTERPROVINCIAL CONFERENCES ARE BORN

As soon as the XVII General Chapter of Renewal was finished, the constitution of the Interprovincial Conferences began to facilitate the work of communion and apostolic coordination between Provinces. Specifically, those of Spain and Guinea, Latin America and Anglo-America were created. Later they adapted to the new circumstances. **ACLA:** African Claretians. In 1988 it included all the African countries where we were. **ASCLA:** Asian Claretians (1982). In 2007 it was divided into: **ASCLA EAST** (the Asian countries we are in, except India, Sri Lanka and Malaysia), and **ASCLA WEST** (India, Sri Lanka and Malaysia). **CEC**: Conference of Claretians of Central Europe (1987, except IBERIA). **CICLA**: Interprovincial Confederation of Claretians of Latin America (1968, except NACLA). **IBERIA**: Spain and Portugal. In 2013 it becomes part of **ECLA** (European Claretians). **NACLA**: North Atlantic Claretians (USA, Canada, Ireland and England, 1990). In 2012, CICLA and NACLA unite, covering all of the American countries, calling themselves **MICLA** Misioneros Claretianos de America [Claretian Missionaries of America].



RAMON HOMS, CMF

Exemplary Missionary (1838-1897)



Cardona (Lleida, Spain). He entered the Congregation as a sub-deacon in 1859. In the *Necrologio* he was called a *living example of the rule.* He stood out for his observance, fervor and apostolic zeal. He died in Barcelona on June 17, 1897. His examples and wise direction contributed greatly in helping the holy brother **Manuel Giol** advance greatly on the path to perfection. In his *Vida Edificante del Padre Claret [The Edifying Life of Father Claret],* Fr. **Clotet** talks about healings during the life of the Saint. While Ramon Homs was still young, his chest had become so delicate that the doctor who visited the community in Vic said he would die of tuberculosis. Father Claret saw him when he went to visit that mission house during one of the years he was living in Madrid, and without prescribing any medicine other than recommending water from marsh-mallow root and a certain method of life, within two years he was able to work, giving missions and Spiritual Exercises until the end of his life.



TOUCHED BY THE MERCY OF GOD



Another caricature against Claret

A 64 year old woman who came to confession to me had been to confession only twice in her life… After three years of marriage, she walked out on her husband. She had been a bad sort ever since she was a child, but after her marriage she went from bad to worse…and had behaved scandalously wherever she went. Finally she came back to her hometown, Madrid, and began to feel the need to go to confession. It had been 44 years since her last confession… When I had listened to the story of her long and very wicked life, and could see how repentant and eager to change her life she was, I asked her whether or not she had kept up some devotion during this time. She answered me that, despite her evil life, she had said seven Our Fathers and Hail Marys to our Lady of Mount Carmel every day because when she was a little girl she had heard that it was good to say these prayers. In November, 1864, she went to confession and has done well ever since… **(Aut 828)**

Madrid, March 21, 1865. A man who was converted and came to confession happened to be the one who had made some very wicked and slanderous caricatures and touched-up photographs of me, which have been sold and circulated everywhere. **(Aut 829)**



FOR PERSONAL REFLECTION

- *How do you act when people who have lived far from God approach you?*
- *Do you live your mission "going forth" to meet those who are not even interested in the faith?*
- *How do you treat someone who approaches you to say that they regret having offended you?*

"Pain and suffering are always inevitable for a large intelligence and a deep heart. The really great men must, I think, have great sadness on Earth."
(*Fyodor Dostoyevsky*)

JUNE

18



1857. Claret attends a meeting at the Escuela de Cristo [School of Christ], in Madrid, where they beg him to give a talk.

1863. Through a letter to a friend written on this day, we know that Claret is overwhelmed with correspondence and cannot answer all the letters he receives.

1868. Perhaps because Claret is a resigned bishop or because of age, he feels excused from participating in the Council, but *they want him to be there and attend anyway.*



THE RENEWAL (1967 - 1979)

CENTERS FOR THE STUDY OF RELIGIOUS LIFE

The Claretian Missionaries had already been developing a long and fruitful apostolate among religious men and women even before the Council, even carrying out initiatives of great impact and significance.

As a logical consequence of these efforts, and in the shadow of the renewal driven by the Second Vatican Council for the Institutes of Consecrated Life, in 1968 the first course of Studies in Religious Life began to be held in Madrid, which later adopted the institutional name *Instituto Teologico de Vida Religiosa [Theological Institute of Religious Life]*. This initiative gave rise to a new and significant front in the evangelizing task of the Congregation, which was later extended to Rome with the *Claretianum - Istituto di Teologia della Vita Religiosa [Institute of Theology of Religious Life]* (1972), and later, *della Vita Consacrata [of Consecrated Life]*. Years later, the *Institute for Consecrated Life in Asia* (ICLA, 1997) was inaugurated, in Quezon City (Philippines) and in Bangalore (India) with the *Sanyasa: Institute of Consecrated Life* (2005). And the establishment of other possible Institutes of Religious Life in Latin America and Africa is foreseen in the near future.



TERESA GALLIFA

Foundress (1850-1907)



San Hipolito de Voltrega (Barcelona, Spain). Foundress of the *Handmaids of the Passion.* She was born on June 21st. Married at 18 and widowed at 32, she emigrated to Vic and lived off charity. Spiritually directed by the Claretian Valentin Morla, she learned to be a midwife. In 1891 she moved to Barcelona and founded the *Santa Isabel Maternity Shelter.* She died in 1907. In 1971, her beatification process began. The Servant of God did not know Father Claret personally but she did declare during his canonization process that she had devotion toward him and that he had helped her to follow her vocation. *I have heard of the servant of God, Anthony Mary Claret from many people, beginning with my mother, may she rest in peace, who told me when I was very young that he was a saint... I profess devotion and affection to the Servant of God for the favors I have received from him, and I wish for his beatification, because I believe he deserves it, since I consider him a saint.*



DELICATE SITUATIONS IN THE MISSION FIELD

On July 17, 1865, at 7:00 in the morning, while I was praying before the image of the Christ of Pardon in the church of La Granja, Jesus told me, *Anthony, leave.* This command came as a result of the queen's recognition of the so-called Kingdom of Italy. There had been some talk hinting of this, and the bishops were beginning to send in written objections…Her Majesty asked me what I thought…I answered that they seemed to be in perfect order and that I would do the same if I were in their place…They wrote for their flocks, but I had no need to because I had but one sheep and she was about to be devoured by the wolf… **(Aut 832)**

Since anyone could see that this matter would eventually come to a head, I had been constantly warning her to avoid granting this recognition…She had promised me that she would never grant it… **(Aut 833)**

Finally, on July 14…the full Council of State Ministers arrived at La Granja at 9:00 in the evening. The President of the Council, O'Donnell, went alone to the palace and talked with the queen from 9:00 to 11:00, telling her that this matter of the Kingdom of Italy was not as bad as people thought and that its bark was worse than its bite…One could truly say that she was both deceived and threatened into doing what she did. **(Aut 834)**



La Granja de San Ildefonso (Segovia)



FOR PERSONAL REFLECTION

- *Have you experienced delicate situations that could destabilize your apostolate?*
- *Are you able to express the message of the Gospel in adverse situations with freedom, charity and clarity?*
- *After reading the text from the Autobiography above, what do these words suggest?*
- *Freedom Patience Clarity Distance Understanding.*

"You are the only Bible some unbelievers will ever read."
(*John MacArthur*)

JUNE

19



1856. Claret begins Spiritual Exercises with his close companions, which were delayed due to the attack. They are the last ones he does with them in Cuba, during which he explains to them his uncertainty about whether or not he will remain on the island.

1867. Claret writes to Fr. **Manuel Miura** that he is enjoying good health at the moment, so much so that he views his upcoming trips with optimism.



THE RENEWAL (1967 - 1979)

CARDINAL ARTURO TABERA

In April of 1969 the news broke of Fr. **Arturo Tabera Araoz'** appointment as the second Cardinal of the Congregation, then Archbishop of Pamplona (Spain). After the Civil War, he had been sent to Rome to direct *Commentarium pro Religiosis*. In 1944 he founded the magazine *Vida Religiosa*. He also held the position of General Prefect of Studies. In 1946 he was appointed Administrator and later Bishop of Barbastro. In 1950 he was transferred to the new Diocese of Albacete and in 1968 he became Archbishop of Pamplona. In 1969, Pope Paul VI made him a Cardinal and two years later he entrusted him with the position of Prefect of the Sacred Congregation for Divine Worship. In 1973 he was appointed Prefect of the Sacred Congregation for Religious and Secular Institutes. His term was interrupted by his death two years later. The Holy Father remembered him *as a brother who always honored the Church ... especially for his unforgettable human and religious virtues, those of a man of God open to the kindness and charity of his brothers.*



VENERABLE ESPERANZA GONZALEZ PUIG

Foundress (1823-1885)



Lleida (Spain). On June 19, 1862, Mother Esperanza founded the Congregation of the *Missionary Handmaids of the Immaculate Heart of Mary* in Lleida. A mission given by Father Claret in that city in 1846 had a decisive influence on her Cordimarian spirituality. He was later consulted in Madrid through Mr. Jose Escola about the intentions of Mother Esperanza. Father Claret was reluctant at first to favor a new foundation, since institutes with the same purposes already existed. However, during a visit to Lleida in 1864, he expressed that he was in favor of the new Institute. Currently, the goal of the *Missionary Handmaids* is the education of girls and young women, and the protection and reeducation of marginalized girls and young women. Mother Esperanza died from a bad case of cholera. She did not live to see the pontifical approval of the Institute, but she witnessed how the Congregation had taken root and extended its branches. On April 28, 2006, the Foundress was declared Venerable.



DISTANCING YOURSELF FROM PROBLEMS

This vote of approval was like a death-blow to me. I went to the queen and showed her the evil of what she had done. She could only cry… **(Aut 836)**

The whole affair so upset me that it gave me a bad case of diarrhea. Because every year someone in the queen's entourage had died of diarrhea, presumably contracted from drinking the water at La Granja, I seized upon this as an excuse to leave the court and go to Catalonia…[The Queen] begged and beseeched me with moans, sighs, and tears not to leave. I told her that I had to go to save my life, that I had made more than enough sacrifices for her during the eight years and months I had been at her side… **(Aut 837)**

I left La Granja for Madrid, then on to Zaragoza, Barcelona, and finally, Vic. On leaving the atmosphere of the court I felt somewhat better, but the diarrhea lasted several days, even in Vic. **(Aut 838)**

On August 14 of this year, at 9:30 in the morning while I was at prayer in the church of St. Dominic in Vic…the Lord spoke to me from the Blessed Sacrament: *You will go to Rome.* **(Aut 839)**



Church and cloister of St. Dominic (Vic)



FOR PERSONAL REFLECTION

- *How do you react to the problems that arise in your mission field?*
- *Do problems tend to affect you physically?*
- *Do you know how to distance yourself in order to think things over better?*
- *Recall some biblical quotes that have helped you to confront difficult situations in the mission field.*
- *Pray for a missionary you know who is going through a difficult situation.*

"Love is the most necessary of all the virtues."
(*Aut* 438)

JUNE

20



1841. Claret begins a ten-day mission in Vallfogona del Ripolles (Girona).

1853. Claret travels from Gibara to Holguin (Cuba) to make a pastoral visit.

1865. Claret accompanies the King and Queen on their visit to the school of the Carmelite Sisters of Charity in Madrid.



THE RENEWAL (1967 - 1979)

IN ANGOLA

In 1969, the Bishop of Luso offered the Claretian Missionaries a large section of his diocese and it was the Province of Portugal that answered the call. The area was an authentic mosaic of tribes: Quioco, Quimbumbo, Luena, et al. Some with very difficult languages and customs that were quite ancestral. There were also groups of Christians who traveled up to 60 km on foot to attend Sunday Mass. The first Mission took place in Luso, an extensive territory of 20,000 square kilometers. The Missionaries zealously attended to its 25,000 inhabitants, of which more than 5,500 were Catholics and another 5,500 catechumens, with 40 catechetical centers, three chapels and a large number of schools. After receiving death threats, they had to leave and return the apostolate field to the diocese. The guerrilla atmosphere was somewhat common. In 1974 the mission in Tchamutete was established, but escalating violence resulted in the Missionaries' expulsion in 1977. The Superiors ended the Missionaries' stay in Angola until better times, and the members went on to reinforce the Mission in São Tome.



FRANCISCO COCA

Collaborator of Claret (1820-1858)



Capellades (Barcelona, Spain). He studied at the seminary in Barcelona. After his ordination, he was an assistant priest at the parish church of Vilanova i la Geltru. In 1850 he accompanied Father Claret to Cuba as a missionary, where he developed an intense and fruitful ministry of evangelization. The saint would later write about him: *I met this priest when I went to preach the Month of May devotions at Villanueva, where he was an assistant pastor. When he learned of my nomination he offered me his services; I accepted and he came along with me. He was a very kind priest, as simple as a child and very zealous and fervent. He always worked with Father Subirana as a teammate, and there was a great bond of sympathy between them. They were very zealous and fervent, always on the move from one village to another, giving missions. Both had very pleasing voices, and everyone used to go to the mission just to hear them sing; of course, after the songs came the sermon, and so they were caught. There's no telling the amount of good they did. Later on Father Coca went to Guatemala, entered the Society of Jesus, and died a Jesuit.* (Aut 594) He died on June 23rd.



ALWAYS FULFILL THE WILL OF GOD

When I saw the way things were going, I asked the Papal Nuncio to ask Rome what I should do. The Nuncio gave me Rome's response in the following letter: "I am not surprised…that Bishop Claret should be bewildered and in search of authoritative advice on the resolve he should take to bring some calm to his spirit. Certainly, in view of the good he could do for the cause of religion, notwithstanding the recognition of the so-called Kingdom of Italy, he cannot be asked to leave his post at court; but neither can he be asked to stay, if it occasions him any spiritual anguish or if he believes that doing so would be contrary to his conscience. Hence there is no recourse for him but to recollect himself in the Lord and, after imploring divine guidance, to do whatever God inspires him to… **(Aut 845)**

…I know full well that your aspirations, tendencies, and desires would lead you to leave as quickly as possible, and you would have more than enough reasons to be at ease over doing so. But experience has taught me that aspirations, tendencies, and desires are not conscience… **(Aut 848)**

…But your removal would make it difficult for you to render the Church some very valuable services, particularly in the election of bishops, and would prejudice the queen's cause in the eyes of the faithful and the clergy… **(Aut 849)**



Statue of Claret on one of the sides of the Sagrada Familia Basilica (Barcelona)



FOR PERSONAL REFLECTION

- *Are you open to human intervention in order to discern the will of God?*
- *Do you strive to distinguish your own aspirations and desires from what God may want for your life and mission?*
- *When making a decision, do you weigh the positive and negative repercussions they could cause for others?*

"Let us learn to read the reality in which the people whom we address live, and learn how to express ourselves in their language and in their symbolic world." (*SW* 16.3)

JUNE

21



1835. Claret celebrates his first Mass in his hometown, where he remains as a beneficiary since he does not have a parochial assignment at the moment.

1851. Claret issues an edict from El Cobre (Cuba) establishing that the poor are not to be charged for parish or curia rights for marriage records, in an effort to correct the problem of cohabitating couples.

1867. Claret has a long interview with the nuncio and gets a favorable answer for Mother **Paris'** nuns. It must be about the foundation in Reus.



THE RENEWAL (1967 - 1979)

THE PRELATURE OF SÃO FELIX DO ARAGUAIA

This Prelature was founded in 1970 and is located in the pre-Amazon region of Brazil. It extends over 150 thousand square kilometers and contains several indigenous villages, landless laborers and large estates. It has no more than 150 thousand inhabitants. The Prelature was handed over to the care of the Spanish Claretians of the Province of Aragon, with Fr. Pedro Casaldaliga as its first bishop for 40 years. He took office as the first Apostolic Visitor and then as Bishop. This Mission had been accepted in 1968 by the Province of Aragon. Born after Vatican II, the Prelature wanted to be a Church committed to the challenges of reality from the very beginning. But the openings were very soon suppressed; schools and dispensaries were closed; pastoral ministers were imprisoned and tortured. The pivotal point was the assassination of a member of the missionary team, Jesuit Fr. João Bosco Penido Burnier, carried out at the feet of Bishop Pedro Casaldaliga, at the very police station where they had gone to protest injustices committed in the town.



INOCENCIO HEREDERO, CMF

Missionary and Preacher (1846-1895)



Cantimpalos (Segovia). Almost newly ordained in the diocese of Segovia, he entered the novitiate in Thuir. He was Fr. **Xifre's** right-hand man for many foundations such as Alfaro, where he was the first Superior; of Zafra, center of their missionary activities for a long time; of Almendralejo, where he maintained enduring fame directing the works of the new church; of Don Benito, where he was also the first Superior and of Ciudad Real. His reputation as a preacher spread throughout Spain, but especially in the churches in Madrid. Thousands of associates of the Archconfraternity of the Immaculate Heart of Mary witnessed his enthusiasm. He died in Madrid after just having settled some matters for other foundations in Ciudad Real and Manzanares. The funeral was a grand demonstration of mourning by all the clergy and associations in Madrid. It was said that he was on Fr. Xifre's list as his potential successor. But above all he stood out as an extraordinary speaker.

ADVISERS TO SEEK THE WILL OF GOD





Vic, August 23, 1865. Because I was unable to decide whether to return to court or not, I discussed it with the Superior General of the Congregation of the Immaculate Heart of Mary, who in turn enjoined the four Consultors of the Congregation to pray over the matter until we met again on an assigned day. The day arrived, and of the five votes cast, three were opposed to my returning and two were for it. Following the majority vote, I have resolved not to return. In the meantime I will busy myself by giving retreats and similar services here in this city. **(Aut 852)**



FOR PERSONAL REFLECTION

Claret stayed in Vic, but after two months he went to meet with the Pope, who advised him to return to Madrid.

- *Do you ask for advice to discern the will of God about delicate issues?*
- *Do you welcome it with openness and availability?*
- *Recall an adviser who has helped you discern God's will in your life...*
- *If someone asks you for advice about a delicate issue, how should you prepare?*

"This heart of Mary is tender, full of compassion; but, as is evident from her *Magnificat* it also seeks justice – God's justice: She dreams, desires, and works for a transformed world where the poor are cared for; the oppressed go free; pride, power, and hunger are eliminated; and God's mercy rules."
(Mathew Vattamattam, *Message for the Solemnity of the Heart of Mary 2018*)

JUNE

22



1860. Fr. **Dionisio Gonzalez**, Fr. **Anthony Barjau** and Fray **Anthony M. de Galdacano** finally arrive in Madrid after finishing their mission in Cuba. They immediately put themselves at the service of Claret, who will place them in El Escorial.

1868. Minister Marfori informs Claret that the Queen has accepted his resignation from the presidency of El Escorial.

1868. Claret writes: *I saw a great and very resplendent light which stood near the sanctuary lamp. And, after a long time, it merged with the light of the lamp and was seen no more. I can already figure what it meant. Afterwards, throughout the night I kept dreaming and longing for martyrdom.*



THE RENEWAL (1967 - 1979)

STATISTICS OF 1970

In 1970 the Congregation was comprised of 17 Provinces, 10 Vice-Provinces and 3 Visitorships. It also had 349 houses, 2 Cardinals, 8 Bishops, 1 Prelate, 2,046 Priests, 721 Students and 507 Brothers. The Congregation's population amounted to 3,285 professed and 80 Novices all together. The numbers show a long period of growth and expansion. But, beginning at this time the Congregation was already recording a decrease in the number of professed members, although not of novices. As previously recorded, as a result of the renewal process promoted by the Second Vatican Council and by our Chapter of Renewal, a quantitatively significant process of secularization and abandonment was produced in the Congregation that, together with the decline of vocations, forced the restructuring of communities and, above all, of formation centers. Among them we must note the suppression of the two international centers of theology in Salamanca and Rome (1970).



FRANCISCO SANZ PASCUAL, CMF

Apostolic Vicar (1883-1961)



Veganzones (Segovia, Spain). Ordained a priest in 1911, he soon received the destination to Choco (Colombia) where he arrived in 1912 with the eighth expedition. As soon as he arrived, he began his famous missionary excursion to the Gulf of Uraba. In September 1913 he was assigned to found the Claretian community of Jerico; then Quibdo, Carmen de Atrato, Cartagena de Indias, Girardot, Bogota, etc. In 1930 the General Government appointed him General Visitor of the Province. He was there when he was appointed Apostolic Prefect of Choco in 1931. In 1937 he attended the General Chapter in Rome. After 22 years of governing that difficult Prefecture, already elevated in 1953 to the Apostolic Vicariate, Fr. Sanz returned to the Province as a humble missionary. He resided in Pereira, in Jerico as Superior, in Cali as a patient, and finally in Medellin, from December 1957 until June 22, 1961, when he died a holy death. He was 78 years old and was only a few weeks away from celebrating 50 years of priesthood.



AN APOSTLE'S DEFENSE



Containing a Gentleman's Defense of my Insignificant Self. Msgr. Claret, Archbishop of Trajanopolis and Confessor to the queen, had resigned himself to listen silently and indefinitely to the damaging reports, some of them erroneous. Some slanderous, that have been spread about him these many years, hoping that God — to whom he prays for his detractors — would enlighten their understanding and abate their ill will. **(Aut 853)**

But yielding to the repeated entreaties of us who, besides respecting and loving him as he deserves, think that it is important for the welfare of the Church to refute or rectify these reports, he has authorized us to publish the following resume of his life and some of his works. This resume has been compiled by a person who is as incapable of altering the facts as he is well informed of them. For our part, we take the single liberty of adding one comment, namely, that if any charge could be brought against Bishop Claret, it would be, in our judgment, that of shunning any involvement in politics, even when by becoming involved he might have helped the interests of the Church against political encroachments. **(Aut 854)**



FOR PERSONAL REFLECTION

- *Do you put up with the possible slander and defamation that could be spoken against you with integrity, silence and prayer?*
- *How do you defend your condition as an apostle when it is attacked or questioned?*
- *Are you convinced that the truth of your life is the best defense against slander and defamation?*

"The heart of the Mass contains a living mystery,
and that is the thing that works."
(Carl Jung, *The Symbolic Life*)

JUNE

23



1852. Claret preaches a mission in Yara (Cuba).

1858. Clare accompanies the King and Queen on their visit to the Virgin de Atocha (Madrid).

1866. Since the previous day, the revolt of the sergeants or the *Sublevacion de San Gil* takes place in Madrid; Claret clearly thought he would be killed; he spends the day in the Virgin's alcove in the Hospital in Montserrat.



THE RENEWAL (1967 - 1979)

THE HIGHLY ANTICIPATED FOUNDATION IN INDIA

In 1969 the Provincial Superior of Deutschland visits India and a decision is made regarding the first foundation. The community of Kuravilangad, in the State of Kerala, was established in March 1970 with the first three priests and Fr. **Franz Dirnberger**, who had arrived from Germany. The Novitiate was inaugurated in May with Fr. Dirnberger as Master, and the first 21 postulants would go to the Diocesan Seminary to study as Claretians. Soon it was necessary to separate the older students and the Postulants in different houses, and it was decided to found a house in Bengaluru. There, the Major Seminary and the Novitiate were established at a temporary location. The Novitiate had to be separated from the Scholasticate, and a new House was founded for the Novitiate in Carmelaram, in Bengaluru itself. The new building was blessed in 1976 for Students of Philosophy and Theology, who studied in the adjacent Diocesan Seminary. The foundation in India would have a growing and uninterrupted importance, to the point that an Indian was elected Superior General in 2015, Fr. Mathew Vattamattam.



PEDRO VALL-LLOVERA, CMF

Apostolic Prefect (1847-1890)



Cassa de la Selva (Girona, Spain). He was commander of the Carlist army, but resigned when he entered the Claretian novitiate in Thuir. In Chile he had great success as a missionary. Fr. **Xifre** called him in 1888 when the need arose to establish a new mission within the Diocese of Tunja in Colombia. By the time he arrived in Spain, the idea of the foundation had been discarded, but the death of Fr. **Ciriaco Ramirez**, Apostolic Prefect of Equatorial Guinea, prompted Fr. Xifre to request him to take his place. During the short time he spent in the mission he devoted himself to consolidating what had been carried out by the previous Prefect, giving the Holy See a very good impression of him. During his tenure, Santa Isabel church burned to the ground and diseases continued to ravage the missionaries. Added to that were the relentless fevers that plagued him with internal suffering. He took all this bitterness to the grave with him on June 23rd, after spending only two years in those missions.



A Victim of Political Conflicts

During the last few years Bishop Claret has been slandered on three main counts:

1. for being a *faccioso trabucaire* [guerrilla leader], a charge that, from what has been said already, is utterly without foundation; **(Aut 863)**

2. for meddling in politics. To this we would only say: ask any of the government ministers from 1857 to the present whether he has ever done anything in speech or in writing to hinder their plans to rise to power or to pursue their particular policies. **(Aut 864)**



3. for distortions attributed to his pious and instructive books. His enemies have gone so far as to rewrite and print scandalous versions of two of the many books Bishop Claret has written. One of them, *The Garland*…His enemies have issued another book under the same title, illustrated with erotic pictures so obscene that the like of them has never been seen, and they have attributed this work to Bishop Claret.

They have done the same with another work, *The Key of Gold*. …And how did his enemies react to this? They wrote a booklet under the same title, with obscene pictures and a revolting text that they attributed again to Bishop Claret… **(Aut 866)**



FOR PERSONAL REFLECTION

- *How do accusations and possible slanders and generalizations about priests and religious affect you?*
- *Do you know how to objectively and critically discern the news about scandals?*
- *Do you know how to distinguish slander from criticism, even if it is harsh, that could help you to know yourself better and improve?*

"The important thing is that each believer discern his or her own path,
that they bring out the very best of themselves,
the most personal gifts that God has placed in their hearts (cf. *1 Cor* 12:7),
rather than hopelessly trying to imitate something not meant for them."
(Francis, *Gaudete et Exsultate,* 11)

JUNE

24



1856. Claret falls ill and leaves Spiritual Exercises while his companions continue them on their own. Given the breakdown of his health - although he recovers in a few days - some of his companions plan their future in Central America.

1863. Claret tells Fr. **Dionisio** that the Queen and the Nuncio have agreed that the seminarians of El Escorial will be able to enroll at the seminary in Salamanca, given the difficulties Toledo's archbishop imposes on granting them degrees.



THE RENEWAL (1967 - 1979)

THE JUANJUI MISSION IN PERU

The Congregation's first missionary impulse during the post-conciliar years was directed towards Latin America. As a fruit of that exuberance, the Province of Leon initiated its own mission in the Peruvian jungle in 1970. Still in its first years of life, three parishes formerly entrusted to the Passionist Missionaries were taken over in the Department for San Martin (Juanjui, Bellavista and Saposoa) in the Prelature of Moyobamba's territory. From the very beginning, it was more difficult to find their way among the people than through the landscape. A period of pain and uncertainty began around 1987 due to the appearance of two influential phenomena: on one hand, the presence and activity of the revolutionary movements *Sendero Luminoso* and *Tupac Amaru*; and on the other hand, the continual invasion of the cultivation of cocoa plants in the area, which spurred the drug trafficking, resulting in the corruption of people at all social levels and the spiral of violence. In 1991 the first native Claretian priest was ordained.



PEDRO MARDONES, CMF

Missionary and Student (1914-1937)



Vallejuelo (Burgos, Spain). From a very early age, Pedro felt called to the priesthood. Through the mediation of a well-known priest, he obtained admittance to the Congregation's school in Sigüenza (Guadalajara). The rule of the Second Spanish Republic interrupted his formation process. On May 17, 1931, Pedro was forced to leave school. Faced with all the attempts to separate him from his vocation, even from his father, he managed to get back to the seminary running away from home. On October 12, 1931, he was able to take the train to Sigüenza. When the Civil Guard appeared two days later to take him back, Pedro maintained his firm determination. In July 1936 the civil war broke out in Spain and Pedro was drafted. His heroic fidelity was going to be proven and sealed definitively during his final test: the infectious disease that ended his life. Pedro was not yet 24 years old. Everyone agreed: *Mr. Mardones was a saint.*

A Time to be Silent and A Time to Speak





On various occasions, Bishop Claret's friends have asked him to defend himself, but his answer has always been that the best defense was to ignore his detractors and pray for them as Jesus did on the cross: *Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do*, for people so misguided cannot know what they are doing or saying. **(Aut 867)**

We respect his silence and his prayers; nevertheless, charity and justice demand that we publish these facts, for two reasons: first, to shame the wicked by unmasking them, and second, to warn the unthinking that they should not allow themselves to be deceived by the slanders and inventions Bishop Claret's enemies are always stirring up against him, as the Jews did against Jesus.

This is taken from the Newspaper, La Esperanza of January 12, 1854 and what is said here is true. **(Aut 868)**



FOR PERSONAL REFLECTION

- *Remember a time in your life when you forgave someone.*
- *Considering the persecutions and rejections the Church suffers, point out some advantages of forgiveness.*
- *If you are a priest, how do you administer forgiveness "according to the heart of God"?*

"For the mystery of human existence
lies not in just staying alive,
but in finding something to live for."
(*Fyodor Dostoyevsky*)

JUNE

25



1843. Beginning on this day, Claret preaches missions in San Felix de Codinas (Barcelona) and its surroundings.

1848. Claret finishes the 25-day mission in Agüimes (Canary Islands).

1868. Possibly on this day El Escorial is handed over to the new President, Mons. **Rosendo Salvado**, OSB, with an economic surplus of 678,999 reales, *all expenses paid and all fees collected.*



THE RENEWAL (1967 - 1979)

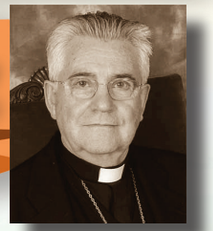
IN CAMEROON

When the Archbishop of Yaounde, Mons. Jean Zoa, explained to the Congregation the need that a large sector of the diocese had, the Province of Canada responded by assuming that responsibility. In 1970 two Priests and one Brother settled in the parish of Akono, in French-speaking Cameroon. Aided for many years by the Spiritans (Congregation of the Holy Spirit), who took care of the entire region. They handed it over with a rectory and a large church that may have been the best in Cameroon. When they took it over the Claretians had more than 10,000 Catholics between Akono, Nkum-Ekye and Abang Mindi, in addition to the 58 chapels scattered throughout the region that had to be served. Soon vocations arose that obligated them to open a Novitiate in Akono in 1978 and later a Theologate for all French-speaking Africa in Yaounde. The people, who speak native Ewondo, and French if they have gone to school, are intelligent and educated, welcoming and grateful. The Missionaries admitted that they felt satisfied, fulfilled, and their only regret was that there were so few of them.



LUIS GUTIERREZ, CMF

Bishop of Segovia (1931-2016)



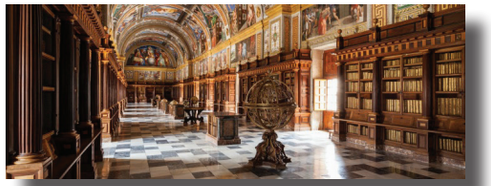
Navalmanzano (Segovia, Spain). He obtained his doctorate *in utroque iure* from the Lateran University in Rome and he taught in Rome and Salamanca. Appointed Provincial Superior of Castilla at only 36 years old, he promoted missionary activity in the areas of Honduras and Panama. During his twelve years as a Provincial, he collaborated with the Spanish Confederation of Religious (CONFER), executing the role of President and creating SERAS, a social service for health care and assistance for retired men and women religious in Spain. The Archbishop of Madrid, Cardinal Enrique y Tarancon, entrusted him with the position of Judicial Vicar (1981). In 1988 he was consecrated Auxiliary Bishop of Madrid. In May of 1995 he was appointed Titular Bishop of Segovia. As a man of the Church specializing in law, Fr. Luis Gutierrez always sought harmonious solutions and there were many people in government who sought his advice. He died on June 22nd.

Ecclesial Renewal



Containing a Report Published in the Parisian Daily, *Le Monde*, by Foreigners Who Had Visited the El Escorial at the Beginning of the Year 1865. The revolution and its *soldiers of fortune*, trained by the Freemasons, are endeavoring to eradicate all Catholic education and belief in Spain, by subordinating its national policies to the commercial interests of England. The Spanish Church, despoiled of its goods and deprived of the powerful help of its religious orders, has demonstrated, nonetheless, by its fidelity to the Sovereign Pontiff and by its continuing resistance to the irreligious press, that it has been strengthened by trial and prepared for the decisive battles that will establish the freedom of the Church of Jesus Christ. Among the notable works of the Spanish episcopate, one of the most notable is the renovation of the seminary of El Escorial, which has been carried out by His Excellency, the Most Reverend Anthony Claret, Archbishop of Trajanopolis, under the auspices of Her Majesty the Queen. **(Aut 869)**

This heroic prelate…has managed to form a model institution of clerical learning and, thanks to his own efforts and those of Don Dionisio Gonzalez de Mendoza, vice president, the seminary of the Escorial holds out the promise of bright hopes… **(Aut 870)**



Library of El Escorial (Madrid)



FOR PERSONAL REFLECTION

- *The renewal of the Church should now focus on …*
- *The greatest witness a missionary can give is …*
- *What contributes most to the renewal of my Claretian Province or Delegation is …*

"You gain strength, courage and confidence by every experience
in which you really stop to look fear in the face…
You must do the thing you think you cannot do."
(*Eleanor Roosevelt*)

JUNE

26



1858. Since Claret doesn't suspect that the Queen will change her mind about his position as royal confessor, he feels his conscience obliging him to present his resignation of the Archdiocese of Santiago to the Pope so that he can appoint another Bishop.

1858. Claret writes the rule of the ***Academy of St. Michael*** and gives it to Fr. Fermin de la Cruz.

1861. Claret writes a second memorable letter to Fr. Domingo Ramonet about the missionary vocation.



THE RENEWAL (1967 - 1979)

IN THE FORMER YUGOSLAVIA

In 1971 a first foundation was made in Yugoslavia, specifically in Nova Stifta, a village of about 700 inhabitants between Maribor and Ljubljana, in present-day Slovenia, with a shrine devoted to the Virgin, and Bocna, with a house with a lot of potential for a seminary. The Claretians set out to revive pilgrimages to the Shrine, perhaps the first Marian Shrine in Slovenia, where the Virgin is invoked as *Our Lady, Star of the Sea*. They wanted to turn it into a meeting place for priests and laity. The church was dedicated to the Assumption of Mary and its fundamental work consisted in preaching, pilgrimages and, in general, collaboration with the pastors. Soon vocational work began. The House of Ljubljana, capital of Slovenia, was founded in 1976, on which the two previous houses would depend as apostolic mission outposts and be members of the one and same community. According to the people, everything was wonderful, but one had to be aware of the authorities in Yugoslavia. It was then that the Kamnica House was established, close to the Austrian border.



JACINTO VERDAGUER

Priest and Writer (1845-1902)



Folgueroles (Barcelona, Spain). Priest and Spanish poet. Bishop Torras Bages called him *Prince of the Catalan poets.* On one occasion Jacinto Verdaguer said to Fr. Jean Güel: *The Great Leo XIII advises all of us priests to distance ourselves from politics. Politics is the net in which the devil traps God's ministers. Our politics must be the salvation of souls. The holy Archbishop Claret said he did not want to belong to one or the other, because he had to save them all. He also said that the priest on the field of the Gospel is not vulnerable. If they had continued in this field, so many of our priests and brothers would not have been so violated, thrown down to the ground and into the mud by their political enemies.* And referring to the preaching of Father Claret, he wrote: *From the arms of my mother I fell in love with that preaching which was so Catalan and so simple, as one ardent and wounded.* He passed away on June 10th.

SOLID FORMATION FOR THE MISSION





Dr. [Dionisio] Gonzalez is a man well-versed in the sciences and of an eminently practical bent. Realizing that his young theologians will have to combat a flood of foreign ideas, especially the German philosophers Strauss, Hegel, and Schelling, he has insisted that they make a thorough study of German, and now 60 of the students can read German works fluently. They also receive a thorough grounding in French and English, not to mention Hebrew and Greek. Many are studying Arabic. One of the learned faculty has compiled Greek, German, and English grammars specifically for the use of the seminary. The theologians will presently be taking courses in church archeology and other sciences related to the study of theology. **(Aut 871)**

The excellent dispositions and remarkable intellectual endowments of the students lead us to expect great things of the restored seminary of El Escorial. **(Aut 872)**



FOR PERSONAL REFLECTION

The great interest that Claret put in elevating the cultural level of the clergy in the seminary of El Escorial is surprising.

- *A quality missionary formation for the mission today especially requires ...*
- *The main currents of thought that we must be thoroughly aware of for our mission are, above all ...*
- *Faced with the cultural and intellectual challenges of today›s world, we should ...*

"An apostolic missionary must have both heart and tongue ablaze with charity."
(*Aut* 440)

JUNE

27



1852. Through Fr. **Paladio Currius**, Claret has to reprimand the Italian priest Alderano Berti, pastor of Santa Catalina de Rizzi (Guantanamo) for speaking about politics.

1856. Possibly today Claret concludes the Spiritual Exercises that had been interrupted by a mild attack of yellow fever. He renews his resolutions from the previous year adding some details to the newest ones, perhaps since he had suffered an assassination attempt.

1856. Claret continues with the thorny problem of the *schism* in Puerto Rico.



THE PROVIDENCIAL FOUNDATION IN NIGERIA

THE RENEWAL (1967 - 1979)

Fr. Christian Mary Ihedoro professed in Vic in 1959. Already a priest, he exercised his ministry in Equatorial Guinea. In 1971 he moved to Nigeria, his native country. The Bishop suggested to him a mission in his diocese of Owerri as a place to work, although, in reality, the Bishop continued to keep him as his personal assistant. Fr. Ihedoro had only been there for two years and had already found several candidates for the Claretian Congregation. Because of the wave of new vocations in 1973 the Congregation decided to begin founding in Nigeria. That year the novitiate was to be opened in one of the houses of the *Missionaries of the Holy Spirit* and Fr. Frank Ambrosi (†1992), of the USA-West Province was sent as Novice Master. At the same time, efforts were being made to establish a proper Novitiate House. It would soon be situated in Nekede, with the initial capacity for 50 Novices and Postulants. It was solemnly inaugurated in December 1978. From then on, the number of novices, students, and ordained would continue to increase.



VICENTE CALVO VALERO

Bishop of Santander (1838-1898)



Seville (Spain). He was appointed Bishop of Santander in 1875. He established the seminary in Corban and numerous schools and hospitals. It was at this time when, invited by Leo XIII, he carried out the fortunate idea of founding a college in Rome for Spanish seminarians who attended the Roman Seminary, so that the Spanish Prelates could have an institution where they could send some of the hard-working young people from their seminaries. He entrusted the direction of this important work to Fr. Jose Maria Rios at first, but later he offered it to the Congregation and it was accepted by Fr. **Xifre** in 1884, who appointed Fr. **Jeronimo Batllo** as the Director of the *Spanish College* and also Procurator General. He placed Fr. **Antonio Naval** as an assistant. After Fr. Vicente Calvo was appointed Bishop of Cadiz he became less and less involved in the project, leaving it in the hands of the Claretian Missionaries who maintained it until Fr. **Henry de Osso** finally founded the Spanish College.

Loving Our Enemies





One of the paintings displayed on the walls of the Church of St. Adrian at the Roman Forum (Rome)

Twelfth day [of October, 1869] at 11:30 in the morning, the Lord granted me the love of enemies.

I have felt it in my heart. The Lord has assured me of this with a prodigy. As I was experiencing this act in my heart, I saw the crucifix and the picture of the Blessed Virgin draw together, without anyone touching them. Some days earlier the Lord had already given me an extraordinary understanding as I was reading the *Fifth Mansions* of St. Teresa. And today, October 12th, as I was making Meditation 27 of the Spiritual Exercises Explained, He has granted me this great grace. *Vivo ego, iam non ego, vivit vero in me Christus (I live, not now I, but Christ lives in me).* Jesus looked at the Jews as a mother looks at her sick, delirious or wine-drunk children, who do not know what they are doing or saying. They are more deserving of pity and compassion than of indignation. (***Lights and Graces, 1869***)



FOR PERSONAL REFLECTION

Claret only speaks about "great grace" on two occasions: that of the conservation of the sacramental species and that of loving our enemies.

- *Take time for adoration in the Eucharistic presence of the Lord. Ask insistently for love, especially toward those who do not deserve it, who tend to be the ones who need it the most.*

"But we must keep on searching for means and forms or styles of mission that have a greater scope, that help evangelization reach more people and places, that have a greater radius of action."
(*SW* 19)

JUNE

28



1839. Claret resigns as administrator of the parish of Sallent in order to be free and able to travel to Rome to offer himself to the missions.

1848. Claret arrives in Las Palmas in the Canary Islands, after preaching missions in several towns on the island. He prints a short catechism that he composed expressly for the residents there.

1869. Claret informs Fr. **Dionisio Gonzalez** of his papal appointment as auditor of the Rota in Madrid and congratulates him for it.



THE RENEWAL (1967 - 1979)

PERSECUTIONS IN EQUATORIAL GUINEA

The dictator Francisco Macias Nguema took power in Equatorial Guinea in March of 1969. The expulsion of foreign missionaries began immediately, among them the Claretian Bishop **Francisco Gomez Marijuan**. In 1972, Msgr. **Rafael Nze**, a Guinean native, was also exiled, threatened with death. Some went to work in Gabon. The churches, especially the chapels in the forests, were looted and closed, as were many Mission schools; the Church was reduced to silence and the Christians found it extremely difficult to maintain their Catholic faith. The magazine *La Guinea Española* had been in operation since 1903, which had greatly publicized the social and missionary work of the Missionaries. Naturally, its name was changed to *La Guinea Ecuatorial [Equatorial Guinea]* in 1968, but it disappeared two years later. It was providential that there were native clergy in the Congregation because their priests could continue there, even though the seminaries were closed, and several priests were imprisoned and even tortured. The nightmare lasted eleven years, until August 3, 1979.



MARIANO FERNANDEZ, CMF

General Consultor (1865-1945)



Bernardos (Segovia, Spain). He was one of the first vocations which were fruit of the missionary work of the community of Segovia. He professed in 1881. In 1887 he was ordained a priest in Madrid. Soon he was assigned to Segovia and other schools as a professor. Beginning in 1892 he was entrusted with the task of formation, for which he had great qualities. Segovia, Bilbao, etc. In 1901 he came to Vic in order to begin the Novitiate in the Province of Catalunya, until 1913 when he was appointed Provincial of Catalunya. During his time as Provincial foundations were made in Monfalcone, Sant Feliu de Guixols, Marseilles, Xativa, Sallent, Mas Claret, Spaichingen, Weissenhorn, Zaragoza, and Girona. In 1924 the Province was divided creating the Quasi-Province of Italy. From 1930 to 1934 he was a General Consultor. He suffered the hardships of the civil war in Madrid. In October of 1936 he was taken prisoner to Carcel Modelo. His life was spared thanks to his advanced age. In 1939 he arrived ill to Mas Claret. He still returned to Madrid where he died on June 12th.



THE ARMS AND BREASTS OF MARY

On the Feast of the Lord's Ascension in the year 1870, a soul was kneeling before the altar of Mary Most Holy from 11:00 to 12:00, contemplating on the Feast day, when he came to understand that the Sons of the Congregation are like the arms of Mary, and that they must, by their zeal, draw everyone to Mary: the just, that they may persevere in grace, and sinners, that they may be converted…The arms of Mary are the Missionaries of her Congregation, who will work zealously, embrace everyone, and pray to Jesus and Mary.

Mary Most Holy will avail herself of them as her arms and maternal breasts to feed her little ones, like a Mother who seeks out the services of a wetnurse. The Missionaries are wetnurses who must feed poor little sinners with the breasts of wisdom and love; and both of these breasts must be in equal supply. Thus, like good and healthy mothers, they must make sure that they eat frequently, both for themselves and for their nurslings, just as all good nurses do. The food that these nurses must take is prayer—mental, vocal and ejaculatory—and spiritual reading… (***Lights and Graces, 1870***)



The founders (Motherhouse, Vic)



FOR PERSONAL REFLECTION

- *What inspires you about the metaphor Claret uses to talk about the missionaries of his Congregation?*
- *In your apostolic life, do you communicate wisdom and love?*
- *How do you nourish yourself spiritually so that your missionary life is neither empty nor superficial?*

"The real danger is when the fire of our charism is absent or extinguished in the heart of our members, or when it ceases to alight the life of our communities. Only this fire of God's love in us will fuel our community life and awaken the vocational seed in the heart of those whom God calls to embrace Claretian life."
(Mathew Vattamattam, *Message for Foundation Day 2018*)

JUNE

29



1857. Claret signs the Missionaries' new *Constitutions* in Madrid. He has been reworking them for two weeks at the request of and perhaps in collaboration with Fr. **Stephen Sala.**

1859. Claret travels from Madrid to Aranjuez to accompany the King and Queen for three days of celebrations and returns with them to Madrid on July 2nd.

1860. Claret gives instructions for admitting Fr. **Donato Berenguer**, whose studies would be brief.



THE RENEWAL (1967 - 1979)

XVIII GENERAL CHAPTER IN 1973

The XVIII General Chapter, held in Rome from September 1 to October 24, 1973, reviewed the journey the Congregation had traveled following the conciliar renewal, noting that its recent expansion (with 41 nations) favored pluralism, but made apostolic insertion difficult, and that the 30 Major Organisms had not finished enriching their missionary fronts. Additionally, there was concern about the unrelenting number of members leaving the Congregation (it happened in all of the Institutes in general). Fundamentally, the Chapter reviewed the renewal that had already begun and refocused community life, placing particular emphasis on it, becoming more sensitive to the values of freedom, autonomy, participation, dialogue, co-responsibility, incarnation, commitment, etc. The *OSG* (*Ordo Studiorum Generalis*) was officially abolished. Fr. Antonio Leghisa was re-elected as Superior General.

At that time the Congregation had 2,805 missionaries: 1,978 Priests, 378 Students and 449 Brothers.



JOAQUIN MARIA SIALO, CMF

First African Claretian (1899-1957)



Rebola (Equatorial Guinea). He studied in Claretian schools and soon expressed his call to the priesthood by going to Banapa, Canary Islands and Barcelona to prepare himself. He studied teaching and returned to Guinea. At last he was ordained in 1929. He was the first Guinean priest. At age 32 he entered the Claretian novitiate in Jerez de los Caballeros, becoming the first black Claretian of the Congregation. Due to political events he had to interrupt his novitiate after two months. He moved to Gibraltar, until he could reach the Novitiate in Salvatierra. He returned to his homeland and dedicated himself to missionary life as an excellent catechist. He wrote in several magazines, especially in *La Guinea Española*. Fr. Joaquin Maria Sialo was strongly drawn to Claret, itinerant missionary. He was patient and kind, truly sacrificing himself in order to visit the sick and administer the sacraments. His piety was evident in how painstakingly he celebrated the Eucharist. He died with the reputation of a saint.



THE DESIRE TO UNITE MYSELF TO GOD

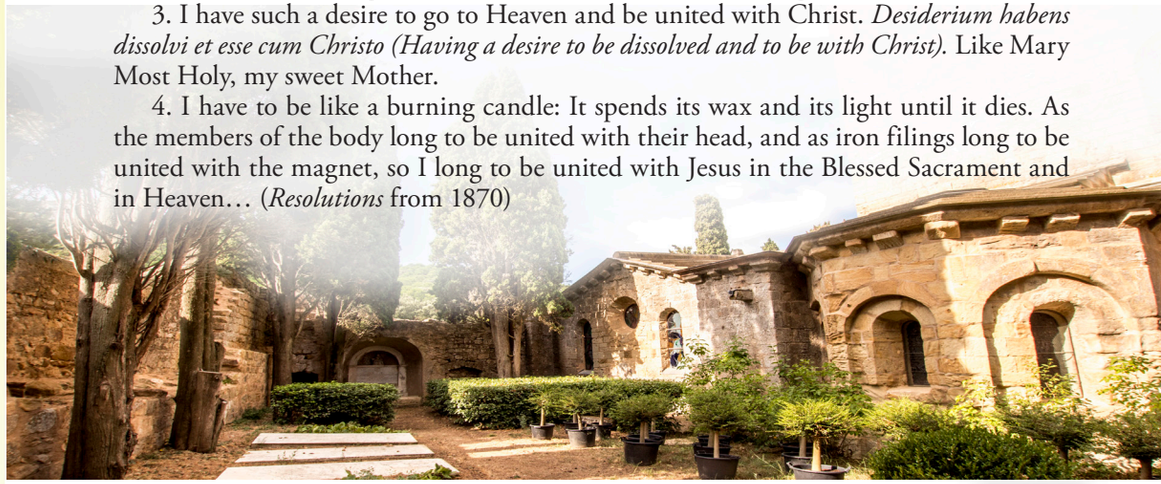
May 26, 1870. The Ascension of the Lord

1. The earth will be an exile for me. My thoughts, affections and sighs will be directed toward Heaven.

2. *Conversatio nostra in coelis est (Our conversation is in heaven).* I will neither speak of nor listen to anything, unless it is about God and those things that lead to Heaven.

3. I have such a desire to go to Heaven and be united with Christ. *Desiderium habens dissolvi et esse cum Christo (Having a desire to be dissolved and to be with Christ).* Like Mary Most Holy, my sweet Mother.

4. I have to be like a burning candle: It spends its wax and its light until it dies. As the members of the body long to be united with their head, and as iron filings long to be united with the magnet, so I long to be united with Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament and in Heaven… (*Resolutions* from 1870)



Burial site of Claret at the Abbey of Fontfroide (Narbonne)



FOR PERSONAL REFLECTION

- *Imagine Claret writing these resolutions five months before his death.*
- *Contemplate his strong desire to unite himself completely to God in heaven.*
- *Contemplate your missionary life like a burning candle: It spends its wax and its light until it dies.*
- *Imagine the moment of your own death and ask the Lord for the grace of fidelity and surrender until the end.*

"It is not by sidestepping or fleeing from suffering that we are healed, but rather by our capacity for accepting it, maturing through it and finding meaning through union with Christ, who suffered with infinite love."
(Benedict XVI, *Spe Salvi*, 37)

JUNE

30



1864. Claret leaves Madrid for Barcelona, to lead the Second General Chapter of his missionaries at the house in Gracia. He travels with utmost discretion due to the atmosphere of persecution. He tells Fr. **Joseph Xifre** that those from Segovia are traveling on their own.

1867. He writes to Fr. **Paladio Currius** that the seminarians of El Escorial should only study Claret's Catechism in order to avoid confusion about Astete, Ripalda, etc. He says the nuncio has thus advised him. He remains committed to the *unity of the catechism in Spain*.



THE RENEWAL (1967 - 1979)

THE MISSION IN NORTHERN POTOSI

During its 1974 Chapter, the Province of Euskal Herria took on the new mission of Northern Potosi (Bolivia), where the first missionaries arrived in January of 1975. It was an extremely difficult mission, in the middle of an eminently mountainous Andean region with a varied climate according to the diverse elevations, between 2,300 and 4,800 meters above sea level. The number of inhabitants is estimated at about 75,000. 60% are of Quechua culture and speak their own language. 30% are of Aymara culture. 10% are mestizos or cholos and speak mainly Spanish. Their relevant mode of expression is celebration, human and religious, at the time of birth, marriage, death, regard for the earth, and important moments of agriculture. The Missionary Team's project focuses on 3 provinces (Alonso Ibañez, Charcas and Bilbao Rioja) and is aimed at human and Christian promotion, education and formation of catechists, the promotion of women and agriculture and the knowledge of Jesus, the great Liberator. Today the mission is dependent on the Province of Peru-Bolivia.



MANUEL MARIA NEGUERUELA MENDI

Archbishop of Santiago, Cuba (1810-1861)



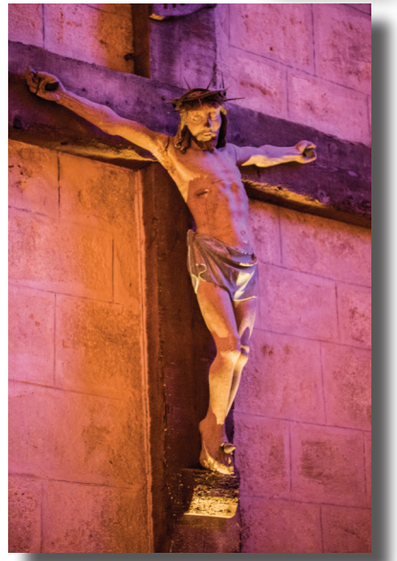
Navarrete (La Rioja, Spain). He succeeded Father Claret in the Archdiocese of Santiago, Cuba. He was canon of Valladolid and Archbishop of Santiago, Cuba in 1859. Father Claret assisted him at his episcopal ordination. He died in Santiago, Cuba shortly after, in 1861, as a victim of anthrax. After Claret left his position as Archbishop of Santiago, Cuba, the Nuncio commissioned him to present his successor to the Queen. He proposed Fr. **Stephen Sala**, his friend and companion since 1843 and soul of the Congregation, but he died shortly afterwards. He then proposed the Capuchin Fr. Felix Maria Arriete, Bishop of Cadiz, but he declined the offer. Finally, they decided on the penitential canon in Valladolid, Manuel Maria Negueruela, with whom he maintained an intimate and affectionate correspondence, and through which he gave him pertinent instructions. It appears that Queen **Isabella II**'s intention wasn't to choose an apostolic bishop like Claret, but rather a politician, who would work to cooperate with the Government in the conservation of that important colony.



I Thought I Saw An Image of Calvary

It is 9 o´clock in the morning. Our Holy Founder has just now surrendered his spirit to God…I have been with him constantly since yesterday afternoon…At 11 o'clock at night he seemed to expire…we prayed entrusting his soul to God. At the end of this, the agony continued and seeing His Excellency's terrible and painful suffering amidst peace and unexplainable calmness, we could not do anything to remove it…I was thinking that I was seeing a true picture of a scene of Calvary… At 4 o´clock in the morning I went to celebrate Mass…I felt very tired and went to rest…I got up at 8 o´clock…I ran towards him, I placed myself on the headboard of his bed…I intensely looked at my beloved father who was dying; it seemed to me that he was saying farewell to me tenderly with no words. Then he slept in the Lord…The clock of the room was showing eight forty-five…

P. D. His Excellency has expired with the Crucifix in his hand but laying it on the bed. **(*Letter from Fr. Jaime Clotet to Fr. Joseph Xifre,* Fontfroide, October 24, 1870)**



Fontfroide Abbey (Narbonne)



FOR PERSONAL REFLECTION

- *We have accompanied Claret in the narrative of his own life. On this last day, we read the letter with which Fr. Clotet communicated his death to Fr. General.*
- *Claret tried to conform himself in every way to Jesus as a missionary; for this reason, it is no surprise that Fr. Clotet considered his deathbed like a Calvary, where he hands over his spirit to God, like Jesus did on the cross.*
- *Claret's life and death invite us to live united to the Lord, expending all our energies on the mission.*
- *Slowly recite the Hail Mary, pausing at the phrase: "Pray for us sinners, now and at the hour of our death."*

"We are all called to be holy by living our lives with love
and by bearing witness in everything we do, wherever we find ourselves."
(Francis, *Guadete et Exsultate*, 14)