Father of kindness and mercy,
We praise and bless You
for having enriched your Church
with the way of holiness and apostolate
of St. Anthony Mary Claret,
our founder and father.
We humbly implore you:
send new workers to our Congregation
and pour forth your Spirit into those You have chosen.
Strengthen them all in their missionary vocation,
and, impelled by the love of Christ.
Make them true Sons
of the Immaculate Heart of Mary,
to proclaim to all peoples
the Good News of the Kingdom.
Through Jesus Christ, our Lord.
Amen.



August



1844. Claret concludes Spiritual Exercises in Vic for the *Calced Carmelites* and for the *Dominican Sisters of St. Catharine of Siena* and begins Spiritual Exercises for the *Dominican Sisters of the Convent Santa Clara* and the *Discalced Carmelites*. He leaves them books of notes, which will lead to the various editions of the *Avisos a religiosas [Advice to Religious Sisters]*.

1847. In Vic, in the church of Santo Domingo, Claret establishes the *Archconfraternity of the Heart of Mary*. While preaching the novena, more than 10,000 members enroll.

1858. Claret is with the King and Queen in Oviedo and preaches in the church of San Vicente, attached to the old Benedictine convent.



IDENTITY AND MISSION (1991 - 1997)

IN ANGOLA, AGAIN

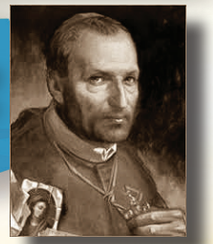
In 1992 the Portuguese missionaries returned to Angola, but this time to Corimba, in the outskirts of Luanda, where the Congregation was reborn amid great difficulties, due to the effects of the war. The missionary consolidation was quick and hopeful. Shortly after, in 1997, the Claretian team took charge of the parish of the Immaculate Conception, in the outskirts of the city of Lubango.

The new foundation in Angola serves three objectives: to symbolically signal the return to a land where the Congregation had previously been established; to serve as launching pad for the area and future evangelization of a more extensive missionary area in the heart of the country; and to offer opportunities for the pastoral initiation of the formandi, especially those from São Tome, making the promotion of native vocations possible. A priest, a brother and a deacon made up the initial community. On February 28, 1993 the Immaculate Heart of Mary Parish was created.



SAINT ALPHONSUS MARIA LIGOURI

Co-Patron (1696-1787)



When Claret describes the time of his life as an itinerant missionary he writes: *I have always been an avid reader of works by authors of sermons, especially of materials useful for preaching missions. I have read St. John Chrysostom, St. Alphonsus Liguori, Siniscalcqui, Barcia, and the Venerable* ***John of Avila***. In his selection of sermons for the missions he was guided by the Alfonsian criterion: *St. Alphonsus Mary Liguori calls some sermon topics, such as the last things, necessary, while he calls others optional.* He very much liked the work *Selva de materias predicables [Collection of material for preaching].* Several of the works of St. Alphonsus are among his personal ex libris volumes. It is not strange that in the first Constitutions, published in 1857, Saint Alphonsus Maria Liguori appears as a co-patron of the Congregation. To this should be added Claret's frequent contact with the Redemptorists for whom he had special consideration. He had contact with them beginning with the arrival of the Redemptorists in Madrid in 1862. In fact, they stayed where Claret had been before, in the hospital of the Italians, with Fr. Fermin de la Cruz.

OBEDIENCE AND MISSIONARY AVAILABILITY

32. With this disposition of mind, our missionaries will be available to be sent anywhere in the world and ready for whatever ministries to which the Congregation through its superior might assign them.



Reliquary of the 109 Blessed Claretian Martyrs (Motherhouse - Vic)



FOR PERSONAL REFLECTION

Review the names of members of your Organism that you know who, by virtue of their missionary availability, develop their life and mission in parts of the world other than their places of birth. Write down, if it's helpful for you, a list with their names and then pray for each of them.

"'To have all things in common' is a prophetic sign."
(*IPM* 31)

AUGUST

2



1847. From his quasi-retirement in Vic, he sends Fr. **Joseph Caixal** the first draft of *Nuns in their own houses, or single women who want to live the religious life in the world*

1851. Claret concludes the first round of Spiritual Exercises for the clergy of Puerto Principe (Cuba). He leads them in a large house that he has rented for himself while he stays in the city.

1858. Claret is traveling through Asturias with the King and Queen, taking advantage of every opportunity to preach. Despite having submitted his resignation two months ago, he is still uncertain whether he will be sent to his diocese again.



IDENTITY AND MISSION (1991 - 1997)

NEW PROVINCES

In 1993 two new Provinces were created: that of Poland and that of Madras (present-day Chennai, India).

The history of our Congregation in Poland began in the middle of the 20th century when the Claretians from Silesia went to live in Miedary in 1932. The activity of the Claretians in Poland had as its starting point the parish in Miedary, inherited from the Deutschland Province, ministry in urban and rural settings, service of the Word and sacraments, collaboration with ecclesial movements, youth ministry and ministry with pilgrims. In 1982, given the abundance of vocations, Poland was elevated to the rank of Independent Delegation and then to that of Province. The missionary activity in Ivory Coast, that began in 1990, opened the chapter of Polish mission *ad gentes*.

The Province of Chennai (Madras) arose from the intense growth in vocations in the Tamil Nadu region. It was thus separated from the Sri Lanka Dependent Delegation (dependent on Deutschland), becoming the second Province in India, after that of Bangalore.



PHILIP ROVIRA

Companion in Cuba (1818-1880)



Centelles (Barcelona, Spain). He studied in the seminary in Vic. He was ordained in Rome in 1844. He was a Latin professor in Sallent. He accompanied Father Claret to Cuba. He was professor of Latin in the seminary in Santiago, Cuba. Claret said about him: *On arriving in Cuba, I placed him in the seminary to teach Latin because that is what he had been doing when he joined me to go to America. I made him secretary after Father* ***Manuel Vilaro*** *left. He accompanied me on visitations and missions and returned with me to Madrid. Afterward he went to Puerto Rico with the new bishop, His Excellency Dr. Benigno Carrion. He was very zealous and a hard worker.* Writing from 1880 were preserved called *Notes of the Illustrious Don Philip Rovira, Canon of Puerto Rico, on the life story of the holy servant of God, Anthony Mary Claret y Clara, who was Archbishop of Santiago, Cuba and Confessor to Her Majesty Doña Queen* ***Isabel II.*** He died on August 27th.

CONSTITUCIONES

IMITATION OF CHRIST THE MISSIONARY WHO PRAYS AND TEACHES TO PRAY

Chapter V: Prayer

33. We who have undertaken Christ's Missionary work should also imitate his constancy in prayer and take to heart his recommendations and teachings on prayer without ceasing.



Sagrada Familia during the beatification of the 109 Blessed Claretian Martyrs (Barcelona)



FOR PERSONAL REFLECTION

It can help you to better understand this paragraph if you spend some time searching online looking for what "prayer without ceasing" means exactly and how it can be carried out in human practice. Stop searching when you have what you consider a well-founded and satisfactory answer.

"The pain and the shame we feel at the sins
of some members of the Church, and at our own,
must never make us forget how many Christians are giving their lives in love."
(Francis, *Evangelii gaudium*, 76)

AUGUST

3



1859. In La Granja Claret begins a series of Spiritual Exercises for 23 priests.

1863. Through Fr. **Clement Serrat**, Claret invites Fr. **Francisco de Asis Aguilar** to leave Vic and go to El Escorial as a professor.



IDENTITY AND MISSION (1991 - 1997)

THE FORGE

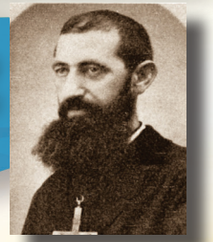
Among the initiatives arising from the Provinces, we need to point out the *Forge*. A project of Claretian renewal that lasted four months, born in the Province of Castilla, now open to all the members of the Congregation. It was divided into four stages with Latin names: *1) Quid prodest?, 2) Patris Mei, 3) Caritas Christi and 4) Spiritus Domini;* aimed at helping the Claretian missionary to revive the fundamental experiences of his vocation as a servant of the Word.

The name was taken from the allegory that the Founder used to describe his own formative process as a missionary (cf. Aut 342). The first Forge was held in 1993. The experience, although reduced to two and a half months for practical reasons, has continued since 2017 with the name of *Claretian Renewal Encounter*, in Los Negrales (Madrid). In the year 2017 the Forge was held in Los Negrales for English-speaking participants for the first time.



MARCOS AJURIA, CMF

Missionary in Equatorial Guinea (1876-1936)



Iurreta (Biscay, Spain). He was a great missionary in Equatorial Guinea. Until his tragic death, he dedicated his life completely to the Guinean people as a teacher, Director of the trade school, Superior, Provincial Consultor, expeditionary and missionary writer. He directed the magazine *La Guinea Española*, also publishing countless articles in other Spanish magazines. He was the soul of the magazine *El Misionero* and organizer of all Spanish missionary propaganda. He directed *Los Apostoles del Corazon de Maria [The Apostles of the Heart of Mary] and La Pia Union Misionera* and intervened in a prominent way in the Exhibition of Missions of Barcelona in 1929. He died when he was most needed. He was in Barcelona when the civil war broke out and, together with Br. Laureano Muñoz, he tried to evade the persecution by taking refuge in an apartment, but they were discovered and taken to a barracks from which they were taken to be shot in the Moncada cemetery on August 3rd. He had written a few days before: *If I die it will be above all for Jesus Christ and the Religion.*

CONSTITUCIONES

Spirit of Missionary Prayer and its Contents

34. For this reason, we should cultivate the spirit of adoptive sonship whereby we cry: "Abba, Father!" Led by the light of faith, we should search for signs of his will in what happens in our lives, thus growing daily more responsive to our mission.



Shrine of the Heart of Mary in Barcelona during the Thanksgiving Mass for the beatification of the 109 Blessed Claretian Martyrs (Barcelona)

Before we dutifully proclaim the Lord's word, we should first listen to it in attentive meditation and also share it with our brothers so that we ourselves may be converted to the Gospel, become conformed to Christ and set afire with his love, the force that should impel us. Finally, in our prayers and petitions, we should intercede with God for the Church and for the life of the world.



FOR PERSONAL REFLECTION

The above paragraph orders the variety of prayer in its filial, prophetic, evangelical and apostolic dimensions.

- *To which of these dimensions do you give more space in your personal prayer?*
- *What role does the Word of God play in your spirituality today? What evolution do you perceive in yourself?*
- *What are the most important needs of the Church and the world for which you feel you should intercede? Do you do it often?*

"In Christ's sacrifice and the Communion
one of the deepest chords in the human psyche is struck...
the symbols of the Mass penetrate into the deepest layers
of the psyche and its history."
(*Carl Jung*)

AUGUST

4



1849. The Minister **Arrazola** signs Claret's appointment as Archbishop of Santiago.

1851. Being in Puerto Principe (Cuba) on a pastoral visit, Claret promulgates a decree on the recruitment of vocations and priestly formation, with much higher requirements than those required before then.

1858. Claret wants Fr. **Joseph Xifre** to provide each Missionary with *Sermones de Mision* (3 vol.) and his collection of *Platicas Dominicales* (7 vol.). In passing he tells him that all the bishops who talk to him want the congregation to have foundations in their dioceses.



FR. AQUILINO BOCOS' CIRCULAR LETTERS

IDENTITY AND MISSION (1991 - 1997)

Father General, Aquilino Bocos, addressed ten Circular Letters to the Congregation during this period: 1) *Missionary Testament of our Martyrs* (1992), on the occasion of the Beatification of the martyrs of Barbastro; 2) *Letter to the Missionaries in Formation* 3) *Towards a Renewed Missionary Commitment* (1994), in it Fr. General points out the future challenges, encouraging the Congregation to open itself with docility and generosity to the new impulses of the Spirit; 4) in 1995, on the occasion of *125th Anniversary of the Approval of the Constitutions*; 5) *On the Road Toward the Year 2000* (1996) encouraged the Congregation to accept the Pope's invitation to prepare for the Jubilee of the third millennium; 6) *The Missionary Brothers: A Challenge for the Life and Mission of the Congregation* (1997); 7) *Heritage and Prophecy*: *150 years of Grace and Service to the Gospel* (1998); 8) *Grateful and Confident* (1997); 9) *Missionary Vocations for the 3rd Millennium* (2001); 10) *Thank you, Forgiveness and Hope* (2003).



BLESSED FERRAN SAPERAS, CMF

Martyr of Chastity (1905-1936)



Alio (Tarragona, Spain). Being dependent on a Barcelona business man, he entered the Congregation. In 1936 he was surprised by the revolution in Cervera. In August, fleeing persecution, he took refuge in La Rabassa, a small village nearby. Soon, he was caught during a search for being suspicious. When they tried to force him to blaspheme, he replied: *I am a religious and I will never do that.* Before this confession, in the car, they forced him to undress. He did not yield to their pressure. In Cervera, while they were eating, they tried to get him drunk and walked him through several brothels. Failing to crack his moral firmness, they tormented him to the point that the prostitutes had to come to his defense. From there they took him to Tarrega. At daybreak on the 13th he was taken to the cemetery. He asked his killers permission to speak and said: *Father, forgive them because they do not know what they do.* The shots rang out and he finally gave his life for the faith. He died a martyr on August 14th. He was beatified on October 21, 2017 by Pope Francis.

OUR ECCLESIAL AND LITURGICAL PRAYER

CONSTITUCIONES

35. In the first place, every day we should wholeheartedly celebrate the mystery of the Eucharist, keeping close to Christ our Lord as he proclaims the words of life, offers himself for his brothers and sisters, honors his Father and builds up the unity of the Church. We should cherish conversation with Christ our Lord by visiting and worshiping him in the Holy Eucharist, as well as by faithfully offering daily prayer in the name of the Church.

During sacred seasons and on feast days, we should try to attune our prayers to the spirit of the Church, which offers the faithful a portrayal of the total mystery of Christ in the liturgy. Through our celebration of the Eucharist and our praise of God, we will receive the strength we need in order to grow in Christian life and become more productive in our ministry.

Our worship is especially joined with that of the heavenly Church in the first place by our communion with, and commemoration of, the Blessed Virgin Mary, but also of St. Joseph, St. Michael and all the Angels, the Apostles and other Saints who, because of their truly missionary spirit, are our traditional patrons: St. Alphonsus Liguori, St. Ignatius Loyola, St. Teresa of Jesus and St. Catherine of Siena.



FOR PERSONAL REFLECTION

- *You can make this invocation by Father Claret your own, with your own words, when you go to communion today: "Oh my Jesus! As water is mingled with wine in the Eucharist, so I want to unite myself to you and offer myself with you to the Most Blessed Trinity." (Spiritual Directory, p. 15)*
- *Remember also the role of the "Eucharistic visit" that Fr. Founder lived out from childhood as an encounter of friendship with the Lord: "I used to enter the church at nightfall, when hardly anyone was there, and talk alone with our Lord. With great faith, trust, and love, I would speak to God, my good Father." (Aut 40)*
- *Which saints are a model of missionary life for you?*

"The best and most beautiful things in the world cannot be seen or even touched. They must be felt with the heart."

(*Helen Keller*)

AUGUST

5



1848. Claret is preaching in Galdar (Canary Islands). He is captivated by the laity, the elderly and children; but the priests have made him very upset.

1854. Claret gives an account to the Captain General of Cuba of the drastic measures he has had to take to reform the clergy of the diocese: he has suspended eight priests *a divinis*, three of whom have left the island.

1859. Claret is officially appointed President of the monastery of El Escorial; he begins his plans for physical and spiritual rehabilitation.



IDENTITY AND MISSION (1991 - 1997)

NEW PROJECTS OF THE GENERAL GOVERNMENT (1)

The Prefecture of Apostolate developed the *Word-Mission* Project, consisting of a process of reading, reflection, community sharing and prayer with regard to the Bible. It was presented in six volumes.

The comments on the Constitutions called *Our Project of Missionary Life*, in three volumes, was a work by various members of the Congregation.

The work *Claretian Missionaries*, by Fr. **Jesus Alvarez**; was a closer look at the charismatic roots of the Congregation, its spirit and ideal: vol. I, *Return to Origins*, Madrid 1993; vol. II, *Transmission and Reception of the Claretian Charism* (Madrid 1997). Vol. III of *Claretian Missionaries, The Conciliar Renewal*, was later published by Fr. Gustavo Alonso (Buenos Aires 2007). The same Fr. Alvarez, the year he died published, *Claves para leer la historia de la Congregacion [Keys for Reading the History of the Congregation]* (Madrid 2001).

During this six-year term the *General Plan of Formation* (Rome 1994) was finished, promoted by the Prefecture of Formation, presided over by Fr. Jesus Maria Palacios (1985-2003).



RAMON MARIA NARVAEZ

Prime Minister (1800-1868)



Loja (Granada, Spain). General and Spanish politician. He was born on August 5th. He was a key figure in the history of Spain during the reign of **Isabella II**. He was the Prime Minister of the Council of Ministers six times. He was the Duke of Victory. He fought against the revolution and maintained peace and order. When he died in Madrid on April 23, 1868, the strongest pillar of the monarchy came down, and the revolution exploded five months later that would bring down the throne of Isabella II and unleash a religious persecution from which Claret was not spared nor the Congregation, which had to leave Spain. Father Claret had to visit Narvaez several times and, according to his words, he was very pleased. Narvaez supported Claret when he asked him to intercede in favor of religion. He managed to publish an Order against dishonesty and picking up many working girls, and also against those who worked at parties.

OUR MARIAN PIETY

CONSTITUCIONES

36. As loving sons we should honor the Blessed Virgin Mary, Mother of God, who is associated with all her heart in the saving work of her Son. Our honor for her should be expressed both in the liturgy and in such traditionally approved forms of Marian devotion as the Rosary.



Icon for the beatification of the 109 Blessed Claretian Martyrs (General Curia - Rome)



FOR PERSONAL REFLECTION

This paragraph presupposes paragraphs 8 and 61 of the constitutional text. Here Mary is contemplated from the perspective of prayer and liturgy.

- *What are your favorite Marian "devotions"? What relationship with Mary do they promote? What feelings do they awake in you?*
- *What evangelical ingredients should be more present in your Cordimarian devotion to make it more authentic?*

"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."
(*Aut* 755)

AUGUST

6



1864. Claret grants a donation to Fr. **Joseph Xifre** for the foundation of the house in Huesca. In passing he tells Xifre that he is printing *La vocacion de los niños [The Vocation of Children]*, a booklet that the missionaries could distribute.

1865. In Vic, Claret's health is improving. Today he confirms about 700 people in the church of Santo Domingo.

1870. Persecuted and very frail, Claret is forced to leave the community of Prades (France) and take refuge in the Cistercian monastery of Fontfroide. Claret travels by train from Perpignan, accompanied by Fr. Joseph Xifre. He hopes to travel to Rome.



IDENTITY AND MISSION (1991 - 1997)

NEW PROJECTS OF THE GENERAL GOVERNMENT (2)

Another project, not written down, that was promoted at this time were the *Missionary Experiences* in mission areas open to all the members of the Congregation. The first one was developed in Japan and the Philippines (1994) and the second one in India (1996).

The *Heart of Mary School of Formators*, which began in 1997, was born with the purpose of forming formators and facilitating the assimilation of the basic lines of the *General Plan of Formation*.

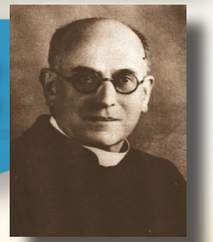
The *Claretian Renewal Encounters* in Vic and Rome continued, and they continued to convene *Evangelization Workshops* at the congregational level: urban evangelization, interreligious dialogue, etc.

New works were carried out with regard to the figure and writings of Fr. Founder: *Epistolario Pasivo [Passive Collection of Letters]* in three vols. (Madrid vol. I: 1992, vol. II: 1994, vol. III. 1995), prepared and annotated by Fr. **Jesus Bermejo**; *Cartas Selectas [Selected Letters]*, prepared by Fr. J. Bermejo, Madrid 1996; *Escritos Pastorales [Pastoral Writings]* (Madrid 1997), prepared by Fr. **J.M. Viñas** and Fr. J. Bermejo; etc.



JOHN POSTIUS, CMF

Vicar General (1876-1952)



Berga (Barcelona, Spain). He professed in the hands of Fr. **Xifre**, in 1892. Assigned to Rome, he majored in Law and Archeology; there he had Eugenio Pacelli as a classmate. In 1905 he went to Madrid, where he lived until 1934. He was a spiritual director and professor in the seminary in Madrid, collaborator in the magazine *El Iris de Paz* and founder of *Ilustracion del Clero*. Between 1905 and 1934 Fr. Postius had an active role in the entire life of the Spanish Church. He was elected and re-elected as General Consultor and Vicar General. He was a Postulator and Procurator before the Holy See. He edited the *Autobiography* of Claret for the first time, in 1915. He was Visitor of the Missions of Equatorial Guinea and protagonist in the foundation of the Missions for immigrants in Paris and Marseille. He was the spiritual director of Saint JoseMaria Escriva. He had to live the immense pain of the holocaust in Barbastro, Cervera and other houses. He himself spent two years of the civil war imprisoned and as a refugee in embassies. He went through a long "dark night." He passed away in Solsona (Lleida) on August 23rd.

PERSONAL PRAYER OF THE CLARETIAN MISSIONARY

CONSTITUCIONES



Altar dedicated to Blessed Ferran Saperas (Tarrega, Lleida)

37. Our missionaries should spend some time daily in mental prayer, an hour when possible, pondering the Word of God in their hearts. We should also engage in spiritual reading, especially from the Scriptures, and examine our fidelity to the gospel.

Daily prayer, faithfully made, is a primary need for both the community and the individual missionary; therefore, it should be given priority in our life.



FOR PERSONAL REFLECTION

- *Consider and make these two texts your own from Father Claret about his personal prayer:*
- *"May God keep me from ever abandoning mental prayer. If I unfortunately came to this, I would be lost." (according to the testimony of Fr. Jaime Clotet).*
- *"The realization of how much good I have derived through reading good and pious books has prompted me to distribute them generously, in the hope that they will bring my neighbors, whom I love so much, the same happy results they brought to me." (Aut 42)*

"Our word and preaching of the God of Life and Love
will be a consoling and hope-filled announcement,
especially for his wounded people."
(*IPM* 43)

AUGUST

7



1859. Claret tells Fr. **Dionisio Gonzalez** about his plan to go to live in El Escorial with his missionaries and to establish a mission center there, for that reason he tells Fr. **Paladio Currius** that it will not be necessary to rent a house in Madrid. He believes that from there he will be able to attend to the Queen, but soon he will see that it is not feasible.

1866. After a few days in Segovia and La Granja, today Claret leaves for El Escorial. The next day he leaves with the royal family towards Zarautz. In the absence of Fr. **Carmelo Sala**, Fr. **Donato Berenguer**, CMF has been his chaplain in Segovia and La Granja.

1868. Claret returns to Madrid after a month in La Granja and Segovia.



IDENTITY AND MISSION (1991 - 1997)

MISSION PROCURES AND *PROCLADE*

Among the initiatives that should be highlighted in this period is the promotion of the Mission Procures in the Provinces with more economic possibilities and the General Procures of Rome and Madrid, in order to support missionary projects in the areas which are most in need. In Spain these Procures took the official form of *NGO PROCLADE* (Claretian Promotion of Development). The progress of the Mission Procures, the evangelizing commitment of *PROCLADE* and the missionary projects that are carried out in each Delegation are numerous, as well as the number of volunteers who collaborate in the dioceses and those who carry out different missionary experiences in places of Claretian mission: Brazil, India, Central America, Africa, etc. The experiences that are programmed with the volunteers are carried out from the perspective of the poor and needy. It is worth praising this work of raising awareness and sensibility toward the emergency aid that is carried out at critical moments in some countries.



BLESSED JOSEP ARNER AND 14 COMPANIONS

Claretian Martyrs of Vic and Sallent



From the community of Vic Fr. Josep Arner and Fr. Casto Navarro were shot on the night of August 7-8, 1936, at the beginning of the Spanish Civil War. Fr. Josep Puigdessens and Fr. Julio Aramendia were shot and killed on the Manlleu highway. Fr. Codinach, Fr. Codina and Fr. Casals took refuge in the house of the martyr Franch, in Mas Vivet, and were shot on the night of October 9th. Br. Isidro Costa, after an interrogation, was sentenced to death and executed. Br. Miguel Facerias, while they were driving him to Vic, was murdered next to the Puente del Lobo. The community from Sallent dispersed on July 20th. Afterwards they apprehended Fr. Juan Mercer and Fr. Jaume Payas and Br. Mariano Binefa and Marcelino Mur. They shot all four. Fr. Jose Capdevila, the superior, fled to his family home. They arrested him and shot him the next day. Fr. Juan Blanch was murdered on August 31st. They were beatified in Barcelona on October 21, 2017.

CELEBRATION OF THE SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION

CONSTITUCIONES

38. We should frequently celebrate the Sacrament of Reconciliation, which both symbolizes and perfects our spirit of constant conversion to God. For in virtue of this Sacrament, we are reconciled with the Church, which we have wounded by our sins, and with Christ, who knew no sin. Thus we too die to sin.



Mas Claret (Lleida)



FOR PERSONAL REFLECTION

In this sacrament, our prayer becomes a petition for the forgiveness of sins and an expression of our desire for permanent conversion.

- *How much importance do you give this sacrament in your spiritual life?*
- *If you are a priest, what importance and space do you give it in your ministry?*

"We are all faced with a series of great opportunities brilliantly disguised as impossible situations."
(*Chuck Swindoll*)

AUGUST

8



1850. Claret visits the Shrine of St. Sigismund, in the mountains of Montseny (Barcelona); it may be at this time when he erects the famous Matagalls Cross.

1851. Claret submits a second request to the Governor of Cuba not to execute eight insurgents who have been sentenced to death; for this he makes an uncommon reference to his status as *Primate of the West Indies and Counselor of Her Majesty*. Five of the leaders were executed.

1861. Claret speaks with the Queen about the appointment of bishops for Osma, Huesca and Teruel.



IDENTITY AND MISSION (1991 - 1997)

IN TAIWAN

In February 1994 the first missionaries arrived in Taiwan with the goal of preparing for the upcoming, long-awaited foundation in mainland China. It arose as a result of the beatification of the martyrs of Barbastro, some of whom saw their missionary dreams in China truncated by martyrdom. The foundation consisted of a presence in Taipei to which the responsibility of the parish of the Sacred Heart in Keelung would later be added. There they began to carry out ministry with Filipino immigrants, who came to religious activities in large numbers. Piety was encouraged in all its forms, but they began to give much importance to the integral formation of Christians with the study of the Word of God, with the deepening of spiritual life, socialization and human and family values. This new mission was incorporated into the Delegation of East Asia. One of the activities that has been carried out is the accompaniment of the indigenous communities of the island.



JUAN DOMENECH

Administrator of Sallent (?-1858)



He was a close friend of Claret. In 1836 he succeeded Fr. Mariano Cots as Administrator of the parish in Sallent, assisted by Claret as Vicar. In 1837, on the eve of Queen **Isabella II**'s name day, foreseeing the dilemma in which he was going to find himself, he escaped to Olost so that he would not have problems with the liberals. Father Claret was appointed Administrator to replace him. Claret wrote about Domenech*: A recommendable man no less for his virtue and zeal than for his literary knowledge*. He was the one who wrote the certificate so that they would let Claret cross the border to Rome. He wrote: *[Claret] is an individual who has never been involved in political matters, but one who has only been seen fulfilling the duties inherent to his sacred ministry, always driven by a great zeal for the religion of Jesus Christ, which zeal, in order to be employed more effectively in the aforesaid ministry, prompted him to set out on a long trip for Rome.* He died on August 7th.

CONSTITUCIONES

FROM THE IMITATION OF CHRIST TO CONFORMITY WITH HIM

Chapter VI: Conformity with Christ



This image of the Mother and Child was unearthed in the field where the martyrs were burried (Catalunya Provincial Curia - Barcelona)

39. The anointing of the Holy Spirit, whereby we are anointed to preach the Good News to the poor, is a sharing in the fullness of Christ. For this reason, we who have been called to follow the Lord and collaborate with him in the work assigned him by the Father, must keep our gaze fixed on Christ, imitate him, and be so steeped in his spirit that it will no longer be we who live, but Christ who truly lives in us. This is the only way in which we will become effective instruments in proclaiming the kingdom of heaven.

We aim to attain conformity to Christ by professing religious vows in a missionary community. We also pursue this conformity by the practice of other virtues and express it according to our gift in the Church.



FOR PERSONAL REFLECTION

We distinguish here our "objective" consecration from our process of "subjective" transformation, both of which are the work of the Holy Spirit. Highlight the importance of the vows and virtues.

- *How do you perceive the effects of the action of the Holy Spirit in you?*
- *Throughout your missionary life, what gifts do you recognize that have been given to you?*
- *Which aspects of your spiritual personality have you worked on the most throughout your life?*
- *Which part of your personal spirituality concerns you and worries you the most at this time? How do you address it?*

"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)

AUGUST

9



1858. During the King and Queen's trip through Asturias, on arrival in Gijon, Claret begins a mission. The newspaper *La Esperanza* says of it: *The crowd of the faithful, from a very numerous beginning, increased more every day, and so many turned to the sacrament of penance that the confessors who helped were not enough.*



IDENTITY AND MISSION (1991 - 1997)

RESTRUCTURING OF ORGANISMS

In 1994 the Province of Castilla and of the USA-East turned over the missions entrusted to them in Panama, Honduras and Guatemala, collaborating in this way to the new restructuring of the Province of Centroamerica that would be carried out in 1995, reintegrating in it all the Congregational Institutions present in its territory.

In April 1995 the Provincials of Deutschland, Italy and Canada opted for the creation of a Confederation of Missions in French-speaking Africa, integrating the mission areas of Zaire, Gabon and Cameroun. The Confederation was born as the result of a long journey of collaboration that had been taking place in Africa, especially in the area of initial formation. In fact, the three Missions had some common formation centers, in which the Claretians of Equatorial Guinea, São Tome, Angola and Ivory Coast were also formed. Statutes were approved which included the formation of a government for the Confederation, formed by Claretians of the three missions.



JOSE SANMARTI

Friend of Claret (1810-1876)



San Martin de Serrahima (Barcelona, Spain). He studied in Sallent and then in the seminary in Vic and the University of Cervera. He was ordained a priest in 1836. After being ordained he lived for a few months in Sallent, while Father Claret was serving in the same parish as Interim Administrator, with whom he had a very close friendship, and from whom he received many lessons about mysticism and much edification. He was Regent of Igualada and Administrator. He was Vicar General of the Diocese of Vic with Bishops **Castañer** and Jorda, carrying out his responsibilities with great approval. The latter named him a canon, but he did not accept, although he did accept the position of librarian. In 1868 he left office and retired to the house-asylum in Vic, where he died piously on August 9, 1876. He was a model student, an exemplary priest, a very active and zealous pastor, an accomplished legal consultant and, above all, a humble, affable, very virtuous individual who was detached from earthly things.

APOSTOLIC CHARITY

CONSTITUCIONES



From the movie "A Forbidden God". A comercial film on the Martyrs of Barbastro

40. Apostolic charity is the virtue a missionary needs more than any other. In fact, if he lacks this virtue, he will be like a resounding gong or a clashing cymbal.

Christ was so driven by a burning love for his Father and for humankind, that he willingly spent himself in work, suffering and even death. The Apostles, too, impelled by the fire of the Holy Spirit, hurried throughout the world, witnessing to the joy of Christ's resurrection.

Driven by apostolic zeal and the joy of the Spirit, we too should bend every effort toward making God known, loved and served by everyone. We should love each and every human being, longing and working for the day when all may come to share the blessedness of the kingdom already begun here on earth.



FOR PERSONAL REFLECTION

Complete the following unfinished sentences:

- *For me charity is the most necessary virtue for a missionary because ...*
- *For me charity is more necessary than efficiency because ...*
- *For me charity is more necessary than wisdom from the moment when ...*
- *For me charity is more necessary than using good means as long as ...*
- *For me charity is more necessary than prayer in the sense that ...*
- *For me charity is more necessary than poverty, because ...*

"We incarnate our missionary and prophetic service of the Word in each of the countries and cultural contexts in which we live."
(*EMP* 57)

AUGUST

10



1844. According to a letter to Fr. Pedro Cruells, Claret begins preaching in several *mountain villages* (Olot and Mieras, in Girona).

1866. In Zarautz, the Minister of Development says goodbye to Claret as he returns to Madrid and promises to accelerate the matter of the university of El Escorial as much as the law allows.

1868. Claret accompanies the King and Queen to El Escorial (although he is no longer President) so that the two princesses can make their solemn entry into the basilica. At noon they take the train to San Sebastian.



IDENTITY AND MISSION (1991 - 1997)

IN TANZANIA AND UGANDA

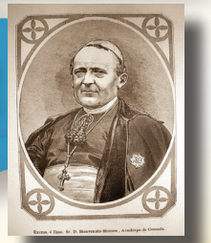
The Claretians from Chennai Province came to Musoma (Tanzania) in September 1994 with the intention of learning the language and collaborating in the pastoral work of the diocese. In this area of Africa there was an abundance of vocations. Their work began at the Makoko Center, an institute for the promotion of courses and seminars for lay people. In July 2001, the new Claretian Seminary, dedicated to the Martyrs of Barbastro, was inaugurated in Morogoro, intended for philosophy and theology students from East Africa (Uganda, Tanzania and Kenya). The new parishes of Kimara and Mwanza were also taken on.

After a careful study, Bangalore Province decided to found a House in Uganda in 1995. The missionary presence began in the Diocese of Jinja, located in southeastern Uganda. In 1996 the Bishop offered the missionaries the direction of the Diocesan Catechetical Center and part of the parish of Kiyunga, 55 km. away from Jinja, where an alternative medical clinic was built.



BIENVENIDO MONZON MARTINEZ

Archbishop of Granada (1820-1885)



Camarillas (Teruel, Spain). In 1850 he was appointed Master of the Collegiate Church of San Ildefonso in La Granja (Segovia). Then he was a canon and professor in Toledo. He was consecrated Bishop of Santo Domingo in 1862, Father Claret participated in his consecration. In 1866 he was named Archbishop of Granada and in 1885 of Seville, although he died without having taken possession. Speaking about Claret's behavior in the Court he stated: *Conduct that, as I see it, was not only good and exemplary, but also discreet and very prudent, given the criticism and very difficult circumstances that surrounded Bishop Claret internally and externally in the exercise of his delicate and thorny position. I know well that all the revolutionary press and the sworn enemies of Jesus Christ and his Church, of the monarchy and of all legitimate authority, slandered him indecently and fought against him with terrible cruelty; but this is clear proof that he behaved and fought as a good person in defense of the high religious and social institutions.*

HUMILITY



From the movie "A Forbidden God". A comercial film on the Martyrs of Barbastro

41. If we are to experience within us the attitude of Christ Jesus, who emptied himself, taking the form of a slave, we must seek humility, which prepares us to receive God's grace, is the foundation of Christian perfection, and is thus an absolutely necessary virtue for any minister of the gospel. Let us give all glory to God for any gifts we may have received, and through them bear much fruit.

Each of us should be aware of his own sins and defects, inwardly acknowledging his dependence on God. This awareness should be manifest in our dealings and relationships with others. We should admit our shortcomings and mistakes, asks pardon of our brothers and perform acts of kindness for them, so that each of us may be in their midst as one who serves.



FOR PERSONAL REFLECTION

There is no humility without being humbled. This is what Claret testifies to: "The memory of my vanity has brought many a bitter tear to my eyes. But you, my God, have humbled me and I can do no less than thank you in the words of the Prophet: *Bonum mihi quia humiliasti me* (Ps 119:71)" (Aut 341)

- *Transcribe the expressions of humility that are included in this paragraph of the Constitutions ... How have you noticed the educating action of God in your humility throughout your life?*

"Openness to life is at the centre of true development."
(Benedict XVI, *Caritas in Veritate*, 28)

AUGUST

11



1849. **Casadevall** gives Claret the letter of his appointment as Archbishop of Santiago, Cuba.

1863. At the request of the Bishop of Huesca for a community of missionaries, Claret responds according to what will be his constant norm: to work it out with Fr. **Joseph Xifre**, who is the Superior.

1865. Claret is in Vic, working a lot apostolically, but perhaps somewhat disoriented. He thinks that he should not return to Madrid, but will go to Rome to consult the Pope about it.



IDENTITY AND MISSION (1991 - 1997)

THE SYNOD ON CONSECRATED LIFE (1994)

In 1994, the Synod of Bishops on Consecrated Life was celebrated in Rome. The Claretians played an important role in the preparation and in the realization of it. Those who attended were: Bishop **Fernando Sebastian**, Father General, Aquilino Bocos, and Fr. Matias Auge, Director of the *Claretianum* (Rome). Fr. Abilio Pina Ribeiro, of Portugal Province, also participated as auditor.

The themes of the Synod focused on the situation and activities of the men and women religious, on the application of the vows of poverty, chastity and obedience, with special mention of their observance of the Vatican guidelines. There were 244 Synod Fathers and a total of 349 people, which made it the most attended of the 14 synods celebrated since the institution was established in 1965. The Pope set the main guidelines that this Synod should follow. The fruit of this Synod was the apostolic exhortation *Vita Consecrata* (1996).



ANTHONY BARJAU

Companion of Claret (1825-1892)



Manresa (Barcelona, Spain). He received his priestly ordination in Solsona in 1848. In 1850 he accompanied Father Claret to Santiago, Cuba. The saint appointed him Director of the Seminary of San Basilio Magno in 1851. Father Claret wrote of him: *He began giving missions with Father Lorenzo San Marti. As he was exceptionally gifted for teaching and instructing boys, I made him rector of the seminary, a task he performed very well remaining at his post until the arrival of my successor. He then returned to Spain, where I made him rector of the royal monastery of the Escorial. He is a priest who is detached from all earthly things and very zealous for the glory of God and the salvation of souls* (Aut. 600). He was proposed as Bishop of Badajoz, but it did not accept. For health reasons he was forced to leave Cuba, where he had returned, in 1880. He wrote: *I profess devotion and affection to the Servant of God for the affection that he professed to me.* He died on August 12th.

42. We should earnestly strive to practice that gentle meekness which the Lord commends and which is a sign of an apostolic vocation. For though we should be impelled by Christ's love to be zealous for our brothers and sisters with the zeal of God and be so strong in spirit that we would daily die for them, we must nevertheless be so imbued with the gentleness of Christ in our ministry that we will be able to win many hearts for him.



Chapel of the Blessed Martyrs of Barbastro Museum (Huesca)



FOR PERSONAL REFLECTION

- *Briefly, in two columns, write the differences between MEEKNESS and WEAKNESS, highlighting attitudes, feelings and behaviors.*
- *Considering that synoptic chart that you have made, do you feel the Lord calling you to something in particular?*

"All that remains now is the Eucharist;
everything else is additional burden...
The Eucharist is the final word about Christ."
(*Bernadette Roberts*)

AUGUST

12



1847. Claret proposes to **Caixal** the reprinting of five books, perhaps with some changes and with new titles *to pique curiosity*. He also communicates his plan to go further into Spain starting in the Fall.

1849. Claret writes to the nuncio rejecting the episcopal appointment.

1858. From Gijon, where he accompanies the King and Queen and preaches abundantly, Claret continues advising the nuncio on the appointment of Bishops: Astorga, Calahorra and Tortosa.



IDENTITY AND MISSION (1991 - 1997)

100TH ANNIVERSARY OF CATALUNYA AND CASTILLA

In the General Chapter of 1895, it was decided to divide the Institute into two Provinces which would be called Catalunya and Castilla. The Novitiate and the Scholasticate of Santo Domingo de la Calzada and Cervera continued undivided and under the responsibility of the General Government.

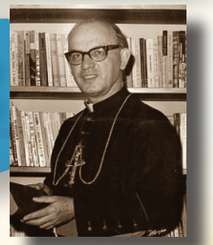
On the occasion of the centenary of this event, there were celebrations in both Provinces in Sallent and Segovia. They took advantage of this occasion to promote the restoration of the Cristo del Perdon chapel in La Granja de San Ildefonso, in Segovia, a Claretian place that the Claretians always visit.

The first Claretian Missionaries arrived in Castilla from Catalunya, under the supervision of the Fr. Founder. From those Catalan missionaries, those who followed learned to be universal in outlook. There were 2,775 missionaries who professed in the Province of Castilla throughout its first hundred years. The first Provincial Chapter of Castilla was held in Segovia in July 1901. Presided over by Fr. **Clement Serrat**, Superior General.



JOSE DE MATOS, CMF

1st Bishop of Barreto (1918-1976)



Taiuva (Brazil). He professed as a Claretian in Guarulhos in 1938. He was ordained in 1945. He devoted himself first to formation and education as a professor. He was Prefect of the theology students in Parana. He soon became a Provincial Consultor. Later, he dedicated himself to parish work in the parish Imaculado Coração De Maria in São Paulo, becoming Episcopal Vicar of São Paulo and later the first bishop of the new Diocese of Barreto. During the three years and two months of his episcopate, he won the affection of his people, he integrated the laity, whose formation he especially insisted on, as well as on the care of the women religious. He was a great catechist and connected very well with his priests. His death came sooner than expected due to cancer. At the end of his life he showed signs of a great Christian spirit and a pure love for the Congregation. He was an example for all of missionary virtue and self-denial.

BEING CONFORMED TO CHRIST THE REDEEMER

CONSTITUCIONES

43. As associates in the work of Redemption, we should strive to be conformed to Christ, who said: "*If anyone wants to be a follower of mine, let him renounce himself and take up his cross.*"

As strangers and exiles, true missionaries should keep themselves from carnal desires, which war against the spirit. Therefore we should keep careful watch over our senses, glorifying God and carrying him about in our bodies. In our use of food, drink or anything that might indulge our sensuality, we should practice those forms of temperance best suited to the circumstances of time and place, for this is most becoming in apostolic ministers. Thus, by our self-restraint, others will be able to discern that the body is for Christ, by whose power God will raise us up.



Urns of the 51 Blessed Claretian Martyrs of Barbastro (Huesca)



FOR PERSONAL REFLECTION

The words of Jesus are not an invitation to enter a path of sadness and bitterness. Nor is this paragraph reduced to ascetic prescriptions. It is an expression of following Jesus. And there is no following without a cross.

- *Identify your personal crosses that come from your community life and your missionary service.*
- *How do you take them up? Do you feel that you grow from the suffering or, on the contrary, it damages and harms you?*
- *To what does the message of this paragraph call you?*

"Be faithful in small things because it is in them that your strength lies."
(*St. Teresa of Calcutta*)

AUGUST

13



1848. Claret finishes a mission in Galdar (Canary Islands).

1861. Claret travels with the royal family from Santander to Palencia.

1864. Claret accompanies the royal family through Segovia and also visits the missionaries in their poor but clean convent. They were amazed at the Queen's affection for her confessor.



IDENTITY AND MISSION (1991 - 1997)

REVISITING MAINLAND CHINA

On March 18-23, 1995, the long-awaited visit to the Prefecture of Tunki, the former mission of the Claretians in China took place. It was made by several members of the community of Taiwan. They still found older Christians who remembered the first Claretian missionaries and who had suffered more than 30 years of imprisonment and forced labor because of their fidelity to the faith. The mission house had been converted into a hotel. The remains of the two missionaries who died in the mission, Fr. Jose Sanchez (†1936) and Fr. Sebastian Soler (†1936) were still buried next to the Chapel of the Heart of Mary.

In July 1995, a new visit to China was made, this time from Korea. Two Claretians and 30 Korean Christians visited the autonomous region of Jilin for 15 days. In October of this same year two other missionaries from Taiwan returned to visit the Tunki area.



BLESSED FELIPE DE JESUS MUNARRIZ AND 50 COMPANIONS

Claretian Martyrs of Barbastro



It all started with the uprising of July 17, 1936. The events took place in the city of Barbastro (Huesca), where 59 Claretian missionaries lived, most of them young students. On Monday, the 20th, at 5:30 in the afternoon, the militia arrived at the house. All were sent to the auditorium of the school of the Piarists. Two Argentine students were released (**Atilio Parussini** and **Pablo Hall**); they were witnesses. On August 12th, the militiamen broke into the room. That day they took the six eldest. The night of the 12th was going to be the last for some. When they slept the night of August 14-15, a group of militiamen burst into the room again. They all stood up at once. It was night when the 17 young people left the prison room. They were singing. Placed next to an incline - some standing, others on their knees, some with their arms outstretched, others with a rosary or a crucifix in their hands - the last shots were heard. They were beatified by St. John Paul II in Rome on October 25, 1992.

THE "PASSION" OF THE MISSIONARY

CONSTITUCIONES

44. We should bear in mind that the Lord has told us: "*Anyone who loses his life for my sake and for the sake of the Gospel will save it.*" It is, then, most fitting that we strive to rejoice in all sorts of hardship: hunger, thirst, nakedness, hard work, slander, persecution and every tribulation, so that we may be able to say with the Apostle Paul: "*It is out of the question that I should boast at all, except of the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world.*"

The Lord himself chose to be identified with those who suffer, and he invites us to recognize him, suffering in them. Therefore we should offer them effective help, even laying down our lives for the sake of our brothers and sisters. In solidarity with all who bear the burden of sickness, sorrow, injustice and oppression, let us bear all things for their sake in order that they may attain salvation.



Reliquary of the Blessed Claretian Martyrs of Barbastro (Huesca)



FOR PERSONAL REFLECTION

Here is proposed the "passion of the missionary" with two components: the missionary who suffers and the people who suffer.

- *What makes you suffer? Why are you crying?*
- *Why do your neighbors suffer?*
- *Review these experiences of Father Claret, which will undoubtedly help you to make sense of yours: "As I find myself so persecuted these days, I will consider that it all comes from God and that he wants me to offer Him the homage of bearing, out of divine love, every sort of affliction, whether in reputation, in body or in soul." (Resolutions 1864)*

"I resolved that in my outward bearing I would be modest and recollected... in my work I would be patient, silent, and long-suffering."
(*Aut* 419)

AUGUST

14



1844. From this date until the middle of the following month Claret is preaching in Olot, whose pastor is Fr. **Joaquin Masmitja**, future founder of the *Daughters of the Most Holy and Immaculate Heart of the Blessed Virgin Mary.*

1848. Claret begins a mission in Guia (Canary Islands), with no less success than in Galdar. In both towns he manages to straighten out some priests.

1861. Claret preaches several times in Palencia; in the afternoon they leave for Burgos.



IDENTITY AND MISSION (1991 - 1997)

IN THE CZECH REPUBLIC AND SLOVAKIA

In 1994 the first exploration for the foundation in the Czech Republic began. After studying the various possibilities, they decided to found a house in the capital, Prague, in 1995. Once the first difficulties and learning the language were overcome, work began, mainly with groups of young Czechs from the Department of Agronomy from the University.

The General Government entrusted the foundation in Slovakia to Polska Province in 1996. The first steps led to considering the city of Brezno, with 40,000 inhabitants, in the Diocese of Banska Bystrica, but eventually they began working in parishes in the nearby towns of Podbrezova, Hromiec and Mýto pod Ďumbierom.

Faced with the reality of unbelief, the experience and proclamation of faith inspired attitudes and actions for preparing dialogue and for accompanying Christians who felt challenged. Service to the marginalized also became an invitation to believe in the Gospel message.



BLESSED MARCELIANO ALONSO AND 3 COMPANIONS

Claretian Martyrs of Valencia



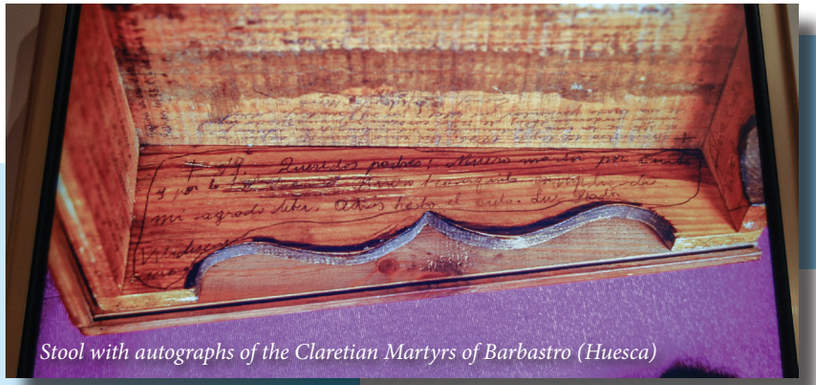
On March 23, 1936 the mobs had seized the house of Requena, setting fire to it shortly after. On April 10th those from the community of Jativa also had to leave their house. Shortly after, at the beginning of May, the house of El Grao was closed. That is why most people were gathered in the community of Valencia. On July 27th, Fr. Frances fled to the town of Serra, with Br. Velez. Soon he was left alone in that town, where he was taken prisoner on August 20th. On the 21st, he was assassinated in Olocau. Fr. Alonso, Fr. Gordon and Fr. Galipienzo were taken prisoner in the apartment in San Vicente after many tribulations. Taken before the court, they left with the conviction that they were going to be taken to martyrdom. They confessed and dedicated themselves to prayer. Three kilometers from Valencia, they were shot while reciting prayers. They were beatified in Barcelona on October 21, 2017.



BEING CONFORMED TO CHRIST THROUGH ILLNESS AND DEATH

45. Since Christ suffered for us and left us an example, we should bear our own illness and suffering with submission to God's loving will, realizing that through our infirmity we fill up what is lacking in the sufferings of Christ. Let us, then, show great patience when we are ill and lack anything because of our poverty. In this way we will preach to others through the witness of our life.

When any of us is gravely ill, he should also unite himself more closely to Christ through the Sacraments of the Sick and offer his life to God for the salvation of all people, placing all his trust in the One who is our resurrection and our life.



Stool with autographs of the Claretian Martyrs of Barbastro (Huesca)



FOR PERSONAL REFLECTION

We will be - perhaps we already are - crucified with the Crucified One. The circumstance referred to here is illness. We are not urged to be stoics, but rather believers.

- *How do I want to live with illness when it arrives or what I am experiencing now? How can I prepare to receive it profitably?*
- *What does my faith and my vocation give me in order to make these sufferings an "apostolic act"?*
- *What could I lean on in these times and circumstances?*

"Communion with the crucified and risen Lord impels us to defend life, and gives meaning to all human situations, especially those most painful."
(*THML* 9)

AUGUST

15



1845. Claret is in Santa Eulalia de Riuprimer (Barcelona), where he preaches a novena for the Assumption.

1858. Claret concludes a very popular mission in Gijon.

1870. From Fontfroide, Claret writes to Fr. **Joseph Xifre** that he is upset about the detriment that his proximity may cause the missionaries; therefore, he persists in the idea of going to Rome. He will be dissuaded from such a possibility and begins to write a booklet about *La castidad de Jesus [The Chastity of Jesus]* and lives a quasi-monastic life.



IDENTITY AND MISSION (1991 - 1997)

ECCLESIAL APPOINTMENTS

During this period several Claretians were promoted to the episcopate: Fr. Romulo Emiliani (1989) Bishop, Apostolic Vicar of the Vicariate of Darien (Panama); Fr. Juan Matogo, Bishop of Ebebiyin (Equatorial Guinea) in 1991; Fr. Pedro Olmedo, Bishop of Humahuaca (Argentina) in 1993; and Fr. Angel Garachana, Bishop of San Pedro Sula (Honduras), in 1994.

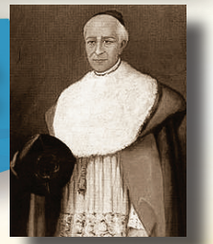
In 1992, Fr. **Fernando Sebastian** moved from Archbishop Coadjutor of Granada to Archbishop of Pamplona (Spain); Fr. **Manuel Revollo** from Coadjutor Bishop of Cochabamba (Bolivia) to Auxiliary Bishop of the Bolivia Military Ordinariate in 1993; Fr. Placido Rodriguez from Auxiliary Bishop of Chicago to Bishop of Lubbock (USA) in 1994; and Fr. **Luis Gutierrez** from Auxiliary Bishop of Madrid to Bishop of Segovia (Spain) in 1995. In 1998, the already ordained Archbishop Jose Saraiva was appointed Prefect of the Congregation for the Causes of Saints.

At this time the Congregation had 18 bishops between residents and emeritus. All of them emulating this ecclesial service that the Father Founder had in his day.



JOAQUIN MASMITJA

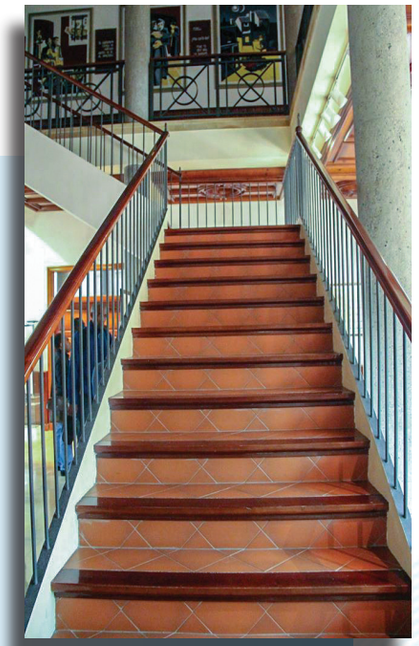
Founder (1808-1886)



Olot (Girona, Spain). He studied Canon Law in Cervera. From 1848 he was Administrator of the cathedral of Girona. That same year he founded the Congregation of *Missionary Sisters of the Immaculate Heart of Mary* for the catechesis and Christian education of girls and young women. He was chosen as Vicar General of the diocese in 1878. Father Claret and Joaquin Masmitja were great friends, both devotees of the Heart of Mary. Claret met him personally in the mission he gave in his parish of Olot in 1844. Many years later he included his name in a list of possible candidates for the episcopate. Expert director of souls, he had a particular gift for eliciting respect and trust at the same time. His humility led him to decline the offer of different professor positions at the University of Barcelona, when the University of Cervera was moved to that capital, and to refuse the miter of Girona years later. Several times Claret wrote to him encouraging him in his work as promoter of the Institute. He died on August 16th.

CONSTITUCIONES

THE CONTENT AND FULFILLMENT OF OUR MISSION



Staircase of the Barbastro Seminary now turned Museum of the 51 Claretian Martyrs of Barbastro (Huesca)

Chapter VII: Fulfilling our Mission

46. The ministry of the word, through which we communicate the total mystery of Christ to humanity, is our special calling among the People of God. For we have been sent to proclaim the Lord's life, death and resurrection, until he comes, so that all who believe in him may be saved.

Sharing the hopes and joys, the sorrows and trials of the people, especially those of the poor, we readily offer to join efforts with all who are striving to transform the world according to God's plan. Nevertheless, we must faithfully and boldly proclaim the Good News of the kingdom, especially since there are many, led astray by the lure of power, wealth or lust, who oppose it.



FOR PERSONAL REFLECTION

This paragraph expresses a central perception of the heart of Father Claret: "Society is perishing for no other reason than that it has withdrawn from the Church's Word, which is the Word of life and the Word of God. Societies have become weak and are starving because they have ceased to receive the daily bread of God's Word. Every plan of salvation will be sterile unless there is a return to the fullness of the great, catholic Word." (*Aut* 450)

- *Do you agree with that perception? Evangelization focuses on "first, do" and "then, teach." (cf. Aut 388)*
- *In what sense do we have to prioritize "teaching" as missionaries? Why?*

"The exclusion of religion from the public square
- and, at the other extreme, religious fundamentalism -
hinders an encounter between persons and their collaboration
for the progress of humanity."
(Benedict XVI, *Caritas in Veritate*, 56)

AUGUST

16



1852. Claret continues to ask the Captain General of Cuba for help so that, with civil provisions, he can help to end the cohabitations.

1859. Claret arrives in Segovia and begins Spiritual Exercises for the clergy. Writing to Fr. **Paladio Currius.** he expresses enthusiasm for the great good that can be done in his two institutions: the hospital of Montserrat and the monastery of El Escorial.

1861. All day today in Burgos, a city full of churches and convents, Claret preaches 11 sermons.



INDIAN DELEGATION OF THE SYRO-MALABAR RITE

IDENTITY AND MISSION (1991 - 1997)

In 1996 the Dependent Delegation of the Province of Bangalore (India) of the Syro-Malabar Rite was born. It was made up of the Houses of Kuravilangad, Vythiri and Wardha and the parishes of St. Thomas, St. Sebastian and Blessed Alphonsa, located in the Archdiocese of Bangalore. The objective was to offer the Claretians who belonged to this rite the possibility of having a legal structure that would allow them to express more fully their ritual identity and help the development of the Congregation in that Church. The erection of said Organism was a step towards the constitution of a Syro-Malabar Major Organism in the future. The Claretian Missionaries of this Delegation, and those of India in general, were at the service of the tribals, *dalits*, caring for abandoned children and elderly people, those with leprosy, alcoholics and attending to those affected by AIDS. They proclaim the merciful love of God and the strength of the heart of Mary. Later (2001) this Dependent Delegation will become the Province of St. Thomas.



RAMON FONT, CMF

Bishop of Tarija (1874-1848)



Rupit (Barcelona, Spain). He studied Humanities in the seminary in Vic. In 1893 he entered the Congregation. In 1901 he set sail towards Peru. Soon the Archbishop of Lima appointed him Visitor of the Archdiocese. He founded the communities of Cocharcas in Peru and Cochabamba, Oruro and Tarija in Bolivia. In 1924 three new dioceses were created in Bolivia, Fr. Font was named Bishop of Tarija. His health worsened, which forced him, along with his love for the people of Tarija, not to accept the proposal of Prelate of Cochabamba and Archbishop of Sucre. He represented Bolivia in various Missionary Congresses in Barcelona and Buenos Aires, and promoted a Eucharistic Congress in Tarija. Before his death he said: *My God, accept my pain for the salvation of the souls of this Diocese that you have entrusted to me; they are Your sheep, oh my Jesus! Good Shepherd, lead them all to the flock of your glory.* He died smiling, like the righteous die.

CONSTITUCIONES

FUNDAMENTAL REALIZATION OF OUR MISSION

47. Our Congregation fulfills its proper mission by raising up and strengthening communities of believers, either by leading people to conversion to God through faith or by renewing their life in Christ and leading them to perfection in it.



Icon of the 51 Blessed Claretian Martyrs of Barbastro (Huesca)



FOR PERSONAL REFLECTION

This paragraph of the Constitutions refers to three apostolic dimensions: the first missionary announcement (to non-Christians), the new evangelization (to those who are no longer Christians) and the ordinary pastoral work (for Christians).

- *How is this triple aspect of the mission carried out in your Organism? Which one is being favored?*
- *Which of them is your priority? How is it justified?*

"The self is identified with desire alone.
What it desires, it resolves; what it resolves, it works out;
and what it works out, it attains."
(*Brihadaranyaka Upanishad*, IV.4.5)

AUGUST

17



1860. In Avila, where Claret arrived on the 13th at night, he began Spiritual Exercises for the Clergy (two rounds) and a mission for the town.

1861. In the morning Claret preaches six sermons in Burgos; in the afternoon they travel to Valladolid.

1868. Claret has been in Lekeitio (Biscay) for a week preaching a lot. He has received news of the unpleasantness that is already happening and of the new President of El Escorial. He describes this monastery as *a great rack on which to torture those in charge of it.*



IDENTITY AND MISSION (1991 - 1997)

THE PERSECUTION DOES NOT END (1)

There were several places and Claretians who suffered the effects of violence during this time.

In December of 1991 it was in the mission in Juanjui (Peru) where 350 terrorists of the Tupac Amaru Revolutionary Movement took the city, of about 30,000 inhabitants, with a great deployment of military weapons. The result was at least 5 dead, and the Missionaries' house was also burned.

At the same time, the violence in Zaire intensified, with the military coming to plunder the Institute of Philosophy in Kinshasa, where our seminarians were studying. As a result, the 15 non-Zairean students had to go to Yaounde (Cameroon) to continue studying, while the seven Zaireans had to do so with an emergency plan in the Claretian Seminary. Shortly after, some of the formators also left. The presence of foreign Claretians in Zaire, even at the risk of their lives, was a valuable witness and support for native vocations.



SERVANT OF GOD PEDRO MARCER, CMF

(1854-1927)



Avinyonet del Penedes (Barcelona, Spain). He entered as a Brother in the Congregation. In 1880 he was assigned to Chile. He was part of the communities of Curico and Santiago where he lived for 47 years. He died there at 73 years old. He always served as porter, a position of great trust from the superiors. But his influence came from his life: *It would be difficult to erase from the memory of those of us who belong to this Province the holy figure of Br. Pedro in the exercise of his position.* His memory has passed through the generations of missionaries as a role model. His cause for beatification was introduced, which did not prosper due to legal deficiencies. *He had an attitude that was so modest and simple, without affectation ... Such prudence with his words, such modesty and humility ...; as a whole, in short, he denounced holiness with all the aspects that make it beautiful.* During his time as the porter of the Claretian community of Santiago, speaking about his zeal, it was commented that more marriages were legitimized here than in the entire Archdiocese.

CONSTITUCIONES

MEANS AND CRITERIA FOR CARRYING OUT OUR MISSION

48. In carrying out this mission, our missionaries should use all means possible, but they should above all foster the following attitudes:

- *a sense of alertness* to whatever is most urgent, opportune and effective, in the setting of the times, places and persons with whom they have to deal, without clinging to outmoded or inadequate methods or tools of the apostolate;
- *a sense of availability* allowing them to be so open to the guidance of the Spirit and so obedient to their mission that they will be ready to abandon all that they have grown accustomed to in order to fulfill their duty of spreading the faith, both within and beyond their native land.
- *a sense of catholicity* that will lead them into all parts of the world and make them open-minded, receptive and respectful of the religious and cultural customs and values of the people.

Their missionary work should be directed mainly to those who most need evangelization or to persons who are or should become agents of evangelization. If any individual or group is led by a missionary spirit and wishes to collaborate with us, we should be glad in the Lord to have them associated in our apostolates.



FOR PERSONAL REFLECTION

- *Suppose you are going to preach a retreat or direct a talk to the community about what is most urgent, timely and effective in our mission. Try to draw up an outline of what you would say to your brothers. Include motivations, reasoning and some simple operational proposals.*
- *Would you change the expression "use all means possible" to "use all appropriate means"?*

"The greater your knowledge of the goodness and grace of God on your life, the more likely you are to praise Him in the storm."
(*Matt Chandler*)

AUGUST

18



1847. Claret begins personal Spiritual Exercises, or perhaps with two or three companions. We do not know if he carried them out in Montserrat, as he wanted. His resolutions are signed in Vic, on the 29th.

1861. Claret travels by day from Valladolid to Villacastin (Segovia); he is staying for a few hours in the house of the chaplain of the Poor Clares, whose nephew will enter as a *famulus* seminarian in El Escorial. At night they travel from Villacastin to La Granja.

1869. From Rome, Claret expresses certain perplexity to Fr. **Joseph Xifre** with regard to the missionaries exiled in France being sent to establish a foundation in the Canary Islands; he uncertain about the outcome.



IDENTITY AND MISSION (1991 - 1997)

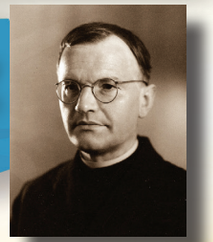
THE PERSECUTION DOES NOT END (2)

On April 4, 1992 a Muslim threw a grenade inside the small church where the Eucharist was being celebrated in the St. Vincent Ferrer Parish in Sumisip, Basilan (Philippines). Of the 500 people present, 17 were injured. On March 18, 1993, Fr. Bernardo Blanco was kidnapped in Lantawan town in the same island of Basilan. On May 6th, after a bizarre escape, he managed to escape from the Muslim rebel groups. In March 1993, the Claret School of Tumahubong, in the town of Sumisip of the same island, one of the four Claretian secondary schools in the Prelature of Isabela, was burned to the ground. In March 1996, two bombs exploded in the churches of St. Joseph and St. Anthony Mary Claret in Zamboanga City while liturgical events were being held. There were no victims.



PETER SCHWEIGER, CMF

VIII Superior General (1949-1967)



Geissirl (Oberpfalz, Germany). He was born on May 6th. Although he was German, he was formed in Claretian seminaries in the Province of Catalunya. He was ordained a priest in 1920. He was a professor at the Roman Seminary and he held important positions in the Claretian communities in Germany since 1930. He was elected Superior General in the General Chapter in 1949; he was re-elected in 1961. He was a Conciliar Father in the Second Vatican Council and it was his duty to initiate the process of renewal in the Congregation with the organization of the XVII Extraordinary General Chapter in 1967. During his generalship, important works were carried out, such as the International Colleges in Rome (Claretianum) and Salamanca. The International Votive Church in Rome was completed. The *Ephemerides Mariologicae* was founded. The Congregation was organized in several new Organisms. He introduced the Congregation into new countries and intensified its traditional ministries, with the following motto: *Ad maiora et ampliora*. He died and is buried in Spaichingen.

CONSTITUCIONES

FREEDOM OF THE MISSIONARY TO COMMIT TO THE MISSION

49. The members of our Congregation should be fully committed to the work of the Gospel. Therefore, they leave their own families, remembering that they have a Father in heaven whom they must please before all others. They should also be on guard against letting an inordinate love of their own country and culture prevent them from adapting to the ways of the people they are sent to evangelize. Moreover, so as to be freer to fulfill their missionary calling, they should avoid becoming entangled in partisan politics or in causes that may be a hindrance to their vocation.



Seminary Bell (Museum of the Claretian Martyrs of Barbastro, Huesca)



FOR PERSONAL REFLECTION

The proclamation of the Gospel demands great inner freedom. Meditate on these words from MCT 146, which are offered as a precious commentary on this paragraph:

"It is the Spirit that creates in the disciples and followers of Jesus the docility that bears fruit in permanent availability for mission. For we are not spontaneously available; availability requires inner liberty. It is the fruit of the benevolent presence of the Spirit within us and of our generosity. It is the Spirit who makes us go outside ourselves, leads us to work through various human, ecclesial and Congregational intermediaries and enables us to adopt as our own the great saving plan of Jesus."

"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."
(*Aut* 767)

AUGUST

19



1845. Claret begins Spiritual Exercises for the *Discalced Carmelites*, in Vic.

1866. Claret begins a mission for the town San Sebastian; at the same time, he preaches Spiritual Exercises for the clergy.



THE PERSECUTION DOES NOT END (3)

IDENTITY AND MISSION (1991 - 1997)

In the mission of El Estor (Guatemala) threats and legal persecution were also felt at the end of 1994, due to the social and educational work that the missionaries carried out in more than 70 villages in the area.

In May 1995, a bomb exploded in the church of Guadalupe of the Claretians in Managua (Nicaragua). Neither the cause nor the perpetrators of the attack were known, which caused serious damage to the building and its surroundings.

The situation in Equatorial Guinea in recent years affected the Missionaries, some of whom were imprisoned and tortured, accused of campaigning on behalf of the opposition.

In 1997, the situation that had been deteriorating in Zaire worsened. The repercussions were especially felt in the structure of formation.

In the area of Quibdo (Colombia) the tribulations of the people continued, being accosted by the paramilitaries. In this harsh situation the Claretians accompanied the people at all times, in spite of the danger.



JOSE RAMIREZ COTES

Friend of Claret (1777-1855)



Palencia (Spain). He was a very zealous priest. Rector of the Italian Church of Madrid, where he founded the devotion to the Forty Hours, of which Claret was very devoted. He hosted some priests in his house, among them **Balmes** and Father Claret in 1848. Fr. Rodriguez Carasa, Mother Micaela of the Blessed Sacrament's spiritual director, lived with him for several years. More than once he refused the miter. Claret wrote in his Autobiography: *During the time it took to complete arrangements for the voyage [to the Canary Islands], I was a guest in the house of Father Joseph Ramirez y Cortes, an exemplary and zealous priest. I attended the consecration of Bishop Codina and throughout my stay in the capital I busied myself preaching and hearing the confessions of poor patients in the General Hospital* (Aut. 479). His steward was Fr. Fermin de la Cruz. He intervened in the appointment of Claret as Archbishop. He died on August 23rd.

FREEDOM OF THE MISSIONARY

CONSTITUCIONES

50. In the various areas of ministry such as governing, sanctifying and evangelizing, our chief duty as missionaries is to collaborate in the evangelization of the people. For this reason, none of us should accept positions in Church governance, except by the consent of the Superior General or a mandate from the Holy See.



The Martyrs of San Joaquin were accused of assaulting and derailing a train (Mexico)



FOR PERSONAL REFLECTION

Evangelization is proper and particular of missionaries, so that is what should prevail and always have primacy.

- *How is this done in your immediate experience?*
- *Write under each of these three columns (governing, sanctifying and evangelizing) the ministries that are carried out in your community or in your Organism (if the community is small).*
- *Keeping them in mind, reflect on the data they provide and draw your conclusions.*

"The power of the Spirit defends and recreates life through individuals and groups, Organisms and Associations that work on its behalf."
(*TMHL* 12)

AUGUST

20



1849. Claret requests the authorization of Bishop **Casadevall** to establish the *Brotherhood of Christian Doctrine* in Vic. The bishop signed the authorization for him the next day, and on the 30th Claret informed Fr. **Pedro Naudo** that it had been established.

1852. From Bayamo, Claret felt the earthquake in Santiago, Cuba.

1861. From La Granja, Claret writes the famous letter to Fr. **Xifre**, in which he sends *the little paper* with the *Definition of the Missionary*.



IDENTITY AND MISSION (1991 - 1997)

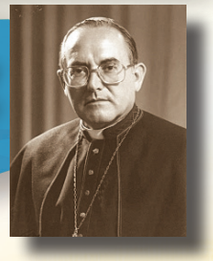
BARBASTRO, A PLACE AND A SYMBOL

On March 7, 1992, Pope John Paul II solemnly declared the authenticity of the process of the 51 Claretian Martyrs of Barbastro, and on October 25th the beatification ceremony was held in St. Peter's Basilica. Even facing the worst consequences, they were an example of love for the Church and for the priestly and religious vocation, love of chastity, penance and the Eucharist, an example of forgiveness and peace. After the beatification of the martyrs, Barbastro became a place of pilgrimage for the Congregation and the Church in general. The creation of a museum and the construction of the crypt where the martyrs are buried, the work of Fr. Cerezo Barredo and Fr. Jose Beruete, have contributed greatly to emphasizing the location. Several biographies have also been published and their names have been used for churches on different continents. In the year 2013 the film *A Forbidden God* was produced which has been widely disseminated.



CARLOS MARIA ARIZ, CMF

Bishop of Colon-Kuna Yala (1928-2015)



Marcilla (Navarre, Spain). At age 12 he entered the Claretian Congregation. In 1954, the General Superior assigned him to Panama, to work among the Kuna Indians in San Blas. Later the superiors entrusted him with the parish apostolate in Colon (the Cathedral and El Carmen) and Panama (National Shrine of the Heart of Mary). In 1965, the ecclesiastical hierarchy of Panama invited him to take the position of Vice-Rector of the newly founded Santa Maria la Antigua University (USMA). From 1969 to 1971 he served as Major Superior of the Province of Centroamerica and Director of Claret School of Heredia, Costa Rica. In 1971 he was appointed Rector of the USMA. In 1981 John Paul II appointed him Apostolic Vicar of Darien, with its See in Colon, and titular Bishop of Negras Mayores. In 1989, the Missionary Diocese of Colon – Kuna Yala was created and he was appointed as Titular Bishop. He was President of the Department of Social Media Communications. He died in Panama.

GROWTH IN MISSIONARY LIFE: GIFT AND GRACE

CONSTITUCIONES

Chapter VIII: Progressing in Missionary Life

51. Our missionaries, hungering for holiness should strive to grow fully mature with the fullness of Christ himself so as to be more effective in communicating the grace of the Gospel to others. However, since God has called us not because of any merit of our own but according to his own gracious design, and has justified us in Jesus Christ, we therefore trust that he who has begun this good work in us will carry it to completion, right up to the day of Jesus Christ.



Chapel of San Joaquin (Mexico)



FOR PERSONAL REFLECTION

The key to our progress in missionary life is based on the primacy of grace. We have all been graced with missionary "dreams". The deepest aspiration is not ours. It is given to us. It develops and unfolds if it is activated. To pray is to desire.

- *Where would you like to go as a missionary? Visualize what you would like to achieve.*
- *What future do you want for yourself? Imagine it, put images on it.*
- *What is your dream as a missionary? Could it be God's dream for you?*

"Beware of the temptation of jealousy!
We are all in the same boat and headed to the same port!
Let us ask for the grace to rejoice in the gifts of each, which belong to all."
(Francis, *Evangelii gaudium*, 99)

AUGUST

21



1853. From Puerto Principe, Claret asks **Currius** and **Barjau** to analyze who he can ordain when he returns to Santiago. He already has in mind Francisco Sansoli and Silverio Gonzalez, and has doubts about Armiñan, and maybe there is someone else.

1858. Pope **Pius IX** sends Claret a gratulatory letter on the occasion of the 20-year anniversary of the *Libreria Religiosa*.

1865. Bishop Puigllat, Bishop of Lleida, arrives today at La Merced in Vic to spend four days in the company of the royal confessor during this time of *leave*.



IDENTITY AND MISSION (1991 - 1997)

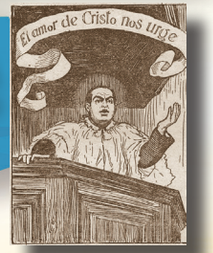
ARTISTS OF UNIVERSAL RENOWN

Although their trajectory is not exactly of this time, all of these artists through the years have obtained artistic maturity. We simply highlight four personalities, two in the art of painting, one in sculpture and another in music, due to their artistic quality and notoriety, even outside the boundaries of the Congregation: Maximino Cerezo Barredo, who above all has managed to capture with his art the spirit of the long-suffering people of Latin America to whom he has devoted a great part of his life. Peter Beruete, known especially for his production about the martyrs of Barbastro, to which he has given a particular image. Segundo Gutierrez (†2012), who dedicated himself to modern woodcarving at the service of evangelization. And Luis Elizalde, who has consecrated his life to reveal with his music the spiritual soul of two continents, Europe and Latin America, in their most identifying aspects. The three who are still living continue to enrich many parts of the Congregation with their works.



BERNARDO CONDE CORRAL

Bishop of Zamora (1814-1880)



Leiva (La Rioja, Spain). He was born on August 22nd. He took the habit of the Premonstratensians in Bugedo (Burgos). He was professor of Philosophy at the seminary in Ciudad Rodrigo. In 1845 he went to the church of San Gines in Madrid. Beginning in 1848 he was Dean of the Bishop of Lugo. He was appointed bishop of Plasencia in 1858 and of Zamora in 1863. An irreproachable Bishop, as wise as he was holy, he was a father to the poor. It is said that on December 8, 1858, while he was attending the Conferences of St. Vincent de Paul in Madrid with the Archbishop of Toledo, the Patriarch of the West Indies, the Nuncio of His Holiness and Father Claret, the lecturers were so tiresome that everyone wanted them to finish. Father Claret then took the floor and within five minutes had already gained everyone's attention, so much so that Bishop Bernardo exclaimed: *To speak of God like Claret one must completely belong to God like Claret.* He died on August 22nd.



GROWTH IN MISSIONARY LIFE: PERSONAL EFFORT



This is the photo of Blessed Andres Sola giving first communion to a child that led to his capture and martyrdom.

52. We should strive to walk in newness of life, setting our hearts on God, doing everything with an upright intention and true fervor of heart, bearing adversities for his sake. We should daily renew our resolution to advance in the way of the Lord. Each month we should set aside a day for recollection during which we can reflect on our own vocation and renew within us our hope of the glory to come, so as to be better prepared for the Lord's coming. Each year we should make a retreat with all due care.



FOR PERSONAL REFLECTION

We have to collaborate with grace. One way to do that is to make decisions. Father Claret, in his resolutions, used imperatives without adverbs or comments (cf. EA, p. 525). Meditate on these confessions of our Founder:

- *"Everything is done either to please God or to please self-love. I will direct myself more and more to God and not to myself." (Resolutions, 1859)*
- *"I will accept the chalice of suffering when I am given some grief or displeasure." (EA, p. 554)*
- *"You will do all ordinary things well." (CC TT, p. 582)*
- *How could the monthly retreat of your community be enriched?*
- *Do you carry out Spiritual Exercises annually? What do they mean for your path of missionary progress?*

"The song of the Church ultimately springs from love.
It is the depth of love that gives rise to the song...
The Holy Spirit is love, and it is He who gives rise to singing."
(*Benedict XVI*)

AUGUST

22



1858. Claret preaches to the people in Gijon (Asturias).

1862. In a letter to **Pius IX**, Claret adds his support for what the other bishops expressed in their recent visit to Rome: their opposition to the occupation of the pontifical states by the Piedmontese army.

1865. Claret complains to Fr. **Joseph Caixal** about how badly the Riera printer is working for the *Libreria Religiosa*.



IDENTITY AND MISSION (1991 - 1997)

THE NEW ECONOMY

During these years, through the work of the General Economic Council and visits by experts, a new style of managing the finances emerged, in order to put it at the service of evangelization, taking into account the commitment to poverty and sensitivity to modern solidarity. To this end, new channels were created, such as: the *Aid Fund and the Claretian Cultural Fund*.

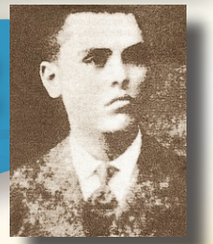
The evangelical life of our Founder demonstrates the planning entailed in the administration of goods towards our apostolic purpose, together with the fraternity of sharing which goes beyond local needs. The goods are not private, they must be governed by the poverty proposed by Jesus.

A guiding principle in matters of communication of goods pointed out by Father Claret is: *Whatever is left over in one house, should make up what is lacking in another.* Corroborated among us with the principle of subordination of administrations.



MARIANO GONZALEZ, CMF

Martyr of Mexico (1888-1914)



Monte Escobedo (Zacatecas, Mexico). Br. Mariano went with three other companions from Mexico to Jerez de los Caballeros, in Spain. Returning to Mexico, he showed great docility and an uncommon piety. He arrived in Toluca, a city in which, in March 1913, there was an uprising by Venustiano Carranza against the regime of General Huerta. The Church called for peace, which Carranza interpreted as support for Huerta. This triggered the anticlerical wave: persecutions, exiles, murders. The Claretians of Tepic were imprisoned together with the bishop. The majority was able to flee, but Br. Mariano Gonzalez remained to care for the house and church in Toluca. At first, because he was Mexican, they released him, but later he was arrested. Because he did not want to reveal the whereabouts of his community brothers, he was shot on August 22, 1914. After the execution, they exposed him in public with a sign that read: *For being a thief of national property.* His body lies in the Church Santa Vera Cruz in Toluca.

CONSTITUCIONES

TEMPTATIONS IN MISSIONARY LIFE



Cross in the crypt of Ferraz where the Martyrs of Fernan Caballero were kept.

53. As Christ our Lord was led by the Spirit into the desert to be tempted by the devil, so must we, his disciples, undergo many temptations. But during our temptations we must stand loyally by Christ who is still being put to the test in us.

Let us all put on the armor of God, not presuming on our own strength, but trusting with unwavering hope in the Lord who will show himself faithful to us in the midst of temptation itself. Let us be on our guard, then, as the Lord tells us and pray to our heavenly Father not to put us to the test.



FOR PERSONAL REFLECTION

- *What do I call a "temptation"? How do I recognize it? Is a "temptation" the same as a "test"?*
- *How do I face temptation? Do I submit to it? Do I flee? Do I trust in God? Do I use means to overcome it?*
- *What are my most frequent temptations? What is my "weak point"?*
- *What does this paragraph give me in order to face my temptations?*

"Know that all this, whatever moves in this moving world, is enveloped by God.
Therefore find your enjoyment in renunciation;
do not covet what belongs to others."
(*Īsāvāsya Upanishad*)

AUGUST

23



1852. Claret publicly excommunicates someone from Bayamo (Cuba) for cohabitation who refuses to change his ways.

1862. Claret travels from La Granja to Segovia to spend three days with the missionaries.

1869. Claret wishes to have the effective help of Fr. **Jose Reig**, Mercedarian, Procurator of the Missionaries before the Holy See and who at the moment is ill (he will die on September 20th), with the difficult processing of the *Constitutions* of Mother **Paris**.



IDENTITY AND MISSION (1991 - 1997)

THE *INSTITUTE FOR CONSECRATED LIFE IN ASIA* (ICLA)

In June 1997, the *Institute for Consecrated Life in Asia* was inaugurated in Quezon City (Philippines), affiliated to the Pontifical University of Santo Tomas (Manila) and the St. Anthony Mary Claret College. The intention of this Institute was to offer its services above all to young religious not only from the Philippines but from all of Asia. In addition to Claretians, they collaborate as Religious Professors for other Congregations. The promoter, founder and first Director was Fr. Domingo Moraleda (†2008).

The Institute has four degree programs: Missiology, Spirituality, Consecrated Life and Biblical Ministry. Currently priests, men and women religious and laity participate in the life and mission of the Institute. The places they come from are: Philippines, China, Taiwan, Korea, Vietnam, Indonesia, India, Myanmar and other places. Some of the students live in the same area as the faculty in a rhythm of community life and others are day students. The origin, the culture and the language of the country of the students are taken into account.



SAINT ROSE OF LIMA

Claret's Role Model (1586-1617)



She was born on April 30, 1586 in Lima. Her name was Isabel Flores de Oliva. She had twelve siblings. Apparently, she was confirmed by the Archbishop of Lima, Saint Toribio de Mogrovejo. Already in her youth she dedicated herself to remedying the needs of the poor and the sick. She had St. Catherine of Siena as her model, entering the Third Order of Saint Dominic, in Lima, around 1606. She was a woman of great mystical experiences. Claret dedicates three paragraphs of his Autobiography to her (239-241). He admired her piety, her love for the poor, her concern for priests and their way of preaching. He was impressed by her desire to go preach herself all over the world: *If it were permitted her she would walk from one kingdom to another preaching the faith until all unbelievers were converted, and that she would go out into the streets, wearing a cilice, with a crucifix in her hand, and shout to sinners in order to awaken them and move them to repentance.*

CONSTITUCIONES

PERSONAL GROWTH: SEEKING HELP FROM OUR BROTHERS

54. As an effective means of advancing spiritually, we should ask our brothers for help, either by way of spiritual direction or community discernment, or by other means. We should earnestly desire and ask for correction and advice and respond to all corrections with outward thanks and inward gratitude.



Stage backdraft during the Beatification of 522 20th Century Spanish Martyrs on October 13, 2013 (Tarragona)



FOR PERSONAL REFLECTION

You cannot advance in the spiritual journey without the help of others.

- *Who helps you on your spiritual journey? What do you value most about this help?*
- *Who do you help? In what concrete ways do you take care of others?*

"Continuous effort
- not strength or intelligence -
is the key to unlocking our potential."
(*Liane Cordes*)

AUGUST

24



1858. The previous day, Claret traveled with the King and Queen from Gijon to Aviles to visit a modern iron foundry established by the Belgians. Today he dedicates the morning to preaching, in the afternoon he visits the mines and the foundry, and they return to Gijon at 12 o'clock at night.

1862. Claret solemnly celebrates the Feast of the Heart of Mary with the missionaries in Segovia.



IDENTITY AND MISSION (1991 - 1997)

IN GHANA

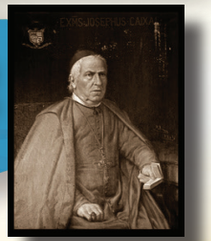
The Nigeria Province, which was already collaborating with Guinea Ecuatorial Province and Italy Province in Gabon, and had its own Missions in Kenya and Cameroon, founded a new mission in Ghana as a missionary response to the urgent request of the Bishop of Damongo, a newly created diocese. In 1997, the first Nigerian Claretians arrived in the Diocese of Damongo, located in the northern region of Ghana (West Africa), made up of two administrative districts, namely that of West Gonja and Bole. Damongo covers a territory of about 24,627 square kilometers. It is a rural area with more than 20 ethnic groups and a multitude of languages.

27 religions coexist in the country. The inculturated evangelization of the Claretian Missionaries is born of a true appreciation of the cultures and religious traditions of the people and helps to initiate a dialogue of life in order to present the full proclamation of Jesus Christ. The African Synod developed the image of the Church as the Family of God, as the most suitable model for the African context.



JOSEPH CAIXAL ESTRADE

Bishop of Urgell (1803-1879)

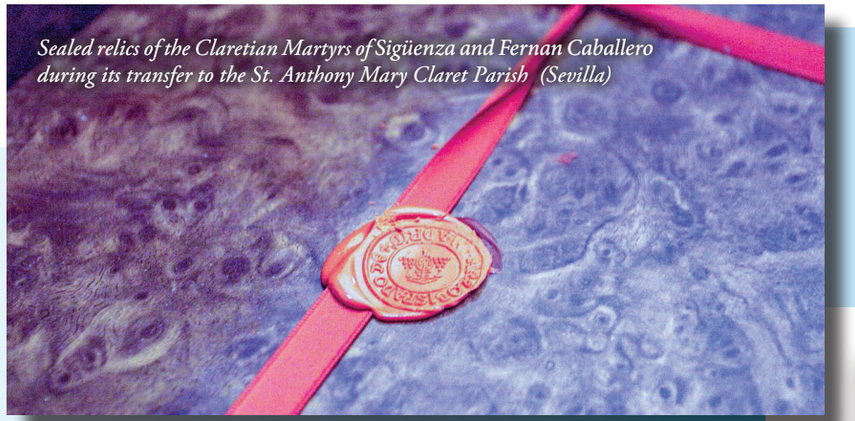


Vilosell (Lleida, Spain). He received his doctorate in Cervera. He was ordained a priest in 1827. He was banished to Mahon and then to France from 1840 to 1846. In 1853 he was consecrated Bishop of Urgell and co-Prince of Andorra. In 1855 he was again banished to the Balearic Islands. He was considered the hammer of the revolution during the 2-year liberal rule. He built the seminary and helped in the founding of the Sisters of the Holy Family of Urgell. He was taken prisoner in 1876 for his Carlist ideas. Finally, he was able to move to Rome, where he died in the convent of San Adrian in 1879. He was a close friend of Father Claret. They were united by ideals and feelings and through their apostolate. They met in 1846 during the mission that Claret preached in Tarragona. He collaborated with Claret in the founding of the publishing house *Libreria Religiosa*. In 1871 he defended Claret in the Senate. He was a man of solid piety and rigid ascetic discipline. He collaborated in publications with Blessed **Francisco Palau**. His remains lie in the cathedral of Urgell. He died on August 26th.

CONSTITUCIONES

PERSONAL GROWTH: HELPING OUR BROTHERS

55. Since we really care for one another, if we happen to see one of our brothers going astray and committing faults that might harm himself or others, we should humbly, gently and charitably admonish him in private, remembering our own frailty. If he will not heed us, or if immediate action should be taken for his own good or that of others, we should inform the superior so that he may apply the proper remedy. Meanwhile, we should commend the matter to God. We should all receive a repentant brother lovingly and encourage him so that he may follow more surely in the way of the Lord.



Sealed relics of the Claretian Martyrs of Sigüenza and Fernan Caballero during its transfer to the St. Anthony Mary Claret Parish (Sevilla)



FOR PERSONAL REFLECTION

Fraternal correction is an important means for the spiritual growth of the missionary.

- *How would you like to be corrected or warned?*
- *How have the good corrections that you have received so far served you?*
- *Ask the Lord to free you from fear and anger when you feel you must correct others or be corrected.*

"Openness to God makes us open towards our brothers and sisters and towards an understanding of life as a joyful task to be accomplished in a spirit of solidarity."
(Benedict XVI, *Caritas in Veritate*, 78)

AUGUST

25



1851. Claret is giving a mission in Puerto Principe (Cuba) with three companions, in three churches simultaneously. He asks for a good number of copies of the *Religiosas en sus casas [Nuns in their own Houses]* and *Avisos a un militar cristiano [Advice to a Christian Soldier]* to be sent to him from the Libreria Religiosa

1855. With prior authorization from Rome, Claret signs the *Decree to erect the convent of La Enseñanza* and to approve of Mother **Paris** and her companions so that they can make their profession.

1862. The community of missionaries in Segovia makes their consecration in the hands of the Founder; the next day they renew their private vows.



IDENTITY AND MISSION (1991 - 1997)

SOCIAL MEDIA COMMUNICATIONS AND THE INTERNET

During this period there were meetings of Claretian Editors of the whole Congregation. And 1997 brought the mass entrance of the Congregation into the world of communication, internally as well as externally, through the Internet. The possibilities that opened for the future were unpredictable and the Claretians from all over the world prepared to integrate this privileged means into their missionary work. The Directors meet periodically. The group consists of representatives from Spain, India, the Philippines, China, the USA, Brazil, Argentina, Italy, Poland, Nigeria, Chile, Cameroon, Kenya, etc. under the name of *Claret Publishing Group (CPG)*.

In February 1996 the Claretian news service was inaugurated through the Internet. Its name was *CMFF*. The server could be used to send news of interest to the Claretians, Provincial Bulletins, *NUNC*, official documents, articles of interest, theological-pastoral reflections and exchanges about our charism and mission, contributions for the preparation of the General Chapter, etc.



FOUNDATION OF THE RELIGIOUS OF MARY IMMACULATE



On August 25, 1855, Archbishop Claret signed the Foundation Decree in Santiago, Cuba. Two days later, on August 27th, **Maria Antonia Paris** professed in the hands of the Holy Archbishop, founding together the *Religious of Mary Immaculate*, Claretian Missionary Sisters. In 1859 Saint Anthony Mary Claret, who was in Spain, called Maria Antonia to the Peninsula, in order to establish a novitiate house in Tremp, in the Province of Lleida, for the missionary formation of those assigned to America. Soon followed the foundations of Reus (Tarragona), Carcaixent (Valencia) and Velez-Rubio (Almeria) in Spain, and Baracoa in Cuba. On January 17, 1885, after a long illness, Maria Antonia died in Reus. Her cause of Beatification is introduced, with the Decree on her heroic virtues being signed on December 23, 1993. In 2001, Pope John Paul II beatified the Claretian martyr Mother **Patrocinio Giner**.

CONSTITUCIONES



56. Our members must grow equally in virtue and learning in order to be able to meet the needs of the times and be fit to minister effectively. We should be diligent in sacred and human studies, keeping abreast of recent developments. As far as circumstances allow, superiors should see to it that each community is supplied with the tools and means required for a profitable pursuit of studies. The whole community should set great store by its library.

Altar sepulcher of the Claretian Martyrs of Sigüenza and Fernan Caballero at the St. Anthony Mary Claret Parish (Sevilla)



FOR PERSONAL REFLECTION

- *Briefly review the "sources of your spiritual progress": books you are reading ...; profitable TV or Internet programs ...; courses, meetings and workshops ...; radio broadcasts ...; newspapers and magazines that you read ...; people that benefit you ...; pastoral activities ...*
- *How can you maintain and improve these channels of lifelong learning? Who will help you? Have you considered doing the residential Forge, if you have not done it yet?*

"The weak can never forgive. Forgiveness is the attribute of the strong."
(*Mahatma Gandhi*)

AUGUST

26



1856. Claret sends an official letter to the Captain General of Cuba urging the prompt execution of the provisions for the seminary as set forth in the royal decrees of September 1852.

1859. Claret begins a mission for the town of Segovia. It began in the church of the seminary, but, given the very abundant attendance, on the second day it had to move to the cathedral.

1861. In the church of Rosario, in La Granja, Claret receives the ***great grace*** *of the conservation of the sacramental species*.



IDENTITY AND MISSION (1991 - 1997)

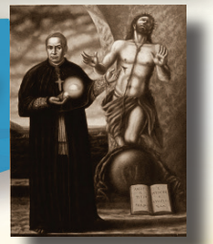
STATISTICS FROM 1996

At the time prior to the celebration of the XXII General Chapter, the number of Claretians had risen to 2,894, of which there were 18 Bishops, 1,981 Priests, 2 Permanent Deacons, 488 Students, 271 Brothers and 134 Novices. Of them, 1,093 were from Spain, 309 from India, 171 from Nigeria, 160 from Colombia, and 124 from Brazil. The other nations were below one hundred members.

Some messages from Pope John Paul II to the missionaries participating in the chapter were: *The Church greatly esteems the service of preaching the Word which you carry out in the mission ad gentes, among ordinary people and the marginalized; in forming new evangelizers, both religious and lay, in promoting religious life; in educational work and in the renewal of Christian communities [...] with a spirit of dedication to God, to the Church and to mankind, you fulfil your vocation by bearing loving witness to Christ through the constant proclamation of the Good News and sincere, practical solidarity, especially with the very poor, the sick, the elderly and the alienated.*



THE GREAT GRACE OF CLARET



We read in the Autobiography: *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. 1 Cor 6:20 (Aut 694).* And later: *On the morning of May 16, 1862 (...) while I was saying Mass, Jesus Christ told me that He had indeed granted me this grace of remaining within me sacramentally* (Aut 700). The Lord wanted to use Anthony to confront, in an effective way, the evils of the Church in Spain; for this, he consecrated and enabled him with his sacramental presence.

COMMUNITY PLANNING

CONSTITUCIONES

57. In keeping with the demands of missionary life, some part of the house should be set aside for the members alone. The community should establish its own inner order, setting up a timetable for community prayer and regulating the other aspects of its life, so that community exercises are distributed according to the needs of the apostolate. Besides the time devoted to spiritual pursuits and work, our missionaries should also have some time to themselves and be able to enjoy a suitable period for recreation, silence and rest. In using the communications media we should observe the necessary discretion and avoid whatever might harm our spiritual life or apostolic witness.

We should observe the prescriptions of universal law with regard to religious garb.



Place of martyrdom of Bl. Jose Ma. Ruiz



FOR PERSONAL REFLECTION

We are also invited to take care of the community organization, the personal spaces and the ordering of our time.

- *In your opinion, what should be the most essential and basic part of a community project?*
- *The media and entertainment have invaded our lives, sometimes without prior discernment. Given that they are irreplaceable, could you formulate three criteria for their correct use?*
- *What are your private spaces? What do you use them for? How do they benefit you? If you do not have them yet, why do you think they are necessary for your missionary progress?*
- *Do you usually wear some kind of religious garb? What does it mean to you?*

"The contents of my luggage were a full-year breviary,
a sheaf of sermons, a pair of socks,
and an extra shirt—nothing more."
(*Aut* 359)

AUGUST

27



1852. Claret asks his associates for advice on whether to continue in Bayamo (Cuba) or to return to Santiago to help those affected by the earthquake. He asks Fr. **Paladio Currius** to take care of his personal effects.

1857. Claret presides over the procession of the church of San Anton (Madrid) in honor of St. Joseph Calasanz.

1858. Claret travels with the King and Queen from Gijon to Covadonga; he preaches in the cave of the Virgin.



IN PROPHETIC MISSION (1997-2003)

XXII GENERAL CHAPTER (1997)

The XXII General Chapter was celebrated in the *Claretianum* in Rome, from August 26 to September 24, 1997. There were 85 participants (as of today, the Chapter with the most members), and it was presided over by Fr. Aquilino Bocos. The largest number of Chapter participants still came from Spain (35), followed by India with 7 participants. Their main concern was to recover the prophetic dimension of the missionary service of the Word; that's why the final document was called: *In Prophetic Mission* (IPM).

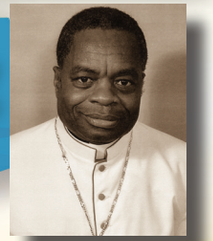
Fr. Aquilino Bocos was re-elected as Superior General. As a peculiarity of this Chapter, we must highlight the variety of languages and cultures that reflected the presence of the Congregation in 56 countries.

The XXII General Chapter relaunched for the third millennium the prophecy that began with a small group of missionaries who were aware that the word of God cannot be contained. A growing prophecy that is now a Work of God which continues in the Church in the spirit of Claret.



ALFRED MARIA OBURU, CMF

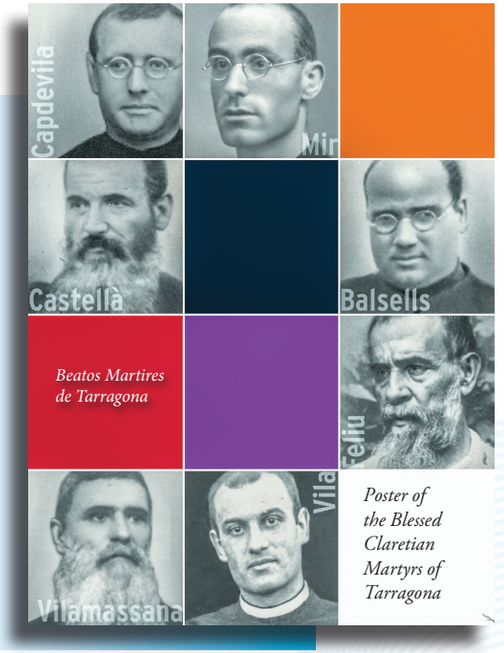
Bishop of Ebebiyin (1947-2006)



Evinayong (Equatorial Guinea). During the reign of the dictator Francisco Macias Nguema he went into exile in Gabon, later studying Philosophy and Theology at the University of Brazzaville (Republic of Congo), and later in Rome, at the *Claretianum*. He was Regional Superior and Pastor in Franceville (Gabon). He was a person who was very loved by the people of Equatorial Guinea and by President Teodoro Obiang himself. He was a simple priest who loved Africa. After 1981 he was in Franceville (Gabon), Kinshasa (DRC) and Yaounde (Cameroon), he was dedicated, above all, to the tasks of formation of young Claretians. In February of 2003 he was appointed Bishop of Ebebiyin (Equatorial Guinea). Soon he had to move to Italy to be treated for his kidney disease. From there, he sent all his prayers every week to Ebebeyin so that every Sunday they would be heard in the church. After receiving a kidney transplant in Italy, paid for by his faithful, he died in Bata, a few days after his return to Guinea.

PART TWO: MEMBERS OF THE CONGREGATION

Chapter IX: Those Called to our Missionary Life



Poster of the Blessed Claretian Martyrs of Tarragona

58. All of our missionaries should joyfully live the gift of their vocation. Moreover, we should intensely desire that others be granted the same gift and that our Congregation may daily grow in numbers, to proclaim the Kingdom of God.

We should all regard these words of the Lord as addressed to us personally: "Ask the Lord of the harvest to send out labourers to his harvest." We should also remember that the way we speak of our missionary life and live it is the best invitation to others to accept the Lord's call. The responsibility for fostering vocations rests with each and every one of us.



FOR PERSONAL REFLECTION

- *Share with another Claretian the situation of vocations in your Organism. Talk to him about the importance of prayer, communication with others and one's lifestyle in encouraging vocations.*

It is not about drawing conclusions, or formulating commitments, but rather about creating a mentality and thus continuing to build a culture of vocations.

"Life is the 'first book' of God's revelation.
Sacred Scripture is that 'second book' in which God reveals his plan of salvation for life threatened by death because of sin.
Both books mutually interpret one another."
(*TMHL* 13)

AUGUST

28



1859. In close communication with Fr. **Jeronimo Pages**, his Vice-President in El Escorial, Claret proposes to publish the conditions to enter the monastery in *La Esperanza*. He presents three groups of priests, one of which he expects to be that of the missionaries.

1863. Claret communicates to Mother **Paris** that *La Colegiala Instruida* was just released and that the nuns should read it in the refectory.

1865. In Vic Claret finds out about the death of Mother **Micaela of the Blessed Sacrament** in Valencia, where she went because of his advice to attend to those sick with cholera.



IN PROPHETIC MISSION (1997-2003)

IN SAINT PETERSBURG (RUSSIA)

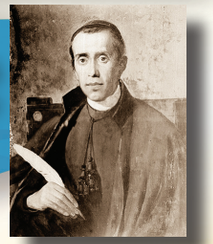
On July 16, 1998, the Province of Castilla began a foundation in Saint Petersburg. The first missionaries assigned to the mission had already been studying the Russian language for two years in Krasnoyarsk (Siberia). Finally, the foundation in European Russia began by choosing Saint Petersburg as the best location because it was the only city in Russia with a Catholic seminary, which was ideal both for the formation of new vocations and for the development of their teaching ministry in the same seminary. At the same time, it would open up other perspectives for pastoral ministry in an area with an Orthodox majority and where the Catholic clergy was scarce and almost entirely foreigners.

In Saint Petersburg, the Claretian Missionaries did not have their own parish, but every Saturday they celebrated the Eucharist in Spanish in the Church of St. Catherine. A small group of people arose who felt a certain harmony with the Claretian identity. Their main ministry was collaborating as professors of the diocesan Seminary, the only one in Russia and welcoming future vocations to the Congregation.



JAIME BALMES

Priest and Philosopher (1810-1848)



Vic (Barcelona, Spain). He was born on August 28th. He studied humanities and theology in the seminary of Vic, and then went to Cervera where he studied philosophy and law. Beginning in 1837 he was professor of mathematics in Vic. In 1841 he settled in Barcelona. In 1844 he founded the newspaper *El Pensamiento de la Nacion [The Thought of the Nation]*. He published important works such as *El Criterio [The Art of Thinking Well]* and *Fundamental Philosophy*. Claret and Balmes studied together in Vic. In Claret's ordination as sub-deacon, Balmes was ordained a deacon, both officiating with the one ordained. Balmes' comment on Claret's preaching is well known: *In the pulpit he never talks of theaters. Nor of heresies. Nor of philosophers or impious men. Always presupposes faith... Little sort to terror, sweetness in everything. Never uses example that might give rise to ridicule. Examples, in general, taken from scripture. Some facts from secular history. Never deals in oppositions or the like. Speaks of hell, but restricts himself to what Scripture has to say on it, same as regards purgatory. Doesn't want to exasperate people or drive them crazy. There is always a catechetical part.*

CONSTITUCIONES

DISCERNMENT, WELCOME, PREPARATION

59. With those who feel they have a vocation, we should begin a process of discernment that includes listening to the word of God, prayer and fraternal dialogue.

Those who have come to believe that they are called to full membership in our Congregation should be fully informed of what our life and mission entail and have some experience of it.

Those who apply for admission to our Congregation must first undergo a period of postulancy and continue a process of discerning their vocation under the guidance of an experienced missionary.

When a postulant is admitted he must declare that whatever work he does while he remains in the Congregation is to be done freely and without remuneration, according to the law concerning the religious state and therefore, that if he should leave, he is to ask for nothing in return for such work.



FOR PERSONAL REFLECTION

According to this paragraph, vocational discernment revolves around listening to the Word, prayer and dialogue.

- *According to your opinion and your experience, would something else be missing in order for discernment to be complete?*
- *Remember - or make an effort to get to know - the people who have joined your Organism in recent years. Pray for them.*
- *How do you understand, according to God's providential plan, such an extended shortage of vocations in some areas of the Congregation?*

"Dialogue ... proceeds and is based on the maturity of man and society.
The Constitutions accept it as a means to achieve a sincere fraternity
and as an instrument for a correct relationship
between the authority and the base."
(*Our Project of Missionary Life*)

AUGUST

29



1860. Claret concluded the Spiritual Exercises and mission in Avila, at night he arrives to La Granja, very happy to have visited the Teresian sites.

1861. Claret shows great astuteness when it comes to setting up the secondary school in El Escorial. It begins with only one grade, so they would not bring in students who bring flaws from other centers or cause enmity with them.

1864. After other ministries in Segovia, Claret dedicates Sunday to spending time with the missionaries, preaching for them, etc., and he gives them some advice. The next day he returns to La Granja.



IN PROPHETIC MISSION (1997-2003)

CONGREGATIONAL JUBILEE

The 150th anniversary of the foundation of the Congregation (1849), the 50th anniversary of the Canonization of the Founder (1950) and the 100th anniversary of the death of Fr. **Clotet** († 1898) and Fr. **Xifre** (†1899), made 1998-2000 a special time of congregational activity. It was opened with a Meeting of Major Superiors of the entire Congregation in Bangalore (India) in October 1998, in which Father General's Circular Letter *Heritage and Prophecy* was made public. The celebration of the anniversary of the foundation was held in the Cathedral of Vic. For this occasion, the tomb of the Father Founder was renovated and the body of Fr. Xifre was transferred to the crypt of the church in Vic. Several statues and plaques of Father Claret were set up in various places, among which we should highlight those placed in the cathedrals of Vic, Madrid, Barcelona, Los Angeles, Puerto Rico and Las Palmas, and in the Church of la Sagrada Familia in Barcelona. The closing of the Jubilee was celebrated in 2000 in Mexico.



JOSE MARIA PRECIADO, CMF

Apostolic Vicar of Darien (1886-1963)



Cadreita (Navarre, Spain). The year after being ordained a priest he was assigned to Mexico. After the start of the revolution, he went to the United States. His areas of apostolic work were San Antonio (Texas) and Los Angeles (California) until 1934 when he was appointed Bishop of the Vicariate of Darien, in Panama, whose archbishopric was presided over by his congregational brother Fr. **Juan Maiztegui**. Small in stature and of delicate health, he put all his heart into serving that mission area. He quietly managed to consolidate the recently created Vicariate which was in need of everything. More than 30 chapels were built and the Cathedral of Colon was completed. He visited the San Blas Islands, San Miguel, Pearl Islands, La Palma, Darien, etc. several times. He generously welcomed everyone: Kuna, Choco, Cholo, Negroes, Darienites, Islanders. In 1955 he resigned from the Vicariate to retire to live with his brothers in the Congregation in Los Angeles, where he died, due to gangrene in both legs, on August 13th.

LEAVING THE CONGREGATION

CONSTITUCIONES

60. Through our good efforts each of us should show that he is solicitous to make his call and election permanent.

However, if after his religious profession someone believes that it is necessary for him to leave the Congregation, he should prepare for his decision of separation through fraternal dialogue, sincerely seeking the will of God.

If the superiors of the Congregation believe that it is necessary to relieve someone of the rights and duties of profession, they should always go about it in a charitable and discreet manner.

When anyone has to leave the Congregation, either of his own will or by the decision of his superiors, the norms of universal law and our own proper law should be followed.

Out of Christian charity, all our missionaries, but especially superiors, should do what they can to help one who was left or been dismissed to be able to lead a decent secular life.



FOR PERSONAL REFLECTION

This paragraph deals with the criteria and the manner for leaving the Congregation. The XXV General Chapter urged us to "to promote among ourselves a culture of fidelity to our vocation, to be increasingly aware of our duty to mutually care for each other respectfully, but also courageously." (MS 31)

- *How is this ministry of fidelity promoted in your Organism? What could be improved? What would be those "good efforts" to which the first paragraph of this section refers?*
- *How do you think our relationship should be with those who were our brothers and are no longer with us? What would contact with them bring us? And what would contact with us bring them?*

"A martyr can be thought of as a hero,
but the fundamental thing about a martyr is that he or she was 'graced':
it is the grace of God, not courage, that makes us martyrs."
(*Homily of Pope Francis at the Basilica of St. Bartholomew on the Tiber Island, Rome, April 22, 2017*)

AUGUST

30



1861. Claret sends Fr. **Dionisio Gonzalez** the royal order by which the school of El Escorial is founded. Everything is ready to begin.

1862. Claret advises Fr. **Joseph Xifre** to use prudence with respect to announcing that the Congregation has received the approval of the State, as a preventive measure against *those who might cause harm*. The concordat is restrictive in terms of recognition of Orders and Congregations.

1868. Claret begins a novena to the Virgin of Antigua in the parish of Lekeitio (Biscay).



IN PROPHETIC MISSION (1997-2003)

RECLASSIFICATION OF ORGANISMS

Following the Meeting of Major Superiors in Bangalore (India) in October 1998, among other topics such as collaboration in the Congregation and the revision of Major Organisms, criteria were given to reclassify the Major Organisms of the Congregation, among them the one about needing at least 40 perpetually professed to continue as a Province. With this in mind the General Government decided to make the Provinces of Antillas, Brasil Central, Guinea Ecuatorial, Canada, United Kingdom-Ireland and Venezuela into Delegations. In the same way, Centroamerica was also declared a Formed Province. Subsequently, the Provinces of Italy (2000) and Chile (2002) were made Delegations. In this meeting the willingness to continue the revision of Organisms and the manner of carrying out the General Visits by geographical areas were reaffirmed, culminating with a meeting of the Provincial Governments with the General Government. The different Prefectures would take into account all those legal changes and changes of presence in the different Organisms and continents.



CIRIACO RAMIREZ, CMF

First Apostolic Prefect of Fernando Poo (1833-1888)

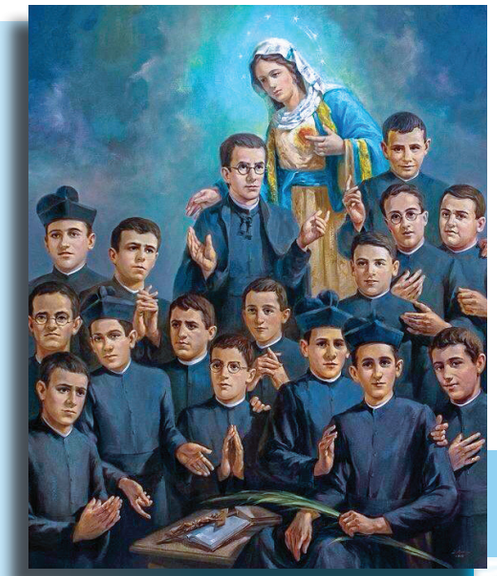


Alija de los Melones (Leon, Spain). He entered the Congregation in 1866. He was strong-willed, but always gave proof of his humility. In 1867 he intervened with other missionaries in the foundation of Jaca (Huesca). Assigned to Equatorial Guinea, he was appointed the first Apostolic Prefect of Annobon, Corisco and Fernando Poo in 1883. Filled with zeal for the glory of God and the salvation of his brothers and sisters, he carried out great missionary activity. He fostered social development, creating cocoa, coffee and tobacco plantations, and teaching. He was a model of perseverance, tenacity and optimism. Aware of the lack of provisions in the mission of Concepcion, he set out on a fragile boat, which, due to the conditions of the sea, was stuck for eight days at the mercy of the sun and water. This caused him malignant fevers and a strong rheumatism. He died in Banapa in 1888. Before him, seven young missionaries had already died in just five years.

THE AIM OF THE NOVITIATE

CONSTITUCIONES

Chapter X: The Novices and the Novice Master



Blessed Claretian Martyrs of Sigüenza and Fernan Caballero

61. Since the novices are preparing for profession in our Congregation, they should take care to lay the foundations for a missionary life, acquire a knowledge of its main elements and begin to practice the evangelical counsels. For this reason, they should cling wholeheartedly to Christ our Lord, especially in the mystery of the Eucharist, since they are planning to share in his life and ministry. Let them take the Blessed Virgin Mary, the first disciple of Christ, as their Mother and Teacher.



FOR PERSONAL REFLECTION

Recall your personal experience as a novice. And tell some trusted person about it, highlighting, first of all, the positive things that you received and learned in that critical year for missionary life.

- *What was the most important thing you learned in the Novitiate about your future in the Congregation?*
- *Is there a wound that still needs healing?*

"If you judge people, you have no time to love them."
(*St. Teresa of Calcutta*)



1852. While preaching a mission in Bayamo (Cuba), when Claret felt an earthquake, he interrupted the sermon and said: *Let us pray to God for our brothers and sisters living in Santiago.*

1864. Claret advises Fr. Jose Quintanas, a priest willing to make a large donation, to give it to the missionaries in Vic to use for giving out good books.

1866. After giving Spiritual Exercises for the clergy and a mission to the people, in addition to preaching in several convents in San Sebastian, today Claret returns to Zarautz, together with the King and Queen.



CONGREGATIONAL DOCUMENTS

IN PROPHETIC MISSION (1997-2003)

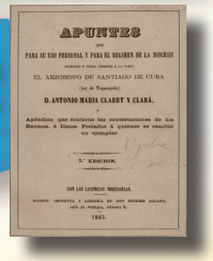
The Congregation has never ceased trying to match its norms with our life; for that reason, the General Government thought it was appropriate to reform and adapt some of its documents to our times. Among them we must highlight the new *Directory* (1999) and our proper liturgical books. At the same time, intensive work was carried out to publish the *Claretian Vocation Directory,* the *Manual for Secretaries,* the *Spiritual Directory,* the *Manual for the Claretian Novice, Claretian Prophetic Formation,* liturgical books, etc. To this must be added the effort to translate the most significant congregational documents into the various languages.

During this time other publications of congregational interest came to light, such as *Pastoral Letters of St. Anthony Mary Claret* (1997) by Fr. **Viñas** and Fr. **Bermejo**, *Claretian Missionaries: Transmission and Reception of the Claretian Charism. vol II* by Fr. **Jesus Alvarez**, and *Our Project of Missionary Life: Commentary on the Constitutions.* Vol. III (1997).



EUSEBIO AGUADO

Publisher and Bookseller (†1870)



He was a famous printer from Madrid whose personal information is unknown. This was written about him during his time: *One of the oldest, richest and most luxurious printers in Spain; he also has his own foundry and bookstore ... Mr. Aguado is one of those men who most honors the Catholic literature of Spain.* Father Claret wrote several letters related to his publications and attended to his wife at the time of her death. Their relationship, therefore, was not only one of business, but became a relationship about conscience as well, as we can see from the last letter that has been preserved from Father Claret to Eusebio Aguado on October 14, 1865: *I received your letter from the 12th of this month and in response to the case of conscience you spoke to me about, I must say: You should be at peace. You have no obligation to do more than what you have done so far. That is the response of your Confessor, Archbishop Anthony Mary Claret.*

62. While our missionaries need all virtues, they must first of all have a lively faith, in order to be able to respond to their own vocation. It was faith that burned in the prophets, the Apostles and the martyrs, and it was faith that led so many preachers of God's word gladly to accept poverty, self-denial and sacrifice in the cause of spreading Christ's kingdom. Therefore the novices should be well grounded in faith and really live by faith, especially when they are troubled by doubts about remaining faithful to their vocation.



Blessed Claretian Martyrs of Sigüenza and Fernan Caballero



FOR PERSONAL REFLECTION

Fidelity to the vocation transcends the idea of simple permanence in the Congregation until death. As Fr. Xifre said: "But, my very dear Brothers, remaining in one's vocation is not enough; we must live it well...The name of Missionary is of no avail if one is not endowed with the virtues proper of a good Missionary." ("Ser fieles", ColCC, 213)

- *What internal relationship do you discover between the faith that is asked of us and poverty, self-denial and sacrifice?*
- *In what way does faith help in moments of doubts about our vocation?*

"I strove to deprive myself of every pleasure in order to give pleasure to God."
(*Aut* 391)