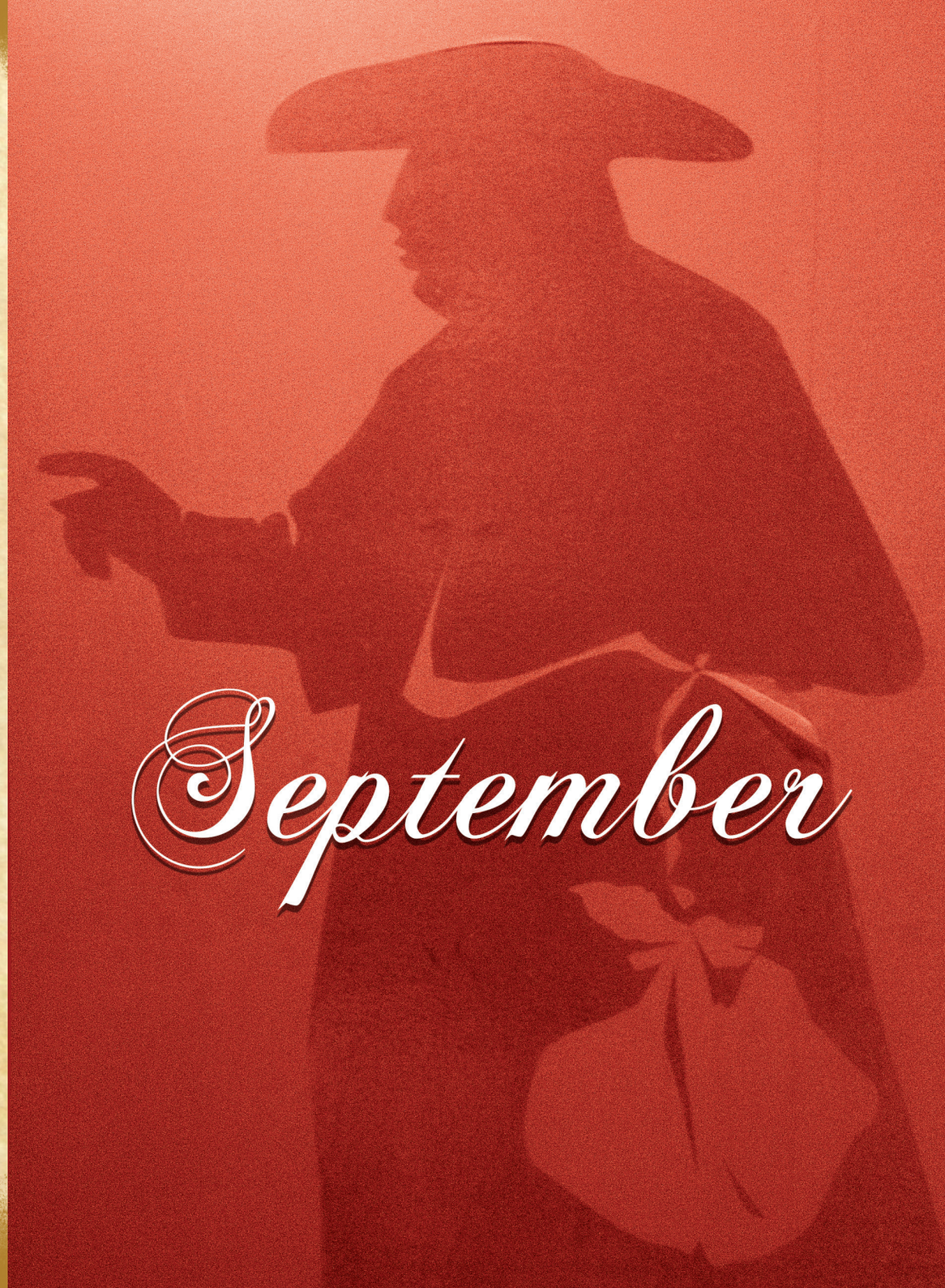
O my God and my Father!
May I know you and make you known;
May I love you and make you loved;
May I serve you and make you served;
May I praise you and make all creatures praise you.
My Father, grant that
all sinners may be converted,
all the just persevere in grace,
and all of us attain eternal glory.
Amen.



September

SEPTEMBER

1



1845. Claret travels from Vic to Ripoll, from there he will continue on to Pobla de Lillet. In Ripoll, he examines the vocation of a candidate for the Capuchin Poor Clares.

1848. Claret begins the month continuing the mission of Guia (Canary Islands), which began on August 14th.

1857. During this month Claret practically does not get close to the palace, due to some scandals.



IN PROPHETIC MISSION (1997-2003)

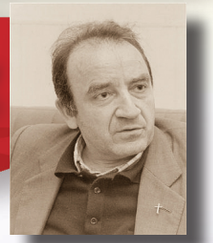
IN HAITI

On the occasion of the Claretian Jubilee Year of 1999, the Claretian provinces of Latin America and the Caribbean set out to realize the dream of founding in Haiti, the poorest and most depressed nation in the Americas. It is an African-American country, whose white population is only 4%. There are no indigenous people either. Its origin comes from the movement of African slaves. It is an overpopulated, boisterous and creative country. It has more than 10 million inhabitants in only 27,000 square kilometers. It is an extremely poor country, in full political chaos, victim of a great ecological disaster. It has its own language, Creole, derived from French, with elements of English and African languages. There is a high illiteracy rate. But the people are very religious. Currently, we have a house in the capital Port-au-Prince, belonging to the Antillas Independent Delegation.



GABRIEL CAMPO VILLEGAS, CMF

Missionary and Writer (1933-2007)



Barbastro (Huesca, Spain). He studied Law, Philosophy and Theology. He was a secondary and university professor. Marked by the conflict of the Spanish Civil War (he could be considered one of the *children of the war*), he reflects in his books the painful experiences of his childhood and youth, with tales that are born of reality and immerse us in it. Noteworthy among his novels are: *El pecado del justo [The Sin of the Just]* (1964), *Esta es nuestra sangre [This is our Blood]* (1992) and *Motin universitario [University Mutiny]* (1995). He also collaborated in several national and Aragonese newspapers and wanted to teach others to write with his work *Como aprender a escribir literariamente [How to Learn to Write Literarily]* (1985), a work that he expanded in 1999. He is also the author of the best biography of Ceferino Jimenez, El Pele, the first gypsy raised to the altars, entitled *Vida de Ceferino Jimenez [Life of Ceferino Jimenez]* and, above all, he wrote about the life of the 51 martyrs of the Claretian seminary in Barbastro, which was already mentioned. *Requiem por un muchacho y otros relatos [Requiem for a Boy and Other Stories]* (2004) was his last novel before dying as a result of a traffic accident.

APOSTOLIC TRUST

63. They should have great trust in God, confidently looking to him for the ability to accomplish their mission well. Therefore, when they feel tempted to lack trust or are worried about their limitations, let them take heart at the thought that it has always been God's way to choose weak and frail instruments in order to shame the strong.



Sant Joan d'Olo (Santa Maria d'Olo)



FOR PERSONAL REFLECTION

The vocational temptations that are instilled from the novitiate in the heart of the missionary are varied. They produce doubts and sadness.

- *Call to mind some of your current temptations and, in doing so, repeat that verse: "I will trust and I will not fear" (Is 12).*
- *Why should personal weakness and limitation not cause us to lose trust in God?*

"[Our communities are 'places of life' when]
they help us to continually recreate the bonds
that nourish our identity and sense of belonging:
prayer, dialogue, service, collaboration in the missionary task."
(*TMHL* 17)



1855. Claret receives for the first time the grace of knowing what the *Angel of the Apocalypse* means.

1865. Claret has been in Vic for more than a month, and his health has improved. Many bishops have expressed their agreement with him leaving the court over the Kingdom of Italy; but some (including the Pope and Cardinal **Antonelli**) advise him that, after a while, he should return to Madrid, so he is perplexed.



IN PROPHETIC MISSION (1997-2003)

INTERPROVINCIAL NOVITIATES

One of the initiatives promoted in the Congregation, following the guidelines of the *General Plan of Formation* (1994), has been the integration of some institutions of formation, among them several Novitiates, with the intention of joining forces in culturally similar areas. The Interprovincial Novitiates responded to the challenge of assuring the quality of formation. The occasion favored a greater coordination between centers and the young members from different Organisms getting to know each other, facilitating likely collaborations and restructuring that in the future would necessarily have to take place. In some cases, it was possible to enrich the Novitiate with the presence of diverse Formators. The Interprovincial Novitiates of Iberia, Centroamerica-Mexico-Antillas, Southern Cone of America, USA-Canada, India, French-speaking Africa and English-speaking Africa were created in the Congregation.



BENITO VILAMITJANA VILA

Bishop of Tarragona (1812-1888)



Sant Vicenç de Torello (Barcelona, Spain). He studied at the seminary in Vic, where he was a classmate of Claret. He was a professor and Vice-Rector of the seminary. In 1849, when the Congregation was founded, he helped the first Claretians, together with Fr. **Mariano Aguilar**. He said it this way in a Pastoral Letter: *Living for a while with the first men that came together, lacking everything, in the former convent of La Merced, Vic, offering them their modest furniture and helping them to sustain themselves with their own money.* He was consecrated Bishop of Tortosa in 1862. He participated in the First Vatican Council and was appointed Bishop of Tarragona in 1879, where he died on July 3rd. **Clotet** tells about the time of the foundation: *Neither Mr. Aguilar nor Mr. Vilamitjana were from the Congregation, but they ate with us and offered us their belongings.* Regarding the intervention of Claret in the First Vatican Council, Vilamitjana declared: *He said such things and said them in such a way that they impressed the Fathers very much, and I do not think many people forget them in their lives.*

CONSTITUCIONES

64. They should safeguard their missionary vocation with Gospel humility remembering that they have nothing except what they have received from God or for which they will not have to render an account. Therefore, let them acknowledge the gifts they have received and, by putting them at the service of all people, let them see to it that these gifts bear fruit.



Sant Joan d'Olo (Santa Maria d'Olo)



FOR PERSONAL REFLECTION

Humility maintains and protects the missionary vocation. Self-exaltation is dangerous because the vain missionary is "a thief of the glory of God and an idolater of himself." (Father Claret, Constitutions of 1862)

- *Humility is born of gratitude for what has been received. Call to mind the best gifts you have received from God in your life. Compose your own Magnificat with them.*
- *Humility leads to appreciation of the other and to service. Do you appreciate others or envy them? Do you serve others or do you use them to serve yourself?*

"Our permanent relationship with God the Father obtains in us,
because of the sin that dominates us, an aspect of permanent conversion.
We live faith, hope and love, that unite us to God the Father,
from a continuous spirit of conversion."
(*Our Project of Missionary Life*)



1846. Claret had planned to leave for Balaguer (Lleida) to preach a mission, but the political turbulence has prevented him.

1852. After the pastoral visit was interrupted, Claret arrived today in Santiago, Cuba to help the victims of the earthquakes; he finds a bleak scene. The cathedral, episcopal palace, etc., have been destroyed, and so he celebrates the liturgies *in the middle of the main promenade of the city*.

1862. At the request of the Bishop of Cordoba, Claret gives him instructions about the ritual to receive the King and Queen in the cathedral, who will arrive in a few days.



IN PROPHETIC MISSION (1997-2003)

THE HEAVENLY CONGREGATION

It is fair to remember and venerate those who preceded us in our vocation. The *Directory*, collecting the indications of paragraph 19 of our *Constitutions*, arranges details about the actions that must be carried out in relation to our deceased Claretians.

In the statistics for the year 2000, the number of those who constitute the greatest wealth of the Congregation was published: the deceased up until that moment, the so-called *Heavenly Congregation*. As of December 31, 2000, they reached the figure of 3,708, of which there were 21 Bishops, 2,019 Priests, 1 Deacon, 968 Brothers, 419 Students and 19 Novices.

The *Constitutions* of 1971, before prescribing suffrages, recorded a true tribute of charity towards those who have gone before us with these simple words. The text, although corrected, deserves to be remembered: *Our brothers who, after having worked in the vineyard of the Lord rest in Christ awaiting the resurrection remain united in intimate union of charity with us who still are on our journey.*



PABLO DESANTIAGO, CMF

Missionary and Preacher (1891-1941)



Villamañan (Leon, Spain). In 1926 he was assigned to Choco, in Colombia. He was a great preacher and he demonstrated it extensively traveling to pulpits throughout all of Colombia. In 1934 he was a Delegate to the General Chapter. When he wanted to return to Colombia, he was prohibited by the Government due to his publications against the prevailing secularism. In Spain he continued with his exhausting pace, preaching everywhere. In his passionate book *Siembra Eucaristica [Eucharistic Planting]* the vibrant interventions of Fr. Desantiago are collected. *He even gave up to three sessions of Spiritual Exercises at a time; the sermons that he preached are countless.* When he exercised a ministry in some town, imitating Claret, he used to preach to the religious sisters, *Catholic Action*, etc. When he was preaching in Asturias, the *Uprising* came in July 1936. He was considered dead, but overcame innumerable afflictions. He managed to escape from Asturias through the mountains of Leon. He died preaching. His great love was the Eucharist and his last words were: *Lord, I offer my life for the Eucharistic triumph and for that of my Congregation.*

65. In their search for God's will, our young missionaries should let themselves be led by the Holy Spirit, co-operating responsibly with their novicemaster and superiors, and accepting their decisions out of faith and love.



Sant Joan d'Olo (Santa Maria d'Olo)



FOR PERSONAL REFLECTION

Our obedience links docility with responsibility and fidelity. And all "propter Jesum Christum".

- *At this point in your life, how do you think the evangelical obedience of the missionary should be, from the perspective of real life?*
- *What do Claret's words suggest to you: "The obedient one obtains sanctity infallibly and in a short time"?*
- *How does the Holy Spirit act in the dynamic of obedience? How is his presence noticed?*

"The best way to find yourself
is to lose yourself in the service of others."
(*Mahatma Gandhi*)

4



1853. In letter to Fr. **Paladio Currius** Claret is tolerant about selling rosaries, medals and books, but he does not want to be involved, so people will not say *that he seeks silver and not souls*.

1853. Claret hopes that, in response to an invitation from him on May 23rd, some seminarians from the Peninsula will soon arrive and he is making room for them in the seminary.

1859. Claret perceives a message from Jesus Christ: *You have to teach your Missionaries mortification, Anthony.*



IN PROPHETIC MISSION (1997-2003)

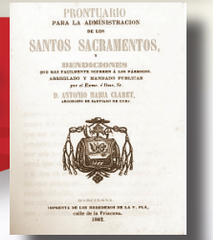
ECCLESIAL APPOINTMENTS

During the month of January of 2001, Msgr. Jose Saraiva Martins, Prefect of the Congregation for the Causes of Saints and former Rector of the Urbaniana University in Rome, was elevated to the dignity of a cardinal. He was the third Claretian cardinal, after Fr. **Arcadio Larraona** and Fr. **Arturo Tabera**. That same year, Fr. Ruben Gonzalez was appointed Bishop of Caguas (Puerto Rico) and Fr. Gaspar Quintana as Bishop of Copiapo (Chile). In February of the same year, Fr. Jorge Ivan Castaño, Bishop of Quibdo (Colombia), was appointed Auxiliary Bishop of Medellin. In May of 2002 Msgr. Romulo Emiliani was appointed Auxiliary Bishop of San Pedro Sula (Honduras). That same month, Msgr. Juan Matogo was appointed Bishop of Bata (Equatorial Guinea). He was replaced in the Diocese of Ebebiyin in 2003 by Claretian Fr. **Alfredo Maria Oburu** († 2006). In June 2003, Fr. Oscar J. Velez, former Provincial Superior of Colombia Occidental, was appointed Bishop of Valledupar (Colombia).



JOSE M. BOCABELLA

Priest and Publisher (1815-1892)



Sant Cugat del Valles (Barcelona, Spain). He was born on September 5th. He was an unconditional proponent of the cause of traditionalism. Manager and owner of the printing company and bookshop of the Heirs of the Widow Pla. *His organizing spirit and laborious activity were manifested when, in union with the great apostle of the town, the venerable Father Claret, Mr. Bocabella gave great impetus to his editorial works. Since the printing presses of his house were not enough to satisfy the demand that arose in all of Spain and America from the popular works of the great missionary, and since, on the other hand, Bocabella did not want to acquire foreign machinery, the venerable archbishop, according to him , founded the so-called Libreria Religiosa* (Arturo Masriera). After 1861 he dedicated himself to spreading the devotion to St. Joseph and the defense of the Christian family. He testified in the informative process for the beatification of Claret. He died on April 12th. His remains lay in the church of the Sagrada Familia in Barcelona.



66. In everything they do, whether it be studying, eating or simply relaxing, God's glory should be the aim and wellspring of their action. For this reason, they should cultivate prayer without ceasing or lukewarmness. Thus, by the time they leave their year of probation, they will have made real progress.

Sanctuary of the Our Lady of Fussimanya (Sallent)



FOR PERSONAL REFLECTION

The first aim of the Congregation is to seek in all things the glory of God (CC 2). It is inextricably linked to personal sanctification and salvation. It is the integral and basic motivation.

- *How could you make that motivation more present in your life and in your actions?*
- *What does prayer without ceasing mean? What is it referring to exactly? Is it possible? How can you do it?*

"My religion consists of a humble admiration of the illimitable superior spirit
who reveals himself in the slight details
we are able to perceive with our frail and feeble mind."
(*Albert Einstein*)

5



1856. Claret begins a fourth pastoral visit to the city of Santiago, Cuba.

1857. Claret communicates to Fr. **Anthony M. de Galdacano** his hope that the Capuchin Order will soon be restored.

1861. Claret and the nuncio present the Queen with two short lists of candidates for her to name the successor of the deceased Bishop **Manuel Negueruela**, Archbishop of Santiago, Cuba.



IN PROPHETIC MISSION (1997-2003)

AWARDS AND MEDALS

Many Claretians received awards during this period. We highlight Fr. Jesus S. Moure, the National Order of Scientific Merit (Brazil); Fr. Gabriel Mejia, the Order of the Chamber of Commerce (Colombia); Hogares Claret, the Queen Sofia Award (Spain); the Claret School of Maracaibo, the Order of St. Sebastian (Venezuela); Cardinal Jose Saraiva, the Grand Cross of Isabella the Catholic (Spain); Fr. Pedro Casaldaliga, the Leon Felipe Award (Spain), Honorary Citizen of Brasilia and the Human Rights Award (Brazil); Fr. Joaquim A. de Aguiar, Doctor *honoris causa* by the University of St. Petersburg (Russia); Fr. Juan M. Corominas, the Grand Cross of Isabella the Catholic (USA); the magazine *U.S. Catholic*, several Awards (USA); Mons. **Fernando Sebastian**, the Medal of Honor from the University of Salamanca (Spain); Fr. Isaias Martinez and Fr. Jesus Torres, the Cross *Pro Ecclesia et Pontifice* (Vatican); Fr. Jesus Olmedo, the *International Courage Award* for highlighting Human Rights; Fr. **Antonio San Cristobal**, etc.



BLESSED MATEU CASALS AND 7 COMPANIONS

Claretian Martyrs of Sabadell



On the evening of July 19, 1936, the Missionaries of the community of Barcelona left their homes and stayed in private homes in the city, where they remained for a few days. In the early hours of July 25th, the militiamen arrested Fr. Jose Reixach and shot him in the middle of the street. The successive days, Fr. Mateo Casals, Superior, Fr. Jose Puig and Br. Jose Claveria, Br. Jose Cardona, Br. Juan Rafi and Br. Jose Sole Maimo, the latter from the community of Cervera, were surprised in the houses in which they took refuge. While in prison, the FAI militiamen tormented the missionaries by putting a mission crucifix in their mouths. Finally, on September 5th, they were murdered in different places: Fr. Casals, together with some lay people, in San Quirico, shouting moments before being shot: *Long live Christ the King!* Later, Fr. Juan Torrents was arrested and murdered in Barcelona. They were beatified in Barcelona on October 21, 2017.

67. The novices should highly esteem their missionary vocation and earnestly engage in the process of discerning whether they are truly called to the Congregation. When they discern that they have been called, they should strive to respond gladly and generously to God's fidelity towards them by their own fidelity toward God.



Altar of Claret in the Sanctuary of the Our Lady of Fussimanya (Sallent)



FOR PERSONAL REFLECTION

Love and fidelity are the two axes of this paragraph. Both attitudes need each other.

- *Comment on this sentence: "Fidelity to our apostolic evangelical life does not consist in the simple fact of living and dying in the congregation but, rather, in an ever-increasing equation between what ought to be and what is, between the scope and demands of the call and the scope of our response." (2RL 56)*
- *Wherever you are, pray a prayer to God asking for your faithfulness: "Make me faithful, Lord, with a joyful and generous Spirit."*

"Oh my Jesus, give me your holy grace
so that I may imitate you perfectly in practicing all the virtues."
(*Aut* 437)

SEPTEMBER

6



1847. Claret offers the bishop-elect Martin Figuerol to go to Segovia to preach. In the end Figuerol will not accept the miter.

1858. Claret is with the royal family in La Coruña, and on this day he preaches four sermons.

1867. Today and the next two days Claret sends his pamphlet to all the bishops about uniting all of Spain with a single catechism, requesting their opinions.



IN PROPHETIC MISSION (1997-2003)

NEW PERSECUTIONS

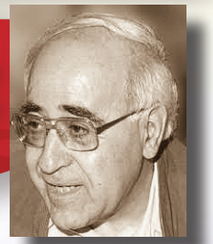
The persecutions suffered in various parts of the world did not cease. In the case of the Philippines, the Congregation gained a new martyr, Fr. **Rhoel Gallardo**, having been a priest only six years, he was tortured and martyred in Basilan by Muslim extremists on May 3, 2000, after having suffered a true Calvary. His body was found with three bullets in his back along with three teachers and five boys. They were kidnapped by the *Abu Sayaf* together with other teachers and students of other schools in March 2000.

Despite the kidnappings, as well as many other attempts by Muslim extremists, the Claretians decided to continue their work, even knowing that this was a very risky area. We must add to this persecution that of East Timor, where both the Priests and the Students were harassed and persecuted, like the whole population, and the churches and property were destroyed. Also, in Choco (Colombia), and in Peru, the missionaries suffered the tragic fate of the people, and in many cases the same death.



JOSE GARCIA CASCALES, CMF

Missionary in Austria (1928-2012)



Xativa (Valencia, Spain). His father was assassinated in 1936 in the Spanish Civil War because of his Christian faith. In 1940 he entered the Claretian Seminary in Alagon (Zaragoza). In 1946 he joined the religious community in Vic (Barcelona). He studied Philosophy in Solsona (Lleida). From 1949 to 1953 he studied Catholic Theology at the Sankt Georgen College of Philosophy and Theology in Frankfurt am Main (Germany). In 1953 he was ordained priest. Beginning in 1958 he worked in Vienna. Starting on Pentecost in 1960, he directed the *Cursillos in Christianity Movement* in German-speaking countries and was the director of the movement until 2003, starting in Stift Heiligenkreuz. In 1969, he was appointed president of the *Association of Diocesan Secretariats* (ADC) by the Bishops' Conference of Austria. He was pastor of the church of the Immaculate Heart of the Parish of Breitenfeld. His literary works have reached a circulation of almost 1.5 million copies. He directed the magazine *Cursillo-Gospel Today* for more than 35 years. He died in Vienna on September 8, 2012.

68. In order to be firmly grounded in missionary life, the novices are entrusted to the guidance of a novicemaster who by word and example will instruct them in the spirit of the Congregation.

The novicemaster is designated by the Major Superior with his council. He should be a truly spiritual man, filled with love for the Congregation. He should be mature, kindly and prudent, equipped with a sound grasp of the nature and mission of our Congregation in the Church, as well as with suitable apostolic experience.

He should give the novices the kind of direction that will help them develop the maturity of judgment and constancy of purpose best suited to their individual needs, encouraging them to grow in those virtues which are generally admired by people and are most becoming in a disciple of Christ. He should be concerned that the novices acquire that distinctive union of missionary life wherein the spirit of union with God goes hand in hand with apostolic work.



FOR PERSONAL REFLECTION

There are three characteristic features that are asked of the Novice Masters of the Congregation: maturity, kindness and prudence.

- *The majority of Claretians are not Novice Masters. There are some that were in the past. But you can pray for all of them, for those you know and for those you do not know given the place where they carry out their work. Pray for each one of them, that the Spirit may grant them these three essential qualities.*

"The great project of spiritual life of the Claretian is, then,
the imitation of Christ in chastity, in poverty, in obedience,
in frequent prayer, in apostolic meekness,
in the communion of life with others, in evangelizing service."
(*Our Project of Missionary Life*)



1848. Claret begins a mission in Moya (Canary Islands), which will last until the 24th.

1852. Claret begins a Mission-novena in the Church of the Corazon de Maria in Santiago, Cuba to beg for divine mercy in the face of the earthquakes.

1862. Claret gives instructions to Fr. Manuel Miura, his representative in Santiago, Cuba, to sell the hacienda in Puerto Principe even if he is losing money, because he needs it for things that are for the greater glory to God.



IN PROPHETIC MISSION (1997-2003)

PRINT AND SOCIAL COMMUNICATION MEDIA

The presence of the Congregation in this ministry gradually increased. It is important to highlight the translation of pastoral Bibles into Chinese at the initiative of *Claretian Publications* in the Philippines. The *Latin American Agenda* and the *Bible Diary*, initiatives of CICLA, also had an impact internationally. In Manila the magazine *Religious Life Asia* (ICLA) began to be published. There were different initiatives through the Internet, with numerous websites around the world. Since 1998 the Claretian Publishers (*Claretian Communications Foundation, Inc.* of the Philippines, *Editorial Claret* of Catalunya, *Ave Maria* of Brazil, *Editorial Claretiana* of Argentina, *Ediurcla* of Rome, *Publicaciones Claretianas* of Madrid, *Claretian Publications* of Poland and *Claretian Publications* of Bangalore) regularly participate in the International Book Fair in Frankfurt (Germany). We must also add, *CLACOM* of Nigeria, *ECCLA* of Chile, etc. Also, in the audiovisual media it is worth highlighting the opening of a TV channel in Bermejo (Bolivia), radio stations in Areosa (Portugal), La Ceiba (Honduras), Darien and Panama (Panama).



SANTA MARIA JOSEFA SANCHO DE GUERRA
Foundress (1842-1912)



Vitoria (Spain). Her given name was Maria Josefa Sancho Guerra. She was born on this day into a humble family. She lived in Madrid with relatives. At the age of 18 she felt called to a religious vocation and finally entered the *Institute of the Servants of Mary*, taking the religious name of *Maria Josefa of the Heart of Jesus*. In 1871 she founded in Bilbao, along with other companions who had left the Institute of the Servants of Mary, the Institute of the *Servants of Jesus of Charity*, of which she would be Mother Superior during the following 41 years. The purpose of this new institution was to assist the sick in hospitals and in their homes, the elderly, children and the homeless. She died on March 20, 1912, and was canonized in 2000. She went to Father Claret about her doubts about her vocation, accompanied by Saint **Soledad Torres Acosta**. After hearing her general confession, according to her own account, Father Claret guided her vocationally and foretold her role in the Church.

CANONICAL REQUIREMENTS OF THE NOVITIATE

69. A postulant is admitted to the novitiate by the Major Superior after hearing from his council.

The time of novitiate begins whenever the Major Superior or his Delegate so decides.

In order that the novitiate be valid, it must include twelve months spent in a house duly designated for this purpose. In order to complete the formation of the novices, superiors, in keeping with the norm of our law, can in addition to the time just mentioned, determine one or several periods of apostolic exercises to be spent outside the novitiate community. However, the novitiate is never to extend beyond two years.

With due regard for these prescriptions, an absence from the novitiate house which lasts more than three months, either continuous or interrupted, renders the novitiate invalid. An absence of more than fifteen days must be made up.



FOR PERSONAL REFLECTION

The legal nature of this paragraph justifies the importance we give to the entry and beginning of the novitiate because they mark one's life.

- *You can recall and be grateful for your entrance and the beginning of your novitiate, the group of your novice companions, your most striking experiences, overcoming your first difficulties, the deposit of teachings it left in your heart, etc. Give thanks to God for the vocation you have received. You can recite the prayer: "O Mother, we thank you for the vocation we have received. Grant us the grace to be faithful to it throughout our lives." Repeat it. It is much needed. It does a lot of good.*

"Seeing the signs of the times and places
have led us to discover Consecrated Life as a passion:
passion for Christ, passion for humanity."
(*Passion for Christ, passion for humanity,*
International Congress of Consecrated Life, 2004)

SEPTEMBER

8



1857. Claret has a meeting with the nuncio about the true fatherhood of the prince who will be born.

1858. Claret celebrates at the main altar of the Cathedral of Santiago de Compostela.

1865. The Queen writes to Claret begging him for what she wants most: for him to return to court.



IN PROPHETIC MISSION (1997-2003)

PRESENCE IN THE SYNODS

The Synod of Bishops is an assembly of Bishops chosen from the different regions of the world, who meet on certain occasions to foster close unity between the Roman Pontiff and the Bishops and to deal with some matter of urgency. It is an ancient ecclesial institution, which was revitalized by the Second Vatican Council. Unlike the councils, which have the capacity to define dogmas and legislate, the synods are only consultative and their primary mission is to advise the Pope on the proposed topic.

There were two Synods of Bishops celebrated during this period in which there was a presence of Claretians and statements by them: In the *Synod for America* (1997), Bishops Angel Garachana and Romulo Emiliani and Fr. Francisco Fierro participated. The *Synod for Europe* (1999) was attended by Bishops Jose Saraiva and **Fernando Sebastian**, and Fr. General, Aquilino Bocos. And the *Synod on the Bishops* (2001) was attended by Cardinal Jose Saraiva, Bishop Juan Matogo and Fr. Aquilino Bocos.

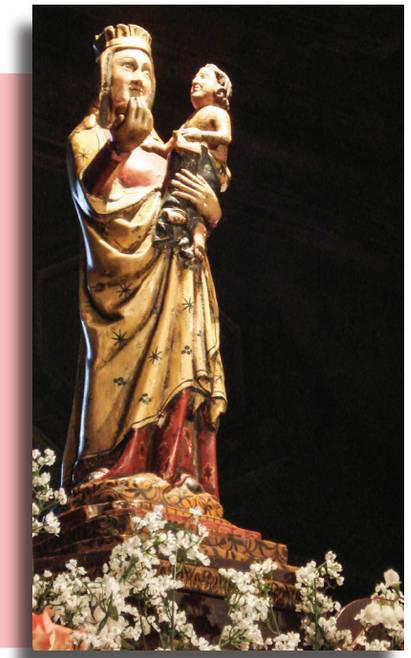


JOSE MARIA MARQUEZ, CMF

Bishop of Humahuaca (1915-1995)



Villamanrique (Seville, Spain). He was born this day into a deeply Christian family. His vocation was born with the arrival of the Claretians in Villamanrique every year during Lent. He professed in the Congregation in 1931. He began his pastoral work as professor and Prefect of the Claretian seminarians. Then he went to the school in Las Palmas as a professor and again he returned to formation, this time in the theologate in Zafra and in Jerez de los Caballeros. When the Claretians were called by the Holy See to collaborate with the Diocese of Jujuy, in Argentina, he signed up for the first expedition in 1968. In 1969 the Prelature of Humahuaca was created. Paul VI appointed him Apostolic Administrator. In 1973 he was appointed titular Bishop and Prelate of Humahuaca. He chose as his motto *to evangelize the poor.* His pastoral action and that in favor of human development over two decades was extraordinary. In 1991 he presented his resignation for health reasons. He died in the Claretian house in Granada.



Our Lady of Fussimanya (Sallent)

RELIGIOUS PROFESSION

CONSTITUCIONES

70. After showing sufficient proof of a vocation to the Congregation during the time of his novitiate, a candidate, with the prior approval of the Major Superior with his council, may join our ranks. His incorporation is accomplished, at first temporarily, by a public profession of vows.

When three years of this temporary profession have elapsed, the member who freely requests it and is judged suitable is to be admitted to a renewal of profession even for another three-year period or to perpetual profession; otherwise he is to leave.

If it seems opportune the Superior General can extend the period of temporary profession of a member, but in such a way that the entire time of temporary incorporation does not exceed nine years.



FOR PERSONAL REFLECTION

After discernment, the approval and the later the incorporation into the Institute happen. This process has its own rites of passage, which try to avoid routine and automatism.

- *What did your experience as a temporarily professed bring you, personally? What did it add to your novitiate experience?*
- *Record the dates of your first profession, your successive renewals and your perpetual profession. Recall something from each of them.*
- *What does it mean for each Claretian to participate in the celebration of a first profession, or a renewal or a perpetual profession? How can we take advantage of those events?*

"I believe that unarmed truth and unconditional love
will have the final word in reality.
This is why right temporarily defeated is stronger than evil triumphant."
(*Martin Luther King, Jr.*)

SEPTEMBER

9



1857. Claret complains to the Queen that, without any explanation, his allocation of 20,000 duros has been reduced to only 4,000, when in reality, because he has moved to Madrid, his expenses have not decreased. His complaint will be addressed.

1858. In Santiago de Compostela, on this day Claret preaches seven sermons.

1861. Claret writes to Fr. **Xifre** inviting him to ignore physical indispositions, which he has often had and *they have not kept me from working.*



IN THE ARCTIC POLAR CIRCLE

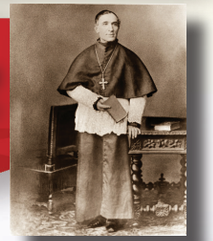
IN PROPHETIC MISSION (1997-2003)

In the year 2000, the Province of Castilla assumed the Parish of *St. Michael the Archangel* shortly after beginning a mission in Russia, this time in Murmansk, a city of half a million inhabitants located about 1,400 kilometers north of St. Petersburg, above the Arctic Circle, about 500 km. from the North Pole. It is the northernmost parish of the Catholic Church. Since this city was founded in 1916, there was no religious presence until the fall of communism. The presence of Catholics is very scarce. There was a small Catholic community that would support the new mission. Once the responsibility was assumed, it was necessary to make arrangements for housing and a place for the celebrations since there was no Catholic church in the city. The fundamental work in those regions so far north consists basically in discovering the presence of Catholics, serving them, consolidating the community, always in dialogue with the Orthodox Church, and opening up new horizons toward the future. In 2007, the first Catholic church was inaugurated.



JOSE BENITO SERRA, OSB

Bishop and Founder (1810-1886)



Mataro (Barcelona, Spain). He took the habit of the Order of Saint Benedict. After being exclaustrated, he took refuge in the monastery La Trinita della Cava in Salerno, Italy. In 1845 he traveled to Australia accompanying Fr. **Rosendo Salvado** to start a foundation in New Norcia. Claret was the sponsor of this expedition. He was appointed as the first Bishop of Victoria in 1847 and later Auxiliary Bishop of Perth. In 1861 he wrote to Claret consulting him about the possibility of moving to Madrid after his resignation. In 1862 he resigned and retired to live in Madrid as Titular Bishop of Daulia. After arriving in Spain in 1862, he met with Claret. With Mother Antonia de Oviedo he founded the *Congregation of Oblate Sisters of the Most Holy Redeemer.* As Mother Antonia Maria de Oviedo wrote, although the conversation was about the foundation of the Benedictines, there is no doubt that it had something to do with the founding of the Oblates themselves. Apparently, the following year the same Father Claret proposed him as Vice President of El Escorial. He died in Benicassim, Castellon on September 8th.

THE PERPETUAL PROFESSION

CONSTITUCIONES

71. With the approval of the Major Superior and his council, a member may be definitively incorporated into the Congregation by perpetual vows. In order to be able to make perpetual vows, a member should have reached a level of personal maturity such that he can see this divine calling as good for his whole person and as a life he can actually live.

Our religious profession consists of taking vows of chastity, poverty and obedience and of making a public act whereby we consecrate ourselves to God and entrust ourselves to the Immaculate Heart of the Blessed Virgin Mary for the ministry of salvation. By doing so, we more clearly show that we are professing religious life in a Congregation that was founded for the express purpose of performing the ministry of the Word.

Through this act of self-giving, accepted by the Congregation and the Church, each of our members share in our mission among the People of God.



Image of Claret in the Sanctuary of the Our Lady of Fussimanya (Sallent)



FOR PERSONAL REFLECTION

The definitive incorporation into the Congregation is made through the perpetual profession. It is, by the grace of God, a free response of giving oneself forever that enriches the one who professes it.

- *Spend a moment of prayer reciting the formula of the profession and updating it. Do not do it quickly. You do not have to feel each one of its paragraphs ... It is enough that you recite it with sincerity and in a way that allows you to listen to your own voice before the Lord. Stop after each period. Let the words descend on you.*

"Science is not only compatible with spirituality;
it is a profound source of spirituality."
(*Carl Sagan*)



1845. Claret begins a mission and Spiritual Exercises for the clergy in Pobla de Lillet (Barcelona).

1850. In Vic, Claret begins Spiritual Exercises for Ordinands, until the 18th.

1863. Br. **Jose Saladich** goes to live with Claret in Madrid. The small community of missionaries begins to form around the Founder.



IN PROPHETIC MISSION (1997-2003)

CONGRESS ON SPIRITUALITY

In response to an initiative that emerged at the Meeting of Major Superiors of Bangalore in 1998, the Congress on Spirituality was held in Majadahonda (Madrid) from July 9-17, 2001. It was attended by a member of each Major Organism of the Congregation. The theme of missionary spirituality had aroused much interest in the Congregation. The aim was to conclude a process of reflection on our missionary spirituality, taking as a starting point the life and experiences gathered through previous surveys. The Congress gathered findings and points of convergence to continue affirming a spirituality capable of recreating unity in plurality and in creative fidelity. After the meeting, a document was published gathering the guidelines for the future: *Our Missionary Spirituality Along the Journey of God's People*, Rome 2002. Included in the document was an appendix with the message of the Congress, the introductory and conclusive reflections of the Superior General, and a selected bibliography on the sources of our missionary life.



JOSE VILLARO, CMF
General Consultor (1841-1895)



Olius (Lleida, Spain). He entered the seminary in Solsona and from there he went to the novitiate in Thuir (France). In 1874 he left Thuir with Br. Jorda to reopen the house in Segovia, from where they were exiled on suspicion of being Carlists; later they returned to Thuir. From there he went back to Segovia as Superior in 1875. After that he held positions of great responsibility in the Congregation: Vic and Cervera, as Superior of a community of 500 members. Since 1883, when Fr. **Domingo Sola** left for Mexico, he was elected General Consultor participating in the General Chapter of 1888, where he was again elected General Consultor. He died during the celebration of the General Chapter of 1895 to which he had also been summoned. **Xifre** and all the capitulars accompanied him at the time of his death. There were many people who had seen him as the future successor of Fr. Xifre. He had a blood brother in the Congregation, Br. Francisco Villaro. He died on September 8th.

Chapter XI: Missionary Students and their Prefect

72. The period of studies is a time of formation for the pursuit of our mission.

Preparation for perpetual religious profession should, however, be carried on for at least three years.

Besides this basic training, each student should receive special preparation to fulfill his priestly, diaconal or lay function in the Church, each in his own way and according to his own gift seeking to share in one and the same spirit of Christ.

During this period of studies, our missionaries should cultivate their hearts as well as their minds, keeping them open to the action of the Spirit and observing our own characteristic method of instruction. Our scholastics should be especially diligent in the pursuit of sacred studies.



FOR PERSONAL REFLECTION

The fundamental principle of the formation of the missionary is that all of it should be oriented to the mission. Bearing in mind this permanent principle:

- *Do you take care of your body, mind and heart, your knowledge and your spirituality? Do you take care of your health?*
- *Do you stay in tune with the spirit of the Founder? How?*
- *What was the best seed sown in you during your initial formation?*

"My Father... At the words of consecration
the substance of bread and wine
are changed into the substance of your body and blood.
Almighty Lord, consecrate me; speak over me the words
that will change me totally into you." (*Aut* 756)

SEPTEMBER

11



1858. During these days, Claret preaches in Santiago de Compostela to the people and the clergy; commenting on the sermons, a reporter affirms: *He gathers the Christian philosophy of the immortal* ***Balmes****, the transcendental conceptions of Fr. Lacordaire, the social applications of Fr. Felix, the biblical and patrological erudition of Fr. Raulica, the irresistible eloquence of Fr. Perrone and the victorious apology of Wiseman.*

1860. Claret travels through the night by boat between Alicante and Palma de Mallorca.

1861. Claret begins Spiritual Exercises for two Ordinands of La Escorial.



IN PROPHETIC MISSION (1997-2003)

SECRETARIAT OF JUSTICE AND PEACE

The General Government wanted to strengthen the *Secretariat of Justice and Peace*. The purpose of this Secretariat is to promote communication and collaboration among the Provincial Secretariats and to illuminate reflection and action according to the Word of God through subsidies and publications.

Later, in February 2014, the *JPIC & Solidarity Workshop* was promoted for congregational sensitization about issues of Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation. Gathered in Vic, the cradle of the Claretian 'great work', in the shadow of the tomb of Fr. Founder, 37 representatives of Organisms of the whole Congregation were convened by the General Prefecture of the Apostolate, by the General Secretariat of JPIC and by the General Mission Procure. Its objective was to exchange experiences and understanding of the reality and the possibilities to qualify and to reaffirm our missionary activity in one of the dimensions that defines our charism: the option for the impoverished in terms of prophecy, liberation and the dignity of human beings and their social and ambient surroundings.



JUAN MELE, CMF

Provincial and Artist (1849-1929)



Sant Llorenç de Morunys (Lerida, Spain). He was born into a family of eight siblings, five of them priests or religious. He studied and was ordained a priest in the Diocese of Solsona (Lleida). Attracted by his Marian devotion, he entered the Congregation in 1870 in Prades (France). In 1875 he was assigned to the community of Alfaro with Fr. **Inocencio Heredero**. He remained there for 18 years. Then he went to Don Benito (Badajoz) and Las Palmas. There he designed the main altar of the church. In 1899 Fr. **Xifre** sent him to Mexico as Visitor. He returned to Spain after two years to participate in the Chapter of Catalunya being appointed Secretary and Superior of the house in Barcelona, where he undertook the great work of the construction of the church. In 1907 he was elected as Provincial Superior of Catalunya. He founded the house in Berga and opened the postulancy in Alagon and the German one in Cervera. After his term he still worked on minor works and on the construction of the school in Solsona. He finished his days almost blind on September 5th in Tarragona.

PROGRESSIVE FORMATION

CONSTITUCIONES



Monastery of Santa Maria de l'Estany (Barcelona)

73. In order to achieve an ever deeper and more mature appreciation of their vocation, let them earnestly learn, in the midst of a changing world, to stand firmly and constantly by Christ according to our charism as set forth in the Constitutions.

They should confidently avail themselves of the help of their prefect and their spiritual director.

They should pray God unceasingly to make them fitting ministers of the divine Word, so that they may be able to spread his name and the kingdom of heaven throughout the world. As trusting sons, they should love and honour the Blessed Virgin Mary, whose special concern is the formation of apostles.



FOR PERSONAL REFLECTION

This paragraph places the young missionary - and everyone - in a situation of growth in the midst of a changing world. Recall:

- *What aspect of spirituality in your time as a Student has helped you become more sensitive to the changing circumstances of life?*
- *What aspects of spirituality have you developed and matured in more afterwards?*
- *Could you detect two or three stages of growth in your Cordimarian spirituality from the time you were a student until now? What differentiates them? How have you noticed progress?*

"Our experience of God in the Word incarnated
invites us to discover his face in every human being
and work with others on behalf of life in all its dimensions."
(*TMHL* 41)

SEPTEMBER

12



1849. Claret begins a series of Spiritual Exercises for more than twenty Ordinands in Vic, despite the persistent discomfort in his knee.

1858. They pass through Lugo, on their return to Madrid, and Claret preaches in the cathedral and in some convents.

1869. In Rome, Claret has his first encounter with the Chilean priest, Fr. Santiago de la Peña, who will be the mediator for the missionaries to found a house in that nation. Claret advises Fr. **Joseph Xifre** to get more information from Fr. Ramon Tubau, former member of the mission-house in Vic and now a Jesuit in Chile.



IN PROPHETIC MISSION (1997-2003)

IN CHAD AND JAMAICA, FROM AFRICA TO AFRO-AMERICA

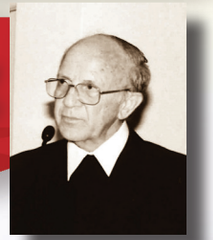
In June 2001, the General Government approved the foundation in N'Djamena, the capital of Chad. The mission was assumed by the Province of Nigeria. This young Organism had 170 members in 1997, half of them priests, and with an optimum median age: 34 years old. They would attend to the pastoral care of the parishes of St. Teresa and Blessed Tansi in Amtoukol. This mission was abandoned in 2008. Later, in 2015, a mission was opened again in the area of Banda, Diocese of Sarh, in a parish with 3,000 Christians and 700 catechumens under the title of Saint Mary Mother of the Church.

Meanwhile, in America, at the request of the Archbishop of Kingston, USA East Province opened a mission in August 2001 in Kingston (Jamaica), in order to serve the parish of Our Lady of the Angels, where they carried out programs of evangelization, formation of laity, attention to families and young people. This mission would also be abandoned years later.



JOÃO BATISTA MEGALE, CMF

General Consultor (1934-2008)



Borda da Mata (Minas Gerais, Brazil). He entered the Claretian Seminary in Rio Claro in 1946. He received his doctorate in Dogmatic Theology from the *Angelicum* in Rome in 1962. He studied Pastoral Theology in Paris. In 1965 we already see him in Brazil as a formator and professor of the philosophy students in Curitiba. He then went on to parish ministry until he was elected Provincial Consultor in 1969 and Provincial in 1977. In 1979 he was elected General Prefect of the Apostolate, a position from which he resigned sometime later due to health problems. His illness of infectious rheumatism led him to live out of community for several years. During this situation, he died on September 8, 2008. In 2004 he had been elected member of the Academia Mineira de Letras, due to his mastery of languages. He was the author of numerous publications of books and articles, including the book *Claret, un apostol moderno [Claret, a Modern Apostle],* in collaboration with Marcio Silva Sousa.

READING THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES

CONSTITUCIONES

74. Our missionaries in formation should acquire an adequate knowledge of contemporary human, social and political conditions, so that in dealing with the circumstances of the modern world they may judge wisely in the light of faith and act with burning apostolic zeal to help their fellow human beings more effectively.



Monastery of Santa Maria de l'Estany (Barcelona)



FOR PERSONAL REFLECTION

The missionaries must know the reality in which they have to evangelize: the reality of the world and of man. From the perspective of this requirement, we speak here - for the first time in formation - of "apostolic zeal."

- *What social and political realities do you feel you should know about?*
- *How can you judge them wisely? How can you avoid abusive ideologies?*
- *What is the point of "burning with apostolic zeal"?*

"Mortification, both external and internal,
has a witnessing and apostolic value,
above all because it places the missionary in an attitude of real participation
in the Paschal mystery and the mystery of salvation."
(*Our Project of Missionary Life*)

SEPTEMBER

13



1857. Claret begins a series of Spiritual Exercises at the church of the Italians for some 500 priests; they conclude on the 22nd.

1860. Claret fills today and the next two days with preaching in Palma de Mallorca.

1862. On a trip to Andalusia with the King and Queen, Claret spends the night and preaches in Santa Cruz de Mudela (Ciudad Real).



IN PROPHETIC MISSION (1997-2003)

BEATIFICATION OF PATROCINIO GINER

On March 11, 2001, Mother Patrocinio Giner was beatified along with 232 other martyrs of the Archdiocese of Valencia. She was the first martyr of the Claretian Missionary Sisters and with her the number of Blesseds of the Claretian Family increased.

Mother Patrocinio was born in Tortosa in 1874. Her given name was Maria Cinta Asuncion. She entered the *Religious of Mary Immaculate*, in which she professed in 1893. She soon distinguished herself as an excellent formator, with a great gift of working with people and an ability to govern. For many years she dedicated herself to the formation of the young generations of *Claretian Missionary Sisters* in Carcaixent (Valencia). She died a martyr on Portitxol Street in Valldigna (Valencia) on November 13, 1936, during the religious persecution in Spain. On that day, while praying the rosary in community, with the call of the militiamen at the door, the call to martyrdom sounded, to which she responded with courage and serenity. That same afternoon she was shot on the way to Tavernes. She was 62 years old.



PALADIO CURRIUS

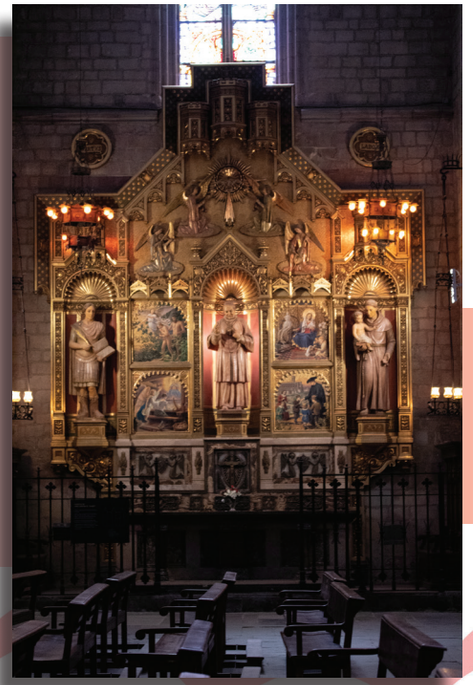
Collaborator of Claret (1817-1903)



Riudaura (Girona, Spain). He was ordained a priest in Rome in 1843. Starting in 1850 he was a close friend of Father Claret, accompanying him to Santiago, Cuba. There he was administrator and professor of the San Basilio Seminary. In 1852 he was named confessor of the budding community of the future *Claretian Missionary Sisters*. In 1854 he was put in charge of the construction of the ***House of Charity*** in Puerto Principe. In 1859 he returned to Spain with Mother **Antonia Paris**, at Claret's request. He was at his service until 1861 as Rector of the church of Montserrat in Madrid. In 1861 he went to El Escorial where he was a royal chaplain, professor of the school and master of ceremonies. Claret speaks of him in his *Autobiography* no. 598. In 1868 he left El Escorial in the wake of the revolution. He was chaplain of the *Claretian Missionary Sisters* in Reus until 1879 when he became the chaplain of the *Calced Carmelites* in Valls. He spent the last years of his life with the Claretian Missionaries in La Selva del Camp where he died.

ACTIVE AVAILABILITY FOR THE MISSION

CONSTITUCIONES



75. Assignment to future ministries should be based on a consideration both of individual inclinations and abilities, and on the needs of the Congregation and the Church. During the period of formation, skills for the apostolate should be both learned and practiced.

Altarpiece of Claret in one of the right side chapels of the Colegiata Basilica de Santa Maria de la Aurora - La Seu (Manresa)



FOR PERSONAL REFLECTION

- *Which of your personal qualities are more apt for apostolic life?*
- *Do you think that they have determined your missionary service along your Claretian journey?*
- *In what apostolic areas do you think you most competent? Where do you see yourself more qualified and gifted?*

"The Church draws her life from the Eucharist.
This truth does not simply express a daily experience of faith,
but recapitulates *the heart of the mystery of the Church*."
(John Paul II, *Ecclesia de Eucharistia*, 1)

SEPTEMBER

14



1855. Claret names Fr. **Paladio Currius** chaplain of the monastery of Mother **Paris**' nuns.

1864. Br. Jose Lluma joins the community of Claret in Madrid, in which there are already three members of the Congregation.

1866. Claret arrives in Avila, where the royal court remains for ten days. This provides Claret the opportunity for abundant preaching. It seems that he gives Spiritual Exercises for the clergy and the people.

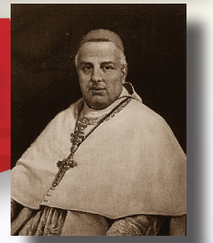
IN PROPHETIC MISSION (1997-2003)

INSTITUTE FOR CONSECRATED LIFE IN INDIA

In March 2001, the creation of an Institute for Consecrated Life was approved in Bangalore (India), under the name of *Sanyasa Jnana Kendra*. Its early beginnings go back to 1998, when the General Government asked the Claretians of India to open an Ecclesiastical Institute of Higher Studies. By means of a previous survey of various levels, the project received a positive impetus. Thus in 2002 the Institute began its activity with 54 students. It is the only institution of the Catholic Church of India specializing in the Theology of Consecrated Life. It is a work of the Province of Bangalore with the collaboration of the other Claretian Organisms of India, based in Bangalore. It aims to promote the renewal of consecrated life in the Asian context from the perspective of a new vision. Little by little it has achieved consistency in that area of the country. Today the number of the Institutes of Consecrated Life in the Congregation totals four.

JOAQUIN LLUCH GARRIGA

Cardinal (1816-1882)



Manresa (Barcelona, Spain). In 1830 he entered the Order of the Calced Carmelites. After his exclaustration of 1835, he went to Carcassonne (France) and then to Lucca (Italy) and was ordained in 1838. In 1847 he returned to Spain. He was consecrated Bishop of the Canary Islands in 1858. It is likely that Claret influenced his appointment. Later he was bishop of Salamanca and Barcelona and Archbishop of Seville in 1877. He was promoted to Cardinal in 1882. He died in Umbrete, Seville. This was how he expressed himself about the possible beatification of Claret: *As for me, I knew him since he was a simple missionary in Catalonia. I have always held him in high esteem because of his virtues, wisdom, exemplary life, industriousness and religious zeal. Such is the opinion I have of him, that I would be glad to see the corresponding people work toward the cause of his beatification, which would give much glory to God, to* ***Pius IX*** *and the Vatican Council, of which he was one of the most illustrious members.* He died on September 23rd.

SHARED RESPONSIBILITY OF FORMATION

CONSTITUCIONES

76. Missionary formation is a matter of such grave concern that responsibility for it rests on the whole Congregation, the Province and the formation community.



Altarpiece of Claret in one of the right side chapels of the Colegiata Basilica de Santa Maria de la Aurora - La Seu (Manresa)

FOR PERSONAL REFLECTION

Shared responsibility in missionary formation is at the heart of this paragraph. It must be exercised according to different levels. You must also feel committed to that task.

- *But in what way? Think of three personal contributions that you can offer starting now to the formandi of your Organism or of the Congregation.*

"Hate paralyzes life; love releases it.
Hatred confuses life; love harmonizes it.
Hatred darkens life; love illumines it."
(*Martin Luther King, Jr.*)

1862. Claret is in Cordoba with the King and Queen. Today he preaches six times; on the 16th he preached eleven times, one of them to the clergy with the bishop included. On the 17th he preached seven times, the one to the conferences of St. Vincent de Paul on the works of mercy being most memorable.

1870. Claret is visited in Fontfroide by Fr. **Joseph Xifre**; he had hoped for Fr. **Pedro Naudo** to come with him, but in the end, it was not possible.

IN PROPHETIC MISSION (1997-2003)

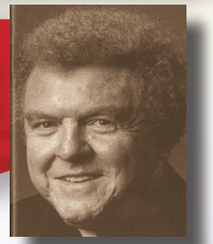
CONTINENTAL MISSIONARY PROJECTS

During this time the whole Church was living the pilgrimage toward the great Jubilee of the year 2000 and it was the eve of the 150th anniversary of the Congregation. Around these special dates and from the perspective of the recent Chapter guidance, several Encounters of the Provincial Governments of each continent with the General Government were happening. These Encounters concluded with *the drafting of a common project of interprovincial mission by geographical and cultural areas.* (*IPM* 53.2)

There were five resulting projects from each area: Africa (*ACLA*), Asia (*ASCLA*), Latin America and the Caribbean (*CICLA*), Europe (*CEC* and *IBERIA*) and North America (*NACLA*). They considered the funding options established by the *MCT* 161-179 as an evangelizing response to the challenges of each continent. Those options were: *Missionary evangelization* (*IPM* 42-43); *inculturation* (*IPM* 45); *in communion and participation* (*IPM* 50); *in shared mission*, (*IPM* 50); *through dialogue* (*IPM* 46); *from the perspective of the poor* (*IPM* 44); *prophetic* (*IPM* 20) and *vocational* (*IPM* 36-37).

MARTIN KIRK, CMF

Provincial of USA-East (1938-1996)



Chicago (United States). As a result of rheumatic fever as a child, Martin would spend his entire life with a perforated heart valve. He always said he wanted to be a priest. In 1952 he entered the Claretian St. Jude Minor Seminary, in Momence, Illinois. There were 36 young people, of whom only he would persevere. In 1961 he was assigned to Rome to study Theology at the International College *Claretianum*. It was the eve of the Second Vatican Council (1962-1965). During those summers he taught English courses at the Claretian seminary in Segovia, Spain. After returning to the United States, he graduated in Theology in Washington and was ordained a priest in Chicago in 1965. In 1974 he was appointed to the Provincial Government and in 1979 elected as Delegate to the General Chapter. In 1980 he was elected Provincial Superior until 1989. He founded a house in Springfield, promoted the *Lay Claretians*, approved the creation of *Salt* magazine as well as *Generation* and *Goosecorn* newsletters. In 1989 he was elected Provincial Econome. In 1996, at the age of 57, he died a sudden death leaving a great void in the Province of the United States.

DUTIES OF THE PREFECT

CONSTITUCIONES



Main altar of La Seu (Manresa)

77. The office of prefect is extremely important, both because of its aim and because of its consequences. For if the conversion of one sinner is so very meritorious, how much more is the formation of fitting ministers who will in their own time become instruments for the salvation of many. Therefore, the one entrusted with such a momentous office must be well instructed in his duties and perform them with utmost care.

He should love them all equally and get to know the needs of all.

In his instructions he should hand down the doctrine of our missionary life. He should aim at bringing them, more by example than by words, to embrace our way of life out of an inner conviction of faith.

FOR PERSONAL REFLECTION

The figure of the Prefect of Students has an important tradition in the Congregation. This paragraph details what qualities they need the most and what functions they should perform.

- *According to your own personal experience, what aspect of formation should the Prefect of Students pay closest attention to, given the times we are living in?*
- *Sincerely, what recommendations would you give to a Prefect of Students for their formative task?*
- *Pray today in a special way for the Claretians who are carrying out this service in the Congregation.*

"The possession of knowledge does not kill the sense of wonder and mystery. There is always more mystery."
(*Anaïs Nin*)



1851. Claret directs a collective letter to the clergy of the city of Santiago, Cuba, in which he establishes three weekly days of conferences, and gives a series of directions about pastoral practice.

1851. Claret begins Spiritual Exercises for the *Ursuline Sisters* in Puerto Principe.

1858. On the way through Astorga, Claret preaches in the two convents of nuns, and to the people in the square of the Cathedral.



IN PROPHETIC MISSION (1997-2003)

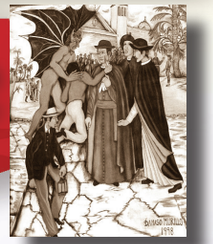
BIOGRAPHY OF CLARET BY CLOTET

The year 2001, as a fruit of the 100th anniversary of the death of Fr. Clotet and the 150th anniversary of the founding of the Congregation, the *Vida edificante del P. Claret, Misionero y Fundador* was published, written by the Venerable Fr. **Jaime Clotet** and prepared by Fr. **Jesus Bermejo** and his collaborators. Fr. Clotet wrote the life of the Holy Founder, whom he admired so much and whose footsteps he followed in faithful charismatic closeness. His patient work led him to collect 18 volumes of documents about Claret and write some biographies about him. It is a first-hand testimony about the Fr. Founder and about the origins of the Congregation. A well-deserved tribute was paid to Fr. Clotet for his filial affection for the Holy Founder and for his profound humility, when he turned over his publication and gave the manuscript to Fr. **Mariano Aguilar** so that he could elaborate the biography of Father Claret, which would be published in 1894.



PEDRO LLAUSAS

Collaborator of Claret (1823-1888)



Flaça (Girona, Spain). He arrived in Cuba as a seminarian and was ordained a priest by Father Claret. In 1856 he was a deputy and senior sacristan of the church of the Sagrario in Santiago, Cuba and then pastor in Holguin. After moving to the Peninsula, he was chaplain of the Monastery in El Escorial in 1861, a position from which he resigned to enter the Society of Jesus three months later. He died in Zamboanga, Philippines, on September 19th. He was one of the two accompanying Father Claret during the **Attack in Holguin** and he was in the room when the doctors treated the wounds. To a question from Claret about what he had seen, he replied: *I saw a man coming out of the sidewalk on my left, somewhat stooped, in a gesture like he wanted to kiss Your Excellency's ring and, when he got near you, I saw him suddenly stand up and, with a razor in his hand, lift his right arm against Your Excellency's neck, without me having time to prevent it.*

Chapter XII: Missionary Brothers, Deacons and Priests

78. All our members, united in pursuit of the same goal according to the grace given to each of us, work together toward the good of the whole body. However, in fulfilling our personal vocation, each of us must esteem and uphold both his own gift and the graces bestowed on others by one and the same Spirit.



Sant Andreu de Pruit (Pruit)



FOR PERSONAL REFLECTION

The opening of Chapter XII is a micro-theology of the Claretian communion, where unity and diversity are intertwined.

- *How can you show appreciation for your own vocation? And for the gift and the graces others have been given? There are ways to do it. Indicate some that are within your reach.*
- *To appreciate the gifts and qualities it is necessary to recognize them first. Try to recognize them in yourself and in others. Make a list. Be kind and realistic.*

"And because we have been created not only to know, love,
and serve God but also to praise Him,
I concluded that the clergy,
in order to fulfill all their duties, needed to know *plain chant*."
(*Aut* 327)

SEPTEMBER

17



1847. Claret begins Spiritual Exercises for the *Discalced Carmelites* and the *Carmelite Sisters of Charity*, in Vic.

1849. Claret writes to **Caixal** about his ministries and those of his missionaries, and about their setbacks. In addition to his knee problems, he has to watch over Fr. **Dominic Fabregas**, who is going through a difficult illness. He is also concerned that they will soon have to vacate the seminary and about the long-term continuation of the works begun in the convent of *La Merced*.

1867. Claret offers to Fr. **Xifre** a series of instructions about the admission of students as soon as they have completed a course of Latin.



IN PROPHETIC MISSION (1997-2003)

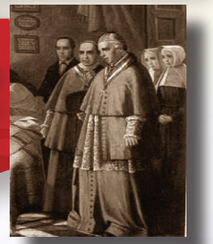
INTERNATIONAL FORMATION CENTERS

Our Seminaries in Colmenar Viejo and Granada always had an international character. Starting in the year 2001 both seminaries became Intercultural Formation Communities. Actually, in March of that year and in response to the new challenge of interculturality and at the request of the Superior General, Fr. Aquilino Bocos, the Provinces of Castilla and Betica opened their Seminary and Theological Center for Students of other Organisms of the Congregation. The purpose was to respond to the challenges of internationality and interculturality which the new times demanded and to cooperate in missionary life within the pluralism that already existed in the Congregation. Students arrived from Nigeria, the Philippines, India, Vietnam, Indonesia, etc. Later, many of them, already ordained priests, filled positions for which they had been prepared. Not only in their respective countries but also in Europe and America. The Seminaries in Colmenar Viejo and Granada have been at the service of the universal mission of the Congregation: the students come from the whole world and are sent to the whole world. The community is like a hive.



CALIXTO CASTRILLO ORNEDO

Bishop of Leon (1804-1869)



Belorado (Burgos, Spain). He studied Canon and Civil Law at the University of Valladolid. He was a Canon in Santo Domingo de la Calzada (La Rioja, Spain). In March of the year 1862 he was consecrated Auxiliary Bishop of Cardinal Manuel Joaquin Tarancon, Archbishop of Seville and Titular Bishop of Doliche. On September 19th of that same year he met Father Claret at the House of Charity in Seville, and was immortalized along with Claret in the painting by Jose Roldan. In 1863 he was appointed Bishop of Leon. He died in September of 1869. In several letters the Nuncio commented to Claret about possible appointments to different dioceses of Spain. This was a custom of the Nuncio. Castrillo had been proposed before for Teruel in 1861; later he was thought of for Lleida; finally, he was named Auxiliary Bishop of Seville. When he was already a bishop, he was thought of for Badajoz, but he was appointed Bishop of Leon. We do not know the influence that Claret had on those specific appointments.

Santa Eugenia de Berga (Osona)



79. Missionary brothers should be aware that their charism bears a distinctively lay stamp. From the very outset, laymen have entered our Congregation to become, in their own special way, cooperators in its mission.

This vocation of sharing in the Congregation's life as laymen should be the authentic basis of the consecration. They should therefore have a high regard for all outstanding lay traits and embody them in their lives according to our missionary spirit.

The brothers, aware of the cares and hopes of the secular world which affect them most directly, should bring them to the fore, for the betterment of the Congregation's mission.



FOR PERSONAL REFLECTION

From the beginning there were consecrated laymen in the Congregation. Let us not fall into the trap of mythologizing the past, or of taking refuge in nostalgia. That "beginning" (genesis) refers above all to a foundational intention.

- *Why are the Missionary Brothers in the Congregation still important today? What do they contribute?*
- *Remember the name of one of them that was essential in your vocation and in your missionary life. Give thanks for them.*
- *Pray for an increase of vocations of Missionary Brothers in the Congregation. Pray in particular to the Heart of Mary.*

"In this world, marked by an unjust and divisive economic system, our Congregation tries to model a system in which all participate in the communion of goods."
(*TMHL* 58)

SEPTEMBER

18



1858. On her way through Arevalo (Avila), the Queen informally names Claret *President of the monastery* in El Escorial. The official appointment will take almost a year to become effective.

1862. After having given three talks to different audiences, Claret travels from Cordoba to Seville accompanying the King and Queen.

1863. Claret is unyielding in his responsibility over the libraries of El Escorial: *As long as I am President, I will never allow anyone to take any book; they should consult them there.*



IN PROPHETIC MISSION (1997-2003)

CIRCULAR LETTERS

The Superior General made a special address on two occasions to the entire Congregation in this period through two Circular Letters.

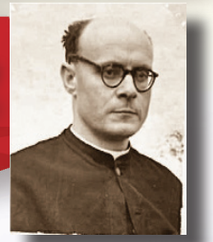
The first one was *Heritage and Prophecy*. It was released on August 22, 1998. With it, Fr. General, was preparing for the Jubilee of the Congregation which would be celebrated on July 16th of the following year, the date on which the Congregation would complete 150 years. As the subtitle of the Circular Letter conveys, we would celebrate *150 years of grace and service to the Gospel.*

Three years later, in 2001, a second Circular Letter was published, focusing on the vocation ministry of the Congregation, entitled *Missionary Vocations for the Third Millennium*. It was a true support to the *Claretian Vocation Directory*, published in the year 2000 by the General Prefecture of Formation and prefaced the year 2001 as a Vocational Year. With this Circular Letter, the entire Congregation was invited to rekindle the gift of their vocation, to pray for vocations and to involve ourselves more in its promotion.



FRANCISCO JUBERIAS, CMF

Missionary and Formator (1919-1991)



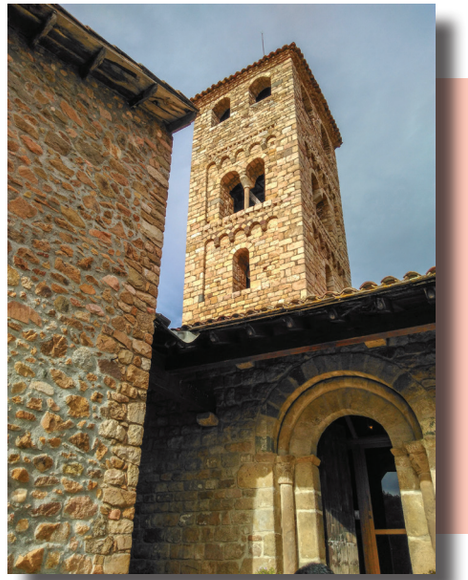
Palazuelos (Guadalajara, Spain). He entered the Postulancy in Sigüenza in 1933. Despite the ups and downs of the Spanish Civil War, he managed to reach ordination in 1943. In Rome he received degrees in Theology and the Bible. His greatest dedication was teaching and the formation of theologians, to whom he devoted 18 years of his life, especially in the theologates in Zafra and the one recently founded in Salamanca. He was a Consultor and Provincial Vicar of Betica. He was the Superior of the communities of Seville, Loja and Cordoba. In addition to being a formator, he was a guide and teacher of souls, especially religious men and women. He wrote about ascetics and Claretian and Marian mysticism, from simple prayer booklets to prestigious writings on the mysticism of Saint John of the Cross and Saint **Teresa**. He had a certain poetic inspiration with deep biblical and mystical roots. As a professor, his classes were consistent because of his Roman training. He died while giving Spiritual Exercises for the sisters of *Santa Clara in Molina de Aragon.*

CONSTITUCIONES

THE BROTHER'S COLLABORATION IN EVANGELIZATION

80. Missionary brothers have an important role to play in the evangelization of the whole world as fellow workers in the truth. In this work, the lay apostolate and pastoral ministry mutually complement each other.

They should constantly renew within themselves their spirit as missionaries, bearing witness in secular arts and professions, so that Christ might have the first place in everything. Any act whereby they co-operate in our missionary community always has a fully apostolic value.



Sant Vicenç d'Espinelves (Osona)



FOR PERSONAL REFLECTION

The missionary spirit of the Brothers contains three features: the primacy of Christ, their witness in the exercise of arts and professions and collaboration in the community.

- *Which of them is the most attractive about this Claretian vocation, from your perspective?*
- *What would you say to a young man who is considering becoming a Missionary Brother? What would you show him as the most typical and admirable about this vocation?*
- *How can we overcome the temptation of clericalism and discrimination that in the past have caused so many wounds to the Missionary Brothers?*

"The Immaculate Conception is for Father Claret a personal and, at the same time, social privilege of Mary... For Claret, the Woman is Mary, and the prophecy of Genesis and the vision of the Apocalypse are like the horizon of her apostolic action."
(*Our Project of Missionary Life*)

SEPTEMBER

19



1847. Claret plans to publish three catechisms soon: a small, medium and a full-sized version.

1858. Spending the night in El Escorial together with Fr. **Jeronimo Pages,** Claret is informed about the situation and possibilities of the monastery.

1862. Having arrived in Seville the night before, Claret will remain for seven days, during which he will give a total of 43 sermons. In the evening he had to attend the royal family's feast, *but he did not eat anything other than a little salad*, and he was the object of admiration for many of the royal entourage.



IN PROPHETIC MISSION (1997-2003)

IN ZIMBABWE AND BELIZE

In January 2002, the first missionaries from the Province of Betica arrived in Zimbabwe. Their final destination was Gokwe. The Diocese of Gokwe, founded in 1991, with 26,000 square kilometers, had 500,000 inhabitants of whom 55,000 were Catholics. In 2007, another new foundation was created in the vicinity of Harare, the capital, taking on a new parish with the support of Claretians from the Province of Nigeria.

In September of 2002, the Missionaries of the Delegation of the United Kingdom-Ireland started their work in Dangriga and in the Stann Creek District (Belize). Belize is a small Caribbean nation, which gained independence from Great Britain in 1981. They settled in Dangriga, a city of 5,000 inhabitants, and the largest Garifuna settlement in Belize. They took on the parish that had a church dedicated to the Sacred Heart of Jesus. From there they also attended to the Stann Creek District, of 12,000 inhabitants and that had 17 chapels and some other communities.



HOSPITAL DE LA CARIDAD



On September 19, 1862, Fath**er Claret visited the Hospital de la Caridad in Seville accompanying Queen Isabella II.** That visit was immortalized by the brush of Mr. Jose Roldan. This famous painting, which one day adorned that same hospital, is currently kept in the Academy of San Fernando in Madrid with other masterpieces by the same painter. The characters that appear in the painting are: the Queen kissing, as was customary, the hand of an elderly man who was maimed, **Princess Isabella**, the Dukes of Montpensier with their daughter Maria Isabel, the Duques of Tetuan, the President of the Council of Ministers, Mr. Saturnino Calderon, Minister of State, the Marquis of la Vega de Armijo, Minister of Development, the Duke of Bailen, the Marquis of Alcañices, the Count of Balazote, the Duke of Ahumada, the Archbishop Claret and Fr. **Calixto Catrillo Ornedo**, Auxiliary Bishop of Seville, with the Brothers and Sisters of Charity.

MISSIONARY DEACONS

CONSTITUCIONES



Heart of Mary Parish (Girona)

81. Missionary deacons, who are ordained to the permanent diaconate as a specific vocation, are strengthened by the grace of the sacrament to serve the people of God and their own community through a ministry of the word, the liturgy and charity in imitation of Jesus Christ who came not to be served but to serve.

They should proclaim the Good News of Jesus to all people and so follow him that, filled with grace and power, they may bear effective witness to his glory.

Through the power of the Holy Spirit, who is love, they should strengthen the bonds of fraternal charity among the faithful and stir up in them a sense of justice.



FOR PERSONAL REFLECTION

In 1973 the Holy See granted the Congregation the establishment of the Permanent Diaconate.

- *Do you know any Claretian who is a Permanent Deacon? Do you know why he decided on this way of life?*
- *What can they contribute to the ministry of the Word, to the liturgical service and to the ministry of charity?*
- *Why do they have a place in the Congregation? Try to inquire about their specific contribution to our missionary family.*

"The celebration of the Eucharist, however,
cannot be the starting-point for communion;
it presupposes that communion already exists,
a communion which it seeks to consolidate and bring to perfection."
(John Paul II, *Ecclesia de Eucharistia*, 35)

SEPTEMBER

20



1833. Claret asks the Bishop of Vic to confer on him the four minor orders.

1845. In Baga (Barcelona) Claret preaches a mission for the people and Spiritual Exercises for the clergy; he thinks he will be there until the end of the month.

1850. Claret and Fr. **Jaime Soler** begin Spiritual Exercises together to prepare for episcopal ordination.

1860. From Menorca Claret sets sail for Barcelona; the trip lasts a day and a half.



IN PROPHETIC MISSION (1997-2003)

WORLD CONGRESS OF CLARETIAN EDUCATORS

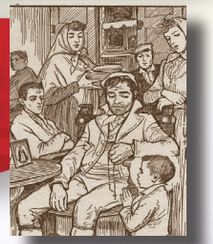
In July 2002, the first World Congress of Claretian Educators of the Claretian Family was celebrated in Santo Domingo (Dominican Republic). 166 participants attended. It was attended by Fr. Josep M. Abella, Prefect of Apostolate, Soledad Galeron RMI, Vicar General of the *Religious of Mary Immaculate* and Pilar Rovira MIC, Superior General of the *Missionary Sisters of the Claretian Institute*. The Congress set its objective as evaluating the educational activity of the Claretian Family, exchanging experiences, consolidating the processes of specifically Claretian formation and creating bonds of communion. This Congress, beyond its predefined objectives, in itself also had the value of an indicator of the interest and scope that Christian Education had acquired within the Claretian Family.

The coincidence of the celebration of this Congress with the date on which, 20 years after the founding of the Congregation, Father Claret wrote the famous letter to Fr. **Joseph Xifre** in which he opened up the Congregation to the apostolate of teaching did not go unnoticed.



MANUEL CLARET CLARA

Claret's Brother (1823-1836)



Sallent (Barcelona, Catalonia). He was the youngest of the siblings of Anthony Mary Claret. He died at 13 years old. He studied humanities in Vic, where Claret had enrolled in the *Confraternity of the Rosary*. This note appeared in his liturgical calendar on September 20, 1836: *On this day at one-fifteen in the afternoon my dear brother Manuel died at the age of thirteen and a few months*. Anthony was at that time Vicar of the parish in Sallent and attended to him at his death and his funeral. Without a doubt Claret influenced his entry into the seminary, which must have coincided with **Claret's Ordination** and First Mass. Studying humanities in Vic meant to enter the seminary, with a possible priestly vocation. Since the humanities studies lasted four years, it is possible that they would meet in the seminary one or two years. And therefore, they traveled together to their parent's house and saw each other frequently.

MISSIONARY PRIESTS

CONSTITUCIONES

82. Missionary priests, who share the role of the Apostles and live their lives in an evangelical and prophetic way in order to preach God's word to all people, are sent forth as steadfast co-workers of the bishops. Thus, their distinctive duty is to devote themselves in a missionary spirit to the good of all the Churches.

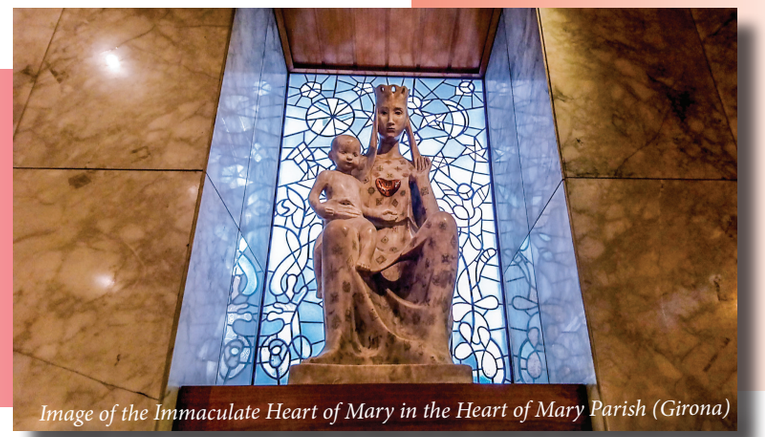


Image of the Immaculate Heart of Mary in the Heart of Mary Parish (Girona)



FOR PERSONAL REFLECTION

This paragraph highlights the prophetic and missionary key with which the ministry of the priest is contemplated.

- *It specifically defines in five traits what constitutes this ministry of the Claretian priest, which identifies him in a genuine way.*
- *How can we insert ourselves better in the overall pastoral care of dioceses? Does it imply any change in mentality?*

"Differences are not intended to separate, to alienate.
We are different precisely in order to realize our need of one another."
(*Desmond Tutu*)

21



1849. The nuncio asks Claret to accept the episcopate, even though he will not impose a formal precept.

1851. Claret's group suffered its first fatality due to the tropical climate: his layman scribe Telesforo Bernaldez.

1862. Claret celebrates Mass for the King and Queen in the church of San Telmo. He begins a triduum for the priests of Seville. When speaking of the priestly virtues, among them chastity, it is one of the times in which he establishes a probable philological relationship between chastity and a chestnut.



IN PROPHETIC MISSION (1997-2003)

THE APOSTOLATE OF THE CONGREGATION

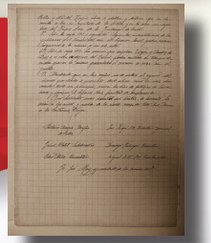
As of December 31, 2002, our Congregation had 3,063 members and with a median age of 49.7. During that year, the General Prefecture of Apostolate published a report on the pastoral activity of Claretians around the world. There were 272 parishes, served by 636 Claretians; 89 schools, boarding schools, colleges and universities, with 165 Claretians dedicated to this activity that served about 77,000 students; 35 missions with 166 Claretians; 31 specialized teams with 83 members; and 8 institutes of higher education.

Our missionary presence had grown remarkably in places where Christianity was a minority. Most of the Organisms had under their responsibility some mission of their own or collaborated with those of others. In some areas there were moments of violence that put our missionaries to the test. Although we were present in the world of communications, that presence was still not significant. The most important challenges arose from welfare states and new forms of religiosity and unbelief.



JOSE REIG

Mercedarian Priest (1815-1869)



Torms (Lleida, Spain). He became a Mercedarian in 1830. A victim of the exclaustration, in 1851 he entered the community of the *Missionaries of the Heart of Mary* in Vic, where he remained until the year 1860. He took part in the **First General Chapter** of the Congregation as Secretary. Once the Mercedarian Order was restored, he was called to Rome and appointed General Procurator and Secretary General. He worked hard giving missions and spiritual exercises. In 1868 he was appointed Vicar General and in 1869 as Consultor of *Propaganda Fide*. He acted for many years as Procurator of the Congregation of the *Sons of the Heart of Mary* before the Apostolic See. He wrote several works. He died in Rome on September 20th. During his stays in Rome, Claret would stay in their *convent of St. Adrian at the Roman Forum*. Thanks to Fr. Reig, the Congregation was well-known in Rome, because he sung its praises and lent it his distinguished service in those years when, for lack of individuals and means, the Congregation could not have a Procurator in Rome.

83. Since they themselves have been conformed through the Sacrament of Orders to Christ the Priest, in whose person they act, especially in the celebration of the Eucharist, they should share in his death and life in such a way that they awaken in others the remembrance of the Lord's presence in the human community.



A stained glass of Claret's Angel of the Apocalypse (Girona)

And since they are taken from among men and made their representatives before God, so as to be able to serve them more effectively, they should not be strangers to their lives and circumstances but should treat them as brothers and sisters, becoming all things to all people. They should show particular pastoral concern for the sick and for those who for any reason have become marginalized.



FOR PERSONAL REFLECTION

These two paragraphs are dedicated to priests: to be men of God for humankind; and be men among humankind.

- *The sacrament of Orders is only lived together with others. In your opinion, how should that coexistence be, which is repeated twice in this paragraph?*
- *If you are a priest, how do you show your concern for the sick and the marginalized? How do you attend to them and serve them?*
- *If you are a Missionary Brother, or a Student, what would you want for the Missionary Priest? How can you help them?*

"What has he found who has lost God?
And what has he lost who has found God?"
(*Ibn 'Ata' Allah al-Iskandari*)



1852. Claret thanks the Mayor of the Island of Cuba for his letter of comfort and closeness in response to the earthquakes, and took the opportunity to ask him to urge before the authorities the arrangement of liturgy and clergy.

1853. The missionary Fr. **Manuel Subirana** is sick and Claret treats him with maximum delicacy, and he wants his companions to do the same.

1860. From Barcelona, Claret goes to Gracia to visit his missionaries. He meets Fr. **Joseph Caixal** and Fr. **Paladio Currius** and he receives a letter informing him that in Rome they still have not approved the Constitutions of the nuns of Mother **Paris**.



IN PROPHETIC MISSION (1997-2003)

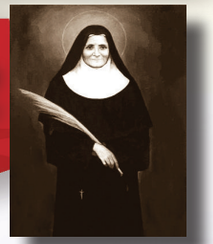
EAST EUROPEAN CLARETIANS

In February 2003, in Wroclaw (Poland) the heads of the General Government and the Provinces of Polska and Castilla met with the representatives of all the Claretian communities present in Eastern Europe: Belarus, Slovakia, Slovenia, Czech Republic, East Germany, Poland and Russia. After a reflection on the social and religious reality of Eastern Europe, the first lines of a future project were drawn for this European area in such need of the presence of evangelizers. One of the characteristics common to these countries was that, after a brief period of great religious awakening, which opened great expectations in the Church, there had been a breakdown, so that the religious dimension had been relegated to an almost marginal place in a large strata of population, to the point that unbelief or religious indifference occupied the first place in percentages with respect to religious beliefs. In some places there were problems of understanding between different Christian denominations. At the congregational level, there was an insistence on increasing collaboration.



BLESSED PATROCINIO GINER, RMI

Claretian Sister and Martyr (1874-1936)



Tortosa (Tarragona, Spain). On March 11, 2001, Mother Maria Patrocinio Giner Gomis, a *Religious of Mary Immaculate Claretian Missionary Sister,* was beatified, along with 232 other martyrs of the same Archdiocese of Valencia. Her given name was Maria Cinta Asuncion. She belonged to a large family of deep religious tradition. For many years she held the position of formator of the young generations of Claretian sisters and educator in Carcagente (Valencia, Spain). She died a martyr on Portitxol Street in Valldigna (Valencia) on November 13, 1936, during the religious persecution in Spain. These were some of her phrases prior to her martyrdom: *What dark clouds cover us, but as our trust is placed in Him who has told us "I will triumph over my enemies and I will reign in Spain" [...] in the midst of so much persecution, our faith becomes stronger, the heart is purged and the will is willing to suffer everything that the Lord allows to come to us, may everything be for our good.* Her liturgical memorial is celebrated on this day.

84. They should ask the Lord for, and strive to practice, the kind of pastoral charity that will make them ready to lay down their lives for their brothers and sisters. Therefore, they should daily pray to God the Father for the good of the Church and the salvation of the world especially when they celebrate the Lord's Supper and say the Liturgy of the Hours. They should always be ready to offer people the help of their priestly ministry.



Cerezo Barredo's painting at the St. Anthony Mary Claret Parish (Lleida)



FOR PERSONAL REFLECTION

In a time of personal prayer, complete with several sincere affirmations the beginning of these incomplete sentences:

- *Help me, Lord, to lay down my life for my brothers and sisters when ...*
- *Help me, Lord, to lay down my life for my brothers and sisters, although ...*
- *Help me, Lord, to lay down my life for my brothers and sisters every time ...*
- *At the time of my death, Lord, may I make my life a final and sincere gift for love of God and others because ...*

"The homily cannot be a form of entertainment
like those presented by the media,
yet it does need to give life and meaning to the celebration."
(Francis, *Evangelii gaudium*, 138)

SEPTEMBER

23



1834. Claret asks the Bishop of Vic to admit him to exams to be ordained a deacon.

1859. Claret perceives the meaning of the biblical texts about the eagle and the angel in Revelations, its voice and the seven thunders, the archdemons with which he must fight, etc.

1865. Claret confers orders of varying degrees in the church of La Merced in Vic to 50 young people, of whom, 17 are priests. Of the 6 who receive the tonsure and minor orders, probably four are from his missionaries.



IN PROPHETIC MISSION (1997-2003)

CHAIR OF SAINT ANTHONY MARY CLARET

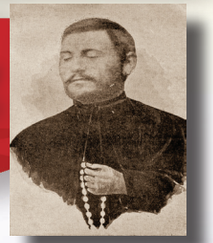
The Chair of popular religiosity *Saint Anthony Mary Claret* was inaugurated in March 2003 at the Pontifical University of Salamanca (Spain). Mons. Fernando Sebastian opened the inauguration, in the presence of the Bishop of the diocese and the academic and congregational authorities. The purpose of the Chair is to research, teach and disseminate that which is related to popular religiosity from a theological, anthropological and pastoral point of view.

On November 9, 2007 the President of the Conference of Claretian Provincials of Iberia, wrote to Dr. Gonzalo Tejerina, OSA, Dean of the Faculty of Theology of the Pontifical University of Salamanca and Director of the same Chair and informed him that the General Government had entrusted the sponsorship of this Chair to the Conference of Provincials and that the Conference had appointed Fr. Aquilino Bocos Merino as representative of the Provincials to collaborate in its administration, replacing Fr. Bonifacio Fernandez, who was in charge until 2007.



MIGUEL XANCO, CMF

Missionary Brother (1836-1887)



Corbera (Barcelona, Spain). In 1864 he entered the Claretian novitiate as a Brother. He consecrated himself to the Lord the following year at the end of the Mass celebrated by Father Claret. Fleeing from the revolution, he arrived in Perpignan (France) with Fr. **Clotet**. He was the right-hand man of the Superiors when it came to repairing the schools in Prades and Thuir, in France. He arrived in Chile with the famous expedition of 1872, living there until the end of his days. His lofty prayer, his charity and his spirit of sacrifice stood out in him. He was the personification of the ideal of a Brother. The Lord granted him extraordinary gifts and graces. He died of cholera in Curico in 1887. He was highly regarded by Fr. **Xifre**, who wept when he found out about his death, paid him great homage and said that in him he had high hopes for the good of the Institute. After nine years, when his remains were transferred, his body was found entirely incorrupt. His cause has been introduced.

CONSTITUCIONES

85. As true ministers of God whether in preaching or in any other pastoral activity, they should let themselves be led by the spirit of the Church deeply cherishing their mutual fraternity and gladly joining one another in their work.



Santa Maria de Montserrat Abbey view from the Creu de Sant Miquel (Monistrol de Montserrat)



FOR PERSONAL REFLECTION

- *Ponder whether this statement is realistic and current: "The community nature of the apostolate of religious recommends and favors teamwork. There would be nothing better for us, united as we are by the same vocation and spirit, than to assume and carry out this type of community undertaking." (Declaration on the Spiritual Heritage, 1967)*

"We have received a grace that brings us together
for the missionary proclamation of the Word
and calls us to live in the midst of those who are marginalised."
(*MFL* 16)

24



1859. Claret perceives, in a supernatural way, that the one who is speaking is not him, but rather the Spirit of his Father and of his Mother. He also understood that he and his missionaries could apply the words of Jesus to themselves: *The Spirit of the Lord is upon me; therefore he has anointed me. He has sent me to bring glad tidings to the poor, to heal the broken hearted.*

1859. Claret's successor is appointed in Rome and he is allowed to resign, but he must continue as Apostolic Administrator of Santiago, Cuba until the new Archbishop takes office.

1862. Claret preaches eight times in Seville.

RESTRUCTURING OF ORGANISMS IN SPAIN

After a long reflection of several Claretian Provinces of Spain, in April 2003 the Provinces of Aragon, Castilla and Leon decided to unite in a single regionalized Province, with the name of *Province of Santiago*. The process began with a transitory period of Confederation. This process responded to the needs of evangelization in Spain, of a better organization of the Claretians and to the scarcity of vocations. The Provinces of Portugal, Betica, Euskal Herria and Catalunya were left out of this process; they are called, however, to also restructure in the not too distant future.

The new Santiago Province brought together a large number of the Claretian Missionaries residing in Spain and supported the presence of the Congregation in Russia (St. Petersburg and Murmansk), Paris (France) and Zürich (Switzerland). The Province is comprised of about 280 missionaries spread over 37 Houses, with 16 urban parishes, 4 rural parishes, 7 churches, 7 schools, 2 colleges, the Institute of Religious Life and other apostolic works.

ANTONIO SAN CRISTOBAL, CMF

Missionary and Historian (1923-2008)



Segovia (Spain). He graduated in Philosophy from the University of Salamanca, and in 1953 from the National University of San Marcos, in Lima. In 1969 he organized and founded the Ricardo Palma University in Lima, of which he was later also Rector. In addition, he was a professor at the National Agrarian University La Molina and the National University of Engineering. He was ranking member of the National Academy of History (Peru) and a member of the Royal Academy of History (Spain). Among the awards he received are the commendation of the *Order of Isabella the Catholic* and the medals awarded by the National University of San Agustin (Arequipa), the National University Pedro Ruiz Gallo (Lambayeque) and the Sedes Sapientiae Catholic University of Lima. In 2003, Juan Luis Cardinal Cipriani Thorne named him Honorary Canon of the Cathedral of Lima, one of the last recognitions he received before passing away in his community in Lima.

THE CONGREGATION, CHARISMATIC AND INSTITUTIONAL COMMUNITY



Santa Maria de Seva (Osona)

PART THREE: GOVERNMENT OF THE CONGREGATION

Chapter XIII: Organizational Structure of the Congregation

86. Our Congregation was raised up by the Holy Spirit and established by the Church. All of our members share a common vocation and mission and, like the Church itself, constitute a community which is at once charismatic and institutional; and in addition is counted among the clerical Institutes. Hence, it also includes all those institutional elements that are necessary for the better fulfillment of its mission.

All of these elements, as well as all our norms of government, are at the service of fraternal charity. At the same time they aim at keeping the Congregation in a state of readiness to serve the universal Church.

FOR PERSONAL REFLECTION

We begin part three of the Constitutions entitled "Government of the Congregation".

- *Do you usually read this part of the Constitutions?*
- *What does the Congregation mean to you as a living and structured organism?*
- *Our rights are at the service of freedom, charity and missionary availability.*
- *Remember some norm of the government in which this purpose is clearly perceived.*
- *Do you usually invoke the Constitutions to remember a duty or defend a right?*

"The primary and constitutive task of the Claretian community
consists in becoming a servant of the world,
sharing the hopes and joys, sorrows and struggles of mankind,
especially the poor."
(*Our Project of Missionary Life*)

SEPTEMBER

25



1846. Claret is preaching in Altafulla (Tarragona). With Fr. **Joseph Caixal**, Claret is making various plans for publishing books, including a print run of 6,000 copies of the *Cami Dret*, in simple binding to make it inexpensive.

1862. After preaching a sermon for an hour and a half with much effort, because of the dimensions of the church of San Pablo (Seville), and another for three-quarters of an hour, Claret told his chaplain that he was well-rested, *as if nothing had been done*; the chaplain adds that *his food is very sparse and he barely sleeps at all.*

1865. Claret travels from Vic to Gracia (Barcelona) to direct Spiritual Exercises for his missionaries.



IN PROPHETIC MISSION (1997-2003)

PROJECTS IN CHINA

Little by little, qualitative steps were taken to open the way for a definitive presence in China. One of them was the construction of a chapel, at the end of 2000, in Huangshan, in the ancient Claretian mission of Tunxi, which was entrusted to a Chinese diocesan priest. Visits from Taiwan to the various Christian groups, to both the official church and the underground one, were fundamental. At all times they had economic aid from East Asia.

Another important step was the publication of the first Pastoral Bible in Chinese, the work of *Claretian Publications* from the Philippines, which would gradually expand from Mandarin to Cantonese. It was the beginning of a work that would later be perfected, especially following the Claretian presence in Macau and Hong Kong.



FRANCISCO BESALU

Collaborator of Claret (1826-1903)



San Vicente de Camos (Girona, Spain). He spent time with Claret from 1857 to 1868. He lived with Claret, he was Rector of the Madrid church of Montserrat since 1865, and honorary chaplain of His Majesty. He was also Secretary of the ***Academy of St. Michael***. Before that, he had been professor of Canon Law and Ecclesiastical History in the seminary of Girona and the Confessor of the Order of Calatrava. He wrote the work *Enseñanza Catequetica [Catechetical Teaching]*. In it he praises the activity of Father Claret in the area of catechesis. The saint, according to Besalu's own confession, dispensed *singular appreciation*. In a letter from 1869 from Rome, Claret said: *Greeting to ... and above all to Fr. Francisco Besalu, who has always and singularly in these months of expatriation behaved like a good friend.* He said that his three loves had been his Mother, Father Claret and the Queen **Isabella II**, to whom he owed everything after God. We do not know the days of birth and death of Fr. Besalu.

CONSTITUCIONES

ORGANISMS IN THE CONGREGATION AND THE NOTION OF ORGANISMS

87. Our Congregation is made up of Provinces, Delegations, Houses and Residences.

88. A Province is the union of a number of Local Communities—either Houses or Residences—which have a special interdependence and true sharing among themselves. A Province constitutes a part of the Congregation united under the same Superior, who governs it by ordinary power. There are two kinds of Provinces: Formed Provinces and Provinces in Formation.

An Independent Delegation is a similar union of local communities under the same Superior, who governs it by power delegated to him by the Superior General.

A Dependent Delegation is one that is governed by a Superior whose power is delegated to him by the Provincial Superior.



Virgen del Lledo de Valls (Tarragona)



FOR PERSONAL REFLECTION

- *Are you incardinated in a Province or an Independent Delegation?*
- *Do you know the history of your Organism?*
- *Are you available to be sent to another Organism if the mission requires it?*

"Wherever you go, go with all your heart."
(*Confucius*)

SEPTEMBER

26



1847. At the end of the Spiritual Exercises for the *Carmelite Sisters of Charity* in Vic, a group of novices professed at the hands of Claret, among them Sr. **Carmen Romaguera**, the future Provincial in Madrid and caretaker of Claret's belongings when he is banished.

1862. Sailing along the Guadalquivir River, Claret travels with the royal party from Seville to Cadiz.

1863. Claret has a meeting with the nuncio in which both show they are in agreement with the plans of the Catholic journalist **Carbonero y Sol**.

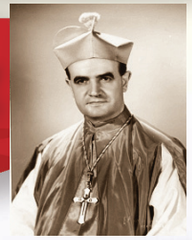
IN PROPHETIC MISSION (1997-2003)

IN SOUTHEAST ASIA

In 2003, the General Government, the Philippine Province, East Asia Independent Delegation and the *Institute for Consecrated Life in Asia*, agreed to establish a joint program of collaboration in the formation of vocations that arose in areas outside the jurisdiction of the Major Organisms already established in Asia. To this end, they drew up Statutes and Rules that would guide the desire to serve the Church and the Congregation in countries such as Vietnam, Myanmar, Laos, Cambodia, Bangladesh, etc. This was going to suppose a great effort by the Congregation in personnel and in preparation in languages and inculturation. It was the origin of a history that little by little would be developed mainly through the native vocations in the different countries where the Congregation would be located. The first to assume the presence of Claretians and native vocations was Vietnam, which would be followed by Malaysia, Myanmar, etc.

JOSE MARIA QUEREXETA, CMF

First Prelate of Isabela (1921-1997)



Urrestilla (Gipuzkoa, Spain). From the age of 8 he felt an irresistible vocation towards the missions. In 1948 he was assigned to China, from which he was expelled in 1951. The other young people had already left in 1949, but he stayed to accompany Fr. Undurraga. They were under house arrest, completely alone, mainly devoted to prayer. On the day of the canonization of Father Claret they were on their way to the police. After being expelled from China, he developed his missionary activity in the Philippines, taking charge of the foundation in Quezon City. In 1964 he was appointed Prelate of the newly created Territorial Prelature of Isabela, on the island of Basilan. He stood out for his dialogue with Muslims and in the defense of human rights. He died in Zaragoza, where he was buried. But they did not miss out on a burial in Isabela City in Basilan, where they had a funeral with an empty coffin.

CONSTITUCIONES

MINOR ORGANISMS: HOUSES AND RESIDENCES AND THE NOTION OF MISSION



Church of Sant Marti (Vialdrau, Girona)

89. A House is a community which is stable, constituted in a place, and in which missionary life is fulfilled.

It is made up of at least three professed members who share fraternal life under the authority of a Superior, who governs it by ordinary power.

A Residence is a community lacking the aforesaid stability, founded in accord with the norms of our law for the exercise of some sacred ministry or for some other purpose and is governed by a Delegate of the Major Superior.

90. Provinces, Delegations, Houses or Residences which enjoy a privileged form of government, are called missions.

FOR PERSONAL REFLECTION

Fraternal life takes place, above all, in the local community.

- *Is your current community a house or a residence?*
- *How many houses have you lived in since you made your first profession?*
- *What have you learned in each of them?*
- *How many members are currently in your community? Today you can pray, once again, for each of them. They are the brothers that the Lord has given you to continue growing as a missionary.*

"If you want peace, do not talk to your friends.
Talk to your enemies."
(*Desmond Tutu*)

SEPTEMBER

27



1846. Claret goes on to preach a mission in Torredembarra (Tarragona).

1848. Claret begins a mission in Teror (Canary Islands). In a letter to Casadevall, he laments that there are so many idle priests in Vic and so much need in the Canary Islands.

1852. Fr. **Manuel Vilaro** dies in Vic who had returned from Cuba with the hope of being healed by his native environment. Two days later his father writes to Claret but the letter arrived in mid-November.



IN PROPHETIC MISSION (1997-2003)

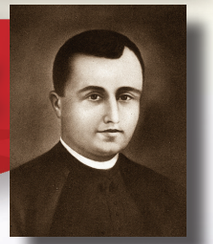
MINISTRY WITH IMMIGRANTS IN EUROPE

In 2003, the VIII Encounter of Ministry with Immigrants in Europe was convened in Fatima (Portugal), encounters that began in the distant year of 1977. Given the urgency of the situation of non-EU immigrants in the new Europe, the Congregation considered the need to include this concern in its project for Europe. It was insisted that immigrants find help and support in our communities and pastoral positions; that Catholic immigrants be accompanied in the growth of their faith and in their integration into the Christian community; that a fraternal dialogue be established with those of other religions. Through the reports it was found that the work with immigrants had ceased to be something specific to some Claretian Missions and was becoming more and more shared by many communities and apostolic positions, but traversing all of our apostolates. This questioned our missionary spirit, attentive to that which is most urgent, timely and effective.



MANUEL VILARO, CMF

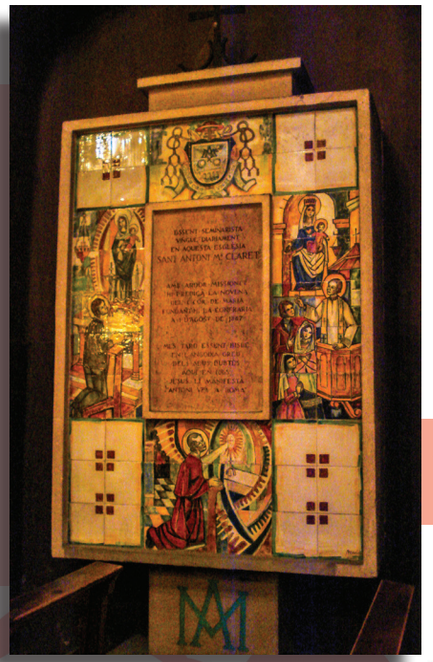
Co-founder (1816-1852)



Vic (Barcelona, Spain). In attention to his qualities, Claret chose him for the foundation of the Congregation. He was the one who responded to Father Claret when he said: *Today we begin a great work: "How important can it be, since we are so young and so few?"* to which Claret responded: *You will soon see. If we are few and young, then God's great power will shine forth even more resplendently.* Father Claret also relied on Fr. Vilaro when he left his position as Archbishop of Santiago, Cuba. Vilaro worked there tirelessly giving missions, spiritual exercises and conferences. A victim of his zeal, he had to return ill to Vic in 1852. There he stayed in his family home and not in the community. He was always assisted in his illness by Fr. **Clotet**. Due to the last events of his life, Fr. **Xifre** considered him excluded from the Congregation. The General Chapter of 1922 had to restore his memory and recognized him, again, the same level as the other co-founders.

COMPETENT AUTHORITY TO ERECT OR SUPPRESS ORGANISMS

CONSTITUCIONES



91. The erection and suppression of Houses is reserved to the Superior General with his Council after hearing from the members involved and observing the prescriptions of the universal law.

The erection, innovation and suppression of Provinces and Delegations is done by the Superior General with the deliberative vote of his Consultors after hearing from the members and Provincial Governments involved in the case.

A remembrance of Claret who frequented the convent of St. Dominic (Vic)



FOR PERSONAL REFLECTION

The Congregation is always in a process of reorganization which responds better to its objective.

- *Have you experienced any reorganization process in recent years? What has it meant for you?*
- *Are you informed about the new Provinces and Delegations that have been created in the Congregation? What does this phenomenon indicate?*

"Re-examine all you have been told...
Dismiss whatever insults your own soul."
(*Walt Whitman*)

SEPTEMBER

28



1837. Claret leaves Sallent for Vic, stopping in Olost for about a month, in order to renounce being appointed pastor of Copons. In Sallent this fact was interpreted as a move to join the Carlist faction and they make allegations against his father, to the point that the mayor had to defend him.

1847. Claret begins Spiritual Exercises in Vic for the *Dominican Sisters* of the Convent Santa Clara and the Sisters from Santo Domingo.

1860. Claret accompanies the King and Queen on a visit to Sabadell.



IN PROPHETIC MISSION (1997-2003)

IN VIETNAM

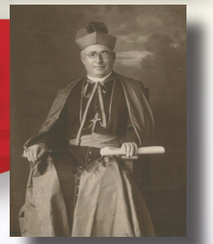
Since 1994, the General Government had already planned a foundation in Vietnam. It could not be done for various reasons. Subsequently, the *Institute for Consecrated Life in Asia* (ICLA) in the Philippines had carried out various pastoral services among Vietnamese religious men and women. As a result of these works, vocations arose for the Congregation. This led to the initiation of visits of first contact in the Philippines from Vietnam, which opened the way for the implantation of the Congregation in that nation. In June 2002, the first Claretian arrived to make the new foundation effective in Ho Chi Min while he dedicated himself to learning the language and the formation of the first Vietnamese candidates.

On March 18, 2011, a Formation House in Vietnam was blessed and inaugurated. The blessing was given by Archbishop Jean-Baptiste Cardinal Phan Minh Man. The new seminary or house of vocational welcome, belonging to the Philippine Province, had numerous students of English and Philosophy.



JUAN JOSE MAIZTEGUI, CMF

Archbishop of Panama (1878-1943)



Iurreta (Biscay, Spain). He entered the Congregation in Balmaseda in 1890. He professed perpetually in the hands of Fr. **Xifre** in 1895. As soon as he was ordained a priest in 1902, he was assigned to Portugal, from where he was banished by the revolution. In 1911 he arrived in the United States where he worked intensely: San Antonio, Yuma, Newman and Los Angeles. In 1926 he was appointed the first Apostolic Vicar of Darien, where he became a model for his missionaries. In 1933 he was named Archbishop of Panama, and died there in 1943. Both in California and in Panama, he achieved great popularity as a preacher and for leading large projects, carrying out the construction of the Cathedral of Colon. He left many pastoral writings, some of relevant merit. He always had a great facility for languages. He had a great love for the Congregation. He often repeated that he preferred to be a Son of the Heart of Mary than Archbishop of Panama.

INSTANCES OF GOVERNANCE

CONSTITUCIONES

92. Our Congregation is governed by a Superior General, by Provincial Superiors, by Delegates and by Local Superiors, each with his own council.

It is directed, however, by Chapters, either General or Provincial.



Altarpiece of the Church of St. Philip Neri (Vic)



FOR PERSONAL REFLECTION

In our Congregation there are personal and collegial authorities.

- *Call to mind some of the superiors who have most helped you in your missionary life. Pray for them.*
- *Have you participated in any General or Provincial Chapter? What has it meant for you?*

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

SEPTEMBER

29



1852. Claret leaves Santiago, Cuba for El Cobre, where he preaches for two days.

1860. Claret preaches to the people in the basilica of Santa Maria del Mar (Barcelona). It is probably on this occasion that he replied to those who admired his indefatigable preaching: *Fall in love with Jesus Christ and with souls, and you will understand everything and will do much more than I.*

1861. The King and Queen pass through El Escorial and Claret travels with them to Madrid. During this visit to El Escorial, the Queen says: *This monastery used to cost me so much ... today it is well-managed... and it does not cost me anything.*



IN PROPHETIC MISSION (1997-2003)

STATISTICS FROM 2003

In the year 2003, the Claretians, present in five continents and in 63 countries, were distributed in 34 Major Organisms (21 Provinces and 13 Independent Delegations), 3 Dependent Delegations and 10 General Houses. There were 6 Conferences: ACLA (Africa), ASCLA (Asia), IBERIA (Spain and Portugal), CEC (other countries in Europe), CICLA (Latin America and the Caribbean) and NACLA (United States and Canada).

The number of Houses in the Congregation rose to 462, with 2,918 Professed (15 Bishops, 2,027 Priests, 4 Permanent Deacons, 239 Brothers, 633 Students and 145 Novices). Together they reached the figure of 3,063 individuals.

Compared with the previous six-year term, there was a moderate optimism regarding the number of Priests and Students and a serious concern about the progressive and constant decrease in the number of Brothers. The number of Novices remained stable as a whole between the 18 Novitiates which the Congregation now had. The average age was 49.7 years. More than 40% were in Formation (26%) and in Parishes (20.6%).



ARCHANGELS MICHAEL, GABRIEL AND RAPHAEL

Co-patrons of the Congregation



Michael means Who is like God? or Nobody is like God. Claret used to invoke the Archangel Michael as he undertook his missionary tasks: He affirmed *I never forgot to invoke St. Michael* (Aut 268). Under his name and patronage he conceived of and founded the ***Academy of St. Michael***, an association of Catholic writers and publishers (cf. Aut 581); he chose him as protector of the *Libreria Religiosa* (cf. Aut 329); and he wanted him to be a co-patron of the Congregation of Missionaries, which has been faithful to the will of its Founder in its esteem for the Archangel Saint Michael, considering him as a co-patron and keeping his image on the official Coat of Arms of the Congregation. The first Coat of Arms was designed by the Founder himself in 1857, after his return from Cuba. In it the Archangel Saint Michael appeared wielding the sword, as an image of the missionary who fights in God's battles and who comes out in defense of the divine glory.

PARTICULAR FORM OF GOVERNMENT

CONSTITUCIONES

Chapter XIV: Principles of Government

93. Our legislation and form of government must be fully consonant with the apostolic character of our Congregation and based on criteria of the missionary life. The mutual relationship and dependence between community and government should be embodied in all our structures of government. Hence, government should be shared in by the associated will of all and be exercised with due order.



Vic (Barcelona)



FOR PERSONAL REFLECTION

We must all participate with due order in the government of our Congregation.

- *How are you doing that?*
- *Do you feel a shared responsibility for the progress of the Congregation?*
- *Do you collaborate willingly with those who hold government positions?*

"Called to place the mission in the heart and the heart in the mission,
we have been born to live, give witness to and proclaim the Gospel
and not just to undertake apostolic works,
even though these have an inestimable value."
(*MFL* 20)

SEPTEMBER

30



1829. Accompanied by his parents, Claret met with Bishop **Corcuera**, and was placed, as a *famulus* and non-residential seminarian, in the house of Fr. **Fortian Bres**.

1860. With the King and Queen, Claret travels from Barcelona to Montserrat, by train until Monistrol, then in carriages.

1868. Claret crosses the Spanish-French border by train with the royal family; in the afternoon they arrive in Pau, where they remain until November 6th. He will not return again to his homeland.



THAT THEY MAY HAVE LIFE (2003-2009)

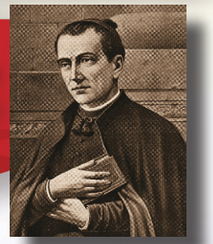
THE XXIII GENERAL CHAPTER (2003)

From August 19 to September 15, 2003, the XXIII General Chapter was held in Rome - the seventh since the Second Vatican Council - with 76 participants. It was presided over by Fr. Aquilino Bocos. After a careful revision of the six-year term in light of the latest exhortations of Pope John Paul II, particularly the Apostolic Letter *Novo Millennio ineunte* and the different Continental Synods, they continued with the election of a new Superior General, a position that fell to Fr. Josep M. Abella (2003-2015), a Spaniard, General Prefect of Apostolate since 1991, and previously a missionary in Japan. The new General Council was also elected. The Prefecture of Spirituality was created. The reflection and searching of the Chapter were guided by these words of Jesus: *That they may have life*, which remained as the title of the Chapter Declaration (TMHL). Pope John Paul II, at the Audience on September 8th, encouraged them to *proclaim the Gospel of life with honesty and love to the people of our time.*



FRANCIS CRUSATS, CMF

Protomartyr of the Congregation (1831-1868)



Seva (Barcelona, Spain). In the midst of the revolution of 1868, word came to the Claretian Missionaries of La Selva del Camp (Tarragona) that they would be slaughtered if they did not renounce their vocation. Fr. Crusats responded: *Lord, pierce my heart lest I abandon my vocation. Would that I could shed my blood for Christ!* The revolutionaries arrived to their home on September 29th. Nobody resisted. Crusats was shot twice. But he was still alive. Finally, with a dagger, they slit his throat and he died instantly. Fr. Crusats was the first martyr of the Congregation. When he found out, Father Claret wrote: *I very much wanted to be the first martyr of the Congregation, but I have not been worthy, another one has won the hand. I praise the martyr and saintly Crusats and I congratulate Mr. Reixach for his blessing of being wounded; and I also I give thousand congratulations to all those in the Congregation, for the joy they have of being persecuted.*

THE MISSION OF THE SUPERIOR

CONSTITUCIONES

94. Our superiors are designated by appointment or by election, according to the norms of our own law. On taking office they make a profession of faith in accord with a formula approved by the Apostolic See in the presence of the community or, if they were elected in chapter, before the chapter itself.



Hospital of the Holy Cross (Vic)

Superiors should reflect both the charity with which God loves the brothers and respect for the human person and so lead the other members to cooperate with active and responsible obedience, even in virtue of the vow, in carrying out their assigned duties and in undertaking new ones.



FOR PERSONAL REFLECTION

Superiors are an expression of God's love for their brothers.

- *Are you currently exercising the position of superior? Did you exercise it in the past? What did you learn from the experience?*
- *Why should superiors make a profession of faith on taking office?*
- *Do you think that the ministry of superior is being exercised in accordance with what is stated in the Constitutions?*

"The greatest risk for a preacher is that
he becomes so accustomed to his own language
that he thinks that everyone else naturally understands and uses it."
(Francis, *Evangelii gaudium*, 158)