

*Lord God,
you chose Mary ever Virgin
to be the Mother of your Son
and our Mother:
Grant that we
who faithfully entrust ourselves
to her maternal heart,
may be more fully conformed to Christ
so that, impelled by his charity,
we may devote ourselves more generously
to proclaiming the Gospel to all people.
Through Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen.*



December



1849. While healing from a tumor in his knee in Barcelona, Claret suffered a severe reaction to his medication. He undergoes a knee operation during these first days of December and his recovery is slow.

1852. Claret spends the entire month in Santiago, Cuba, where he makes daily visits to the hospitals that are crowded with cholera patients.

1865. Claret arrives in Gracia (Barcelona) from Rome and, as ordered, awaits instructions from Rome or the Nunciature about continuing on as the Royal Confessor.



TWO NEW CONGREGATIONAL ORGANISMS

MEN ON FIRE (2009-2015)

As another fruit of the reorganization process of the Claretians of America, a new integrated Organism called the USA-Canada Province was created in June of 2014, made up of the USA Province and the Delegation of Canada. It had 115 professed members at the time of its erection. The Curia remained in Chicago. They took advantage of the Assembly to present the different ministries that both Organisms conducted, especially Claretian Publications, formation and

economic status. That same month and year the Saint Charles Lwanga Independent Delegation was erected, integrating the missions of East Africa: Kenya (dependent on East Nigeria), Tanzania (dependent on Chennai) and Uganda (dependent on Bangalore). The Curia of the new Organism was established in Nairobi. During the Assembly, the new life and mission plan was discussed. Cardinal John Njue, Archbishop of Nairobi, presided at the inaugural Eucharistic celebration.



JACOBA BALZOLA Claret's Benefactor



Miajadas (Extremadura, Spain). She was the daughter of the Marquis of Balzola. She had the pleasure of Claret staying in her home. She said: *I have hosted several clergyman in my home, but none have edified me as much as his excellency Father Claret.* In addition to his stays in San Sebastian, Claret stayed in touch by letter. In 1868 he wrote to her from France: *It doesn't matter to me in the least that they persecute me or slander me; I fear God alone, who will judge me. Jesus tells us to rejoice when they say all kinds of evil things against us, lying. Even those who are bad, without trying, are our panegyrics. Jesus' enemies who stood guard at his tomb were the first witnesses of his resurrection.* And he wrote to her daughter, Mary: *Tears come to my eyes when I contemplate Jesus, the Blessed Virgin Mary and St. Joseph in the midst of so much work and misery, and the three of us, Don Lorenzo Puig, Br. Jose Saladich and the Archbishop, with so many comforts and gifts.* The dates of her birth and death are unknown.

DEVELOPMENT OF THE CHARISM



"As an experience of the Spirit, his charism has been preserved, observed, developed and enriched by several generations of missionaries, and has thus given meaning to our plan of life. In many and varied ways, this foundational grace has been recognized as the root of unity and solidity in our community. Missionary likeness to Claret has been and must continue to be a touchstone, a permanent incentive and decisive criterion in confronting and revising the conduct (life + attitudes) and options of our mission." (MCT 71)



Chapel in the birthplace of St Anthony Mary Claret (Sallent)



FOR PERSONAL REFLECTION

- Do you think that the Congregation has been able to embrace and develop Claret's charism?
- Do you notice any elements of the charism that need to be updated considering the Church's current guidelines?

"Big results require big ambitions."
(Heraclitus)



1846. Claret preaches a mission with Fr. **Manuel Vilaro** in Barbera (Tarragona), where he asks Fr. **Joseph Caixal** to send him holy cards and booklets for the different populations where he still intends to preach.

1857. Claret sends Fr. **Dionisio Gonzalez**, his Ecclesiastical Administrator, the royal decree that a *Te Deum* be sung in the Cathedral of Santiago, Cuba and in the other Cuban churches as well, in honor of the prince's birth on November 28th, and that each priest should celebrate three Masses of thanksgiving.



FR. JOSEPH XIFRE'S NEW BIOGRAPHY

MEN ON FIRE (2009-2015)

In 2014, the long-awaited biography of Fr. **Joseph Xifre** Mussach was published in three thick volumes. This great work was written by Fr. Jaume Sidera, from Catalunya Province. The biography, highly valued by experts, also became a point of reference about the origin and development of the Congregation throughout the 19th century. It can be said that Fr. Xifre's generalship coincided with the first 50 years of the young Congregation's life. Translation

into other languages is quite complicated since it is so voluminous. In any case, in 2015, Fr. Jaume Sidera published in the collection *Claretians of Yesterday and Today* included a brief biography of Fr. Xifre entitled *Missionary by Profession. A Brief Portrait of Fr. Joseph Xifre*, CMF (48 pages). A 230-page third biography appeared in 2018 which summarized the three volumes. Its objective was to get a larger audience to take interest in the life of this great Co-founder.



IGNACIO CARBO, CMF The First Deceased CMF (1812-1852)

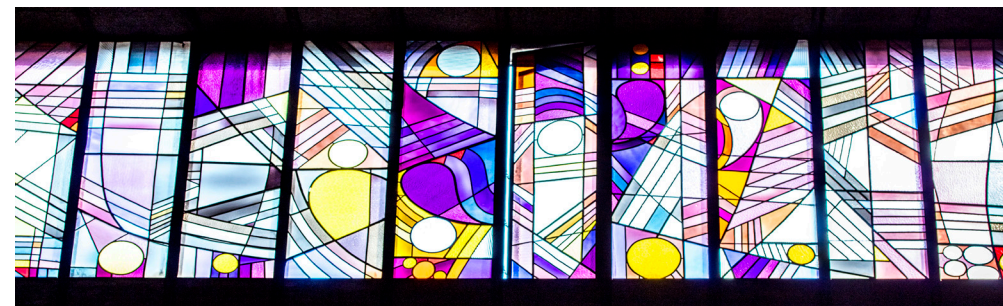


La Riba (Tarragona, Spain). He was one of the nine priests during the first year of the Congregation (1850). He had been a Cistercian monk in the monastery in Poblet before his exlastration. His convent was ruined by the revolution, so he requested asylum among the Claretian Missionaries in order to continue his religious observance and to dedicate himself to the ministry of preaching. He was affable and always smiling, a man of intense interior life and very apostolic. He was eloquent and good with words. He worked in the missions with Fr. **Clotet** and Fr. Antonio Picanyol in Palau d'Anglesola in 1852. After giving the mission, the excessive work caused a mild illness that led to pneumonia. His illness lasted nine days and he died a holy death from it on December 3rd. Shortly before he died, when he saw Fr. Clotet enter his room, he said to him: *Take your hat off, Father, do you not see the Mother of God?* His last words were: *Everything is vanity of vanities except loving God and serving Him alone.* He was the first deceased of the Congregation.

OUR HERITAGE OF MARTYRDOM



"This rapid review of some of the most characteristic facts of its life gives us some notion of the missionary history of the Congregation which, since its Founder's days, has been watered by the blood of martyrs. Like its Founder, it has suffered persecution, exile and death. There were significant examples of this a few years after the foundation. The same was true, somewhat later, in Mexico, Spain, China, Cuba and, most recently, in Equatorial Guinea. Add to these more notable examples of the stigmata Christi, the silent witness of many lives cut off prematurely by the climate and unhealthy or harsh conditions in mission territories." (MCT 77)



Stained glass in the chapel of the birthplace of St. Anthony Mary Claret (Sallent)



FOR PERSONAL REFLECTION

- How have you lived out the dimension of martyrdom of the Claretian charism throughout your missionary life?
- Is there a story of our martyrs that has helped you the most in your spiritual journey? Which one? Why?

"A man who is a master of patience is master of everything else."
(George Savile)



1848. Claret concludes the mission in San Lorenzo (Canary Islands) but does not travel back to Las Palmas until the 11th since he has fallen ill, so he has a type of post-mission in that town. Since he is bedridden, he hears men's confessions in his room.

1868. Today Claret concludes the Spiritual Exercises he has done with Fr. Lorenzo Puig and Br. **Jose Saladich** in Paris.



CLARETIANS IN THE SYNOD ON THE FAMILY

MEN ON FIRE (2009-2015)

In October of 2014, the Extraordinary Synod of Bishops was celebrated on the topic of the family, entitled *The Pastoral Challenges of the Family in the Context of Evangelization*. Italian was used as the official language in this Synod instead of Latin. It was characterized by the preparation of a later, longer and more extensive one: the XIV Ordinary General Assembly

of the Synod of Bishops (2015), which dealt with a similar theme (*Jesus Christ Reveals the Mystery and Vocation of the Family*). At the end of the aforementioned Synod, the Pope presented a conclusive post-synodal apostolic exhortation on the subject: *Amoris laetitia*. From the contents, the two synods made up a single unit in two stages, with a period of almost a year in between.



PEDRO ALIBES, CMF
Missionary in Algiers (1820-1884)



Vidra (Girona, Spain). Fr. **Dominic Fabregas** won him over to the Congregation when he was Vicar of Igualada. *When he entered the Congregation in 1851, he was a young priest ... pleasant-looking, jovial, of steady wit and a brilliant imagination. He stood out among everyone because of his singular devotion to the Blessed Virgin.* He was the first Superior of the House-Mission in Gracia (Barcelona), a position he held from 1864 to 1868. That year he left the house of Prades (France) for the new Claretian foundation in Algiers, holding the same office of Superior. In Algiers the Lord subjected him to many trials and disappointments, which refined his virtue and brought him closer to God because of the resignation with which he bore them, always hoping to die embracing the cross. He was also Superior of the Houses in La Selva del Camp and Solsona from 1879 until the day of his death. Father Claret wrote him a letter on March 13, 1864.

CLARETIAN CHARISMATIC TRAITS



“Like his Founder, in the unfolding of his mission, each Claretian:

- proclaims the Father that he may be known and loved (the basic meaning of what Claret calls ‘the glory of God’);
- feels that he is anointed and sent to the poor (love urges him to commit himself to mankind);
- feels that he is son and minister of Mary, formed in the forge of her love;
- by his own poverty proclaims to mankind the goods of the Kingdom;
- by his own chastity shows his missionary availability and ardent love;
- by his own obedience to the Church, the Pope and the Bishops, proclaims the mystery of the obedient Christ, the itinerant Christ, intent on the Father’s glory;
- by his own community life, recalls the apostolic community, a community which was both evangelical and evangelizing;
- faithfully and lovingly lives the Word which he hears and assimilates, to more fittingly fulfill his prophetic function and become an apostle, witness and martyr;
- lives a life attentive to the needs of the world and the Church, tries a great variety of means to obtain the salvation of mankind, and remains ever alert to what is most urgent, timely and effective.” (MCT 85)



FOR PERSONAL REFLECTION

- How would you present the essential traits of the Claretian identity in a few words?
- Is there a symbol that is meaningful to you and that helps you keep the memory of your identity as a Claretian missionary alive? Which one?

“Hope is a good breakfast, but it is a bad supper.”
(Francis Bacon)



1852. Claret tells the Captain General of Cuba that he has received the royal order and royal decrees about fixing the situation of the clergy, which will come into effect next January 1st. Claret thanks him and promises due diligence in putting them into practice.

1857. Claret congratulates the Queen for having given birth on the 28th. He thanks her for communicating the news to him personally and wishes every blessing for the newborn prince.

1867. Claret asks the Lord: *Lord, what do you want me to do?* And a very clear inner voice responds: *Write!*



MEN ON FIRE (2009-2015)

2014 STATISTICS

In 2015, the Congregation's new statistics were published. They revealed that there were 3,002 Claretian Missionaries all together: 20 Bishops, 2,176 Priests, 1 Permanent Deacon, 157 Brothers, 533 Students and 115 Novices.

The Congregation was comprised of 34 Major Organisms and 458 Houses at that time. Following the trend of recent decades, the Congregation's numbers fell in Europe and America

and grew in Asia and Africa.

This information would be shared while studying the situation of the Congregation in the General Chapter celebrated that year. To do this, material and reports, workshop conclusions, reactions to the Circular Letter of the announcement, etc. were collected by the various Prefectures. All this information would be studied by the Pre-capitular Commission appointed for that purpose.



MANUEL LUNA, CMF
Secretary General (1873-1916)



Caspe (Zaragoza, Spain). He was born in a barracks of the Civil Guard since he was the son of one of the guards. He was an elder brother of another Claretian, Fr. Diego Luna, and entered the Congregation in 1885. He was ordained a priest in 1897. He was assigned to Madrid where he worked in various associations: the Congregation of Belen y San Juan de Dios, the Cathedral's Archconfraternity of the Immaculate Heart of Mary, etc. In 1912 he was appointed Mission Procure in Fernando Poo. He was able to obtain exemptions from military service for our missionaries before the other Congregations. In 1915 he was appointed Secretary General of the Congregation. He was a regular contributor to the magazine *Iris de Paz*. He contracted the illness that led to his death while accompanying the General Superior on a visit to Fernando Poo. After visiting Annobon, they stopped in São Tome and there he began to feel the effects of the disease. They finally arrived in Santa Isabel, but the remedies did not help at all and he died there.

WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO BE A CLARETIAN?



Image of St. Anthony Mary Claret in the chapel of his birthplace (Sallent)

"This process can only find authenticating guarantees when it embraces human, ecclesial and congregational forms of mediation and solidarity.

For us, being Claretians is the concrete way of being men, Christians, religious, priests and apostles. It means reliving in community the spiritual journey of Claret and his basic preoccupation with serving and building up the Church through the ministry of the Word, proclaiming the Kingdom of God. All our life, consecration and mission is shaped by this charism, which is offered and shared in community. In virtue of this grace we can and should renew our works and structures.

And only if these have been impregnated with the spirit of Claret- our gift and our inheritance- will we be able to call them Claretian." (MCT 132)



FOR PERSONAL REFLECTION

- What does the phrase "for us, being Claretians is the concrete way of being men, Christians, religious, priests and apostles" mean to you? Do you identify with it?
- Are you aware that, living the Claretian charism authentically, you enrich the Church and all of humanity?

"Anyone who does not believe in miracles is not a realist."
(David Ben-Gurion)



1856. Claret blesses the new parish church of San Nicolas in Moron (Cuba).

1857. Claret writes to Fr. **John N. Lobo** giving him some advice and telling him without hesitation how much he cares about him, and that he hopes it is mutual.



MISSION DAY IN MOROCCO

MEN ON FIRE (2009-2015)

In December of 2014 the PROCLADE of Santiago, Betica and Euskal Herria, *Enllac Solidari* of Catalonia, KORIMA of the Claretian Missionaries and AMIC of the Missionary Sisters of the Claretian Institute, all of them NGOs linked to the Claretian Family in Spain, celebrated their Annual Missionary Day (JOMI 2014) in a daycare center run by Betica Province in the city of Tangier (Morocco). The topics of formation focused on the dialogue between Christianity and Islam and on the knowledge of the

support given to the sub-Saharan emigrants who seek to move on to Europe from there.

Surely the memory of the first congregational mission, precisely in Algiers, in Northern Africa, and in the Muslim area, floated around in everyone's minds. It is a presence impelled directly by the Father Founder and which was a breath of fresh air for a congregation seeking refuge in France at that time. An immigrant congregation in a Muslim country. This is how our missionary history began.

JOHN NEPOMUCENO LOBO

Collaborator of Claret (1816-1882)



Madrid (Spain). He studied with the Piarists in San Antonio. He was close friends with **Santiago de Masarnau** and Pedro de Madrazo. Father Claret says of him: *I first met this priest as I was passing through the court on my way to the Canary Islands and was pleasantly impressed by his wisdom and virtue. When I became Archbishop, I offered him the post of Vicar General and, after commending the matter to God in prayer, he accepted. I also made him treasurer and, later, dean, so that he could watch over the cathedral chapter for me, which he did very well. In addition to his satisfactory fulfillment of the duties of Vicar General, he also acted as Administrator in my absence. He is a very virtuous, wise, and zealous priest and was a great help to me. Later he renounced all his possessions and entered the Society of Jesus (Aut 591). He became Provincial of Castilla after having to emigrate to France because of the 1868 revolution. In 1871 he professed the fourth vow. He died in Madrid.*

MARY, STAR OF EVANGELIZATION

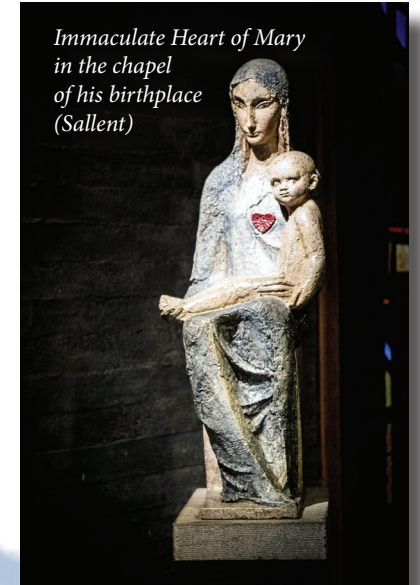


“Under the maternal action of Mary, we learn to accept the Word, to give it a body of commitment to life and to communicate it with the same readiness and generosity that she did. Under her protection we grow in brotherhood and acquire the strength of mind we need in difficult moments.

Looking to Mary, we realize that the change for which mankind yearns has already taken place in her, in a privileged manner, through the power of the Holy Spirit, who sanctified her and made her the Mother of God-with-us. Her womanly and motherly consciousness was fully evangelized.

The presence of Mary in the Claretian family should bring light and fruitfulness to our urgent and effective endeavors as missionaries and servants of the Word. She is the star of evangelization.” (MCT 151)

*Immaculate Heart of Mary
in the chapel
of his birthplace
(Sallent)*



FOR PERSONAL REFLECTION

- What does it mean to you that Mary is “the Star of Evangelization”?
- Do you remember any experience that confirms this reality?
- Do you usually invoke Mary at the beginning of your apostolic activities?

“There is no sadder sight than a young pessimist, except an old optimist.”
(Mark Twain)



1847. Claret is in Manresa, where he visits with and attends to Br. Francisco Bosch, SJ, who had arrived from Rome very ill three months prior and for whom Claret professes great affection.

1859. Claret informs Fr. **Anthony M. de Galdacano** of the steps he is taking to restore the Capuchin order.

1861. Claret is in the midst of cumbersome processes to prolong Fr. **Dionisio Gonzalez's** absence from his canonry in Cuba.

AWARDS

MEN ON FIRE (2009-2015)

In 2015, the *Pere Casaldaliga Prize for Solidarity* was awarded to the Casal Claret Association in Vic. Shortly thereafter, the Spanish Catholic Mission in Paris (France) received the *Emigration Medal of Honor* from the Spanish Minister of Employment and Security Social. In June of the same year, the Claret School of Valls (Tarragona, Spain) was awarded the 2015 *Award for Civic Initiative*. In that same month, Fr. Maximino Cerezo Barredo received the annual Award of recognition from

the Spanish magazine *Alandar* for his work building a better and more just world with his religious murals, both in Spain and Latin America, Italy, etc. In August, the Uniclaretiana in Colombia received the recognition of best research in the category Focusing on Rights from OCHA and IEH. In October in Rome, Fr. Pablo Largo (Province of Santiago) received the *Rene Laurentin - pro Ancilla Domini Prize* at the Marianum Theological Department.



CRISTOBAL SOTERAS, CMF

Missionary in Chile (1836 - 1908)



Piera (Barcelona, Spain). He entered the seminary in Barcelona. Ordained a priest, he exercised his parish ministry in different towns, until, desiring greater perfection, he went to France to join the Claretian novitiate in Thuir. He received the cassock from the hands of Fr. **Xifre**, remaining under the spiritual guidance of Fr. **Clement Serrat**. He was a fellow novice of Fr. **Mariano Avellana**. They made their religious profession together and were both assigned to Chile, where they arrived in September of 1873 together with 5 other missionaries. It was the third expedition. He exercised his ministry in the Dioceses of Santiago, Concepcion and La Serena and the Vicariate of Antofagasta in 1902. He constantly visited schools and prisons. The most important work of his life was organizing catechetical centers throughout the whole city of La Serena and employing catechists that the people called *señoritas instructoras* [young women teachers]. They settled anywhere: schools, private homes, ranches. All this intense work weakened him to the point of being transferred to Ovalle, where he died on December 8th.

TEMPTATIONS AND OPPORTUNITIES



Windows of the house where Claret was born (Sallent)

spirit needed in order to match the measure of our mission. We know that we cannot back the options and preferred recipients of our mission, unless each one of us internalizes, in terms of a personal commitment, the unique experience of the grace of our vocation, accepted and nourished in a serious spiritual life and in a community life so as to be always available to respond to what is most urgent, timely and effective. The process of renewal pre-supposes, as its proper source, the newness of the Spirit of Christ.” (CPR 47)

“In reference to ourselves, as persons called to the missionary life, we are well aware of where we must direct our efforts today in order to be faithful to our mission; our objective is clear-cut. In the Congregation there is an abundant supply of good documents, good doctrine, and the main lines of a renewed community organization. However we observe in many persons a sort of spiritual flabbiness, and a lack of the gospel mystique and utopian



FOR PERSONAL REFLECTION

- Why is there often a great rift between us when it comes to the ideals marked by our documents and our personal and community practices?
- Do you recognize symptoms of spiritual apathy, lack of mysticism and evangelical utopia within yourself?
- Is the Claretian Year helping you to rekindle the fire of your missionary vocation?

“The risk of a wrong decision is preferable to the terror of indecision.”
(Maimonides)



1848. Claret writes to Bishop **Casadevall** from the Canary Islands, giving him an account of his activity and he says that Fr. **Joseph Caixal** is pressuring him to return to the peninsula; he proposes to Casadevall that he do so in one of *the embarkations during May*.

1853. Claret gives indications to the Cuban government about the most appropriate places to situate the two Piarists communities who are expected to go, by royal decree, as well as two communities of Jesuits.

1857. Claret attends the baptism of Prince **Alfonso**, performed by the Archbishop of Toledo.



LA PLACITA IS HANDED OVER

MEN ON FIRE (2009-2015)

After 105 years of taking responsibility for the *Mission of Our Lady Queen of Angels* in Los Angeles (USA), commonly called *La Placita [the Old Plaza Church]*, it was handed over to the diocese in June of 2015 during a Eucharistic celebration presided by one of the Auxiliary Bishops. It ended a beautiful part of Claretian missionary history in which thousands of Latin American immigrants had been welcomed, especially those from Mexico.

Since 1910 many Claretians have worked at this Mission, located in the center of Los Angeles and a point of reference for many people who had to emigrate to the United States of America in search of better living conditions for their families. The social commitment that the Mission has developed throughout those years has been very remarkable, as well as caring for the faith of those who drew near, sensing it as a safe place in times of difficulty.



PABLO HALL, CMF
Missionary Witness (1911-1970)



Guatrache (Argentina). He was one of the two Argentines, along with **Attilio Parussini**, who escaped death during the fateful days of religious persecution in Spain in 1936 due to his status as a foreigner. He was deported to Italy, where he joined the formation house in Albano Laziale to finish studying theology. It was there that he wrote his testimony of those tragic days, which according to him, filled them with optimism and songs like *Jesus ya sabes [Jesus You Already Know]* or *¡Oh Maria Lucero bendito! [Oh Blessed Mary, Morning Star!]* In his account he describes life in the auditorium as a catacomb story and one of intense fervor. Everything was spoken softly so that the jailers would not hear them. Back in Argentina, he was ordained a priest in Rosario. He exercised his ministry mainly in parishes (Chascomus, Cordoba, Parana, Tucuman, Mendoza). Later he was sent to the mission in Formosa and in 1967 to Catamarca, where he became seriously ill and died.

THE WORTH OF THE CLARETIAN PERSON



Birthplace Chapel (Sallent)

“The Congregation’s richest resource is its members. Each of them is precious for the gift of his unique selfhood. Through faith, we discover in the person of each Claretian the image of God, an unsuspected newness of the Spirit and a missionary vocation that is a grace for the world.

This person finds growth and fulfillment by opening himself to communion and by entering into his moment in history. For this very reason, it is only in communion and in community mission that we achieve personal development as Claretians.

From this viewpoint, we want to enable each and every Claretian to be fully involved, with his whole worth and responsibility, in the mission of our community, and thus achieve personal growth. To this end, we commit ourselves during the next six years to promote personal spirituality, the renewal of our community from the viewpoint of the person, and the formation of each Claretian as an ongoing process.” (CPR 49-50)



FOR PERSONAL REFLECTION

- What does it mean to you that “The Congregation’s richest resource is its members”?
- Do you try to treat your brothers with respect? Do you put yourself at their service before they ask you?
- Do you believe that human rights are respected and promoted within the Congregation?

“Education is the movement from darkness to light.”
(Allan Bloom)



1847. Br. Francisco Bosch, SJ, dies at his sister's home in Manresa. Claret had the joy of attending to him during his final agony and death. On the 10th he informs Fr. **Jan Roothaan**, the Superior General of the Society of Jesus.

1859. The church attached to the hospital in Montserrat (Madrid) is opened for worship, recently restored under the direction of Fr. **Paladio Currius**. Claret celebrates in accord with those rites to be performed by bishops. Within a short time, it will become the busiest and most active church in Madrid.

1869. Claret attends the opening of the *First Vatican Council*.



THE XXV GENERAL CHAPTER (2015)

MISSIONARIUM SUMUS (2015-2021)

From August 24th to September 17th of 2015, the XXV General Chapter was celebrated in Rome with *Witnesses and Messengers of the Joy of the Gospel* as its motto. Fr. Mathew Vattamattam, originally from Bangalore Province (India) was elected Superior General. He had been General Consultor and General Prefect of Formation for twelve years. He was the first Superior General of Asian origin. Also for the first time in our history, a Brother was elected General

Consultor: Br. Carlos Horacio Verga Vicente, Argentinian, from San Jose del Sur Province. During the Chapter a new congregational phase was designed in which the Congregation was invited to live three processes of transformation. During his audience, Pope Francis invited the Claretians *to adore, to walk and to accompany*. The Chapter's statement is divided into three parts: I) Challenges from God in our Times; II) Charismatic Traits in Mission; III) Processes of Transformation.



THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION



The first traces of this celebration date back to the 7th century in the East. In the West, on the other hand, the feast began to officially take place after 1476. Today it is necessary to remember that the adjective *immaculate* forms part of the official name of the Claretian Missionaries and is precisely that which is applied to the Heart of Mary: *We call ourselves Sons of the Immaculate Heart of the Blessed Virgin Mary or Claretian Missionaries*. For Saint Anthony Mary Claret the Immaculate Conception is two-dimensional: personal and social. He understands it, certainly, as a fullness of grace and preservation from all sin, but senses in this act of grace a special apostolic dimension: he contemplates God's plan to overcome the serpent and his offspring through the Woman and her offspring. For Claret, the Woman is Mary and her offspring are all of her children, especially the missionaries. On this day, the **Religious of Mary Immaculate** (Claretian Missionary Sisters) celebrate their main feast day.

A COMMUNITY THAT DWELLS IN THE WORD



"We are a community called together in the Spirit for the missionary proclamation of the Word. In our charism, the Word of God is as essential to community, as community is to the Word (CC 13). Without the primacy of the Word, the Claretian community would lose its reason for being. When marred by individualistic attitudes, our proclamation loses the community imprint with which Claret stamped us.

If the Word dwells in our community, as it did in Mary's Heart, our community will not lead a life that is divided or set in its ways (Lk 1:38-39); it will never be insensitive to God's crying out to us in others (Jn 2:3); nor will it serve any kinds of idols (Lk 1:49,52). It will be good soil that bears abundant fruit (Lk 8:15,21). Proclaimed by a community of brothers living united with Jesus and in Jesus (Mk 3: 14; Jn 17:23), the Word of the Kingdom will be both believable and winsome." (SW 7)



Stained glass of the main door of Claret's birthplace (Sallent)



FOR PERSONAL REFLECTION

- What does the essential dimension of community of the Claretian charism mean to you?
- Do you believe that your community is, in fact, a community that is called together by the Spirit and in which the Word of God dwells?
- Do you notice any signs of individualism that blur the community imprint Claret marked us with?

"Knowing that you do not know is the best humility.
Not knowing that you do not know is an illness."
(Lao-Tze)



1850. Claret travels to Arenys de Mar (Barcelona) to preach.

1852. Claret sends a dossier request to the Captain General in Cuba in order to establish the convent Enseñanza in Santiago, Cuba.

1860. Claret appoints Fr. **Dionisio Gonzalez** Vice-President of El Escorial to replace Fr. **Jerónimo Pages** who resigned.



THE POPE'S VISIT TO HOLGUIN (CUBA)

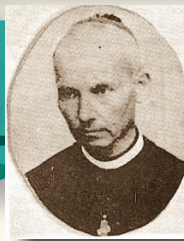
MISSIONARIII SUMUS (2015-2021)

During his trip to Cuba in September of 2015, Pope Francis visited Holguin on the 21st, where the Father Founder was seriously wounded on February 1, 1856. At the end of Mass, Msgr. Emilio Aranguren Echeverria, Bishop of Holguin, reminded the Pope of that fact with these words: *In the midst of the 19th century, in our present Cathedral Church, Saint Anthony Mary Claret – tireless missionary of our oriental fields*

– was attacked and wounded on the face leaving us also the stamp of his blood as a testimony of his dedication to the Lord. It is admirable that Claret's memory lives on in that Cuban Diocese after more than 150 years. Then, the Bishop added: Today, as Successor of Peter, you also mark the history of our people forever by visiting us as a Missionary of Mercy, which commits us to live the upcoming Jubilee Year which you have convoked in a spirit of conversion in communion with the whole Church.



CAYETANO GIRBAU, CMF Missionary and Formator (1828-1890)



Manresa (Barcelona, Spain). He was formed in the seminary in Vic. He had felt inclined to teach ever since his youth. Ordained a priest, he placed himself at the service of the Bishop of Vic. He collaborated with the Society of Jesus until, while praying at the Cathedral in Barbastro while visiting his sister, he made the decision to enter the Congregation. It was 1876. He had met Father Claret, whom he admired, and had been in contact with the first missionaries of the Congregation on many occasions. He went to France where he professed. He was immediately assigned to the school in Segovia until the Novitiate in Vic was inaugurated and he was assigned as Novice Master in 1878. There he remained for eight years, until he was replaced by Fr. **Martin Alsina**. From then on he dedicated himself to teaching and hearing confessions in Vic and Cervera, where he died a holy death on December 8th.



ANIMATED BY THE SPIRIT



Hanging cross above the main altar of the birthplace chapel of Claret (Sallent)

“Welcoming the Word that makes us disciples (cf. Lk 8:21), announcing it and witnessing to it, is the core of our spirituality, that is, of our way of following Jesus, a Prophet powerful in works and words (Lk 24:19), with the power of the Spirit. The Spirit of the Father and of the Son - and also the Spirit of our Mother (cf. Aut 687) - is the integrating center for all the dimensions of our life and mission.

This vocation, which is both a grace and a commitment, creates our personal and community style in the Church. Nevertheless, forms of thinking and acting that do not correspond to the Gospel radicalism we profess have crept into our life. This accounts for the dullness in our missionary life, for our lack of daring in the revision of positions and for the scant capacity of our witness to challenge others.” (SW 13)



FOR PERSONAL REFLECTION

It is not difficult to describe what we do in life, even how we do it. The hardest part is knowing why we do it.

- Are you aware that missionary life is insignificant without the strength of the Holy Spirit?
- What ways of thinking and acting do not correspond to the evangelical radicalism that we profess?
- Pray to the Lord for all the missionaries who go through stages of dryness, dullness and lack of daring.

“In the end, they will not ask you what you have known,
but what you have done.”
(Jean de Gerson)



1856. Claret directs a statement to the commandant of the department regarding the sale of goods from the properties of religious clergy in Cuba. He proposes that they be divided into plots in order to avoid that a few people accumulate them, and that preference be given to the current tenants.

1862. Claret sends the *Constitutions of the Redemptorists* to Fr. **Joseph Xifre**, which may be useful while elaborating those of the missionaries.

1867. Claret is summoned to testify before the courts regarding the claims of two teachers dismissed from El Escorial. Finally he appears before the Administrator of El Escorial in Madrid.



SAINT OSCAR ROMERO, A CLARETIAN STUDENT

MISSIONARIUM SUMUS (2015-2021)

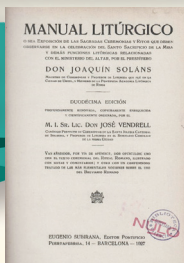
Archbishop **Oscar Arnulfo Romero** was canonized in Rome on October 14, 2018 by Pope Francis. Monsignor Romero was a student at the Minor Seminary in San Miguel, run at that time by the Claretians in El Salvador. In 1962 he recalled: *The Claretian Fathers and the seminarians were under the mantle of the Heart of Mary, a family whose spirit was that of the founder himself, Saint Anthony Mary Claret. The pages of that famous seminary manual El Colegio instruido were not only read, but lived.* He

celebrated his first Mass at the Claretian Minor Basilica in Parioli, Rome in 1942. He always maintained a great friendship and closeness with the Claretians, and even visited the General Curia a few months before his death leaving this memento with his autograph: *Today I returned to my origins: I did my minor seminary in San Miguel (El Salvador) with the dear Claretian Fathers and celebrated my first Mass here on April 5, 1942. Thanks and blessings. May 3, 1979. Oscar Arnulfo Romero, Archbishop of San Salvador.*



PANTALEON CASANUEVA, CMF General Consultor (1859 - 1925)

sla (Santander, Spain). He was recruited by Fr. Felipe de Santiago, who constantly frequented the Marquis of Arco's house. Ordained in 1882 he was assigned to the house in Gracia. His second assignment to Calahorra left a deep mark on him because of Fr. **Vallier's** presence. In 1891 Fr. **Xifre** appointed him Secretary General until 1894 when he was assigned to Segovia. When the Provinces were divided in 1895, he was appointed Provincial Consultor of Castilla until 1906 when he was appointed General Consultor during the General Chapter in Aranda de Duero, a position he resigned from the following year due to illness, then was assigned to the house in Calahorra, where he dedicated himself to preaching and collaborating with the recently founded magazine *Ilustracion del Clero*. He died there on December 24th. He did not dedicate his great intellectual capacity so much to his own publications but rather to collaborating in magazines and preparing others people's works, such as Solans' *Manual de Liturgia*.



OUR OPTION FOR THE POOR



"During these years, we Claretians have been haunted by the panorama of impoverished and oppressed human masses who live in inhuman conditions. This situation impels us to reiterate with still greater force our congregational option for the poor (cf. CC 39, 46). We can certainly offer no «solutions» to the great problems of poverty; but we can support the «indicative signs» of a new style of life that points toward the utopia of the Kingdom. In these situations the prophetic Word cannot be neutral, but inevitably takes on a political dimension; and it can never - if it is truly authentic - be at the service of the idol of power. Insertion among impoverished majorities is a privileged place that allows us to read the Word in its most challenging keys." (SW 20)



Casa Natal Museum (Sallent)



FOR PERSONAL REFLECTION

- How do the situations of the most impoverished and oppressed echo within you?
- What do you do in a practical way to feel the anguish of the poor as your own and accompany them in their situation?
- Do you usually say something in an unjust situation or do you prefer to remain "neutral" so as not to complicate your life?

"Life is really simple, but we insist on making it complicated."
(Confucius)



1848. From the Canary Islands, Claret expresses his joy to **Caixal** at having received a letter from him, since he had already considered him to be lost as a friend and collaborator.

1855. Claret gives Mother **Paris** indications regarding the admission of Aspirants wishing to enter the convent, especially on how to contribute their dowry.

1860. After three weeks in El Escorial, Claret returns to Madrid and goes to see the Queen in the evening. She tells him that she has given the railroad a piece of land from El Escorial so that no one can claim that the King and Queen do not promote progress.



A PARISH IN HONG KONG

MISSIONARII SUMUS (2015-2021)

In 2007 three Claretian Missionaries went to Hong Kong to study Cantonese in the Chinese University. Two years after the completion of their language studies, the diocese assigned two of them to two different parishes as assistant pastors in 2011. Four years later, on 1 November 2015, Epiphany Parish in Lantau island was entrusted to the care of the Claretians - the largest in the diocesan territory and encompasses half of Lantau, the largest island in

Hong Kong. Later on, the Claretians acquired a new residence in Siu Lek Yuen in the Sha Tin District, New Territories East of Hong Kong. In May 2019, the diocese asked the missionaries to take care the Our Lady of Fatima Church in Cheung Chau. The Church is situated in a quiet and serene location near the waterfront of Cheung Chau. It is an island 10 kilometres southwest of Hong Kong Island with a population of 30,000, the most densely populated island.



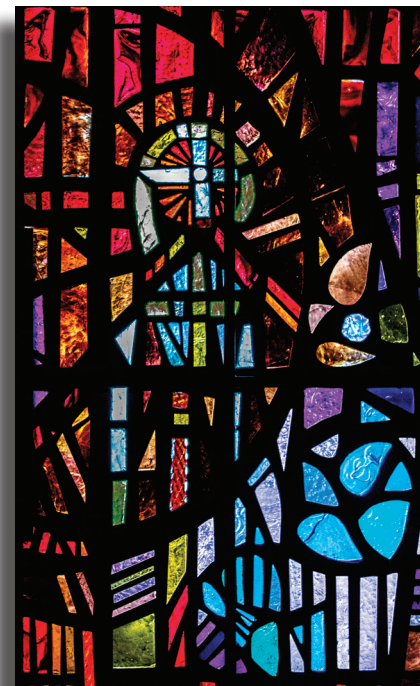
JOAQUIN MARIA ALONSO, CMF

Missionary and Mariologist (1913-1981)



Peñaranda de Bracamonte (Salamanca, Spain). He was an eminent Claretian theologian and studied at universities in Rome, Paris, Leuven and Heidelberg. He was a professor at the *Claretianum* in Rome and organized theological and mariological congresses in Spain and America. He was Director of the magazine *Ephemerides Mariologicae* from 1969 to 1977. He founded and directed *Centrum Marianum Matritense* and was a member of the *Society of the Sacred Hearts*. During the Council he was a peritus from the Spanish Episcopate. His most controversial books were written at this time: *La libertad religiosa [Religious Freedom]*; *Los derechos de la conciencia errónea y otros derechos. [The Rights of a Wrong Conscience and Other Rights]*. He worked intensely on the project of the Chapter of the dogmatic constitution *Lumen Gentium* about the Blessed Virgin. He was named an ordinary member of the *Pontifical International Marian Academy*. At the request of the Bishop of Leiria (Portugal), he devoted the last fifteen years of his life (from 1966) to the historical and theological study of documents on Fatima. He died on December 12th in Madrid.

IN A CONSTANT PROCESS OF FORMATION



Stained glass of the main door of Claret's birthplace (Sallent)

“In order to be suitable ministers of the Word we need to be in a permanent or ongoing process of formation. It is proper of a disciple to be constantly listening, open to the surprises of the Word and the Spirit. There are moments when our weakness or sinfulness blocks, both in ourselves and our communities, the dynamics of listening, of vital contact with the Word and the Spirit. There are critical situations that leave us inwardly void, yet demand an answer from us if we want to remain faithful to our vocation among the People of God. At such times we need to open ourselves to conversion and undertake a new process of Claretian re-initiation.” (SW 22)



FOR PERSONAL REFLECTION

- Do you think that the dominant attitude in your life is “to be constantly listening” to the Spirit?
- Do you notice signs of spiritual deafness or indifference?
- What can you do to “open your ears” and let yourself be challenged by the Word of God?

“To profit from good advice requires more wisdom than to give it.”
(John Churton Collins)



1814. Claret is confirmed in his parish in Sallent by Archbishop Felix Amat.

1860. Claret receives a *Decretum Laudis* from Rome for the Missionary Congregation, which does not imply approval of the *Constitutions* nor the capacity to carry out ecclesiastical studies in our Houses for the moment.

1864. Claret writes the *Testimonio de la Verdad*, which will be published by *La Esperanza* newspaper on January 24th after some finishing touches are made.



MISSIONARIUM SUMUS (2015-2021)

THE FOUNDATION IN BURKINA FASO

In November of 2015 the Claretians from Polska Province opened a new mission in Kondougou (Burkina Faso), 75 km away from Ouagadougou, the country's capital. Polska Province signed an agreement with the Bishop in which the Claretian Missionaries assumed a new parish named after Our Lady of Mercy, created from an area of the parish near the Koudougou Cathedral and some neighboring towns. The official announcement was made by the Bishop on December

13th, and the pastor took office on February 7th the following year. At first the community was formed by two priests of the Province, one from Poland and the other from Ivory Coast. Burkina Faso is currently a Republic which was first a French colony. It gained independence in 1960 with the name Upper Volta. Burkina Faso means *the Land of Incorruptible People* in the Moore and Bambara languages, spoken by the Mossi and Dyula ethnic groups respectively.



FELIX AMAT DE PALAU PONS

Confirmed Claret (1750-1824)

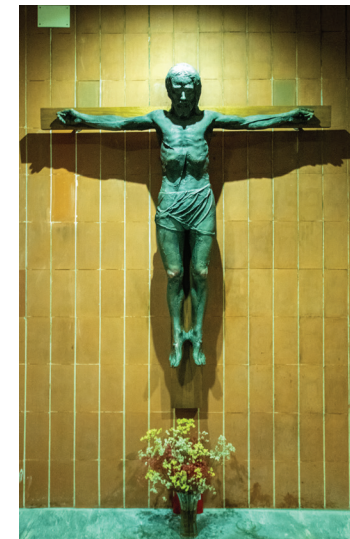


Sabadell (Barcelona, Spain). On December 12, 1814, Archbishop Felix Amat, Titular Archbishop of Palmyra and Abbot of the Royal Palace of San Ildefonso in la Granja in 1803, a resident of Sallent at the time, conferred Claret with the sacrament of Confirmation when he was 7 years old. Claret did not have any impediment to receiving it. By that time he was already attending Mass every day and his father accompanied him on feast days. Amat was King Charles IV's confessor. When Joseph Bonaparte declared the suppression of the collegiate church, Archbishop Felix Amat was transferred to the Osma Bishopric. During the War of Independence he lived in Madrid and then in his native town, beginning in 1814. He was known for his austere habits. He was called the *Spanish Bossuet*. French-like, regalist and conciliarist, moderate in politics and advocate of a profound renewal of the nation's clergy. His most important work is the 12-volume *Historia Ecclesiastica* [Ecclesiastical History]. In 1921 he retired to Barcelona where he died. He was Felix Torres Amat's uncle.

FOLLOWERS OF JESUS THE PROPHET



"We consider the prophetic aspect to be one dimension of our missionary life: it likens us to the biblical prophets and above all to Jesus the Prophet. The prophets are persons seduced by God (cf. Jer 20:7), impassioned by Him and his Covenant, partakers in his compassion for the poor and the people. They see historical reality with the eyes of God, they feel with his heart (cf. 1 Sam 12:7-25) and proclaim a message of renewal with the authority of his Word. This message is at once consoling and challenging, hence it creates hope and arouses rejection. This vocation alters their lives and transforms them into a sign. Authentic prophets are faithful to the ultimate consequences. Anointed by the power of the Spirit, Jesus was the definitive prophet of God and the fulfillment of Old Testament prophecy (Lk 14:21; Mt 5:17; CC 3 and 40). The 'prophetic dimension' of our missionary service of the Word should be understood as deriving from Him." (IPM 2)



Birthplace Chapel (Sallent)



FOR PERSONAL REFLECTION

We often use terms like "prophet" and "prophetism" to refer to our missionary vocation. Beyond the possible abuses, the prophetic dimension characterizes all the followers of Jesus.

- What does it mean to you to be a prophet in the communal and pastoral conditions in which you live?
- Do you tend to see the reality that surrounds you "with the eyes of God" or do you let yourself be carried away by your prejudices, inclinations and phobias?
- Do you know how to combine announcement and denouncement in your lifestyle and in your ministry of the Word?
- Are you consistent with what you announce and denounce?

"Our life always expresses
the result of our dominant thoughts."
(Søren Kierkegaard)



1855. After four years of complaints, Claret got La Merced convent in Puerto Principe (Cuba) back, where he hopes to establish a community of Jesuits.

1860. Claret begins giving Spiritual Exercises for the Sisters Adorers, which will conclude on the 21st.

1864. Claret is going to give Spiritual Exercises for the priests and seminarians in El Escorial. Br. **Saladich** and Br. Llumach go with him and also make Spiritual Exercises, which end on the 22nd.



REORGANIZING EUROPE

MISSIONARI SUMUS (2015-2021)

In a letter from December of 2015, the Superior General announced the beginning of a reorganization process for the Congregation in Europe, which would include the following Organisms: Betica-Portugal-United Kingdom-Ireland; Catalunya-Euskal Herria-France-Italy; Deutschland-Polska; and Santiago. The aim was always to form a single European Province at some point. The previous General Government had prepared a

reorganization project that was then offered to the new General Government. Returning to these conclusions, the General Government summoned the Major Superiors to go deeper on some aspects in order to make decisions about this process. What stood out among their conclusions was the need for reorganization, a consensus on the reorganization model, strengthening ECLA, teamwork among Claretians and promoting existing shared projects.

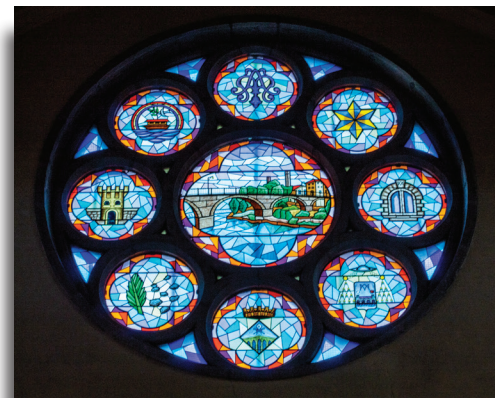
DOMINGO SOLA, CMF
General Consultor (1843-1923)



Gualada (Barcelona, Spain). He studied at the seminary in Vic until he entered the Congregation in 1865. He escaped to Prades (France) due to the persecution.

There he received the tonsure and minor orders from the hands of the Father Founder. In 1870 he was among the first group of students to be ordained in the Congregation. In 1876 he was elected a member of the General Government. Fr. **Xifre** commissioned him to found a house in Madrid, on Toledo Street 42, in order to have a community where they could negotiate matters with the National Government, but his services were required at the Novitiate in Thuir soon after. He was expelled from there and arrived at the house in Gracia in 1880. He was appointed the first Apostolic Prefect of Fernando Poo, but resigned from the position and was assigned to Mexico in 1883, with the purpose of establishing the Congregation there. He was the first Claretian to go to Honduras in 1893 with the intention of founding the Congregation there. In 1899 he was again elected a member of the General Government. In Madrid he managed to carry out the construction of the first church dedicated to the Immaculate Heart of Mary. He died in Barcelona.

INHABITANTS OF A NEW CONTINENT



Main stained glass window of Santa Maria Parish (Sallent)

“The technological revolution in communications has qualitatively changed the treatment of information and has opened up new ways for evangelizing. Cyberspace piques our missionary sensibility like the discovery of a new Continent. It enormously enhances the possibilities for humanization, solidarity, development and the service of the Word. In theory, present-day science and technology hold solutions for many of the problems that afflict us: hunger, disease, etc. We can engage in a universal dialogue and

give birth to an effective solidarity between all human beings, overcoming dogmatisms, fundamentalisms, totalitarianisms and a meaningless or aimless vision of the world. In practice, however, all of this potential is often used by a dominant system that puts it in the hands of a few and spreads a single model of human being. These few overlook the human rights of peoples and cultures, the rapid deterioration of creation and the exploitation of natural resources.” (IPM 11)



FOR PERSONAL REFLECTION

Whether you are a digital native or immigrant, you cannot withdraw from the information age we live in.

- How do you use mobile devices and the internet?
- How has your world of searches and relationships been broadened? What have you learned about yourself?
- Do you notice any signs of addiction? What are they? How can you face them and learn from them?
- Are you aware that we are subject to digital colonization? How do you react?

“In the end, it’s not the years in your life that count.
It’s the life in your years.”
(Abraham Lincoln)



1858. The Queen uses Claret as an intermediary to welcome Nuncio **Barili**.

1866. They begin the return trip from Lisbon and arrive in Badajoz at midnight. They will spend the morning of the next day there, where Claret will preach several times and forbid acclaiming the Queen in church.

1869. The second General Congregation of the First Vatican Council. Claret will attend them all with great enthusiasm.



CLARETIAN BISHOPS

MISSIONARIUM SUMUS (2015-2021)

In December of 2015, the Pope appointed Mons. Ruben Gonzalez Bishop of Ponce (Puerto Rico). In 2016 Fr. Jacek Kicinski was appointed Auxiliary Bishop of Wroclaw (Poland). Bishop Angel Garachana was elected President of the Episcopal Conference of Honduras. In 2017 Fr. Luis Angel de Las Heras was appointed Bishop of Mondoñedo-El Ferrol (Spain); Fr. Argemiro de Azevedo, Bishop of Assis (Brazil); Fr. Juan Domingo Esono, Bishop of Mongomo (Equatorial Guinea); and Fr. Hilary Nauman Dechelem, Bishop of Bauchi (Nigeria). In 2018 Fr. Josep M.

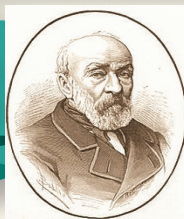
Abella was appointed Auxiliary Bishop of Osaka (Japan). And in 2019 Fr. Leo Dalmao was appointed Prelate of Isabela (Philippines).

We must add three farewells to the news of these episcopal appointments: in August of 2015, Bishop **Carlos M. Ariz** died in Panama; in June of 2016, Bishop **Luis Gutierrez** in Spain; and in February 2019 Cardinal **Fernando Sebastian** in Spain.

There is no doubt that the period of Francis' papacy has brought with it a sign of confidence in the Congregation, reflected in some of its sons.

SANTIAGO DE MASARNAU

Musician and Founder (1805-1882)



Burlada (Navarre, Spain). Composer. He went into exile with his father in France in 1823, where he perfected himself in piano studies. He was part of the *Ozanam* group. When he returned to Spain in 1850, he founded the *Conferences of St. Vincent de Paul*. Father Claret protected and encouraged them always with his friendship and his words. He was one of the most outstanding personalities in the music world. Father Claret once said that his reputation was *well established in Spain and beyond*. He always stood out as a faithful Christian, dedicated to works of charity, mainly through the *Conferences of St. Vincent de Paul*. He died in Madrid. He said of Claret that *his most heroic quality was undoubtedly the patience and consistent state of mind with which he suffered slander and persecution for so many years, without his mouth or his pen ever complaining to anyone directly or indirectly*. He said that he entrusted himself to Claret frequently as a saint.

COMPANIONS OF CLARET THE PROPHET



Left side of the altarpiece of the Adoration Chapel of Santa Maria Parish (Sallent)

“Our Father Founder, Anthony Mary Claret, felt anointed by the Spirit of Jesus. He found incentives for his missionary vocation in the prophets (cf. Aut 114-120; 214-220) and above all in Jesus, a simple and enchanting prophet, close to the people, but also a sign of contradiction, persecuted even to death on a cross (cf. Aut 221-222). Claret's grand passion was to become identified with Jesus in all things. He recognized that the virtue most needed by an apostolic missionary and the hidden treasure for which we should sell everything, is love (cf. Aut 438-439). The love of God, Jesus, Mary and his neighbor was his lifelong passion, the very reason for his apostolic ministry. Claret served the bread of the Word in season and out of season, so that God the Father might be known, loved and served (cf. Aut 233). He was clairvoyant, creative and enterprising. God granted him a strong sensibility in facing the evils of his time. He founded our Congregation, and in his ‘pattern of the missionary’ (cf. Aut 494), he transmitted to us the way in which we are to prophetically prolong his project.” (IPM 17)



FOR PERSONAL REFLECTION

- Which traits of Claret the prophet are most challenging for you today?
- Do you follow your prophetic vocation out of love or do other motives drive you?
- Are you credibly and effectively concerned that God be known, loved, served and praised?
- Do you react with resignation in the face of the evils of our time or do you look for clairvoyant and creative answers, without letting yourself be carried away by pessimism?

“Nothing is more harmful to creativity than the fury of inspiration.”
(Umberto Eco)



1852. Claret drafts an extensive legal complaint before the Commander of the Province about the unfounded accusations made to him by the Court of Audits.

1857. Claret concludes a novena to Mary Immaculate which he has given in the form of a mission at the Italian church (Madrid).

1858. Claret advises the Nuncio not to attend the Marquis of Salamanca's conference due to his political-partisan character.



WORLD YOUTH DAY 2016 IN CLARETIAN FAMILY

MISSIONARI SUMUS (2015-2021)

In July of 2016, the 31st World Youth Day took place in Krakow, Poland. More than 300 young people from different countries and members of the Claretian Family participated. During the days prior they were fraternally welcomed by Polish families close to the Claretians in Lodz, one of the aspects the pilgrims appreciated most during this first stage. There were several special moments during this pilgrimage: first at the parish in Lodz, then at the deanery

with a procession to the Shrine of Mercy and a celebration at the cathedral, later a formative and celebrative encounter with other groups. This stage concluded with a gathering of some 15,000 young people at Atlas Arena in Lodz. Finally they moved to Blonia and the Campus of Mercy to participate in the closing Mass with Pope Francis. At the end of the Mass the Pope announced the date and place of the next World Youth Day: Panama in 2019.



MARIA DEL CARMEN ROMAGUERA

Carmelite Sister of Charity (1823-1901)



Sant Feliu de Guixols (Girona, Spain). She entered the Carmelite Sisters of Charity in 1845. Father Claret gave her and another novice Spiritual Exercises and presided at her profession in 1847. She was the Provincial Superior of Castilla and Catalunya. She and Father Claret were friends and they began corresponding by letter mainly during the final years of the Saint's life. She died in Vic on December 8th. She was the most dynamic and effective person among Mother **Paula Delpuig's** collaborators, with very clear points of view and immediate actions. She was a figure of particular importance within the Institute. She was the one who entered Claret's room in Madrid, when it was abandoned because of his exile, and took charge of all the things she found there, despite Br. **Agapito Gomez's** resistance. He prevented her from opening the drawers: *Brother, you can hear the screams to set the house on fire, I'm just trying to save some of my father's things.* Chasubles, miters, crozier, pastoral crosses, portraits.

THERE IS NO PROPHECY WITHOUT A HEART



"Our prophetic lifestyle receives a distinctive imprint from the Immaculate Heart of Mary, Mother of the Congregation. She teaches us that without heart, without tenderness, without love, there is no credible prophecy. Mary uttered the Word (cf. Lk 1:38) because she had first conceived it in her heart; she proclaimed her prophetic Magnificat (cf. Lk 1:46-55) because she had first believed; she stood near the Cross and was present at Pentecost because she was the good earth that welcomed the Word with a glad heart, made it bear fruit a hundred fold (cf. Lk 8:8,15,21) and asked others to do whatever the Word told them (Jn 2:5)." (IPM 20)



Santa Maria Parish (Sallent)

FOR PERSONAL REFLECTION

- Do you think that your prophetic lifestyle is characterized by tenderness and love?
- In the end, are you a Claretian with or without a heart?
- Surprise yourself by examining some of your reactions to people and events.



"Success is getting what you want.
Happiness is enjoying what you get."
(Emerson)



1850. Claret assigns Fr. **Antonio Barjau** to answer a letter from Fr. **Stephen Sala**. They inform him of the difficulties they encounter in ministry for the missionaries in Vic to still enjoy the esteem of the Dominicans of Ocaña even though they aren't men religious.

1866. Returning from Portugal, the royal train stops at Daimiel (Ciudad Real), where they visit those injured from an accident on the way out and celebrate a Mass for those who died.

1869. In Rome, Claret requests that the Congregation be definitively approved and that - with the necessary constitutional changes - it be elevated to the category of a Religious Institute.



THE CESC WEB PAGE

MISSIONARIII SUMUS (2015-2021)

On October 24, 2016, coinciding with the feast of St. Anthony Mary Claret, the Claretian Spirituality Center in Vic (CESC) launched a web page: www.cescvic.org. It is available in Spanish, English, French and Catalan. The website focuses on the person of Saint Anthony Mary Claret Clara. It puts the Saint's writings that are already widely circulated at the disposal of the user (like his *Autobiography* or the famous *Straight Path* for example) and also others less accessible, such as

his *Epistolario* (both active and passive), others *Spiritual, Pastoral and Marian Writings* and also his manuscripts assembled in thirteen volumes. In this way, both the simply curious and the researcher can know firsthand what Saint Anthony Mary Claret wrote and, through his writings, understand him at a deeper level. Several studies about Claret are included with his works (especially the complete collection of articles published in the *Studia Claretiana* journal that is yearly published).



FRANCISCO DE ASIS AGUILAR SERRAT

Bishop of Segorbe (1826-1899)



Manlleu (Barcelona, Spain). He was a weaver like Claret and then a seminarian in Vic. He met Father Claret as a student. He was ordained a priest in Vic in 1854. After a call from Father Claret he entered El Escorial in 1863, where he was appointed as Royal Chaplain. He was also a professor at the school and then at the seminary. In 1865 he left the monastery and founded and directed the *University of Santo Tomas de Aquino* in Madrid, attached to the Central University. In 1870 he was Rector of the *Association of Catholics*. In 1871 in Madrid he wrote and published the *Vida del Excmo. E Ilmo. Sr. D. Antonio Maria Claret* in Claret's defense and against the publication of *Vida del Padre Claret [The Life of Father Claret]* by O*, a false story attributed to Salustiano Olozaga. He was consecrated Bishop of Segorbe in 1880. In 1889 he made a statement during Father Claret's beatification process and in June of 1897 he attended the transfer of his remains to Vic. He died in Segorbe.

THE PROPHECY OF ORDINARY LIFE



"The prophecy of ordinary life, which is frequent among us, is what makes possible the great prophecy of extraordinary moments. It is shown in prayer as an expression of friendship with God; in an incessant search for his will; in relationships marked by tenderness, happiness of life, compassion, faith in others and service." (IPM 24)



Adoration chapel of the Santa Maria Parish (Sallent)



FOR PERSONAL REFLECTION

The General Chapter of 1997 made the expression "the prophecy of ordinary life" popular.

- Do you believe in the value of simple things, lived in the Spirit?
- Recall some brothers who are, "prophets of ordinary life." Give thanks to God for their silent witness outside of the spotlight.

"A heart is a treasure that cannot be sold nor bought, but can be given."
(Gustave Flaubert)



1861. Strong attacks are made against Claret in the Congress of Deputies related to El Escorial's administration and institutions; Claret is designated as *the manager*.

1865. Claret receives a letter from the Nuncio telling him to travel from Barcelona to Madrid. He leaves on the 21st and arrives the next day.

1866. Claret promulgates a brief set of rules so that Montserrat hospital will function properly. He had just set up the Carmelite Sisters of Charity there.



THE XIFRE YEAR

MISSIONARI SUMUS (2015-2021)

The *Xifre Year* (February 17 - November 3, 2017) was a congregational initiative to commemorate **Xifre's** bicentennial of his birth. It began in Vic on February 17th with a lecture by Xavier Cateura entitled *Joseph Xifre, vicense ilustre, emprendedor de una gran obra* [Joseph Xifre, *Illustrious Native of Vic, Innovative Director of a Great Work*]. It took place in a room in the Town Hall. It was followed by a prayer vigil in the Crypt of the Church of St. Anthony Mary Claret.

The vigil, presided over by Superior General, Mathew Vattamattam, was entitled *The Three Loves*. The next day there was a conference by Fr. Jaume Sidera, as well as a Mass presided by the Bishop of Vic. As a commemorative gesture, a commemorative plaque was blessed and placed in the house where Fr. Xifre was born. Throughout the year there were other activities collected in a special section of the CESC website. The publication of a video entitled *A Missionary by Profession* is noteworthy.

SAINT JOSEP MANYANET

Priest and Founder (1833-1901)



Tremp (Lleida, Spain). Founder of the *Sons of the Holy Family* and the *Missionary Daughters of the Holy Family of Nazareth*. He and Claret maintained a deep friendship despite the age difference. Fr. Manyanet always admired Father Claret as a saint, whom he met because he was a relative of **Joseph Caixal**, Bishop of Urgel. Here is a letter from 1900 to **Fr. Francisco Naval**: *I am very grateful that your Reverence and those in your Institute make vows to the Lord for our prosperity: we also have Your Reverences present every day in our humble prayers and I almost believe I am obligated to it because of the friendship that united me with your holy Founder whom I ate at table with several times and with whom I consulted several important things, some concerning our foundation. I suppose you know that the illustrious Claret and Caixal were joined at the hip, as they say, and I lived closely with the latter for thirteen years.*

OUR APOSTOLIC POVERTY



"It costs us to be poor and to find the road to poverty.

We are convinced that our ministry only acquires great prophetic power when the Word we proclaim is backed by our apostolic poverty, an authentic option for the poor, an economy in solidarity, and our own hard work (cf. CPR 87-88; SW 20). The market economy in which we are immersed obliges us to constantly rethink our economies and lifestyle." (IPM 25)



Right side of the altarpiece of the Adoration Chapel of Santa Maria Parish (Sallent)

FOR PERSONAL REFLECTION

Evangelical poverty is essential for prophetic witness.

- What traits best describe the type of poverty you practice?
- In the environment you live in, is it a sign or, rather, a hieroglyphic?



"If we exaggerate our joys, as we do with our sorrows, our problems would lose importance."
(Anatole France)



1845. Claret is in Figueres (Girona) preaching a regional mission. Attendees travel in from 40 villages every day praying the rosary.

1854. From Puerto Principe (Cuba) Claret tells his Administrator, Fr. **Felipe Rovira** that a group of Catalan seminarians who *they tell me are very good* will soon arrive in his diocese.

1869. The Queen has sent a donation to Claret in Rome and asked him to help her get an audience with the Pope. Claret asks Cardinal **Barili** to mediate.



THE NEW FORGE:

CLARETIAN RENEWAL ENCOUNTER (CRE)

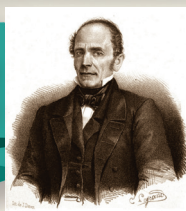
MISSIONARIII SUMUS (2015-2021)

After 21 editions of *La Fragua* in Spanish (1993-2016) and some in English, the project entered a new phase in October of 2017. For this reason, the General Government created a team made up of four Claretians from various Organisms and set up their headquarters in the Los Negrals house (Madrid, Spain). The new project is called the *Claretian Renewal Encounter – The Forge* (CRE). The first edition in Spanish took place from October to December of

2018. The first one in English took place from April to June of 2018. Both are aimed at Claretians between 40 and 65 years old or those who have celebrated the 25th anniversary of their First Profession. The CRE is an ongoing formation initiative that aims to help the Claretian Missionary discern the will of God at the crossroads of midlife. The project is centered around the nuclei of the Forge and the three processes of transformation proposed by the XXV General Chapter.

PEDRO DE LA HOZ

Journalist (1800-1865)



Espejo (Cordoba, Spain). He exchanged his liberal ideas for Carlist ideas. He was the Director of the *Gazette of Madrid* and a judge. He was in France for a while. Upon his return, he founded the newspaper *La Esperanza* (1844-1874), an unofficial publication of the Carlist party during **Isabella II's** reign. He was a friend and collaborator of Claret, who subscribed to *La Esperanza* and collaborated with it. The newspaper began to follow Claret's missionary adventures beginning in 1846, but especially since 1857, when he arrived in Madrid as the Queen's confessor. Claretian collaboration began in 1857 when they published flyers of his short work *El Ferrocarril* [*The Railroad*], entitled *El Tren ha descarrilado* [*The Train has Derailed*] in the Entertainment section. The following year he devoted ample time to his Madrid cathedral project and then to the **Academy of St. Michael**. In 1861 Emilia, Pedro's religious daughter, made her religious profession at the hands of Claret at the church of the Salesas Reales. He passed away on December 17th.



A PASSION FOR LIFE



“The *loss of life's meaning* and the disregard for *the person* are at the root of these signs of death. The glory of God, which is one of the basic aims of our Congregation (cf CC 2), is the human person fully alive (Ireaneus of Lyon), the poor fully alive (Oscar Romero), nature fully alive (Paul of Tarsus). We give glory to God, proclaiming that ‘the Gospel of God's love for people, the Gospel of the dignity of the person and the Gospel of life are one, indivisible Gospel’ (EV 2). The passion for life thus belongs at the very heart of our missionary vocation.” (TMHL 8)



Santa Maria Parish (Sallent)

FOR PERSONAL REFLECTION

- Do you perceive that the meaning of life has been lost in your environment? Where do you notice it?
- In addition to what was pointed out by the General Chapter of 2003, how can we look for “the glory of God” today?
- What is the difference between “the quality of life” and “a full life”?



“Death as the end of the time we live
can only cause terror in those
who do not know how to fill the time they have been given.”
(Viktor Frankl)



1854. During the next few days Claret begins giving Spiritual Exercises for the priests in Puerto Principe (Cuba).

1858. Claret preaches at San Marcos Church in Madrid to help the charity board obtain resources for the poor.

1863. Claret informs Fr. **Jaime Clotet** of his work in favor of the single catechism and asks him to send him a copy of all catechisms used in the Diocese of Vic.



THE BEATIFICATION OF 109 CLARETIAN MARTYRS

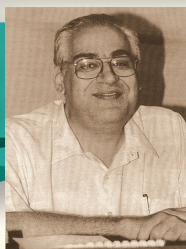
MISSIONARIJ SUMUS (2015-2021)

On October 21, 2017, the solemn beatification of 109 Claretian martyrs from the Spanish Civil War (1936-1939) was celebrated at the Basilica of the Sagrada Familia in Barcelona. The first beatification ever held in the said basilica. Fr. **Mateu Casals**, Student **Teofilo Casajus** and Br. **Ferran Saperas** were at the top of the list. The Superior General presided the vigil held at the Shrine of the Heart of Mary (Barcelona) the previous day. The beatification celebration was presided by Cardinal Angelo Amato. Several

Bishops accompanied him as well as a large number of Claretians. The presence of a considerable number of the martyrs' relatives was also noteworthy. The ceremony was broadcast on television and the internet. A Thanksgiving Mass took place the following day, presided by the Archbishop of Barcelona, Cardinal Juan Jose Omella. In his homily, he told us: *The martyrs teach us to put our trust in God, to trust that love will overcome hatred and that no difficulty or persecution can take away the joy of confessing Jesus as our Lord.*



LUIS ALBERTO ALVAREZ, CMF
Missionary and Communicator (1945-1996)



Medellin (Colombia). He entered the seminary in Bosa in 1962. In 1964 he moved to Italy and Germany to study theology and other related subjects. In 1972 he returned to Colombia and was assigned to Manizales and then to Medellin to join the Cinema Club of Orlando Mora and Alberto Aguirre. He composed programs for Radio Bolivariana and was a professor at the American and German Colombo Center. He received the title *honoris causa* as a journalist from the University of Antioquia. His charisma was using the word in service of evangelization in the cultural arena. He died on December 23rd after a delicate operation. He wrote movie reviews for *El Colombiano* newspaper in Medellin for many years, one of the most frequently read pages due to its quality and depth. He was, without a doubt, one of the people in his country who knew most about the seventh art. He published a book of cinematographic critiques called *Páginas de Cine [Movie Pages]* in 1988 in Medellin.

MARY, MOTHER OF LIFE



Painting of the Annunciation in the Santa Maria Parish (Sallent)

“Mary is the Mother of Life. Elizabeth called her blessed because of the fruit of her womb and because of her faith. As people of God we acclaim her as ‘our life, our sweetness and our hope’ (Salve Regina). We also beg her to pray for us ‘now and at the hour of our death’ (Ave Maria). We give ourselves to her in our Profession (cf CC 159). Through her we receive life in abundance. She is the Woman of the Apocalypse who gives birth amidst the dragon’s threats and who is reflected in

the Church, also a mother in the midst of threats to life (cf Ap 12:1-2). The Magnificat proclaims her commitment to a world where life is held sovereign (cf Lk 1:46-55). The definition of a Son of the Immaculate Heart of Mary shows us how we can be like her, proclaim life and fight against all that threatens it (cf CC 9).” **(TMHL 10)**



FOR PERSONAL REFLECTION

The General Chapter of 2003 called Mary the Mother of Life.

- Which Marian titles or names are most endearing and meaningful to you?
- Pray to Mary, the Mother of Life today for all the people who live a precarious and threatened life.

“Modern science has not yet produced a calming medicine as effective as a few kind words.”
(Sigmund Freud)



1834. Claret is ordained a deacon at the convent church of the Calced Carmelites in Vic.

1852. Claret asks the Nuncio to process dispensation faculties for him in Rome for first degree affinity and second degree consanguinity in order to legalize as many marriages

as possible.

1862. Claret sends a new version of Student regulations to Fr. **Joseph Xifre**, which also includes chapters for Aspirants and those in the process of discernment.



FOUNDATION IN BORNEO (INDONESIA)

MISSIONARIII SUMUS (2015-2021)

In 1890, Fr. **Joseph Xifre** wrote to the missionaries in Guinea: *I would like to share with you the fatigue, heat, privations and hardships you have suffered. I would like even more to spread to other countries, form new missions in Borneo, in Japan ... throughout the whole world.*

Xifre's former dream of founding a mission on the distant island of Borneo became a reality almost 130 years later on December 10, 2017. The new mission is in Wayun-Palmejo, in the Diocese of

Palangka Raya (Borneo), located about 300 kilometers west of the capital. In addition to fulfilling Xifre's dream, the mission in Borneo, entrusted to Indonesia-Timor Leste Delegation, is an answer to the call of the Church and the Congregation to go to the peripheries. The mission, entrusted to a community of three missionaries, aims to set the small Christian community in motion and accompany them, as well as spread the Gospel in that region.

VICENTE DE LA FUENTE Writer and Publicist (1817-1889)



Calatayud (Zaragoza, Spain). He was a member of the Academy of History and of Moral and Political Sciences and Rector of the Central University (1875- 1877). He was Father Claret's close friend and President of the first choir of the **Academy of St. Michael** in Madrid. He provided abundant material on the saint to his first biographer Bishop **Francisco de Asis Aguilar**, and later he himself also wrote a small biography entitled: *Brief Review of the Life of the Honorable Anthony Mary Claret, Archbishop of Cuba*, dedicated to the members of that Academy and to the Conferences of Saint Vincent de Paul, to give them to the poor (1878). He always came to Claret's defense, especially when the book entitled *La Llave de Oro* was published. During the cause of Claret's beatification he testified: *His humility, purity, self-denial, love of holy poverty and zeal for the salvation of souls were his most sublime virtues and they stood out above the rest.* He passed away on December 25th.



THE TWO BOOKS OF REVELATION



“What has come into being in him was life and life that was the light of men’ (Jn 1:4). Life is the ‘first book’ of God’s revelation. Sacred Scripture is that ‘second book’ in which God reveals his plan of salvation for life threatened by death because of sin. Both books mutually interpret one another. As servants of the Word in all its amplitude, the commitment to justice, peace, and the integrity of creation is not for us a matter of discretion; it is a genuine obligation and also a fundamental right of all Christians (cf CIC 222) that obliges us particularly as religious and ordained ministers (cf CIC 287/672).” (TMHL 13)



Above the main altar of Santa Maria Parish (Sallent)



FOR PERSONAL REFLECTION

Life in all of its forms is the stage on which God reveals his design of love to the human race.

- Do you think that your spirituality pays attention to God's signs in personal, ecclesial and social events?
- How do you integrate your commitment to peace, justice and the safeguarding of creation into your spirituality? Is it an essential dimension or just “matter of discretion”?
- Practice the following exercise today. Choose a current event and pick a biblical text that can shed light on it. Pray about the contrast between the two. This exercise can also be done in community.

“Patience is bitter, but its fruit is sweet.”
(John Chardin)



1833. Claret receives Minor Orders at San Felipe Neri Church in Vic.

1850. Claret preaches at San Miguel Church in Barcelona, where he establishes the Archconfraternity of the Immaculate Heart of Mary.

1858. On this day Claret receives some indications: more prayer, write books, direct souls and to be more tranquil about being in Madrid.



ONLINE COURSE IN ACCOUNTING AND FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

MISSIONARIII SUMUS (2015-2021)

This course was organized by the Claretian Missionaries in collaboration with the Claretian University of Batatais (Brazil), officially inaugurated on March 5, 2018. It is a training sponsored by the General Prefecture of Economy, offered to treasurers, economies and other interested persons, and divided into three levels: beginner, basic and advanced. Each of them includes two semesters with a total study load of

900 hours (equivalent to a Master's Degree). The course is offered with the experience and professionalism of the professors and staff of the aforementioned University of Batatais. 20 Spanish language students enrolled in the first semester. In the future it will expand to include the English language.

This type of training had been requested for some time and Brasil Province has made it possible to carry it out with professionalism.



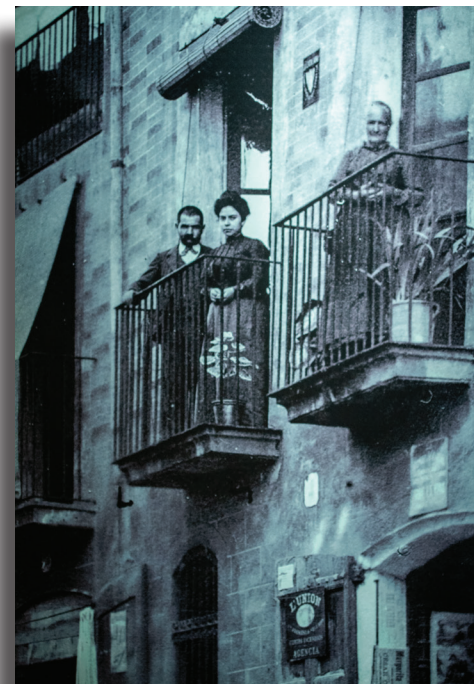
ST. VICENTA MARIA LOPEZ DE VICUÑA

Foundress (1847-1890)



Cascante (Navarre, Spain). She was sent to Madrid to be educated with her aunt and uncle at a very young age. They instilled in Vicenta their concern for the sick and needy. She remained in Madrid as a schoolgirl until 1864 when she returned to Cascante with her parents. She felt the desire to consecrate herself to God at age 19. After several inconveniences, including opposition from her family, she made her vows on June 11, 1876; that same year she founded the congregation of the *Religiosas de Maria Inmaculada - Servicio Domestico*. She died on December 26, 1890 and was canonized in 1975 by Paul VI. Her interactions with Father Claret were exclusively in her years as a schoolgirl in Madrid. She heard Claret's sermons in the Church Santo Tomas in 1860. That same year, she heard him preach at the General Hospital and it stuck with her in a particular way. Her uncle and aunt, Mr. Manuel Maria and Maria Eulalia, had already met Father Claret as well.

DISSATISFACTION WITH COMMUNITY LIFE



Birthplace of St. Anthony Mary Claret (Sallent)

"The Chapter has detected a considerable degree of dissatisfaction in regard to the development of community life. Generally, we are satisfied with what we are doing, but not so much with our fraternal life. Dissatisfaction with community leads us to look for other types of belonging or to lock ourselves into our responsibilities, assuming individualistic and competitive attitudes. It is also not easy to find adequate ways to translate the ideal of missionary community into the varied situations in which we live today. We have not sufficiently made our own 'the prophecy of ordinary life' (cf IPM 24)." (TMHL 50)



FOR PERSONAL REFLECTION

Community life is essential for missionaries. The way it is lived out may differ, but its substance is the same.

- Do you also experience "a considerable degree of dissatisfaction" with your community life or, on the contrary, do you feel happy, grateful and encouraged?
- Do you think you are looking for external compensation in order to escape from the frustration you feel in your community?
- What do you dream about for the future of our missionary communities? According to your experience, which direction should they take?

"If you do not remember the slightest madness in which love made you fall, you have not loved."
(William Shakespeare)



1849. The official announcement of Claret's appointment arrives in Cuba and a *Te Deum* is sung in the cathedral.

1857. Claret gives the Queen a report about his missionary Congregation and a copy of the constitutions that he had prepared for them last June, requesting her approval.

1865. Claret travels from Gracia (Barcelona) and arrives in Madrid, after being separated from the court for almost half a year. He brings Fr. **Jaime Clotet** as his chaplain.



AIDE FOR NEPAL

MISSIONARIJ SUMUS (2015-2021)

On April 12, 2018, 60 houses were given to those affected by the earthquake in Nepal. This work was an initiative of the Claretian Missionaries in India. In November of 2015, the Claretians in India had already visited Kathmandu (Nepal), with the intention of collaborating with staff in two district centers in 2016. A solidarity program entitled NNU was then promoted. The earthquake-resistant houses, built under the leadership of Caritas Nepal, serve the needs of the

village of Tartung in the Himalayan mountain ranges, the epicenter of the earthquake that killed 10,000 people on April 25, 2015. Thirty houses were built with the support of the PROCLADE Foundation and the other 30 were supported by AIFO, an Italian agency based in Bangalore. *Care for Nepal* of Bangalore, under the coordination of the Claretian missionaries, had already built a school for 300 students prior to that, with four classrooms as well as a library and a laboratory.

JOSE SALADICH, CMF

Claret's Page (1828-1894)



Monistrol de Calders (Spain). He entered the Congregation as a Brother at age 31 in 1859. When the Father Founder requested a Brother to take care of his house, the Superiors believed that he was the most suitable. He moved from Segovia to Madrid as the Father Founder's page. He accompanied him to Rome and all over until the Revolution of 1868 separated them when Claret took refuge in Fontfroide. He learned a spirit of prayer and obedience from Claret. He learned zeal for the faithful performance of his position, to constantly write down and take notes about everything that happened that might enlighten him. He wrote in a catechism he had for personal use: *This catechism was given to me by our Father Founder in Rome in 1869.* Just talking about Father Claret or showing him his picture was enough to bring back to his mind all the things that he had seen and make him break down in bitter tears. He died on December 8th.

CONCERNING SIGNS



"In spite of all this, in many of us there can be seen symptoms of weariness, spiritual mediocrity and lack of vocational and missionary enthusiasm. Often it is difficult for us to take significant time for personal reflection, the prayerful reading of the Word and the serious study of the reality from our faith. At times we do not take full advantage of the spiritual dynamism that the liturgy offers us, forgetting the primacy of the Father and his Kingdom; we take on comfortable life styles and distance ourselves from the major concerns of the Church and the world without giving testimony to the value of perseverance, sharing, the cross and renunciation. The number of those who abandon the Congregation, or do not join it after showing an initial interest, *challenges us to be better witnesses to the experience of God in our lives and to deepen our sense of belonging to the Congregation.*" (MFL 11)



Casa Claret Museum (Sallent)



FOR PERSONAL REFLECTION

The Spirit impels us to see, above all, signs of God's grace present within us, the Church and the world. From this perspective of faith, we also perceive some signs of mediocrity and infidelity.

- *What signs of discouragement, spiritual mediocrity and lack of vocational and missionary enthusiasm do you perceive in yourself, your community and Organism and in the Congregation?*
- *What can we do to help each other be faithful to the vocation we have received?*
- *How should we help our brothers who leave the Congregation? What can we learn from their experience?*

"The human heart is an instrument of many strings;
the perfect connoisseur of men that knows how to make all of them
vibrate like a good musician."
(Charles Dickens)



1807. Anthony Claret was born in Sallent, the fifth son of **Juan Claret** and **Josefa Clara**.

1851. From Puerto Principe Claret writes to the Minister of Justice explaining the miserable situation of the liturgy and the clergy in Cuba and begging him to ask the Queen to speed up the solutions he has proposed.

1867. In recent weeks he has fallen ill with three infirmities at the same time: a fracture from the northern wind, paralysis of his hands and arms, symptoms of a stroke, and a strong, consistent pain in his lower left side. He thought he was going to die.



THE CONGREGATION'S FIFTH CARDINAL

MISSIONARIUM SUMUS (2015-2021)

On May 20, 2018, after reciting the Sunday *Angelus*, Pope Francis announced the appointment of 14 new cardinals. One of them was the Claretian Fr. Aquilino Bocos Merino, Superior General of the Congregation for twelve years (1991-2003). Before receiving the Cardinal's miter, he was consecrated Bishop on June 16th at the parish St. Anthony Mary Claret in Madrid, Spain, by Cardinal **Fernando Sebastian Aguilar**, CMF, accompanied by Cardinal Carlos Osoro, Archbishop of

Madrid and Cardinal Ricardo Blazquez, Archbishop of Valladolid and President of the Spanish Episcopal Conference. Fr. Bocos was appointed titular Archbishop of Urusi. On June 28th, during the Ordinary Public Consistory, Pope Francis elevated him to Cardinal and appointed him Cardinal Deacon of the Church of Santa Lucia del Gonfalone, in Rome, run by the Claretians. A Thanksgiving Mass took place on the morning of June 30th, 2018 at the Minor Basilica of the Immaculate Heart of Mary in Rome.



THE BIRTH OF ANTHONY CLARET



Anthony Claret came into the world in Sallent (Barcelona, Spain) on December 23, 1807. This date is recognized by common belief, since the Founder never mentioned the exact day, nor is it possible to prove it otherwise. He was baptized very quickly, according to the custom of that time, on Christmas day. *I was christened Anthony Adjutor John* (Aut 5). He himself agrees with these names that he was baptized with, which are linked to strictly family references. Mary was added on later when he was consecrated Bishop, due to his devotion to the Virgin because she *is my mother, my patroness, my mistress, my directress and my all, after Jesus* (cf. Aut 5). As we commemorate the date of his birth today, we give thanks to God for the gift of his missionary life, which began in Sallent next to the Llobregat River, and was called to flow into the sea of all the continents for the good of the universal Church.

LOVE, THE CORE OF THE DEFINITION OF THE MISSIONARY



Birthplace of Claret (Sallent)



"To live the call to evangelize more fervently, we need to remember who we are and to whom we belong. Returning to the *definition of the missionary* helps us to eliminate the ashes of routine and weariness, rekindles the burning embers of our vocation, and renews the enthusiasm we need to be 'on fire', 'to spread the flames' and 'to set everyone on fire with God's love.' The *definition of the missionary* leads us to the core of a fulfilled human and Christian life: love.

Thanks to the Spirit we recognize ourselves as sons who are sent (cf. Jn 20:21-23; Rom 8:15). This gift opens us to gratitude and prepares us to share freely that which has been freely given to us. With this vocation we receive a new name (*identity*), we become part of a new charismatic family in the Church (*belonging*), we are gifted with a way of living as "men on fire with love" (*spirituality*), we are empowered to follow an ongoing process of conformity with Christ (*formation*) and we are sent to light up the whole world in this same love of God (*mission*). Many Claretians have attested that this vocation gives one's life a sense of joy and meaning." (MFL 32-33)



FOR PERSONAL REFLECTION

The *Definition of the Missionary* synthesizes our charismatic profile in the Church.

- Which expressions of this Definition relate most with the experiences you are living at this time?
- Would you add any others in order to express what it means for you to be a Claretian today?
- If you have not already done so, it would be beneficial to write this Definition on a piece of paper and keep it in your wallet.

"To love is essentially to give oneself to others."
(John Paul II)



1847. In Barcelona Claret begins giving Spiritual Exercises for the nuns of La Enseñanza of Mother Lestonnac.

1856. Claret writes to the Queen requesting that some Daughters of Charity be sent to Cuba to work at the hospitals in his diocese.

1864. Claret has a mystical experience while celebrating Mass at Dawn with the Sisters Adorers in Madrid: *the Virgin put the baby Jesus in his arms.*



THE FIRST CLARETIAN BISHOP IN JAPAN

MISSIONARI SUMUS (2015-2021)

On June 2, 2018, Fr. Josep Maria Abella Batlle's appointment as Auxiliary Bishop of the Archdiocese of Osaka (Japan) was made public. Fr. Abella, originally from Lleida (Spain), was sent to Japan as a missionary after completing his studies in Barcelona. After his priestly ordination, he was assigned Coadjutor of the parish in Midorigaoka, Nagoya (1975-1977); Counselor of the Delegation of East Asia (1976-1981); Formator and member of Youth Ministry in Tokyo (1977-1981); Pastor in Hirakata, Osaka (1981-1988);

Coordinator of Missionary Promotion in the Archdiocese of Osaka (1988-1991) while serving as Major Superior of the Delegation of East Asia (1981-1991). For twelve years he was General Prefect of the Apostolate (1991 - 2003) and then Superior General at two other times (2003 - 2015). After having returned from Japan in November of 2015, he was appointed Pastor of the Cathedral in Osaka in 2017. His episcopal ordination took place on July 16, 2018 at the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception in Osaka at the hands of the diocesan Archbishop.



MIGUEL PAYA RICO
Cardinal of Toledo (1811-1891)



Beneixama (Valencia, Spain). In 1857 he founded the newspaper *El eco de la religion* [The Echo of Religion]. He was consecrated Bishop of Cuenca in 1858, Archbishop of Santiago de Compostela in 1874, and Cardinal in 1877. He died in Toledo as Archbishop of that diocese in 1891. In March of 1867 he published a circular letter praising Claret's work and instilling his catechism throughout the Diocese of Cuenca: *Throughout [Cuenca] may this text be useful to explain Christian doctrine, examinations and other acts involving religious ministers, the duplicate Catechism of Christian Doctrine, arranged by the Honorable Archbishop Anthony Claret, and adopted by the Most Holy Father Pius IX, eliminating all other known [catechisms].* And in a letter to Claret he said: *I have always deplored its variety (of the catechism) and for that I have given thanks to God for the gigantic step you have taken to procure one sanctioned by the Holy See.*

PILGRIMS LIKE THE DISCIPLES OF EMMAUS



“Like the disciples of Emmaus, we too can overcome the lack of enthusiasm and zeal when we allow ourselves to be accompanied by the Master along the way of the missionary life. He hears our frustrations and questions and gives us what we need to rekindle the embers of a weakened vocation: the Word that ‘makes the heart burn’ and the Eucharist that ‘opens our eyes’ (cf. Lk 24, 31-45). That was the experience of our Founder. In the forge of meditation, spiritual exercises, and especially of Scripture and the Eucharist, challenged by the social, political and ecclesial context, his heart burned with the fire of his love for God and Mary (cf. Aut 227, 342). Realizing that love is a gift, as well as a task, Claret calls insistently upon God the Father (Aut 444-445), Jesus (Aut 446), the Spirit and Mary: ‘Oh Heart of Mary, furnace and instrument of love, kindle in me the love of God and neighbour’ (Aut 447).” (MFL 44)



FOR PERSONAL REFLECTION

The General Chapter of 2009 proposed the journey of the disciples of Emmaus as a paradigm for all transformative journeys.

- Do you usually share with others “the conversations you have had along the way”?
- Do you find within the Word and the Eucharist ways to make your missionary heart burn?
- Do you tend to ask God and the Virgin Mary for the gift of love with humility and insistence?

“I would give everything I know, for half of what I do not know.”
(Rene Descartes)



1807. Claret is baptized at Santa Maria church in Sallent. They named him Anthony Adjutor John.

1848. Claret preaches at Santo Domingo Church in Las Palmas, Canary Islands.

1850. As he waits to set sail for Cuba, Claret celebrates in accord with those rites to be performed by bishops at the Cathedral in Barcelona.



NEW ORGANISMS IN AFRICA AND ASIA

MISSIONARII SUMUS (2015-2021)

Within the framework of the reorganization of our Organisms in Africa, on July 16, 2018, the anniversary of the Foundation of the Congregation, the new Padre Xifre Independent Delegation was erected, uniting the former Guinea Ecuatorial Independent Delegation and the General Mission of Gabon. At the time it was instated the new Organism had 62 members and 12 communities. The house of the *Claret Shrine* of Malabo (Equatorial Guinea) was established as the Curia.

After a long process of discernment and preparation, Kolkata Dependent

Delegation was elevated to an Independent Delegation on 16 July 2019. Two Assemblies were held prior to this occasion, the first in Kolkata and the second in Ranchi, both during the month of February. It is blessed with missionaries from different tribes (mainly Santhal, Oraon, Kharia and Munda) and regions of North and South India. On the 24th of October 2019, Sri Lanka Dependent Delegation to Deutschland Province was elevated to Independent Delegation taking the name of the canonized in 2015, priest and missionary saint, Apostle of Sri Lanka, St. Joseph Vaz.

CLARET'S CHRISTMAS



In his Autobiography Claret talks about how he spent Christmastime giving Spiritual Exercises to the nuns since this was when they had the most free time. One Christmas something special happened. *During the years that the illustrious Fr. Carmelo Sala was his chaplain, the Sisters Adorers in Madrid traditionally invited him to celebrate Midnight Mass on Christmas Eve in their school chapel and they would all receive communion. Then he gave them a meditation and a talk, and finally he celebrated the other two Masses, according to the liturgy of that solemn day. One year, when leaving there, Fr. Carmelo observed something extraordinary about the Archbishop, and without knowing the reason, he showed some admiration, and, since he was his confessor, Father Claret told him privately: Tonight the Blessed Virgin has put the baby Jesus in my arms. Oh! It was so beautiful! This fact was declared by the same Canon during the Informative Process.*

WE ARE MISSIONARIES



“We are missionaries! The Mission belongs to the core of our most fundamental identity. We have received from the Spirit a charism that conforms us to Jesus and makes us similar to the apostles, in a communion of life, totally dedicated to the Father and to the Kingdom (cf. CC 34). One hundred and fifty years ago, our Claretian community experienced a great joy when the Church approved our Constitutions and recognized, with joy, that our Congregation of Missionaries is a gift of the Spirit. Today, also with great joy, we proclaim gratefully with Mary the greatness of the Lord.” (MS 1)



FOR PERSONAL REFLECTION

The General Chapter of 2015 strongly emphasized the missionary dimension of our vocation.

- Do you live your missionary vocation in the Church with joy and gratitude?
- How do you express that you are a missionary and not just a religious or a priest?

“Experience is not what has been lived
but rather all of the good that has been learned.”
(Jairo Fowbier Pabon)



1846. From Sarreal (Tarragona), where he is preaching a mission with Fr. **Manuel Vilaro**, Claret tells Fr. **Joseph Caixal** how the booklets are bearing fruit.

1856. Claret asks the Director of the Daughters of Charity to send him Sisters for his hospitals; he argues that he has done a lot for their congregation and feels he deserves some compensation.

1857. Claret writes a welcome letter to Nuncio **Barili** and asks him to put the 1851 Concordat into action. He appears eager to cooperate with him.



IN NEW ZEALAND

MISSIONARI SUMUS (2015-2021)

The new mission in Mount Maunganui is located in Tauranga in the Diocese of Hamilton. It was inaugurated on August 28, 2018. The work will take place at All Saints parish, next to the sea. The new mission began with a Mass on the Feast of the Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary. The fundamental ministry, as in all parishes, focuses on young people, children, and those in charge of the missions. They began by assisting the pastors. Bangalore Province has assumed

responsibility for it. New Zealand is a small country, similar in size to Great Britain or Japan, with a population of only four million inhabitants. Most of New Zealand's population is of European descent; the *Māori* indigenous are the largest minority. Even though it has three official languages, English is by far the most spoken. It is a predominantly urban country. 53% live in one of the four largest cities: Auckland, Christchurch, Wellington and Hamilton, the area where the new foundation is located.



SAINT STEPHEN Claret's Role Model



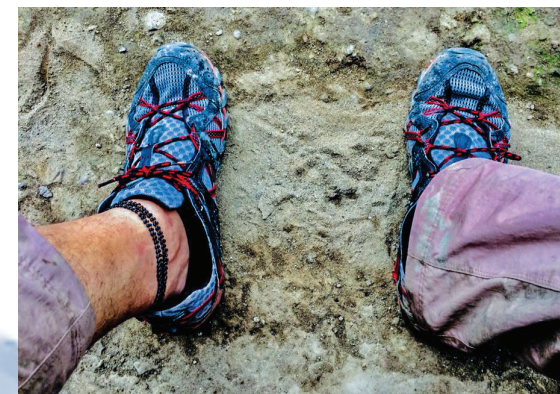
The feast of St. Stephen has always been celebrated immediately after Christmas, the closest day to the birth of the Savior, since he was the protomartyr. St. Stephen was the patron saint of Sallent. A chapel was built in his honor at the parish church in 1419. In his *Autobiography* Claret tells us that the first sermon he preached after his priestly ordination was the panegyric of the town's patron saint (see Aut 103). Apparently, the Feast of St. Stephen was celebrated on September 13th there. St. Anthony Mary Claret mentions St. Stephen in particular when in his *Autobiography* he narrates his experience of victory over temptations against chastity. Later, during his diaconate ordination in 1834, he understood the presence of Saint Stephen not only as a patron saint but as a model of vocational identification which showed him his future mission as the victor over the powers of evil. Moreover, St. Stephen told him that his struggle would not only be against the flesh, but against all evil.

THE WORD CONNECTS MISSION WITH LIFE



“Our charismatic heritage defines us as ‘listeners and servants of the Word’. We are in the Church and in society an echo of Claret (cf. Aut 686), passionate minister of the Gospel in season and out of season, using all means at his disposal. We, like Mary, as Sons of her Heart, want to welcome and meditate upon the Word in our hearts and to proclaim it with passion.

The Spirit helps us understand the depth of God (cf. 1 Cor 2:11). The hermeneutic key to properly listen to the Word is God's love for his People, and the revelation of the mysteries of the Kingdom to the humble, the poor and excluded (cf. VD 90-108). The ministry of the Word belongs to the core of our charismatic experience; it is a link between mission and life. If we do not encourage the dialogue of the Covenant with our God, and with all those people who in one way or another listen to his voice, our preaching will be in vain.” (MS 42, 44)



FOR PERSONAL REFLECTION

- How would you briefly express what it means for you to be a “listener and servant of the Word”?
- Do you think that you live this charismatic trait in a Marian key?
- How is the Word of God helping to enlighten your life and your mission?

“If a person loves only one other person and is indifferent to all others, his love is not love but a symbiotic attachment, or an enlarged egotism.”
(Erich Fromm)



1857. At Christmastime Claret leads Spiritual Exercises for the Daughters of Charity that run the House of Mercy of Santa Isabel (Madrid).

1859. Claret writes a letter to **Pius IX** that Fr. **Paladio Currius** will take to him personally in which he consults with him about the writings of Mother **Paris**; he asks him to *deign to tell this priest what you want me to do and I will do it at once.*

1867. Claret feels that Jesus Christ says to him: *Do whatever she tells you.*



A FEW RECOGNITIONS RECEIVED DURING THIS TIME

It is now quite common that we receive some kind of official recognition on behalf of distinct authorities for Claretian Missionaries that have become renowned for a certain reason.

Fr. Hugo Rios, from Chile, who is carrying out his mission in the Congo, was one of the 318 nominees for the 2017 Nobel Peace Prize for his work with abandoned children.

Fr. Sabu George Koottaranppallil, Director of St. Claret College, Bangalore, received the *Republic Day Achievers 2018 Award for Integrated Intelligent*

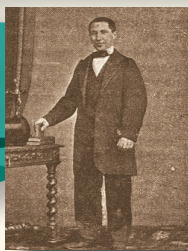
Research on January 18th. Likewise, St. Claret College won the prestigious *Best Upcoming Private College Award*. On March 26, 2018, Fr. Vineeth George from Bangalore Province received the *Rashtriya Gaurav Puraskar 2018 Award* at the Indian International Center, New Delhi.

In Medellin, Colombia, Fr. Gabriel Antonio Mejia, from Hogares Claret, received the *World's Children's Prize Honorary Award*, for his more than 30-year battle in favor of vulnerable children.

MISSIONARII SUMUS (2015-2021)



IGNACIO BETRIU Claret's Page (1825-1886)



Areu (Lleida, Spain). As a youth he worked with Ribas de Freser (Girona) as a carpenter in Ventolar, where he met Father Claret. He accompanied the Saint with great fidelity from 1850 to 1864. Father Claret says of him: *He was most dependable, very well mannered, kind to the poor, and zealous. He also taught Christian doctrine to the poor and, during the missions, to others. He distributed books, medals, holy cards, and rosaries from the supply I ordered him to bring along with us. He returned from America with me and is still in my service to this day.* (Aut 605). He always referred to him as *the good Betriu*. Several letters have been preserved from Betriu addressed to Sister Rosa de San Elias, which contain interesting facts about Father Claret. In 1864 he entered the Society of Jesus. He died in Manila (Philippines).

COMMUNITY, A PARABLE OF COMMUNION



“From the beginning we have lived in community, in the style of the apostles with Jesus and the first community, which had one heart and one mind and had everything in common. In the community we are sons of God the Father and sent by Him, and brothers among ourselves. Like the beloved disciple, we welcome Mary into our home as our Mother. To live as a missionary community is a gift of the Holy

Spirit, which we must welcome and care for by loving one another (cf. CC 15); it is He who shapes our fellowship and forms us into disciples-missionaries among the people of God. Our communities – inter-generational and inter-cultural (cf. CC 17) – are called to be a parable of communion, an eschatological sign, an evangelizing word, in today's world.” (MS 46)



FOR PERSONAL REFLECTION

Throughout the *Claretian Year* you have meditated on community several times.

- How would you explain your experience of community life in a few words to someone unfamiliar with religious life?
- What could you do to make your community truly a “parable of communion”?

“Faith is to believe what you do not see;
the reward of this faith is to see what you believe.”
(Saint Augustine)



1850. After the departure is postponed several times, they finally embark for Cuba. They go in procession from the Episcopal Palace to the port. Eight priests and four lay people accompany Claret.

1864. Claret forwards a letter from the Apostolic Vicar of Gibraltar to Fr. **Josep Xifre** in which he asks for missionaries. As usual, Claret states that matters of governing and extending the Congregation pertain to the Superior General.

1869. Claret attends the fourth General Congregation of the First Vatican Council.



PANAMA WYD 2019 IN CLARETIAN FAMILY

MISSIONARIII SUMUS (2015-2021)

World Youth Day took place in Panama City from January 17-28, 2019. This event was preceded by the Claretian Family pre-World Youth Day event that gathered approximately 600 pilgrims from different communities, mainly from the Americas and a group from Asia.

The Marian imprint of WYD, whose theme was *May it be done to me according to your Word*, could be perceived from the beginning, both in the activities carried out at the Claret School of the **Religious of Mary**

Immaculate, and in the hospitality offered by families in the area as they welcomed pilgrims into their homes.

The objective of the Claretian Youth gathering was to: *meet at WYD 2019 and make a pilgrimage with the young people of our communities, as a Claretian Family, together with the Immaculate Heart of Mary*. The event also helped to link Youth and Vocations Ministry of the Claretian Family with other pastoral practices in service of life, through the first edition of the *Claret-Life Award*.



CEFERINO GONZALEZ DIAZ-TUÑÓN

Cardinal of Seville (1831-1894)



San Nicolas de Villoria (Asturias, Spain). He became a Dominican in 1846 and was a missionary in the Philippines. He was ordained a priest in 1854.

He returned to Spain in 1867 and was named Prior of Ocaña. He was consecrated bishop of Cordoba in 1875. He published *Historia de la Filosofia [History of Philosophy]* and founded the magazine *La Ciencia Cristiana [Christian Science]*. He was the Archbishop of Seville, Cardinal and Archbishop of Toledo beginning in 1885, then Archbishop of Seville again until his resignation in 1889. He wrote from Cordoba in 1879: *Claret stayed in this city for a few days in 1862 or 1863; and from the reliable reports that I have received, it appears that his conduct on that occasion was exemplary in every way, excelling in zeal for the salvation of souls, which caused him to use most of the day preaching the divine word, to the point of giving eight or ten sermons a day ... Among the tremendous good he did in this city, the establishment of the Academy of St. Michael should be noted*. He died on December 29th.

THE POOR CHALLENGE US



“Our Father Founder understood his vocation using the scene of the synagogue of Nazareth in which Jesus identified himself with the anointed, to evangelize the poor. Our Constitutions present Mary, our Mother, to us as the foremost among the poor of the Lord (cf. CC 23). In its process of return to the Gospel and adaptation to the times, our Congregation has deepened its call to evangelize the poor and to let itself be evangelized by them. Today, it listens even more intensely to the Church’s call to strengthen ever more – with boldness and creativity – the option for the poor and displaced. One cannot be Claretian if he acts as if the poor did not exist. Nor can he be Claretian without denouncing unfair structures, fighting against the system that subjugates the poor and proposing alternatives. The poor are ‘the privileged recipients of the Gospel’. Through them – as in Mary – the Gospel speaks and challenges us with a new voice.” (MS 49)



FOR PERSONAL REFLECTION

- Do you remember an experience in which you have felt evangelized by the poor?
- What does it mean to you that “you cannot be a Claretian as if the poor did not exist”? Do you live in a protected bubble or do you expose yourself to make contact with those in need?

“Change your pleasures, but not your friends.”
(Voltaire)



1851. In a letter, Claret tells **Caixal** that he found the Archbishopric in misery due to many things, and about the deaths and illnesses of some collaborators.

1865. Claret writes to the Secretary of State, Cardinal **Antonelli**, asking him to tell the Pope that he has fulfilled all that he has been ordered to do.

1866. Claret thanks **Joseph Gras Granollers**, Canon of Sacromonte (Granada), for sending him the *Reglamento de la Academia y corte de Cristo* [Rules for the Academy and Court of Christ], an institution similar to the *Academy of St. Michael*.



NEW ORGANISMS IN EUROPE AND AFRICA

MISSIONARIUM SUMUS (2015-2021)

Within the framework of the Congregation's reorganization in Europe and Africa, two new Organisms were erected on January 1, 2019, after a process of discernment and preparation: Fatima Province and Mãe da Africa Independent Delegation. Mãe da Africa is the new name of the former Angola and São Tome-Príncipe Dependent Delegation formerly attached to Portugal Province.

The Fatima Province is made up of the former Provinces of Betica (including Zimbabwe Mission) and Portugal and UK-Ireland Independent Delegation.

At the time of its constitution it had 180 members and 25 houses. The Curia was set up in Lisbon.

On January 1, 2020, Sanctus Paulus Province was erected comprising the former Provinces of Catalunya and Euskal Herria and the Independent Delegations of France and Italy. The Curia was established in Barcelona.

These reorganizations have been the result of a lengthy discernment, particularly the new Provinces of Fatima and Sanctus Paulus given its particular characteristics: distance, language, culture and congregational tradition.

DONATO BERENGUER, CMF

Missionary in Chile (1816-1882)



Cedo (Lleida, Spain). He was formed at the seminary in La Seo de Urgel and was ordained there. He entered the Congregation in 1860. When the house in Segovia was founded he was sent there. He had a powerful voice and extraordinary zeal. Fr. **Fabregas** said to Fr. **Clotet** about him: *Fr. Berenguer ... is achieving great success throughout the country and wherever he goes.* After his experience in Algiers, he arrived in Chile in 1872. He was a renowned spiritual director. His love for the poor led him to found the *Asilo del Corazon de Maria* [Heart of Mary Shelter] in Santiago. He was a man of prayer and great apostolic zeal. Some of his favorite phrases were: *I prefer in this world to walk the path of Calvary than through the glories of Tabor ... It seems that work feeds me ... I seek only the glory of God and the salvation of souls, the hardest work seems sweet to me.* It was he who brought about the construction of the Corazon de Maria Church in Santiago, Chile, in whose presbytery lay his remains.



EVANGELIZING WITH OTHERS



“Our Father Founder taught us that the evangelizing mission is an enormous work of transformation of the world that has to be carried forward ‘by all’, in favor of all and to bring real happiness to our neighbors. At Pentecost, the Spirit is poured out on the whole Christian assembly, on ‘young and old,’ ‘sons and daughters,’ and ‘on all flesh’. Mary, our Mother, was there, as witness and messenger of the total mystery of Jesus in the community that had one heart and one mind (cf. Acts 1:14). For our Congregation the dimension of

‘evangelizing with others’, multiplying evangelizing leaders, and shared mission is an indispensable charismatic trait (cf. CC 3, 7, 48) that we understand and carry out in various ways.” (MS 53)



FOR PERSONAL REFLECTION

“Knowledge speaks, but wisdom listens.”
(Jimi Hendrix)



1861. Claret sends an excerpt that he likes from the rules of the nuns of Trespalacio to the press so they can distribute them while awaiting approval of the full text from Rome.

1862. During these days, Claret writes an *ascetic letter* to the President of one of the choirs of the **Academy of St. Michael**.

1865. Having just recently arrived in Madrid from Gracia (Barcelona) after the crisis over the Kingdom of Italy, today Claret travels to El Escorial, where he will spend the end and beginning of the year. Fr. **Jaime Claret** accompanies him.



CONTINENTAL MEETINGS

MISSIONARIUM SUMUS (2015-2021)

During the 2015-2021 six-year term, the General Government decided to make canonical visits by conference: ACLA (2017), ASCLA EAST and WEST (2018), MICLA (2019) and ECLA (2020). At the end of each cycle of visits, it meets with the Provincial Governments of the Organisms of each Conference. The first meeting took place in Nairobi (Kenya) in November of 2017; the second in Medan (Indonesia) in December of 2018; the third in Medellin (Colombia) in December of 2019

The objective of these meetings is to discern the challenges and the missionary responses in each of the continents, based on the analyses achieved during the canonical visits and the guidelines of the XXV General Chapter. The Major Superiors report on the situation of their respective Organisms and the impact the canonical visits had. The General Government then shares how to apply the three processes of transformation proposed by the XXV General Chapter in each continent.



LUIS IGNACIO ANDRADE, CMF
Governmental Minister (1894-1966)



Neiva (Colombia). He was a minister, ambassador and Presidential candidate in Colombia. In order to get his family out of its tough financial situation, he devoted himself to collecting and selling firewood. Around age 20 he entered fully into the political life of his country. By 1919 he was already a member of Parliament. Later he would become Ambassador to the Holy See, Minister and even a Presidential candidate of the Republic. After his wife died, whom he had entrusted to the then Blessed Anthony Mary Claret, he fulfilled a promise by asking to enter the Congregation, leaving behind children and numerous grandchildren. He was 64 years old. He professed at the General Curia in the hands of Fr. **Schweiger**. In 1959 he was ordained in Rome. He was captivating as a learned man, but his simplicity as a religious was evident. He did not go back to participating in politics once he returned to his country, but rather dedicated himself to social promotion and priestly ministry. He had changed his name, going by Anselmo de Santa Quiteria from that point on. He died in Neiva, Colombia.

OPEN TO THE WHOLE WORLD



“Like Claret, we are convinced that our spirit is for the whole world. Today we understand the world in a global sense: the other, nature, the cosmos, the virtual world... This world is already inhabited by God. We need a sensitivity that will help us to discover all that he is already doing in the world (cf. RM 28). From here springs our dialogue with the sciences, culture, religions, etc.

The Mission means announcing the Gospel, taking into account the previous action of God's Spirit in the world and thus becomes *missio inter gentes*, prophetic dialogue (cf. MFL 58). The Church that is born of the *missio Dei* is shown to be a community that not only gives, but also receives; that does not impose, but persuades; that loves and respects freedom and dignity, which empties itself and is humble to grow with the other (cf. EG 171). In the dialogue of life questions and the more serious issues of the mission emerge (cf. LS 10). Thus, we discovered how God reveals himself in various contexts and how these prepare us for God's revelation.” (MS 58-59)



FOR PERSONAL REFLECTION

A missionary is someone willing to be sent wherever the mission demands.

- Have you had any missionary experiences outside of your Organism or your country? If yes, what have they meant to you?
- Are you open to the signs of the Spirit in science, culture and religion or rather do you find yourself with a defensive attitude?
- Do you usually talk with people who belong to other cultures or religions that are different from yours? What do you learn from them?

“To know and to know how to demonstrate it is to be worth twice as much.”
(Baltasar Gracian)



1848. Claret spends New Year's Eve in Las Palmas, Canary Islands, healing from pneumonia and a leg malady.

1850. Claret is sailing toward Cuba on this New Year's Eve and they spend it in front of Denia (Alicante).

1852. A *Te Deum* is sung at the cathedral in Santiago, Cuba because the cholera epidemic has ended.



MISSIONARI SUMUS (2015-2021)

THE CLARETIAN YEAR

The XXV General Chapter requested that during the six-year period 2015-2021, a *formative and spiritual itinerary to help all Claretians know and live deeply and passionately our spiritual patrimony* (see MS 74.1) be designed and carried out. The General Prefecture of Spirituality took charge of materializing this proposal through the *The Claretian Year* project, which continues the tradition of other projects lived out by the Congregation in recent decades; above all, *Word-Mission and The Forge in Everyday Life*.

The *Claretian Year* is an instrument of

ongoing formation and Claretian renewal (in the form of a book, web page and mobile app) that offers a recommendation for each day of the year on how to get to know and personalize our spiritual heritage. It presents Claret's daily itinerary, a fragment of the Congregation's history and the biography of a distinguished person that had to do with Claret. From January to June it offers a few refined paragraphs from the *Autobiography* with questions for personal reflection. From July to mid-November it does the same with the Constitutions and the remaining days and month on selected Chapter documents.



LUCAS JOSE ROSENDO SALVADÒ ROTEÀ

Bishop of Puerto Victoria (1814-1900)



Tui (Pontevedra, Spain). He took the Benedictine habit in Santiago de Compostela. He studied music. Exclaustrated, he settled in Tui. In 1838 he moved to Cava (Italy). In 1848 he went with Fray **Jose Benito Serra** to Australia to found a mission in Nueva Nursia. Several Spanish Benedictines, especially Catalans, and eminent figures such as Fray Benito Serra went on this expedition to Australia which Father Claret sponsored. He was consecrated Bishop of Puerto Victoria in 1849. He remained in Australia until 1853, the year the English government abolished the colony. Father Claret wrote to him on April 6, 1868 about founding a Benedictine college for Australian missionaries at El Escorial. At the end of June that same year, Salvado succeeded him as President of that monastery. He resigned from his diocese in 1888, dying in Rome on December 29th. He belonged to the higher Board of the **Academy of St. Michael**.

THE PROCESSES OF TRANSFORMATION



"We resolve to be – with Jesus – a Congregation 'going forth' (cf. Mk 1:38) which receives the call of the Church to the pastoral-missionary and ecological conversion: we commit ourselves to form – under the guidance of the Spirit – communities of witnesses and messengers; we will take care to be men of deep spirituality who – open to the recommendation of Pope Francis to the Congregation – adore our God the Father 'in spirit and truth' (cf. Jn 4:23) and embrace the processes of transformation that the Spirit grants us. And all of this, we want to live in the joy that is born of God (cf. Aut 444, 754), which Mary, our mother, experienced (cf. Lk 1-2) and which is characteristic in receiving the Gospel. There will not be privations and adversities (cf. CC 9, 44) that will prevent us from living and proclaiming the beatitudes of Jesus. The Spirit of our Father and our Mother will speak for us." (MS 65)



FOR PERSONAL REFLECTION

The Congregation invites us to live three processes of transformation in our missionary growth.

- How have you assumed the three processes of transformation proposed by the XXV General Chapter?
- Which of them do you need to pay more attention to?
- Do you live a spirituality of actions, or rather, of processes?

"To bring bad news; give to a gracious message a host of tongues, but let ill tidings tell themselves when they be felt."

(William Shakespeare)