

Marianist “Saints”

As we begin a new scholastic year, perhaps it would be helpful to review the situation of our “saints.”

Did you realize we have nine in the Marianist Family who have been named *Blessed*? The Church sees these as persons in heaven and we can offer them public veneration. Martyrs need no miracle to be named Blessed. All the Blesseds need a miracle to be canonized as Saints.

Blessed William Joseph Chaminade is credited with interceding with God for the cure of **Elena Gracias Otero** from Argentina. Even though the Church did not accept another healing as a miracle because of the possibility that it might have come about through some medical intervention, we are grateful for the answers to our prayers and we believe that Fr. Chaminade and our “Saints” do intercede for us.

We have seven **Spanish martyrs** from two cities during the period of the Spanish civil war. The martyrs, **Brothers Carlos Eraña, Jesús Hita, and Fidel Fuidio** were martyred in Ciudad Real. They were teachers in our school there.

Bro. Carlos Eraña was Basque and struggled with the Spanish language. He became a great teacher of Spanish. He also was a great soccer player. When the brothers were forced to leave the school, they took up residence with friends of the school. He was well known as a religious teacher and would walk through the streets to maintain contact with the other Marianists, offer them help, and, in general support them.

Bro. Jesús Hita was one who overcame a stuttering problem to become a great teacher. He saw this crisis as a time for him to prepare for the worst. He spent much time praying, listening to the news reports, following the progress of the armies on maps.

Bro. Fidel Fuidio was older, a nationally known archeologist, a professor in the university.

There were four other Marianists killed for the faith during the Spanish civil war. These were killed in Madrid: **Fr. Miguel Léibar** and **Bros Florencio Arnaiz, Sabino Ayastuy, and Joachin Ochoa.**

There were a number of other Marianists killed during the civil war but they were not judged to have died primarily for the faith. The Church studies to see if their deaths were truly for the faith or for political or other reasons.

Fr. Miguel Léibar was a mentor for the other three martyrs from Madrid. Through the work of an informer, their residence was searched without warning. They saw his cassock and arrested him.

Bros. Florencio Arnáiz, Sabino Ayastuy, and Joachin Ochoa had been given a new assignment. Before they could get there, they were arrested, taken to a distant place and murdered. They found religious articles on their persons.

Blessed Jakob Gapp was martyred for the faith because he refused to accept National Socialism. He had studied it and was convinced it was incompatible with Christianity. He preached against it wherever he could. The Superiors moved him from country to country in order to protect him and our works. In Spain, two Gestapo agents followed him, pretending they were Jews wishing to convert. When they had gained his confidence they took him to France, which was then controlled by the Nazis. They arrested him and took him to Berlin. He maintained his opposition to the Nazi ideology because of his Christian faith. They beheaded him and used his body for research. What is left is his gold ring, sign of his perpetual consecration.

These nine Blesseds in heaven are members of the Marianist Family. They know us and want to help us. We must get to know them on a first-name basis and ask them to intercede for us in our own efforts to live our Marianist charism. All our Blesseds need one more declared miracle in order to be canonized as Saints.

We also have three members of the Family who have been declared **Venerable**. They have been recognized for practicing heroic virtue. They need a miracle to be considered Blessed. We may privately venerate them and ask God to have mercy on us through their intercession. **Venerable Adèle de Batz de Trenquelléon**, foundress of the Daughters of Mary, is claimed to be instrumental in the healing of a Marianist sister in Italy of ovarian cancer. This case is being studied at present.

Venerable Thérèse de Lamourous spent her life at the Misericorde (Mercy House) and was instrumental in the founding of other Mercy Houses in France and even in Poland. St. Faustina, a Sister of Our Lady of Mercy, is a member of a congregation that was inspired by Therese.

Venerable Faustino Pérez-Manglano Magro was a Marianist Sodalist, who wanted to become a Marianist missionary in South America. He died of Hodgkin's disease. He was judged to have lived a life of heroic virtue.

There are other members of the Marianist Family who are being considered for their holiness. These are **Servants of God. Fr. Doming Lázaro** was a noted educator. **Fr. Vicente Lopez** was chaplain at one of our schools and was known as an excellent confessor.

We really believe in the Communion of Saints. Blessed Fr. Chaminade's dream was that we would become a nation of saints.

The French Province is considering **Fr. Emil Neubert**, noted Mariologist. In Latin America, **Bro. Miquel Quiroga** gave his life defending his parishioners, who were being harassed by a lay militia group.

Besides these, we must remember the large number of the Marianist Family who are with God already. These are the **unknown saints** who also pray for us.

This is why it is important that we ask all our "saints" to intercede for us in our various needs. It is also good for the building up of our faith to hear that God has listened to their prayers. If a favor is granted through the intercession of one of our "saints," please let us know. You can reach me by mail, email, or phone.

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May God bless the entire Marianist Family during this coming year and show us His mercy through the prayers of our Marianist "saints."