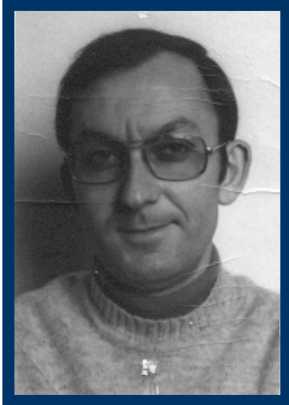


January 27, 2007

Death Notice No. 2 (To all Unit Administrations):



The Province of Madrid, recommends to our fraternal prayers our dear brother, CELESTINO BACAS ALVAREZ, who died in the service of the Blessed Virgin Mary on January 18, 2007 in Madrid, Spain in the 67th year of his age and the 49th year of his religious profession.

Celestino Bacas was born in Los Espejos de la Reina (León) on May 19, 1940. His parents were Ramón and Lucía. He was the fourth of five brothers: Maximino, Nemesio, Tomás and Fidel.

On October 9, 1953, Celestino entered the postulate at Valladolid. He made his First Profession in Carabanchel on September 12, 1958. He preferred working with his hands, so, after he was trained in manual skills, he sought further training so could become a “Master Teacher” of these skills to others. Celestino manifested his “great desire to one day be able to touch the souls of the young workers, who so very much needed someone to direct them...to be an apostle amongst workers in the schools.”

On August 19, 1963 he made his Perpetual Profession in Vitoria.

That same year, he received his official certification as a teacher of technical and industrial skills. This allowed him to become a teacher of technology and mechanical drawing. He was a teacher at Santa María del Pilar in Madrid (1963-1965) and Santa Ana y San Rafael (1965-1974). After a sabbatical in Fribourg (1974-1976) he returned to Santa Ana, remaining there from 1977-2000. He devoted 32 years of his life to the community and school at Santa Ana y San Rafael. There, he worked with those students studying trade and industrial skills. He also actively assisted in youth ministry, as well as with the Marianist Fraternities. This work left a profound impact both on his life and on those whom he served.

In 1999 he accepted the invitation made on behalf of the entire Society of Mary by Fr. David Fleming, Superior General, to serve as a founder of the first Marianist community in Cuba. He had to wait several years to obtain his visa. He spent those years of waiting helping at the formation community in Salamanca (2000-2001) and Santa María de Carabanchel (2001-2003).

On January 16, 2003, he left for Cuba to become the superior of the first Marianist community. There he lived through the difficulty of the illness of Francisco Pérez de Mendiguren who had to return to Spain where he died of cancer a short time later.

Celestino, himself, had to return to Spain due to illness in February 2006. He lived during his illness in the communities of Siquem, Santa Ana and Adelfas.

Very conscious of the gravity of his illness, he affirmed: “my illness has come to me during the happiest moment of my life.” Cuba had touched and filled his heart. The simplicity of the people of Vertientes, as well as the self-discovery of his own “missionary” spirit, opened new horizons in his life. This, indeed, filled him with deep joy. Still filled with that joy, he passed from this life on January 18, 2007.

We give thanks to God for Celestino, a happy and faithful religious up to the last moment of his life. In Celestino we find a marvelous example of good judgment, a practical sense and the wisdom of experience. From Heaven he will continue to accompany us in our mission, especially that of the Foundation in Cuba.