

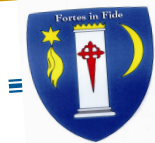
# Via Latina 22

News From the General Administration - Society of Mary



Issue # 159 - July 2007

## MARIANIST MARTYRS OF MADRID TO BE BEATIFIED



Curia Generalizia dei Marianisti

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Superiore Generale

My Dear Brothers and Sisters,

It is with great joy, and profound gratitude, that I share with you today the news that our Holy Father, Pope Benedict XVI, has approved four Marianists Martyrs for beatification on October 28, 2007. These four, Miguel Léibar, Joaquín Ochoa Salazar, Sabino Ayastuy Errasti and Florencio Arnáiz Cejudo, will be beatified along with 494 other martyrs of the religious persecution in Spain during the years 1936-1939. This large group includes bishops, priests, consecrated religious and laypersons. 462 of them were members of institutes of Consecrated Life!

While the pain and sorrow of the events that led to their martyrdom remain a difficult memory for the Spanish people, as well as many religious institutes, including the Society of Mary, we find joy, consolation and inspiration in that during those days there were so many witnesses to the Faith. They gave of themselves, in steadfast courage and faith, never surrendering their principles or convictions. They were called to follow Christ to Calvary. They have received the martyr's crown, and now the Church will proclaim their virtue for all to see.

In this issue of *Via Latina 22* we share with you some of the story of these Marianist Martyrs of Madrid, as well as some background of their Cause as it progressed over the years. We are most grateful to those who have worked diligently on this Cause, especially Fr. Enrique Torres, SM, and Fr. José María Salaverri, SM.

The large number who will be beatified in October means that we will have to share the privileges of participation in the actual ceremonies with many other congregations, dioceses and faithful (see the article *Events of the Beatification*). Nevertheless, as Marianists around the world, we will remain united in joy, challenged in our own witnessing to the Gospel, and rededicated to our mission to do whatever He asks of us!

May the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit be glorified, in all places, through the Immaculate Virgin Mary!

Fraternally,

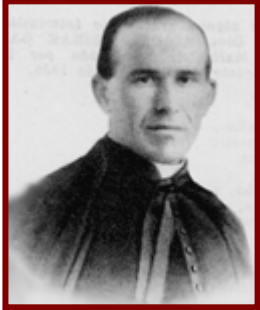
*Manuel J. Cortés*  
Manuel J. Cortés, SM  
Superior General

MIGUEL  
SABINO  
JOAQUÍN  
FLORENCIO



## THE MARIANIST MARTYRS OF MADRID

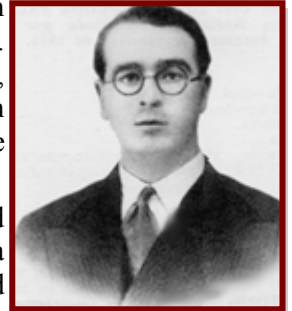
During the first months of the religious persecution in Spain (1936-1939), four Marianists were shot in Madrid by revolutionary militias. Fr. Miguel Léibar Garay was arrested and shot on July 28, 1936 and Brothers Joaquín Ochoa Salazar, Sabino Ayastuy Errasti and Florencio Arnáiz Cejudo suffered martyrdom later, on September 14, along with two other Dominican religious.



(←) **Miguel Léibar Garay** was born in Sargaray-Aozaraza, Spain, on February 17, 1885. He professed First Vows in the Society of Mary in 1903. He was ordained a priest in Fribourg (Switzerland) in 1915. He devoted himself to teaching at various Marianist schools in Spain, also serving as director of the schools in Jerez de la Frontera and San Sebastián, as well as chaplain of the schools in Cádiz and Madrid. When the religious persecution broke out at the time of the Civil War, Fr. Miguel continued to be the leader among those religious in hiding in Madrid. Then, on July 28, 1936, he was arrested and shot by one of the

revolutionary militias.

**Joaquín Ochoa Salazar** (→) was born in Valdegovia (Spain) on April 16, 1910. He professed his First Vows in the SM in 1928. Having completed his university degree, he served as a teacher at Marianist schools in Escoriaza and Madrid. Following the military uprising and subsequent revolution in 1936, he took refuge in the house of a family friend. He was soon



arrested and on the following day, September 14, he was shot in the company of his fellow Marianists, Sabino Ayastuy and Florencio Arnáiz, as well as with two Dominicans.



(←) **Sabino Ayastuy Errasti** was born in Ojala-Selay, Aozaraza (Spain), on December 29, 1911. He made his First Profession as a Marianist in 1928. He taught in Marianist schools in San Sebastián, Escoriaza and Madrid. When the Civil War broke out and declared the religious persecution, he sought refuge in the home of a sympathetic family. He, too, was arrested and shot in the presence of his fellow Marianists and the two Dominicans.



**Florencio Arnáiz Cejudo** (→) Born in Espinosa de Cerrato (Spain) on May 10, 1909, Florencio professed his First Vows in the Society of Mary in 1926. He obtained his university degree and was sent to teach at Marianist schools in Jerez de la Frontera and Madrid. Like his brothers, as the Civil War broke out, he was forced to seek refuge with a family. He too, was sacrificed by those who hated the Faith, alongside of Sabino Ayastuy, Joaquín Ochoa and the two Dominican religious.



## MARIANIST LOGO FOR THE BEATIFICATION

- Four blots of color revealing interconnected crosses and a central "M" which unites these crosses.
- Red, the color of fire, passion and of blood. Dark red, the color of blood spilt on the ground.
- A flame of fire over a fragile clay lamp.
- An impetuous wind that stirs the flame and retells the story.
- A tree leaf that falls by this violent autumn wind in Madrid. The four crosses hold the delicate leaf together amidst the storm.
- A claw print that recalls the clawing of a wild animal. And over the print, the Cross, many crosses.
- Four names that explain it all, without any other references — without saying where, nor when, nor who. Four names written in capital letters, firm and stable, which invite us to remain strong in faith at the foot of the Cross, of our crosses.



*José Eizaguirre, SM, Province of Madrid*

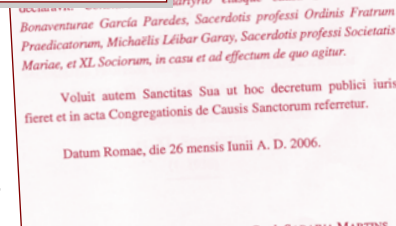
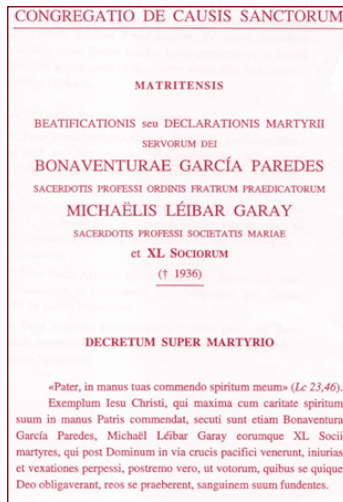
# HISTORY OF THE CAUSE

The Cause of Martyrdom for the four Spanish Marianist religious is united to that of a group of 38 Dominican religious. The idea to promote the cause for the beatification of these 42 religious began during the 1950's. Thus, in 1955 the Marianists named a Vice-Postulator in charge of the cause of their martyrs who were killed during the 1936 religious persecution in Spain. The following year, Brother Jose Antonio Romeo was named assistant to the Marianist Vice-Postulator for this work. In 1957 the three Spanish Dominican provinces, known as España, Rosario and Bética, agreed to work together with the SM in promoting the causes of all these martyrs. The Vice-Postulators from both orders collected all of the archival data, legal documents, along with both eye-witnesses and third-party accounts. All of these showed the violent death suffered by these religious martyrs.

With all of this material, on April 30, 1961, the Ordinary Process was begun in the Diocese of Madrid, at the Madrid Basilica of Our Lady of Atocha. The diocesan process lasted five years and was closed on April 23, 1966.

On November 3, 1966, the minutes and report of the diocesan process were brought to Rome to what was called at that time, the Sacred Congregation for Rites. The following year, the Congregation gave the authorization to proceed toward opening the Roman process, according to the Canonical norms. Pope Paul VI, however, imposed a moratorium for all causes related to the 1936 religious persecution in Spain. This remained in effect until 1980, when John Paul II promoted these martyr's causes as part of his pastoral program of bearing witness to the Church martyrs of the Twentieth Century. In addition, a new norm for the Causes of Saints, which made the canonical process much simpler, was promulgated in 1982. Thus, all of the postulators began to reactivate the causes for the martyrs of their dioceses and congregations.

During the 1990's, the Postulator for the Society of Mary, Fr. Enrique Torres, began to promote the causes of the four Marianist Martyrs of Madrid. He example was followed by the Dominican Congregation. The two Congregations then agreed to entrust the cause to the Postulator General of the Dominicans, Fr. Innocenzo Venchi and to the Postulator General of the Marianists, Fr. Enrique Torres. Towards the end of 1991 they began to compile the *Positio* detailing the story of their martyrdom, under the direction of the Relator of the Cause, Msgr. José Luis Gutiérrez. The *Positio* was completed and edited in 1995. Following the favorable study by the Congress of theologians and cardinals, Pope Benedict XVI, on June 26, 2006, issued the Decree of Martyrdom for 38 Dominicans and four Marianists: Fr. Miguel Léibar, Bro. Joaquín Ochoa, Bro. Sabino Ayastuy and Bro. Florentino Arnáiz. (Taken from the *Positio*, T. I, pages 19-22).



Recent letter from the Cardinal-Prefect of the Congregation for the Causes of Saints

Il Cardinale José Saraiva Martins

Vaticano, 28 May 2007

Dear Fr. Gascón,

Thank you very much for your gracious gift of the book *MADRID, SUMMER 1936 Miguel Léibar and Companions, Marianist Martyrs*.

I wish to express to you my sincere

appreciation for this biography of the four Marianists, who clearly loved Mary, and were enthusiastically dedicated teachers. This precious publication on the "Theology of Martyrdom" will most certainly make a remarkable contribution to the discussions about the Spanish Martyrdoms

which today hold more and more interest among experts.

I beg the Lord to grant abundant blessings on you, the Marianist General Administration and on all the members of the Society of Mary, especially Fr. José María Salaverri, former Superior General and author of this work.

Yours truly in Christ,

+José Card. Saraiva Martins

José Cardinal Saraiva Martins  
Prefect of the Congregation  
of the Causes of Saints

**ORATIO COLLECTA — Martyres Societatis Mariae**

Domine Deus noster,  
 qui beatis martyribus Michaël, Ioachino, Sabino ac Florentino  
 gratiam dedisti ut, sub praesidio beatissimae Virginis Mariae,  
 vitam suam in munere iuvenes educandi consumerent  
 et fidem usque ad effusionem sanguinis profiterentur,  
 concede ut et nos, eorum exemplo atque intercessione roborati,  
 eandem fidem verbis et operibus firmiter testificemur.  
 Per Dominum nostrum Iesum Christum Filium tuum...



**Prayer — Marianist Martyrs of Madrid**

Lord, Our God,  
 who granted to the blessed martyrs Miguel, Joaquín, Sabino and Florencio  
 the grace of dedicating their lives to the education of youth  
 under the protection of the Most Blessed Virgin Mary,  
 and of courageously professing the Faith, even to the point of shedding blood,  
 grant to us that, strengthened by their example and intercession,  
 we might give witness to the same Faith in word and deed.  
 Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of  
 the Holy Spirit, God for ever and ever. Amen.



**General Administration  
 Calendar**

*For all trips, the final date shown is the date the person is back in Rome*

- Jun 24-Jul 2: General Council attends USA Assembly in Tucson
- July 10-14: MC and AF attend the General Chapter of the FMI, Rome
- July 19-21: General Council Meetings, Rome
- August: Various family visits, retreats and meetings. Contact members of the GA by e-mail if necessary.

**G.A. Communications  
 Recently Sent...**

- Death Notices: #18 and Biographies #'s 16-17 to all Unit Leaders, etc.
- June 9: Report of the Official Visitation to the Chaminade International Seminary, Rome.
- June 15: *New Leaders Seminar* Information to participants.

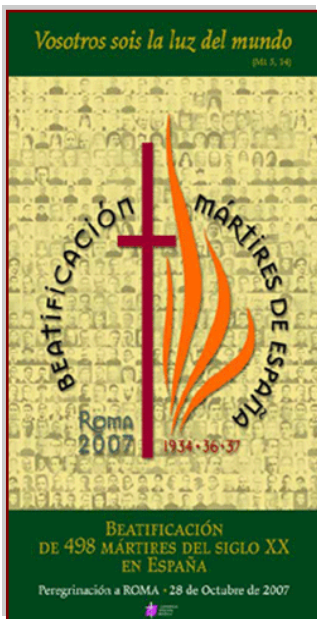
**EVENTS OF THE BEATIFICATION**

*(These events are tentative and subject to change)*

While the large number of persons being beatified at the ceremony on October 28, 2007 means that tickets will be quite limited, the Society of Mary is planning to hold special events during the days before and after the Mass of Beatification. At this time, the Marianist Provinces of Madrid and Zaragoza, in conjunction with the Spanish Bishops Conference and the Marianist General Administration, are making specific plans for these events. A tentative plan is as follows:

- Saturday, October 27 – Celebration of the Vigil (Aula Paolo VI, Vatican City — no tickets required)
- Sunday, October 28 – Mass of Beatification at the Basilica of St. Paul Outside the Walls, Rome (tickets required)
- Monday, October 29 – Mass of Thanksgiving for all Congregations and Dioceses at St. Peter's Basilica (no tickets required)

The General Administration is please to invite representatives from each unit, former Superiors General, and those connected to the Cause (families of the *Beati*, etc.). Formal invitations will be sent shortly. The Provinces of Madrid and Zaragoza are handling the arrangements for those pilgrims from Spain



**Common Logo for the Beatification of all 498 martyrs**

planning to attend.

Even if you cannot attend these events, you are invited to be present in prayer with those in Rome throughout those days.

**Marist — Marianist Renewal Programs: 2008**

Contact: [www.icmf.info](http://www.icmf.info) [T.Giardino,SM]

English Programs:

- Ages 35-50: 20 Jan.-6 June (Italy)
- Ages 65-80: mid-Oct – mid-Dec. (Italy)

**CONGRATULATIONS**

**FIRST PROFESSIONS IN INDIA**



Four brothers recently professed First Vows in India. Show here are (from left to right): Fr. Nicholas D'Cruz (Novice Director), Bro. John Paul, Bro. Vinod, Bro. Julius, Bro. Kumar & Bro. Dulare Lucas (Asst. Novice Director)