

Blessed Carlos Erana, Fidel Fuidio, and Jesus Hita: Martyrs

Blessed Carlos Erana

Blessed Carlos was 52 when he was martyred. Even some of his former students who occupied important political positions were unable to protect him from the executioners. He had been principal of the Instituto Popular de la Concepcion in La Mancha (Ciudad Real) for 11 years (1916-1927) and was really loved. A superior wrote about him: *"He is certainly the religious of the Province who best understands the little soul of the child in primary school and who is best prepared to direct this kind of teaching."* He had been transferred to Tetuan, Morocco (1927-1933) and then to Colegio de Nuestra Senora del Pilar Primary School in Madrid. When trouble started, he went back to Ciudad Real. He felt he would be safer there. Unfortunately the opposite happened. He tried to be a support to the various Marianists scattered throughout the city, bringing them news and money, and strengthening their determination to persevere. On September 6th soldiers from the "popular army" arrested him and placed him at the Seminary, now turned into a prison. Blessed Carlos remained serene, continued to pray, and abandoned himself to Divine Providence. On September 18th he was taken with seven laymen and shot. He had written in applying for vows: *The service of God, the practice of love toward the Divine Model and Mary his most holy Mother, I want that these be the aims of my entire life.* That is the way he offered his life at the end.

Blessed Jesus Hita

Blessed Jesus was 36 at the time of his death. It is remarkable how God works with each of us individually. Blessed Jesus was in the diocesan seminary. He left desiring to become a priest in the Society of Mary, but he was not admitted to the priesthood. God instead chose the personal sacrifice of his life in martyrdom. Blessed Jesus had a severe condition of stuttering, yet he became an excellent and dedicated teacher. He gives us a vivid example of how personal limitations and disappointments can be a means of great sanctity. He was born at the start of the 20th century on April 17th. At the age of 28 he professed his vows perpetually. In 1936 he was professor for the advanced courses in Colegio de Nuestra Senora del Pilar in Madrid, but was sent to Ciudad Real to teach summer school. While there trouble erupted, the Marianist school was occupied, and all had to seek shelter with local families. Blessed Jesus spoke of his motivation: *All my eagerness is to be useful. Being holy + being useful + self-giving, these three insights I hold so*

deeply in my soul that they come easily and quickly to my thoughts and lips. This was the spirit behind this Marianist. On July 24th Blessed Jesus went to the home of Dona Ramona along with two Passionists, Blessed Fr. Juan Pedro and Blessed Bro. Pablo Maria. They were well aware of the possibility of martyrdom and began to prepare for it. Blessed Jesus put aside his mattress and slept on the springs of the bed. He was often seen praying at night with his arms extended. The group had frequent conversations on spiritual topics. Blessed Jesus confessed to Fr. Pedro twice a week and received his blessing each night before retiring. On Sept 25th he was arrested and with the two Passionists and two other priests was executed. Their bodies were thrown down into the well at the cemetery in Carrion de Calatrava (Ciudad Real.) Blessed Jesus had received the soldiers with serenity. He told Dona Ramona not to worry. Blessed Jesus had come to the conviction of faith that God gives his martyrs the grace to overcome their weakness and fear. A pupil wrote of him: *He cared very much for the formation of his pupils. He always used some means to make spiritual reflections. He was one of the best teachers I had. He had the knack for making corrections.*

Blessed Fidel Fuidio

Blessed Fidel was 56 when he was murdered for the faith. He held a doctorate in history and was a professor from 1933 in Colegio Marianista in Ciudad Real and in the public High School. By the enthusiasm and persistence that he showed for the study of prehistory, archeological sources and other artistic Spanish works, Blessed Fidel deserves an outstanding place among Archeologists, Museologists, and Collectors of his time. His scientific publications were recognized throughout Spain. He was a born teacher...his first biography bears the title, *Sympathy in Education*. With the soul of an apostle he used to say that *'the happiest moment of the day is the one when I open the classroom door to be a missionary to my students.'* A superior had written of him: *The students held him in much esteem for his unalterable kindness; he never saw malice in them; he supported their defects with complete affection and love.* On October 17th, 1936 Bro. Fidel, two secular priests and a noted lawyer were shot and their bodies thrown down the well in the cemetery of Carrion de Calatrava. What Had happened? When the soldiers discovered his religious crucifix on his breast, he was arrested on August 7th in the house where he was taking shelter. For two months he was imprisoned in an overcrowded room where he helped lift the spirits of his fellow prisoners and exercised a significant spiritual influence. He never denied that he was a Marianist religious. He often said that he was ready to give his life for Christ. *If it would be necessary that I sacrifice my life for the cause of religion and my country, I offer my head gladly for its triumph.* He was often seen in prayer and confessed regularly to one of the detained priests. Despite the fact they found no charge against him Blessed Fidel was transferred to the

prison the seminary on Oct. 15th. Two days later, at dawn, he was taken out and executed.

(This is a reworking of various brochures on the martyrs)

Other news

We mourn the death of Dom Miranda, who was a member of our committee to promote the saints. Our sincere condolences to Helen, his wife and to the children. Raymond, Donna, Joseph and Marc. Dom and Helen recommended Zack Gilrain to our prayers to Fr. Chaminade and our Marianist saints. Zack had suffered from cancer since the age of 3. Now both Zack and Dom are with the Lord. Lord, grant them eternal rest.

Bro. Mike Galvin has finished translating a short biography of Fr. Domingo Lazaro, whose cause for holiness is being presented to the Church. When Fr. Enrique Torres, the author, approves the translation, we shall have it printed up here. This will be very inspiring for our Marianist schools.

Fr. Jose Maria Salaverri has just finished a short, inspiring booklet on Faustino: *Venerable Faustino – He is all smiles*. Fr. Salaverri believes this booklet is very appropriate for the Year of Faith.

The Province of France has submitted the name of Fr. Emil Neubert, SM for consideration of sanctity. Fr. Jean Louis Barre is promoting the cause. Anyone having recollections of Fr. Neubert or desiring more information may contact Fr. Jean Louis at jeanlouisbarre@wanadoo.fr

What Individuals and Communities Can Do to Pray to Our “Saints”

Each day, highlight one of our “saints” and pray for all the intentions being asked through his or her intercession.

When someone asks for prayers, suggest the person ask one of our “saints” to intercede.

Thank you.

Peace

Fr. Paul Landolfi, SM