

Marianist Moment:

Blessed William Joseph Chaminade



January 22: Anniversary of the death of Blessed William Joseph Chaminade

“We feel called to give new vitality to the witness of Blessed William Joseph’s life and teachings. We recall his special sensitivity to the world in which he lived and his missionary passion toward the world he loved. It is our task now to incarnate in our lives that legacy which, with his beatification, is a gift for the whole Church.”

(From Sent by the Spirit, #2)

Fr. Chaminade timeline

1761 Birth

1797 Exiled to Spain

1799 Returned to France

1816 Founded the Daughters of Mary Immaculate with Adèle de Batz de Trenquelléon

1817 Founded the Society of Mary

1850 Died at age 89

2000 Beatified

Fr. Chaminade founded 40 schools with the primary purpose of forming persons of religious faith

Fr. William Joseph Chaminade was a man of tremendous vision. The succession of lay persons and religious who have followed in his footsteps and shared his vision has given life to his charism in the world. Inspired by his insistence that we “do whatever He tells you,” Marianists work to discern what Jesus is asking of us now.

In his footsteps, we seek to understand the signs of the present time. In the midst of the struggle with the ambiguities and confusion in society and within the Church, we seek to spread the Good News to the bewildered and hungry world, as Mary did, to make Christ more fully present among us.

The vision continues ... a world in which the Reign of God continues to grow and expand through the living and striving of those who choose to remain faithful to God's word – and to the woman who first brought the Word into the world.

Chaminade's legacy is a rich, apostolic Marian spirituality of living and working in union with Jesus and Mary. Recognized as the 19th century apostle of Mary, he is acknowledged as the most noteworthy Mariologist of the first half of the 19th century. He had the ability to relate doctrine to ministry and mission, and showed the significance of Mary's role in the life of Christians. As Jesus chose Mary to cooperate with him in the salvation of the human race, Mary asks each Christian to participate in her apostolic mission to bring the grace of redemption to each person. His was an applied, pastoral theology inviting us to live fully our baptismal commitment to bring Jesus to the waiting world.

Blessed Chaminade is in the final stages of beatification, to be declared a saint, but it may take many years for this process. Two miracles must be attributed to him. The first miracle has been established and approved. This miracle occurred when a woman in Argentina was diagnosed with a very serious form of cancer and not expected to live. She prayed to the Venerable Chaminade and was cured. This miracle led to his beatification, to being named "Blessed."

A second miracle was submitted to Rome. It also involved a cure for cancer, for Rachel Baumgartner Lozano, a parishioner at Our Lady of the Pillar in St. Louis, Missouri. Rachel was a young teen when she was diagnosed with a rare form of cancer. She fought through many surgeries, procedures and treatments, but the cancer remained.

Rachel, her family, friends and Pillar parishioners prayed (specifically the Prayer of Canonization for Blessed Chaminade) and when the doctors went to remove the tumor, they found that the tumor and the cancer cells were dead. To our disappointment, however, Rome did not approve this miracle.

We need to continue our efforts in praying for the intercession of Blessed Chaminade and of our other Marianist Blesseds and Venerables in the lives of men and women who need to experience God's grace.

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