

In the canon of Marianist saints are two Spanish saints who have been recognized as *Servants of God*. They are Vincent Lopez de Uralde and Domingo Lázaro.

The September 2017 issue of *FamilyOnline* included a “Marianist Moment” about Vincent Lopez de Uralde. This issue introduces Domingo Lázaro, whose feast day is Feb. 22. Following are two short articles by Marianists Bro. John Samaha and Fr. Enrique Torres. These provide a glimpse into the life of Fr. Domingo Lázaro.

SERVANT OF GOD DOMINGO LÁZARO, SM

Bro. John Samaha, SM

In the winter of 2002 Father Enrique Torres, SM, presented the *Positio* about Father Domingo Lázaro Castro, SM, to the Reporter of the Congregation for Saints at the Vatican. A full length biography in Spanish by Father Jose Maria Salaverri, SM, appeared in autumn 2003.

September 27, 1988, the Province of Madrid initiated the process for the first native Spanish provincial superior, Father Domingo Lázaro Castro, through the good offices of the Cardinal Archbishop of Madrid. Father Enrique Torres, SM, and the late Father José Antonio Romeo, SM, have been the vice postulators of his cause.

When the Marianists first arrived in Spain in 1887, Domingo Lázaro was a boy of ten years of age. He was born and raised in San Adrián de Juarros, Burgos, a seed-bed of many Marianist vocations. When twelve, he entered the Marianist postulate at Escoriaza, where his early formation was guided by Father Louis Gadiou, SM. Then his religious formation continued in France for five years. In 1893 he professed vows as a Marianist, and in 1906 he was ordained a priest in Fribourg, Switzerland.

August 15, 1916, Father Domingo Lázaro was named the first native Spanish provincial for his country, and served in that capacity until 1924. During his term of office he established the famed Colegio Nuestra Señora del Pilar in Madrid. Then and later he enjoyed a

widespread reputation as a Christian educator and was renowned for his exemplary pedagogy.

Father Lázaro became a close friend of American Brother Michael Schleich, SM, and Father Francis W. Howard of Columbus, Ohio (later Bishop of Covington, Kentucky), who was President of the National Catholic Educational Association. He developed a fluency in English because of his many contacts with Marianists and other Catholic educators in the USA, and a strong enthusiasm for the American system of Catholic education.

At the time of his death on February 22, 1935, Father Domingo Lázaro Castro was already considered a saintly person by many.

The Timeliness of Domingo Lázaro's Approach: Education for the Family and in the Family

by Father Enrique Torres, SM

Translated from Spanish by Brother Michael Galvin, SM

The figure of Domingo Lázaro, Marianist Christian educator of youth, acquires renewed relevance in our times. Doña Carmen Gayarre, spiritual daughter of Father Domingo and a pioneer in special education in Spain, made this declaration in her deposition as part of the process of beatification on behalf of Father Domingo.

"Domingo Lázaro is a true model for Christian educators in these times when educators are so necessary and in these moments that so much resemble the time in which he lived."

Reflect on this insight that is central to Father Domingo's thinking: the importance of the family in education. It was a recurrent theme in his pedagogy already in the days when he was principal in San Sebastian. It was the topic to which he dedicated a series of articles published eleven years after his death in 1946 in the book *Forjando el Porvenir* (Forging the Future). Consider several thoughts from this book:

"The family is by its very nature an educational center and it should be the principal center of education Parents, while recognizing their limitations and, to some extent, their

insufficiency, are nonetheless 'more competent than others'Education that takes place outside the home is very incomplete and frequently it works at cross purposes with the family."

"In the motherly approach there is the kernel of all pedagogy -- a role animated by the spirit of self-sacrifice, enthusiasm and love. Educators that are truly faithful to and successful in their trade owe all of their art to mothers."

"Schools can do little in terms of true education, and the little that can be done is accomplished only when the parents are educating their children at home and... at school, through their influence, through the lingering recollection of their love, and their dignity. The school can do little, very little, unless something of the shadow of the father is there, or unless something of the radiation of the warmth of a mother's heart glimmers thereThe family is the true center of education. When the school acts in concert with parents, the school can work miracles; without them the school can do almost nothing."

"It is necessary that parents be concerned about -- I am tempted to say "obsessed with" - the education of their children. This means that they must repeat to each other often: '... the education of our children is our primary professional duty, our essential personal duty and the fundamental and inescapable dimension of our parenthood.' On this point there is no room for indifference. Indifference is an abdication and abdication is malfeasance. Parents may have many types of aspirations -- humanitarian, economic, political, artistic, etc. -- but the primordial aspiration has to be the education of their children. Each morning when they awake they should profess an act of commitment to this sublime mission."

I think that these words of Domingo Lázaro are very timely, even though some expressions of his time may seem quaint today. We live in times when the family feels threatened from without and within and when parents experience difficulty in transmitting values and in inculcating principles of faith. Educational centers -- both public and private -- also feel themselves to be immersed in crisis -- crisis that is easy to identify but very difficult to cope with in the day-to-day task of education.

Isn't this the moment to find inspiration and support in the example of educators who, like Domingo Lázaro, Servant of God, have spent their lives of service in the Christian education of children, adolescents and young adults?

Our "saints" are our models and our intercessors before God. Let us entrust to Father Domingo our family difficulties and all of our concerns and apprehensions with regard to the education and formation of our children.