



Our Marianist Saints: Bearers of God's Love

By Bro. David Betz

February is a time when we spend a great amount of time recognizing the importance of love in our lives, especially the love among people. The traditions for this month of February include giving cards, flowers, and candy to the ones we love and having special dinners where the engagements of couples may take place. It may also include acts of kindness to show appreciation for loved ones.

St Valentine's Day remembers a third-century priest who performed new marriages outlawed in ancient Rome by Emperor Claudius. He was martyred for refusing to renounce his faith. Before he died, he supposedly sent a note to the jailer's daughter, who was blind, encouraging her to persevere in her relationship with Jesus. After receiving this note, the daughter was cured of her blindness so she could read the message from Valentine. This is the reason for the giving of cards on February 14. People then prayed to Valentine to ask him to intercede with God for their romantic lives. But it seems that in this present day, we may have lost the role of God in what it means to love, and I believe that as a Marianist Family, we can look to our Marianist Saints as bearers of God's love to bring us a greater awareness of what love is about in our lives.

Our Marianist Blesseds, Venerables, and Servants of God are examples of how the love of God is essential in one's relationships with others and with God. They lived during times of great struggle and upheaval. They felt compelled to seek ways to reintroduce God's role and love in the lives of the adults and children of their times. It was God's Great Commandment of Love that motivated their work - Love God with all your heart, soul, mind and strength and then love your neighbor as yourself (See Mark 12: 28-34, Lk 10:25-28, Mt 22: 34-40). And looking upon Mary as their model, our Marianist Saints strove in their daily lives to be witnesses of God's love as part of their mission to rebirth Jesus, who was the premier representative of God's love. Granted, there were times of obstacles and setbacks, but their perseverance and steadfast belief in God's Providence enabled them to pursue their work in bearing God's love with confidence and joy.

And an example of this was being attentive to the Beatitudes, which Jesus proclaimed to his followers. I invite you to read a circular written by Sr. M. Franca Zonta, FMI, Superior General for the Daughters of Mary Immaculate, on the occasion of Blessed Adèle's Beatification. It is titled, [In the Light of the Beatitudes](#) and is dated May 25, 2018. Sr. Franca presents to us how Blessed Adèle lived out the Beatitudes, which are representative of God's love. They are indicative of Blessed Adèle's holiness, which has been recognized in her beatification.