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**TRACES
OF CLARET**

Roma, 2009

INTRODUCTION

Some time ago, in 1973, in the Claretian seminary of Segovia, a group of minor seminarians, guided by their formators, and after many days' work, were able to make a dream come true. They gathered in just one book what they thought was essential to get to know the Congregation of Claretian Missionaries. Time passed and, with the collaboration of many others, we can publish now this edition, revised and updated.

The idea of reediting the book is basically due to the acceptance and usefulness it is having in the seminaries of the Congregation and in the provincial centres of Youth Ministry, as well as the felt need among vocation promoters of such publication. We know it has already been translated into English, French, Japanese, Polish and Russian.

To those who may consider the book too elemental I would say that my intention is still to respect the original idea: To have in just one book the basic elements to know the fundamental aspects that no candidate to the Congregation should ignore. At the end of each chapter I have added a "*basic bibliography*" for the sake of those who wish to widen their information.

I hope this book is useful to all. I dedicate this simple work to the Blessed Martyrs of Barbastro who, with their writings and the testimony of their death, have given the Congregation an inexhaustible treasure of life and hope.

Rome, January 2009

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CHAPTER I

SAINT ANTHONY MARY CLARET, FOUNDER OF THE CONGREGATION

FIRST YEARS (1807-1829)

Childhood

Anthony Claret y Clará was born in Sallent, Barcelona, Spain on 23 December 1807. He was the fifth of eleven children of John Claret and Josephine Clará. He was baptised on Christmas Day. The delicate condition of his mother caused him to be placed under the care of a wet-nurse in Santa María de Oló. One night that Anthony stayed at his parents' house, the wet nurse's house collapsed and everyone in the house died in the accident. For Claret that always was a sign of divine Providence.

Claret's cradle was constantly shaken by the rattling of the wooden looms his father had in the ground floor of the house. From a very tender age Anthony gave signs of a sharp intelligence and a soft heart. At age five, "*Toñín*" thought about eternity: sitting on the bed at night, he was deeply touched by that "*forever, forever, forever.*" Later on, when he became an Archbishop, he would recall: "*This idea of an eternity of torment made such a deep impression on me, either because of the tender age when it began, or because of the many times I thought about it, that it is surely the thing that to this day I remember best. The power of this idea has made me work in the past, still makes me work, and will make me work as long as I live, in converting sinners*" (Aut n.9).

The people's war against Napoleon vividly affected the ambience of that epoch. His soldiers often passed by the town between 1808 and 1814. Even the priests of the town had joined the battle. In 1812 the new Constitution was promulgated.

Meanwhile, Anthony played, studied, grew... Two loves were already outstanding in little Claret: the Eucharist and the Blessed Virgin. He attentively attended Mass, made frequent visits to the Most Blessed Sacrament, often went with his sister Rose to the shrine of Fusimanya and daily recited the rosary.

Books were Anthony's weakness. Few things contributed to Anthony's holiness as much as his readings, the first readings of his childhood, because his readings were selected. But as early as that age, Anthony had a dream: to become a priest and an apostle. However his vocation would follow a different itinerary yet.

Among the Looms

Anthony spent his entire adolescence at his father's workshop. He soon became master in the textile craft. In order to improve his craftsmanship, he asked his father to let him go to Barcelona, where the textile industry was attracting many young people. There he enrolled in the School of Arts and Trades of "La Lonja." He worked during the day and studied at night. Although he continued being a good Christian, his heart was centred on his work. Thanks to his tenacity and ingenuity, he soon was able to surpass

in quality and beauty the samples that came from abroad. A group of businessmen, admiring his competence, proposed to him an alluring plan: to start a textile company in which they would take responsibility for the financing and set-up of the factory. But inexplicably, Anthony refused. God was involved. There were events that made him more sensitive to the voice of God. These are some of these events: he ran into a partner who ended up in prison, his friend's wife set up a tempting trap for him, he came out miraculously unscathed from the sea where a gigantic wave had carried him, etc. Lastly, he was deeply impressed by the words of the Gospel: "*What will one gain by winning the whole world if he destroys himself?*" (Mt 16,26). The looms suddenly stopped, and Anthony went to consult with the Oratorians of St. Philip Neri. At last he resolved to become a Carthusian and informed his father of his plan. His decision to become a priest reached the Bishop of Vic, Msgr. Paul of Jesus Corcuera, who wished to meet him. Anthony left Barcelona about the beginning of September 1829 on his way to Sallent and Vic. He was 21 and was decided to become a priest.

PRIEST, APOSTOLIC MISSIONARY AND FOUNDER (1829-1850)

In the Seminary

In the seminary of Vic, forge of apostles, Claret was formed as an extern seminarian, living as a *famulus* (helper) of Don Fortián Bres, the Steward of the bishop's palace. Soon he stood out for his piety and his industriousness. He chose Fr. Peter Bach of the Oratory as his confessor and director. After a year, the time arrived to carry out his decision to enter the Carthusian monastery of Montealegre. He left for the monastery, but he ran into a summer storm that ruined his plans. Perhaps God did not want him a Carthusian. He took a half turn and went back to Vic. The following year he passed the acid test of chastity in a temptation that came up to him a day that he was lying sick in bed. He saw the Blessed Virgin appear to him and, showing him a crown, she said to him: "*Anthony, this crown will be yours if you overcome.*" Suddenly, all obsessive images vanished.

Under the wise guide of Bishop Corcuera, the atmosphere of the seminary was optimal. There he made friends with James Balmes, who would be ordained Deacon in the same ceremony that Claret was ordained Subdeacon. It was in this epoch that Claret entered into a deep contact with the Bible, which would impel him unto an insatiable apostolic and missionary spirit.

Priest

At age 27, on 13 June 1835, the Bishop of Solsona, Fr. John Joseph de Tejada, former General of the Mercedarians, conferred upon him the sacred order of the Priesthood. He celebrated his first Mass in the parish of Sallent on 21 June, with great satisfaction and joy on the part of his family. His first assignment was precisely Sallent, his hometown.

At the death of Ferdinand VII the Spanish political situation had worsened. The constitutionalists, imitators of the French revolution, had taken over the power. In the Parliament of 1835 the suppression of all religious Institutes was approved. The possessions of the Church were confiscated and auctioned, and the people were instigated to burn the convents and kill the priests. The Provinces of Navarre, Catalonia and the

Basque country soon revolted against this disorder and the war broke out between Carlists and Isabellines.

But Claret was not a politician. He was an apostle. So he dedicated himself, body and soul, to the priestly tasks, despite the enormous difficulties he encountered due to the hostile ambience of his hometown. His charity had no bounds. Therefore, the horizons of a parish did not satisfy Claret's apostolic zeal. He consulted and decided to go to Rome to enrol in the Propagation of the Faith, with the intention of going to preach the Gospel in *pagan lands*. It was the month of September 1839. He was 31.

In Rome he Seeks his Missionary Identity

With a little bundle of things and without money, a young priest crossed the Pyrenees, bound for the eternal city. When he arrived in Marseilles, he took a ship for Rome. In the eternal city, Claret made the Spiritual Exercises with a priest from the Society of Jesus. He felt called to enter as a Jesuit novice. He had gone to Rome in order to offer himself as a missionary of the world, but God seemed not to want him either as a missionary *ad gentes* nor as a Jesuit. A malady, a stabbing pain in his right leg, made him understand that his mission was in Spain. After three months he left the novitiate on the advice of Fr. Roothaan.

Back in Spain, he was temporarily assigned to Viladrau, a small woodmen town at the time, in the province of Gerona. In his capacity as Regent, since the Pastor was an elderly and disabled man, he set about the ministry with great zeal. He also acted as a physician, because there was none in the town or its environs.

Apostolic Missionary in Catalonia

Since Claret had not been born to remain in just one parish, his spirit pushed him on towards wider horizons. In July 1841, when he was 33, he received from Rome the title of *Apostolic Missionary*. At last, he was someone destined to the ministry of the Word, in the style of the apostles. This type of missionaries had disappeared since the time of Saint John of Avila. From that moment on, giving missions was his work. Vic was to be his residence. Claret walked always on foot, with an oilcloth map, his small bundle of things and his Breviary, through the snow or in the midst of storms, sunken between ravines and mudholes. He joined muleteers and merchants, talked to them about the Reign of God and they were converted. His footsteps were left imprinted on all the roads. The cathedrals of Solsona, Gerona, Tarragona, Lérida, Barcelona and the churches of other cities filled up with people when *Padre Claret* spoke.

Once, as he was walking toward Golmes, they invited him to rest, because he was perspiring; he answered in jest: "*I am like the dogs: they stick their tongue out but they never get tired.*"

"*Father, hear my ass' confession,*" a muleteer told him mockingly. "*You are the one who needs to confess,* -Claret answered- *you have not done it in seven years and you need it indeed.*" And the man confessed.

Another time he got a poor smuggler out of a jam by changing a tobacco bale into beans when some revenue guards stopped them. Upon arrival home, the good man was greatly surprised when he saw that the beans had turned again into tobacco. These are some of the "*Claretian little flowers*" of that epoch.

Other miraculous facts are being told about Claret but, above all, his power to penetrate the conscience of people was outstanding. He had enemies who slandered him and strove to thwart his missionary activity, so that the Archbishop of Tarragona had to

come out in his defence. But he had a steel temper. He withstood it all and came out unscathed from all the ambushes they laid for him.

In addition to preaching, Fr. Claret devoted himself to giving Spiritual Exercises to the clergy and to religious women, especially during summer. In 1844, for example, he gave a Retreat to the Carmelite Sisters of Charity of Vic, in which St. Joaquina Vedruna participated.

During this time he also published numerous pamphlets and books. Among them we can highlight the "*The Straight Path*," published for the first time in 1843, which would become the most read pious book of the XIX century. He was then 35 years old.

In 1847, together with his friend and future Bishop of Seo D'Urgel, Joseph Caixal and Antonio Palau, he founded the Religious Press. That same year he founded the Archconfraternity of the Heart of Mary and wrote the statutes of the Fraternity of the Most Holy and Immaculate Heart of Mary and Friends of Humankind, made up of priests and lay men and women.

The list of disciples and companions he had in this epoch is long and worth noting, men who would remain engraved in the Catalonian church history: Stephen Sala, Manuel Subirana, Blessed Francis Coll, Manuel Vilaró, Dominic Fábregas...

Apostle of the Canaries

On 6 March 1848 he left for Madrid and Cadiz, on his way to the Canaries, together with the newly elected Bishop Msgr. Bonaventure Codina. He was 40. The reason was that, after the recent armed rebellion of 1847, it was no longer possible to preach missions in Catalonia. The persuasive voice of Claret resounded from the Puerto de la Luz of Grand Canary to the rugged sandy spots of Lanzarote. He evangelised Telde, Agüimes, Arucas, Gáldar, Guía, Firgas, Teror... The miracle of Catalonia repeated itself. Claret had to preach in the plazas, on platforms, in the open air, amid multitudes that hemmed him in. Despite a pneumonia, he never stopped in his intensive work. In Lanzarote he gave missions in Tegüise and Arrecife.

He spent 15 months of his life in the Canary Islands, leaving behind conversions and miracles, prophecies and legends. With tears in their eyes the Canarians saw their *Padrito* leave one day and they bade him farewell with nostalgia. It was towards the end of May 1849. His memory still lingers.

Founder of the Congregation of Missionaries, Sons of the Immaculate Heart of Mary

Shortly after his return to Catalonia, on 16 July 1849, at three o'clock in the afternoon, in a cell of the seminary of Vic, he founded the Congregation of the Missionaries, Sons of the Immaculate Heart of Mary, an idea he had been thinking about for quite some time. He was 41 years old. Cofounders were Frs. Stephen Sala, Joseph Xifré, Manuel Vilaró, Dominic Fábregas and James Clotet.

"*Today a great work begins,*" Fr. Claret said.

Claret was no pseudo-charismatic who liked to speak in his own name, rather he felt impelled by God. And God revealed three things to him: first, that the Congregation would spread throughout the whole world; second, that it would last till the end of time; third, that all those who should die in the Congregation would be saved.

ARCHBISHOP OF CUBA (1850-1857)

Appointment

An extremely important fact soon endangered his newly founded Institute. Fr. Claret was appointed Archbishop of Santiago de Cuba. After several attempts to resign, he finally accepted the position on 4 October 1849 and he was consecrated Bishop in the Cathedral of Vic on 6 October 1850. He was 42. The motto he chose for his Archbishop's coat of arms was a veritable life project: "*Charitas Christi urget nos*" (the love of Christ urges us on). He went to Madrid to receive the pallium and the great cross of Isabella the Catholic. Before he embarked for Cuba, he paid three visits: to Our Lady of the Pillar in Zaragoza, to Our Lady of Montserrat in Barcelona and to Our Lady of Fusimanya in Sallent, his hometown. And he still had time, before his departure, to conceive a new foundation, the Religious Women in their Houses, or the Daughters of the Immaculate Heart of Mary, now called Cordimarian Filiation. In the port of Barcelona an immense crowd bade farewell to Archbishop Claret with a huge manifestation.

In Cuba

During the trip to Havana he took the opportunity to preach a mission aboard the ship for all passengers, officers and crew. And at last... Cuba. Six years was Claret to spend in the diocese of Santiago de Cuba, tirelessly working, giving missions, sowing love and justice in that island where racial discrimination and social injustice reigned everywhere.

He confronted the foremen, snatched the whip away from their hands. One day he reprimanded a rich landowner who was ill-treating some coloured natives who were working in his property. Seeing that the man was not inclined to change his behaviour, the Archbishop wanted to give him a lesson. He took two pieces of paper, one white and the other black, he set fire to them and pulverised the ashes in the palm of his hand. Then he said: "*Sir, could you tell the difference between the ashes of these two papers? Well now, in just the same way, people are equal before God.*"

Fr. Claret had an inventive capacity that indicated an uncommon ingenuity. In Holguín some popular celebrations were organised. The main attraction was the launching of a manned globe. This aerostatic contrivance was among the first tried out in those times. It was a failure; it began to rise, but the pilot lost control and fell in a small ravine. The Archbishop studied the problem and one day he surprised everyone. "*Today I have hit upon the globe direction system.*" And he showed them a sketch that is kept until today.

He was a practical man. In all parishes he established religious and social institutions for children and adults; created technical and agricultural schools; established and propagated Savings Banks all throughout Cuba. He founded orphanages; visited four times all the cities, towns and settlements of his immense diocese. He always went on foot or on horseback. He was also able to surround himself with an enviable team of great missionaries such as Frs. Adoain, Lobo, Sanmartí and Subirana.

One of the most important works Fr. Claret carried out in Cuba was the foundation, together with Mother Antonia París, of the Religious Sisters of Mary Immaculate, Claretian Missionary Sisters. This took place, after many difficulties, on 27 August 1855, with the profession of the Foundress.

But not even in Cuba did his enemies leave him in peace. The storm of attempts reached its climax at Holguín, where he was seriously wounded when he was leaving the Church, by a hired assassin, paid by his enemies, whom Claret himself had earlier

got out or prison. Fr. Claret asked that the criminal be pardoned. Despite all this, his enemies continued keeping him in sight.

After six years in Cuba, one day an urgent message was brought to him from the Field Marshall of Havana, in which he was informed that Her Majesty Queen Isabel II summoned him to Madrid. It was 18 March 1857.

APOSTLE IN MADRID (1857-1868)

The Queen's Confessor and Missionary in the Court of Spain

When he arrived in Madrid, he learned that he had definitively been appointed the Queen's confessor. Upset, he accepted but put three conditions: that he should not live in the palace, that he should not be involved in politics, and that he should not be made to wait in line to be received, and should have freedom for apostolic action. He was 49 when he returned from Cuba. In the 11 years that he stayed in Madrid, his apostolic activity in the court was intense and unceasing. Few were the churches and convents where his voice was not heard, forceful and convincing. From the church of the Italians, situated in the present enlargement of the Parliament and from the Montserrat church, where the Monumental Theatre is now located, he developed an unstoppable activity. He was especially outstanding for his popular missions and his retreats to the clergy.

While he accompanied the Queen in her trips throughout Spain, he also seized the occasion to carry out an intense apostolate. Towards the beginning of June 1858 the royal entourage rolled along the plains of La Mancha, Alicante, Albacete, Valencia... Then to the Northwest of Spain: Leon, the mining coal field of Mieres and Oviedo, Galicia, Balearic Islands, Catalonia, Aragon and Andalusia. The sojourn in the South was full of enthusiasm and the royal confessor used it to preach missions everywhere; sometimes he managed to preach no less than 14 sermons in one day: Cordoba, Seville, Cadiz, Granada, Malaga, Cartagena and Murcia. Later on, again in the North: the Basque country, Old Castile and Estremadura. God's Kingdom was being announced and the people responded generously.

President of the Escorial Monastery

The Queen appointed him President of the Royal Monastery of the Escorial for its restoration, because of the lamentable condition it was in, since the law of sale of Church lands and closure of convents of 1835. He held this position from 1859 to 1868. Not a long time, but enough to demonstrate his organising talent. He repaired the towers and wings of the building and of the great basilica. He restored the choir loft and the altars, installed two organs, acquired scientific material for the Physics and Chemistry laboratories, restored the dilapidated library and set up a new one; he landscaped the gardens, planted a great many fruit and garden trees. With all this, the Archbishop managed to turn over yearly to the Queen a considerable surplus. It seemed a miracle.

Together with the material restoration, he undertook the spiritual one. He created a true ecclesiastical University, with the studies of humanities and the classics, modern languages, natural sciences, archaeology, schola cantorum and music band. He also set up studies of Philosophy and Theology, with patristics, Moral Liturgy and biblical sciences, as well as the Chaldean, Hebrew and Arabic languages, etc. With the inestimable help of his collaborator from Cuba, Don Dionisio González de Mendoza, he made of

this monastery one of the best centres of Spain. And thanks to his zeal, the eighth wonder of the world recovered its former splendour.

Apostle of the Press

He felt as if Christ and the Blessed Virgin were telling him, “*Write, Anthony!*” Like an enormous and sensitive radar screen, Claret continuously scrutinised the signs of the times: “*Experience has taught me that one of the most powerful forces for good is the press, -he said- just as it is one of the most potent weapons for evil, when abused.*” He himself wrote some 96 works (15 books and 81 booklets) and edited 27 others, annotated and, at times, translated by him. Only by taking into account his extreme industriousness and the strength God gave him can one understand the fact that he wrote so much while exercising such an intense dedication to the apostolic ministry. Claret was not only a writer. He was a propagandist. He profusely disseminated his books and loose leaflets. As for this diffusion, he reached truly large quantities. He never claimed any amount from the edition and sale of his books; on the contrary, he invested great sums of money in it. Where did he get this money from? From what he received for his office and from donations. “*Books -he used to say- are the best alms.*”

In 1848, as we have already said, he had founded the *Religious Press* together with Dr. Caixal, future bishop of Seo de Urgel. Before that, he established the *Spiritual Fraternity of good books* which, during the years it was under Claret’s direction until his departure for Cuba, printed great quantity of books, booklets and leaflets, with a yearly average of more than half a million printed materials. In the first decade of its foundation he received a personal congratulation from Pope Pius IX. When he was still a priest, he had founded the *Fraternity of the Most Holy and Immaculate Heart of Mary*. The aim of this fraternity was to maintain permanently the diffusion of books, which constituted one of his first attempts of active lay apostolate, since it was composed of priests and lay men and women.

One of his most brilliant works was the foundation of the *Academy of St. Michael* (1858). He wanted to gather in it the living forces of plastic arts, journalism and Catholic organisations: artists, writers and propagandists from all over Spain for the cause of the Lord. In nine years, many books were given away, many more were lent, and an incalculable number of leaflets were distributed. Here are some names of the members of the Academy, according to his main biographer, Fr. Christopher Fernández: minister Lorenzo Arrazola, journalists Carbonero y So and Ojero de la Cruz, Professor Vincent Lafuente. Its influence reached even writers of the stature of Ayala and Hertenbusch.

He also founded popular libraries in Cuba and in Spain, where more than one hundred were functioning in the last years of his life. Fr. Claret deserves indeed the title of *Apostle of the press*.

Spiritual Director and Cofounder

Fr. Claret’s most significant work was the foundation of the Congregation of Missionaries, Sons of the Heart of Mary. But in the splendid flowering of new religious institutes that took place in the XIX century, the royal confessor was the most decided collaborator that almost all founders and foundresses of his time could find.

Together with Mother París, he had already founded in Cuba in 1855 the Institute of Religious of Mary Immaculate, called Claretian Missionary Sisters, for the education of girls.

Under his spiritual direction we must include St. Michaela of the Most Blessed Sacrament, foundress of the Sisters Adorers, and St. Joaquina de Vedruna, foundress of the Carmelite Sisters of Charity.

He directly or indirectly intervened in other foundations. He had contacts with Joachim Masmitjà, founder of the Missionary Sisters “Immaculate Heart;” with Mark and Gertrude Castañer, founders of the Sisters of St. Philip Neri; with Mary of the Heart of Jesus, foundress of the Handmaids of Jesus of Charity; with Blessed Mary Ann Moga, foundress of the Missionary Franciscan Sisters of the Divine Shepherd. We find him with the Blessed Francis Coll, founder of the Dominican Sisters of the Annunciata. He also had something to do with the foundation of the Missionary Handmaids of the Immaculate Heart of Mary, of Mother Maria Esperanza González. And we should also add his influence in the Teresian Sisters, Daughters of Christ the King, etc.

All these institutions were born or sprouted under the influence of Fr. Claret.

A Saintly Man

The lavishness of the Court did not prevent Fr. Claret from living as the most observant of religious. Everyday he dedicated much time to prayer. His austerity was proverbial and his sobriety in eating and drinking, admirable.

This was his timetable: He rose at three o’clock in the morning after scarcely six hours’ sleep; by the time the others rose, he had already spent two hours in prayer and reading of the Bible, and then one more hour together with them. After that, he celebrated the Eucharist and attended another one in thanksgiving. From breakfast till ten o’clock he heard confessions and, after that, he wrote. What he disliked most was the hour dedicated to audiences towards twelve noon. Afternoons he preached, visited hospitals, prisons, schools and convents.

He was a model of poverty. One day he had a shock when he put his hand into his pocket. He thought he had felt a coin, but soon he was relieved when he saw it was not a coin but a medal. On another occasion that he had nothing to help a poor man, he pawned his Archbishop’s pectoral cross.

Claret was a true mystic. Several times he was seen in a state of deep reverie before the Lord. One Christmas Day, in the church of the Sisters Adorers of Madrid, he said he received the Child Jesus in his arms.

He received a unique privilege, to wit, the conservation of the sacramental species from one communion to the next for nine years. He wrote in his Autobiography: *“On August 26, 1861, at 7:00 in the evening, while I was at prayer in the church of the Rosary at La Granja, the Lord granted me the great grace of keeping the sacramental species intact within me and of having the Blessed Sacrament always present, day and night, in my breast.”*

This almost sensible presence of Jesus within him must have been so great that he went to the extent of exclaiming: *“Nowhere do I find myself as recollected as amidst the crowds.”*

A Persecuted Man

It is not surprising that a man as influential as Fr. Claret, who drew the crowds after him, should also attract the fury of the enemies of the Church. But all their threats and attempts were being frustrated one by one, because Divine Providence watched over him who, in turn, rejoiced in persecutions. In his life he underwent numerous per-

sonal attempts. Most of them were frustrated by the conversion of the would-be assassins.

Nevertheless, a much worse defamatory campaign was organised on a large scale throughout the whole of Spain in order to discredit him before the simple people. He was accused of interfering with politics; of belonging to the famous *camarilla* or clique of the Queen with Sor Patrocinio, Marfori and others; of being of little intelligence, obscene in his writings, referring especially to his book "*The Golden Key*;" of being ambitious and even a thief. But Claret knew how to keep silent, happy to suffer something for Christ.

Facing the Recognition of the Kingdom of Italy

On July 15, 1865, the Government held a full meeting in La Granja de San Ildefonso in order to extort from the Queen her signature about the recognition of the Kingdom of Italy, which was tantamount to approving the pillaging of the Pontifical Estates.

Fr. Claret had already warned the Queen that the approval of this outrage was, in his opinion, a grave crime, and he threatened to leave her, should she sign it. The Queen was deceived and signed. Claret did not want to be an accomplice by remaining in the Court. He prayed before the Christ of Pardon in the church of La Granja, and he heard these words: "*Anthony, leave.*"

Racked with sorrow at being forced to leave the Queen in such situation, he went to Rome. Pope Pius IX consoled him and ordered him to return again to the court. The royal family was immensely happy with his return. But a new storm of calumnies and attacks broke out against him. It can be said that Claret was one of the most persecuted public men of the XIX century.

HIS LAST YEARS (1868-1870)

Exiled

By September 18, 1868, the revolution was already in progress and beyond control. Twenty-one cannon shots of the frigate Zaragoza, in the Cadiz Bay, announced the dethronement of Queen Isabel II. With the defeat of the Isabelline army in Alcolea, Madrid fell and the revolution spread throughout the whole of Spain like wildfire.

On the 30th, the royal family, with some supporters and the Queen's confessor, left for their exile in France, first toward Pau and then Paris. Fr. Claret was 60 years old.

The outrages and burning of churches proliferated and another one of the prophecies of Fr. Claret was fulfilled: the Congregation will have its first martyr in this revolution. Fr. Francis Crusats was assassinated in La Selva del Campo.

On 30 March 1869 Claret definitively left the Queen and went to Rome.

Father of the First Vatican Council

On December 8, 1869, 700 bishops from the whole world, superiors of religious Orders, archbishops, primates, patriarchs and cardinals gathered in Rome. The First Ecumenical Vatican Council was beginning. Fr. Claret was there.

One of the most debated themes was the Papal infallibility in matters of faith and morals. Claret's voice resounded, already with difficulty, in the Vatican basilica on 31 May 1870: "*I bear in my body the marks of Christ's passion*," -he said, referring to the

wounds at Holguín- *would that I could shed all my blood once for all, confessing the infallibility of the Pope.*”

He is the only Father present at that Council who has reached the altars.

The Decline of his Days

On 23 July 1870, Archbishop Claret arrived at Prades, in the French Pyrenees, accompanied by Fr. Joseph Xifré, Superior General of the Congregation. The community of missionaries in exile, mostly young students, received the Founder, already sick, with great joy. He knew that his death was imminent. But not even in the placid atmosphere of that retreat did his enemies leave him in peace. On August 5, a notice was received. They wanted to take the Archbishop into prison. Even sick and in exile, Fr. Claret was forced to flee. He took refuge in the neighbouring Cistercian monastery of Fontfroide. With great joy, the monks in that cloister, near Narbonne, admitted him.

His health was totally undermined. Fr. James Clotet never separated from his side and carefully took note of the incidents of his sickness. On October 4 he had a brain haemorrhage.

On the 8th he received the last sacraments and made his religious profession as a Son of the Heart of Mary, at the hands of Fr. Xifré.

The morning of the 24th of October came. All the religious were kneeling around his deathbed. Frs. Clotet and Puig were at his side. Amid prayers Claret gave up his spirit into the hands of the Creator. It was 8:45 in the morning, and he was 62 years old.

His body was laid in the monastic cemetery with an inscription of Gregory VII that said: *“I loved justice and hated iniquity, therefore I die in exile.”*

GLORIFIED

In 1897, Fr. Claret’s remains were transferred to Vic, where they are presently venerated. On 25 February 1934, the Church inscribed him in the catalogue of the Blessed. The humble missionary appeared in the glory of Bernini to be venerated by the entire world. The bells of the Vatican Basilica proclaimed his glory. And on May 7, 1950, Pope Pius XII declared him a SAINT. These were his words on that memorable day: *“Saint Anthony Mary Claret was a great soul, born as it were to assemble contrasts: he could be of humble origin and glorious in the eyes of the world. Small in body, but giant in spirit. Modest in appearance, but very capable of imposing respect even to the great of the world. Strong in character, but possessing the soft gentleness of one who knows the restraint of austerity and penance. Always in God’s presence, while in the midst of his prodigious external activity. Slandered and admired, honoured and persecuted. And amidst so many wonders, like a soft light that illumines everything, his devotion to the Mother of God.”*

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CHAPTER II

HISTORY OF THE CONGREGATION

I. THE FOUNDATION (1849-1858)

Historical Background of the Foundation of the Institute

The XIX century saw the birth of Saint Anthony Mary Claret and, with him, all of his immense work. Spain was immersed in political wars caused by the liberal and traditionalist parties. When the last Carlist groups had been crushed and the political upheaval had subsided, Fr. Claret decided to found his favourite work: the Congregation of Missionaries, Sons of the Immaculate Heart of Mary. The adverse laws of the liberal governments of Spain and the suppression of the religious orders had dismantled the traditional forms of evangelisation and the scarcity of preachers was a great challenge.

The Great Work

The idea of the foundation was not based on illusions; its realisation came from way back, and was born out of his zeal for the salvation of souls. Before the foundation, Fr. Claret had already offered himself to the Congregation for the Propagation of the Faith in order to go and preach in non-Christian territories and he had exclaimed: *“I thirst, I long to shed all my blood for the sake of Jesus Christ.”*

He had earlier tried to create a *Missionary Centre* in Sallent in 1839, a *“Fraternity of Mary of the Rosary”* in San Juan de Oló in 1843, an *“Apostolic Fraternity”* in Vic in 1846, a *“Fraternity of Jesus and Mary”* in the Canaries in 1848. But toward three in the afternoon of 16 July 1849, Fr. Claret convoked in the Seminary of Vic Frs. Stephen Sala, Joseph Xifré, Dominic Fábregas, Manuel Vilaró and Jaime Clotet, some of whom did not know each other. He wanted to found a congregation of priests who would both be, and be called *“Sons of the Immaculate Heart of Mary.”*

He had already talked with them about the foundation. That sixteenth of July, when each of them had settled in his respective room, “with his own bed, table, chair, washstand and oil lamp,” they started the spiritual exercises in the process of which the Congregation would be founded. *“At three o’clock we were all gathered in the above mentioned place of the Seminary. Before we started the inauguration exercises Fr. Claret said: TODAY A GREAT WORK BEGINS. Fr. Manuel Vilaró answered, with a festive mood and a smile: What can we do, so young and so few? You will see, Fr. Claret replied; if we are few and young, so much the more will the power and mercy of God shine”* (These are words taken down by Fr. Clotet). After the spiritual exercises, Fr. Claret was chosen as Superior.

The Congregation Is Born

Obviously Fr. Claret did not found a religious congregation. This was a congregation of Diocesan Priests who started a new lifestyle, a community life, free from any

diocesan commitment that would tie them down to any concrete place or ecclesiastical benefice. In this way, they could fully devote themselves to the preaching of the Word, especially by means of Popular Missions, Spiritual Exercises and catechesis.

One Year with the Founder

Shortly after the foundation, on August 4, the first big trial came: Fr. Claret was appointed Archbishop of Santiago de Cuba. In spite of this, Fr. Claret intensely devoted the time previous to his consecration to the formation of the members of the first missionary community. It could be said that this was the noviciate year of the Congregation. Their occupations were: mental and vocal prayer, divine office, conferences about catechising, preaching, hearing confessions, moral, mystical and ascetical theology... In the words of Fr. Claret, *“In this college we live in community a truly poor and apostolic life.”* He wanted his missionaries to be itinerant in the fashion of the Apostles; he did not even want them to engage themselves in public worship or the confessions in the Church of La Merced. For these tasks, he counted on two priests, his friends. When he departed for Cuba, he left Fr. Stephen Sala as Superior and Frs. Bernard Sala and Dominic Fábregas as consultors.

The Communities of Vic and Cuba

With the departure of the Founder, the community of Vic stagnated in its growth. Fr. Stephen Sala did not devote himself exclusively to the newly founded Institute. The Missionaries engaged themselves basically in giving Popular Missions and Spiritual Exercises and in the publication of pamphlets and leaflets. By this time they were already staying in the convent of La Merced. The new revolution of 1854 plunged the Institute in greater difficulties yet. That year they worked among the cholera patients and dedicated themselves preferably to giving retreats and to the direction of the Carmelite Sisters of Charity.

Meanwhile, the Congregation lived a latent life in Cuba, around Fr. Claret, with different characteristics, but with the same rules and spirit. He had brought with him Fr. Manuel Vilaró, cofounder. On May 26, 1857, Fr. Claret was appointed confessor to Queen Isabel II.

Death of Fr. Stephen Sala

When the Founder was already in Madrid, Fr. Stephen Sala died on April 18, 1858. Shortly before, on June 27, 1857, the Constitutions of the Institute had been published with the bishop's approval. At the death of Fr. Sala, the Congregation had one house, twelve priests and three helping brothers.

II. CONSTITUTION OF THE INSTITUTE (1858-1870)

Election and First Actuations of Fr. Xifré

After the death of Fr. Stephen Sala, they went on to elect the person who would become the Superior General of the Institute. The election fell on Fr. Joseph Xifré. He was not slow in taking the first steps in the government of the Congregation that had been entrusted to him. As early as 1859 he gathered in Vic the first General Meeting of

the Congregation, convoked and presided over by the Founder. This General Meeting is considered as the first General Chapter.

Subsequently there were two General Chapters that were transcendental for the Congregation, because they dealt with the definitive drafting and approval of the Constitutions. The first one took place in 1862 and the second in 1864. Fr. Claret was also present in both.

The First Spiritual Directory

Our Fr. Founder and Fr. Xifré published this Directory in 1858. It had seven sections: examination on the Constitutions for the recollection day; suffrage for those who are travelling; itinerary; practical way for starting and ending the mission; eight formulas for as many blessings; prayers for those who return from a trip, for the sick and for thanksgiving; and meditation on death for the recollection day.

Noviciate and Scholasticate in Vic

In 1861 the Noviciate for Priests and Brothers was established. The students that began to flow posed a problem of difficult solution. Fr. Xifré took the first steps to solve some of these problems of the Noviciate and Scholasticate, mainly that of admission of young students. Fr. Claret always viewed the Noviciate and Scholasticate of Vic with fondness and sympathy. In 1862 he even wrote the “*Reglamento*” or Regulations that became a part of the Constitutions with some variations. That same year Fr. Xifré wrote an “*Instruction*,” that was considered as the first document on vocational promotion in the Congregation.

Mission House of Vic

The Mission House of Vic was the main house of the Institute. It was used as retreat house for clergy and laity, and as residence. Although at the beginning they did not handle any church, later on they did accept one: the church of La Merced.

Foundation in Gracia

With the foundation of Gracia (Barcelona), the expansion aspirations of both the Founder and Fr. Xifré began to take shape. The house of Gracia that was about to be founded was an isolated building. Towards the end of 1858 the foundation was already accepted in principle, but couldn't quite be finalised because the promised funds for the work to be done did not come very punctually. Later on, thanks to the steps taken by Fr. Claret, they were able to obtain three thousand “duros” and, later, the rest. On January 23, 1860 Fr. Clotet and two Coadjutor Brothers moved into the building and took charge of the house.

Foundation in Segovia

The mission house of Gracia could not satisfy the yearnings of Fr. Claret and Fr. Xifré. It was necessary to expand. The Founder wanted to have one house in each diocese. It was he who initiated and directed the steps towards the foundation of Segovia, at the request of Bishop Friar Rodrigo Echevarría y Briones. It was established in the church of St. Andrew and officially founded on November 22, 1861. Later on it moved

to St. Gabriel, the convent-church of the “alcantarinos.” Thus began the foundation in the Castilian region. The first persons assigned to Segovia were Fr. Clement Serrat as Superior, Fr. Francis Crusats and Bro. Joseph Saladich. Shortly after, Frs. Dominic Fábregas and Antony Vilaseca joined them.

The Founder with his Missionaries

Fr. Claret was still present in his Institute in spite of his many duties as archbishop and royal confessor. He visited the houses of Vic and Gracia in 1659, 1862, 1864; and that of Segovia during his summer stay in La Granja with the Queen. During these visits he lived with the missionaries as one of them. In 1865 he stayed with them in Vic for three months and gave them spiritual exercises in 1867. He did the same in the house of Gracia. In these exercises he prophesied that the Congregation would have a martyr: this would be Fr. Crusats. He also exerted efforts to have some members of the Institute stay with him in Madrid, like Frs. Vilar and Puig and Bros. Saladich and Calvo.

The Autobiography

Fr. Xifré ordered our Fr. Founder to write the Autobiography in order to contribute to the formation of new apostles. He wrote it in Madrid and submitted it personally to Fr. Xifré during a trip he made to Vic in 1862. The so-called *Autobiography* was not published until 1915 in the first volume of *Archivo Histórico de la Congregación* (‘Historical Archive of the Congregation’). Its reading was reserved to the more mature priests of the Congregation, because it included some delicate stories intended to give orientation in the direction of souls and in the confessional. Its reading was not brought into general use until 1951 when an expurgated edition was made. Today we can consider the Autobiography as the true Programmatic Letter of the Congregation and a source of inspiration for all Claretian missionaries. The original autograph is kept in the Claretian Archive in Rome.

The Definition of the Missionary

Although the obligations of his office did not allow him normally to live with the missionaries, he was always near. For this reason, in 1861 he sent from Madrid to Fr. Xifré a most valuable document: the Pattern or pen-portrait of the missionary, which is a true gem of Christian spirituality. This document was well known and transcribed in multiple occasions by the first missionaries. Condensed in it is the life ideal that the Founder sought for himself and wanted to transmit to his sons. For this reason it has been included in the present text of the Constitutions. Here is the text of one of the two drafts that still exist and he left written in the Autobiography: *“I tell myself: A Son of the Immaculate Heart of Mary is a man on fire with love, who spreads its flames wherever he goes. He desires mightily and strives by all means possible to set the whole world on fire with God’s love. Nothing daunts him; he delights in privations, welcomes work, embraces sacrifices, smiles at slander, and rejoices in suffering. His only concern is how he can best follow Jesus Christ and imitate Him in working, suffering, and striving constantly and solely for the greater glory of God and the salvation of souls.”*

The Consoling Promise

This type of promises is not exclusive of this Congregation. It is the third of the three statements that have been traditionally picked up from the prophecy of our Founder: the expansion throughout the whole world, the permanence until the end of times and the promise of salvation for all those who die in the Congregation. Fr. Xifré made it known in a circular letter of 1897 and it was later taken up by other publications, such as those of Frs. Cepeda and Ribera, but it was never taken as an official teaching of the Congregation.

“The Spirit of the Congregation”

This book was written by Fr. Joseph Xifré in 1867. We can say that this work inspired the lives of many Claretians in the beginnings, because of the scant knowledge of the works of the Founder. “The Spirit of the Congregation” is a small book in three parts: the first part contains the means for one’s own salvation; the second, regulations to give Missions and Retreats successfully; and the third, various notes and useful preaching materials for the missionaries. His project was approved by the Founder.

New Foundations

Soon foundations were made in Huesca (1864), Jaca (1867) and La Selva del Camp (1868), and there were offerings for other foundations: Astorga, Valencia, Cadiz, Compostela, Zaragoza.

The Missionaries in the Missions

The only ideal of the first missionaries were popular missions and spiritual exercises. Later on, this ideal would extend to other ministries like confessions, direction of seminaries, teaching.

The Founder was the first missionary and, from the beginning, the missions were very successful. Like Fr. Xifré, the local Superiors dedicated themselves also to the missions.

The Missionaries at Home

The life of the missionaries was ruled by the Constitutions, the Directory and the Director. The Constitutions and the Directory had been written by the Founder, and the Director was the work of Fr. Clotet, dedicated to the Brothers.

Life at home was quite regulated from the outset. They rose at four in the morning and, after one hour of personal meditation, the Mass was celebrated. There was an obligatory conference on morals, examen and noon meal at 12:15, during which there was some reading. In the afternoon, after prayers, there was another conference on preaching and a stroll. On returning, there was a conference on mystical theology, supper, a visit to the Blessed Sacrament and recreation until a quarter to ten when they retired to rest. But, although everything was regulated, the family spirit, which was the ideal of the Founder, could always be felt.

Oath of Permanence, Consecration and Vows

After the General Chapter of 1862, the noviciate, the oath of permanence, the consecration and the vows were adopted, and the students were accepted as a new class

of members in the Congregation. In 1865 the formula of religious profession was confirmed and the door was opened for all the members of the Congregation to make it. Fr. Claret himself made the profession at the end of his life on October 8, 1870 in Fontfroide, at the hands of Fr. Xifré.

Civil and Canonical Approval of the Institute

The civil approval of the Institute was necessary in order to insure its future in Spain and was soon obtained, on July 9, 1859. The canonical approval was obtained in 1860. It was Pope Pius IX who gave the definitive approval of the Institute when he approved “*ad experimentum*” the Constitutions on 22 December 1865.

Drafting and Final Approval of the Constitutions

The origin of the Constitutions is found in some first norms drafted by our Fr. Founder in 1849 for the first community. No copy is left of these first Constitutions. In 1857, when Fr. Claret had been newly installed in Madrid, in order to obtain the civil approval of the Congregation, he dedicated himself, together with Fr. Stephen Sala, to the actualisation of the Constitutions. These are the first Constitutions that we know today. In 1862 an appendix was added with 29 corrections to the previous text. In the text of 1865, the order and the structure are maintained, and the chapters on formation are added. This was the text approved by Pius IX “*ad experimentum*” that year, and definitely on February 11, 1870.

The Revolution of 1868

On those stormy days the communities went through particularly tragic moments. The house of Jaca definitively ceased to exist, painfully and without glory. The community of Vic was dispersed and, although Fr. Hilarius Brossosa bravely maintained that of Huesca, a general discouragement prevailed. In Segovia the missionaries were expelled from the province and went to the dioceses of Valladolid, Avila and Santander. Some priests abandoned the Congregation while the national Government civilly suppressed the Institute on October 18, 1868. The house of La Selva was assaulted and the Congregation could offer there its first martyr, Fr. Francis Crusats, newly arrived from Segovia.

Dodging the Storm

Fr. Xifré had to cross the Pyrenees, not by an exclusive personal decision, but in order to look for some house in France where he could gather the dispersed members. It was not an easy task, but after many efforts and after a short time in Perpignan, he found in the small town of Prades a small house to let. With the foundation of this house on February 2, 1869, that small enclosure in the exile became the centre and heart of the Institute.

Foundation in Algiers

The preoccupations of Fr. Xifré were about expansion, taking into consideration the circumstances and the growth of the members of the Congregation. The first foundation was in Algiers, a territory under France. Invited by Msgr. Lavigerie on October 4,

1869, Frs. Alibés, Quintana, Bech and Bro. Philip Gómez left for that territory. The missionaries found many difficulties there: lack of work, hostile ambience, even on the part of the Prelate, a very impulsive man who very easily hurled excommunications: even the missionaries themselves were not exempt from them. Although the Procurator of the Republic in Algeria protected them, things were becoming ever more critical, even in the economic aspect, and they abandoned the foundation in 1888.

The First Foundations of America in Chile

This foundation as well as that of Algiers had been done with the approval of the Founder. It was a proposal of the priest Santiago de la Peña, who had constructed a chapel and wanted to keep alive the worship there. On December 13, 1869, the first missionaries departed for Santiago de Chile. In charge was Fr. Paul Vallier. They found great hostility among the people and, one week after their arrival, they had to move to another residence. Fr. Xifré visited them as soon as they were established. He made no less than three visits to the missionaries of Chile. Fr. Vallier expanded the Congregation in Chile by opening a new foundation in La Serena in 1873. In 1876 he was appointed Visitor.

Foundation in Barbastro

Fr. Diego Gavín explained to Fr. General the convenience of establishing a foundation in Barbastro. Once the old house of Jaca was abandoned, and after taking the opportune steps in Barbastro, the house was founded in the year 1869. There also the first church dedicated to the Heart of Mary in Spain was built. The admission of some children and young adolescents in this house was also the beginning of the schools for postulants in the Congregation. Fr. Xifré wrote the first “Reglamento” or Regulations for them in 1876. This house would later become an example for the entire Congregation, because of its numerous martyrs during the Spanish civil war in the year 1936.

Last Days and Death of our Founder

Our Founder arrived to the house of Prades on 23 July 1870. That was an oasis of joy in the midst of his sufferings. Prophetically he saw the Congregation spread throughout the whole world and he sensed that his death was already at the door. But soon, on August 6, he had to leave his own children and go into exile in the Cistercian monastery of Fontfroide, near Narbonne.

After several days of terrible uncertainty and of slow and painful agony, Fr. Claret gave up his spirit to God in the said monastery on 24 October 1870.

Providentially the Founder was the first one to die after the definitive approval of the Institute with the official profession of vows, and after he himself made such profession.

III. FIRST GREAT EXPANSION (1870-1899)

The Congregation in France

Fathers, students and novices were together in the house of Prades. They lived there in straitened circumstances and there too persecution arrived. But soon after, in

May of 1872, thanks to Fr. Clotet, a house was founded in Thuir. The Noviciate house was established there and it became at the same time the quarters of the General Government. Fr. Clotet acted as Superior, and Fr. Clement Serrat as Novice Master. Soon the number of students and priests increased. In ten years it went from 100 to 400. Frs. Diego Gavín and Ramon Genover, two great missionaries, were there, while Fr. Bernard Bech took care of recruiting new vocations in Spain.

The community of Thuir devoted itself mainly to formation, but it also worked giving missions in that region, and learning to adjust themselves to France.

Restoration in Spain

On October 5, 1875 the copy of the Royal Order by which they could return to their former possessions in Spain arrived in Thuir, sent by Fr. Xifré. Alfonso XII had already entered Madrid. The houses of Vic, Segovia and La Selva were recovered. Those who went to La Selva soon founded in Tarragona, where the Congregation had already been since 1872, but had been compelled to quit. The houses of Gracia and Huesca were also recovered.

In 1876 the IV General Chapter was celebrated in Gracia; Fr. Xifré was reelected General, as were also the same assistants, Fr. Clotet as Subdirector and Frs. Clemente Serrat, Lorenzo Font and Dominic Solá as consultants.

First Foundations in Spain after the Restoration

There were new foundations in Alfaro and Alagón (1875), Solsona and Calahorra (1878) and Pamplona (1880). Fr. Antony Pueyo, future bishop of Pasto (Colombia), was sent to Cordoba to make the first foundation in the South of Spain on 3 September 1876.

Foundation in Madrid

Fr. Dominic Solá was entrusted with the foundation in Madrid in 1877, in Toledo Street, n. 42. There was great interest on the part of Fr. General in this foundation in the capital of Spain; this was important to facilitate the transaction of all affairs with the National Government. Fr. Mata succeeded Fr. Solá and, for 20 years, he carried out with great success works in Madrid such as "*Iris de Paz*" and "*Annales*" of the Congregation. Frs. Postús and Dueso worked tirelessly in this house.

Disastrous Foundation in Cuba

This was an offer by the Archbishop of Santiago de Cuba. It had always been a dream of the missionaries to be able to continue the work of the Founder in that diocese. Fr. Xifré sent the first expedition in May, with Fr. Manent in charge. Everything started well, but tragedy soon struck. A few months after their arrival, three members of the expedition fell in three days, victims of the yellow fever. Two weeks later, two more died. In view of this, Fr. Solá was greatly discouraged. When Fr. Xifré ordered Fr. Solá to return to the peninsula, telegrams were crossed: one with this message: "*Solá, Sassoliver, Pérez, dead. Xuriach critical: quid? Urgent. Manent.*" Fr. Xifré's answer was: "*Come first ship. Xifré.*" Of the 6 Priests and 5 Brothers only two remained alive: Fr. Manent and Bro. Sesé. The reaction was a shower of voluntary offerings from the whole Congregation to go to Cuba.

Expulsion from France

In March 1880 a decree of the government of the Republic of France established that all religious communities should regularize their situation by soliciting legal recognition. This was only a pretext. In the month of October the government proceeded to the closure of all religious houses, through a premeditated and well organized plan. The General Secretary of the Prefecture of the Oriental Pyrenees, accompanied by several gendarmes, appeared in the house of the Missionaries and ordered them to abandon the house in a few hours. The following day, the nearly 80 members of the community left Thuir on foot up to Elne where they took a train to Spain. Three or four Brothers and a Priest remained to take care of the house. The scholasticate was established in Barcelona (Gracia).

The Missions of the Gulf of Guinea

This Vicariate had been under the care of the Jesuits since 1858. In 1868 the subsidy was withdrawn from them and they left definitely in 1872. Things did not go well in that mission until, finally, in 1882 Fr. Xifré was invited to assume it. By accepting the mission, the Congregation obtained also the exemption from military service on behalf of the young missionaries in formation, something Fr. Xifré longed for. The first expedition of 10 voluntary missionaries was sent in 1883. Fr. Ciriaco Ramírez went as Apostolic Prefect. The history of this mission is completed in the chapter on Missions.

Foundation in Mexico

The idea of having a foundation in Mexico had already crossed the mind of Fr. Claret when he was in Rome on the occasion of the Council. But he was not very enthusiastic, due to the political situation. Not until 1883, when the situation improved, could they seriously discuss the matter. A canon, nephew of the Archbishop of Mexico City, approached Fr. Xifré in Barcelona and suggested this foundation. It was accepted, and Fr. Dominic Solá was tasked with its realisation. He arrived there on 15 November. Toluca was the city chosen to begin the Claretian presence in Mexico. On August 3, 1884 they took possession of the church and the house and soon after a school was erected. In 1887 the house of Jesús María would be founded in the Mexican capital and in 1892 that of San Hipólito.

Foundation in Rome

To have a foundation in Rome was the dream of any Institute with aspirations of expansion and agility in its transactions. They started in 1884 with the direction of the Spanish College of Rome that would later be transferred to Via Giulia and become the Hispanic-Roman seminary. At the same time two more houses were founded in Spoleto: the Fosco and San Félix. They were founded by Fr. Antony Naval, but were soon suppressed.

Two Providential Foundations: Santo Domingo de la Calzada and Cervera

The church and the University-College of the Franciscans were the basis of the foundation of Santo Domingo in 1885. It was the first great house of studies of the Con-

gregation in Spain. All the theologians from Gracia moved there and the noviciate was transferred there as well. Fr. Isaac Burgos took part in this foundation. Its first Superior was Fr. Serrat. Fr. Paul Vallier, newly arrived from Chile was the novicemaster. Some conditions had been imposed upon the authorities: they should repair the building. Since these conditions were not complied with, Fr. Xifré ordered the community to abandon Santo Domingo but, through the intervention of Fr. Philip Amigo, a priest of the city, things were arranged and the order of transfer was revoked. Soon the hospital and the schools were constructed. The community continued increasing and the new installations were also occupied.

The initial difficulties in Santo Domingo and the increase of the number of formandi in the Congregation compelled the Superiors to accept in 1887 the providential offer of occupying the grandiose building of the former University of Cervera, bigger yet than the building of Santo Domingo. Fr. Peter Mulleras was the first Superior, followed by Fr. Antony Naval. Soon the work began and the Noviciate and Scholasticate for the philosophy students were opened.

Other Foundations in Spain until the General Chapter of 1888

In the year 1881 a foundation was opened in Las Palmas de Gran Canaria. Fr. Joseph Prim, eminent missionary of those islands, carried out this foundation. Fr. Hilaris Brossosa would consolidate the work. On July 14, 1881 the house of Zafra was founded, with Fr. Genover in charge. In 1882 Valmaseda was founded, although it had a population of only 2,500 inhabitants. Tarragona followed in 1883. The bishop of Lérida insistently requested a foundation in his diocese. In 1885 Fr. Peter Mulleras arrived with the task of organising the foundation, at a time when the cholera was scourging the city. Jaén was also founded at the request of its bishop in 1885. In 1886 the foundation of Bilbao took place, with Fr. Diego Gavín as Superior. Plasencia was an advantageous foundation that was also realised with the help of the bishop. Fr. Navarro took possession of it in 1886.

First Study Houses

When the Spanish civil authorities in 1885 gave the Congregation authorisation to teach, there were already schools in Segovia (1884), Toluca (1884), Gracia (1885) and in the following years, more were created in other houses such as Zafra (1886), Alfaro, Calatayud, Rioseco, Las Palmas, Santa Cruz de Tenerife, etc. Our Fr. Founder had thought of the Brothers to carry out this ministry, but Fr. Xifré thought it more convenient to assign priests also.

Annales Congregationis

On 20 November 1885 the General Government published the first number of the "*Boletín Religioso de la Congregación*" that would later be called "*Annales Congregationis*." Its aim was to inform about everything that happened in the Congregation, but also to fill up the void caused by the prohibition of the habitual reading of dailies and newspapers. To this end, it published a selection of the most important news of the whole world.

Cordis Mariae Filius (CMF)

The primitive practice offered a great variety of abbreviations to be used at the end of the signature of the Claretian Missionaries: Pbro., Mro., P. Del C. De M^a., del I.C. de M^a. The present abbreviation cmf started to be used toward 1878. It began to spread until 1887 when Fr. Xifré gave this disposition in the *Boletín Religioso*: “everyone should attach to his name the initials C.M.F. (Cordis Mariae Filius), since this is the true distinguishing mark by which we, the members of the Congregation, are honoured.”

V General Chapter and New Foundations (1888)

In 1888 the V General Chapter was celebrated in Madrid, from June 8 to 17. During this Chapter, Fr. Joseph Xifré was re-elected General of the Congregation. At that moment the Institute had 3 Visitorships, Chile, Fernando Póo and Mexico. Previous dispositions were revised and primary and secondary education were adopted.

New foundations

In these years the following foundations were made: Almendralejo (1889), Don Benito (1893), Calatayud (1894), Ciudad Rodrigo, Medina de Rioseco and Valladolid (1894), Écija and Ciudad Real (1895).

Iris de Paz

In 1889 the future “*Iris de Paz*” or “*El Inmaculado Corazón de María*” was born in Bilbao. At the beginning it was called “*Boletín del Corazón de María*.” It was the Congregation’s first own and exclusive publication. It was to be the non-official organ of the Congregation (the official one was *Annales*). Its first director was Fr. Diego Gavín. From the very outset it was liked, although Fr. Xifré had some reservations. Soon the work exceeded the possibilities of Fr. Gavín, and in 1891 Fr. Joseph Mata was appointed director and the magazine was transferred to Madrid. In 1892 it began to be called “*Iris de Paz*.” In 1897 its format was enlarged and it became fortnightly. From this magazine would later on split away another no less important one in the history of the Congregation: “*Ilustración del Clero*.”

Chronicle of the Congregation

Fr. Xifré started to write this historical Chronicle of the Congregation on 13 January 1893, aboard the British vessel *Mendoza*, during a trip from Panama to Guayaquil, across the Pacific. When it was finished is not known. The manuscript is kept in the General Archives of the Congregation in Rome and was first edited in *Annales* of 1915.

Division in Provinces: Catalonia and Castile

In 1895 the VI General Chapter was celebrated in Cervera (September 3-16). During this extraordinary Chapter the Institute was divided in two Provinces: Catalonia and Castile. But Fr. Xifré continued personally intervening in everything.

The Province of Catalonia comprised Catalonia, Aragon, Valencia and Murcia; the Balearic and Canary Islands; USA, Mexico and other Republics of Central America. Fr. Felix Alexander Cepeda, Chilean, was elected first Provincial Superior. The first

foundations of the Province were Sta. Cruz de Tenerife (1896), Sabadell (1899) and Olesa de Montserrat (1899).

The Province of Castile comprised the two former Castiles, Estremadura, Andalusia, Leon, Navarra, Galicia, Asturias, the Basque country and the South American Republics. Fr. Isaac Burgos was elected first Provincial Superior. The first foundations of the Province were Aranda de Duero (1897) and Aldeia da Ponte, first foundation in Portugal (1898), which disappeared immediately after the persecutions of 1901.

Creation of Visitorships

Through the Visitorship of Guinea two new Apostolic Prefects passed after Fr. Ramírez: first, Fr. Peter Vall-Llovera (1888) who died one and a half year later, of a gangrenous sickness. Shortly after, came Fr. Armengol Coll, a great missionary that would later be appointed Apostolic Vicar and first bishop of the Congregation after Fr. Founder.

In the Chapter of 1895 the Visitorships of America were created, although they remained dependent from the new Provinces of Spain. That of Mexico, from Catalonia; and that of Chile and Brazil, from Castile.

As regards the Visitorship of South America, there had already been two foundations in Valparaiso and Curicó (both in 1880). In 1895 the house of Linares was founded.

In charge of the North American Visitorship, which comprised Mexico and USA, was Fr. Dominic Solá (1888) until Fr. John Melé was appointed (1889). The foundations of Guanajuato (1895), Leon (1895), Puebla (1896) and Orizaba (1900) were also established.

First steps in Brazil

When the Province of Castile took charge of the Visitorship of South America we had in Brazil only the project and the acceptance of the foundation of São Paulo, which would be constituted by the Province of Castile in 1895. The foundation was led by Fr. Eusebio Sacristán. Among the members of this first community was Fr. Francisco Ozamis, future Bishop of San José de Tocantins. Through the tireless efforts of Fr. Ramón Genover, the Province began to look for a way to extend the presence of the Claretians in that immense country, until it found the appropriate place: Campinas. In September of 1899 a community was definitively installed there, with Fr. Eusebio Sacristán as superior. The house and the church were the object of great reforms as the apostolic activities and the works of charity among the poorest were multiplied.

The Magazine Ave Maria

A Brazilian Catholic, Mr. Tiburtino Martín, very devout of the Blessed Virgin, founded in 1898 the magazine "Ave Maria." It would not have lasted long, had not the Claretian missionaries, newly arrived in São Paulo, taken charge of it the following year. The growth of the magazine was spectacular. In 1908 it was already the Catholic magazine with the largest number of subscribers of the whole of Brazil. After more than one century of existence, it has become a great editorial emporium, basically focusing on the spreading of the Holy Bible.

The first foundation in Portugal

One of the houses of the Province of Castile in Spain was that of Ciudad Rodrigo (Salamanca). The pastoral work of this community brought out the idea of founding in Portugal, concretely in Aldeia da Ponte, a small town near the Spanish border. The foundation took effect in May of 1898 by decision of Fr. Xifré, but it was the Provincial Superior, Fr. Isaac Burgos, who accompanied the first members. In spite of the added difficulty of the language, the missionaries were able to adjust themselves to the new reality, and soon they were able to widen their activity to a great zone of the country, until the political situation plunged the community in serious tribulations, beginning in 1901.

In Brazil, the efforts of Fr. Genover again made it possible to open the house of Pouso Alegre in 1901. Fr. Francisco Ozamis would later describe the first steps of this foundation.

Situation of the Institute at the End of this Period

Fr. Clotet represented the tendency to the establishment of Provinces in the Congregation, out of fidelity to the Constitutions. Fr. Xifré, on the contrary, was in favour of a more centralised Congregation. The Chapter of 1888 had posed the question and the formation of Provinces was rejected. However, during the extraordinary General Chapter of 1895 the theme was taken up again, and the result was a unanimous decision in favour of the division into two Provinces: Catalonia and Castile. At any rate, the powers of the Provincials were not clearly defined. There was a new extraordinary General Chapter in 1896, but the situation was not clarified either. By that time, Fr. Dominic Fábregas had already died (1895).

The Provincials, in turn, especially Fr. Isaac Burgos, began to prepare with sufficient time the Ordinary Chapter of 1900. They were trying to obtain the decentralisation of the government in the Institute. But Fr. Xifré died on November 3, 1899, after having ruled the Congregation for 41 years. His was an immense work. He received the Congregation with one house and 10 persons and, at the moment of his death, it had 61 houses and 1,368 persons.

IV. GENERALATE OF FR. CLEMENT SERRAT (1899-1906)

The Congregation without Fr. Xifré

Immediately after the death of Fr. Xifré, the VIII General Chapter was celebrated in Vic from December 19 to 27, 1899. Fr. Clement Serrat was elected Superior General, with the prestigious Frs. Martin Alsina and Francis Naval as companions. Neither in this Chapter nor in the subsequent Provincial Chapters of Catalonia and Castile were they able to advance in the consolidation of the provinces. Their fruits however were not long in coming and, in 1901, the decree of constitution of the two noviciates of Vic and Segovia was promulgated. Also, beginning this year, the American Visitorships became dependent from the Provinces: those of South America (Chile, Argentina and Brazil) from Castile and that of Mexico from Catalonia.

During this period, the Congregation continued its progress toward the consolidation, without neglecting the establishment of new foundation. We could say that its history became more complex because the two Provinces followed separate ways.

General Dispositions

In 1900 the first *Disposiciones Generales* are published. They are an organic and systematic compilation of the general norms of the Congregation, emanated from the General Chapters. In addition to insuring observance, they give the Institute its own face and character, like its own distinctive seal. They were updated in 1905, 1906 and 1912.

Andacollo (Chile), First Parish

In the year 1900 a house was founded in Andacollo at the request of the Bishop of La Serena. The first contract was provisional, till they could see how this foundation developed, considering that the permanent attention to the Marian Shrine and to a vast rural zone was not very adequate to the ministry so far performed by the missionaries. Soon the efficacy of their work and the necessity of not depending on the pastor of La Serena became evident. Thus the creation of the first parish of the Congregation was requested and easily obtained.

First History of the Congregation (1901)

Fr. Mariano Aguilar, who had already published the *Vida Admirable del P. Claret*, prepared the first *Historia de la Congregación*, which did not satisfy everyone, because it showed “a not sufficiently generous and ample concept of the nature and demands of History.”

The Religious Vocation

In 1902, on his birthday, Fr. Serrat published a beautiful circular to the Congregation entitled *La Vocación Religiosa*, through which he wanted to stimulate in everyone feelings of gratitude, by reminding them of the gift of divine vocation. At the same time he invited to fidelity and the imitation of the Master by three means: humility and meekness, two typical virtues of a Claretian missionary, patient charity, avoiding harshness and severity, and unity.

The Mission of Guinea in this Period

Thanks to a Decree of the Ministry of State of 1902, which imposed the presentation of a yearly Report of the Spanish possessions in Africa, we have abundant information from Fr. Coll. In 1903 too, the publication of the fortnightly Claretian magazine “*La Guinea Española*” began, with the aim of “commenting on the religious, material and moral interests of the Gulf of Guinea.”

The Provinces of Catalonia and Castile

Fr. Cepeda was re-elected Provincial of Catalonia in the provincial chapter of 1901. Soon difficulties began to arise that led him to resign from his office in 1902. Fr. Francis Cases was appointed to take his place. In this period the Province of Catalonia made only one foundation in Cartagena (1906).

The Provincial Chapter had re-elected the Provincial Government en bloc, with Fr. Burgos as Superior, who was leading the Province with determination. The quarters of the Government were established in Segovia. In 1902 the Province founded the house

of Zamora as a result of a Retreat preached by Frs. Dominic Solá and Edward Gómez. One of the first to be assigned to this house was Fr. Nicholas García, future General of the Congregation. In 1904 the houses of Jerez de los Caballeros and Gibraltar were founded.

In Portugal where Aldeia da Ponte was the only existing foundation, the Province of Castile founded during these years the houses of Fraga (1903) and Lisbon (1905).

Progress of the Visitorships

The Visitorships of Chile, Argentina-Brazil and Mexico continued as such, in a growing process until the extraordinary General Chapter of 1904.

In that of Chile there was a great foundational activity in this period. There were foundations in Andacollo (1900), Temuco (1901), Coquimbo, Antofagasta and Talca (1903). The sowing was hard but the harvest was extraordinary, thanks to the tireless work of missionaries such as Fr. Thomas Sesé, stimulated by Fr. Raymond Genover, dependent Visitor from the Province of Castile to which this Visitorship belonged. It's unavoidable to mention here Frs. Avellana and Soteras, extraordinary missionaries; the first died in the hospital of Carrizal Alto in 1904 with the reputation of being a saint, and the second in La Serena in 1905.

The Congregation in Argentina

After several unsuccessful attempts, some of them as early as 1877, Fr. Ramón Genover went finally from São Paulo to Buenos Aires in the year 1900, at the request of Fr. Burgos, in order to prepare what would become the first foundation in Argentina. Towards the end of 1901, on his return from the Provincial Chapter, he was able to establish a community in a rented house of Buenos Aires. With Fr. Zacarías Iglesias as superior of the foundation, it took as its first tasks the attention to the parish of La Concepción and to a correctional house for women. It did not take long to increase the number of houses in the Republic, and so a foundation was started in Tucumán in 1902, in Catamarca in 1903 and in Rosario in 1904, all at the initiative of Fr. Genover. The outstanding figure in Argentina in this epoch was Fr. Zacarías Iglesias, from Chile.

Foundation in the United States

As a result of the missions preached from Mexico in Texas and California, Fr. Raymond Prat carried out the foundation of San Antonio in 1902. First from the residence of the Bishop and later on from their own residence, they started their tireless missionary work throughout the entire region. At the same time they started to take the first steps toward the foundation in San Marcos, a small town of 2,000 inhabitants, about 100 kilometres from San Antonio.

IX Extraordinary General Chapter (1904)

In 1904 the IX extraordinary General Chapter was celebrated, in which it was granted that the Provinces should have their own Scholasticate, and the Central House of Studies was created for those who finished their career: it was called *Año de Aranda*. The three General Vicariates of Mexico, Chile and Argentina-Brazil were created and segregated from the Provinces of Spain, in addition to that of Fernando Póo. Shortly

after, the latter was elevated to Vicariate, with the Most Rev. Fr. Armengol Coll as its first Vicar. He was also the first bishop of the Congregation after the Founder.

Creation of the Province of Betica

In this Chapter it was also decided to create the third Province of the Congregation, that of Betica. The resolution was implemented at the beginning of October of 1906, Fr. Cándido Catalán being appointed Provincial Superior. He fixed his residence in Zafra.

Statistics and Apostolate in this Period

During this period, the Congregation went from 1,368 Claretians in 1899 to 1,490 in 1907, with 84 houses, 24 more than at the death of Fr. Xifré. The principal ministry was still preaching, but without the exclusive attachment to missions and exercises. Other ministries, like parishes, were accepted, especially in America, where the first parish of the Congregation was established in Andacollo, Chile, in 1900. Secondary education was also accepted in both internal and external schools. In this period was also born a rudimentary publishing house (1903), seed of the future “Editorial del Corazón de María.” In the same way, publications like “*La Guinea Española*” spread throughout the whole Congregation.

V. FR. MARTIN ALSINA AND THE INCREASE OF THE CONGREGATION (1906-1922)

Death of Fr. Serrat and new Superior General

On January 6, 1906 Fr. Clement Serrat unexpectedly died in Segovia. The X General Chapter of the Congregation was convoked and celebrated in Aranda de Duero from June 5 to 17. In this Chapter Fr. Martin Alsina, till then Subdirector of the Institute, was elected as the new Superior General. The only novelty in the Government was the inclusion of Fr. Antony Naval, Francis’ brother. Until 1913, the quarters of the General Government would continue in Aranda de Duero.

The Revision of the Constitutions

As soon as the new government was elected, it began to work on the preparation of an improved text of the Constitutions. The new draft would be ready by April 1910, to be studied in the General Chapter of 1912.

The “divine pious motion”

In 1906 the new Fr. General wrote his first circular to the Congregation, entitled *Remedies against Dissatisfaction in Religion*. He had observed that dissatisfaction was one of the main evils that affected the missionaries and their vocational fidelity. As a remedy he proposed the “*divine pious motion*,” which was not a matter of intelligence but of will, of practical fidelity and dedication to one’s vocation. We could say that it was a call to joy and happiness.

The Missionary Song

We do not know the date, but we do know that the lyrics of the Missionary Song “Jesús, ya sabes, soy tu soldado...” (*Jesus, you know that I am your soldier...*) were composed by Fr. Agapito Ajuria, who died in Corisco in the year 1908. The music was composed later, in 1912, by Fr. Vidal Bandrés, a missionary in Chocó. The song became famous among the seminarians and served as a spiritual stimulus for the Martyrs of Barbastro in the last days of their glorious martyrdom.

The Quasi-Province of Chile

From 1905 to 1912 Chile was a Quasi-Province *ad experimentum*. In this period it had two Major Superiors: Fr. Thomas Sesé until 1909 and Fr. Anselm Santesteban until 1912. During the first mandate the new foundation of Ovalle (1907) was made. During the second, the orientation was changed and efforts were basically dedicated to the consolidation of the communities. However, the Congregation also expanded with new foundations in Bolivia (Cochabamba) and Peru (Lima), both in 1910; to these, that of Cocharcas (Peru) would be added in 1912.

The Quasi-Province of Argentina-Brazil

With Fr. Zacharias Iglesias at the helm, the Quasi-Province of Argentina-Brazil continued till 1908, when it was divided in two, in a climate of expansion. In Argentina foundations were made in Cordoba in 1906, in Tránsito in 1907 and in Bahía Blanca in 1908. Also in 1908 the first foundation was made in Uruguay, concretely in Montevideo. In Brazil the foundations of Curitiba (1906) and Rio de Janeiro and Porto Alegre (1907) were made.

In 1808 two independent Quasi-provinces were erected: Argentina-Uruguay and Brazil. In Argentina, Fr. Mariano Sahún was elected Major Superior in 1909. His priority concern was the consolidation of past foundations. However there were also new foundations in this period, like Goya (1911) and Mendoza (1912). In Brazil Fr. Joachim Bestué, from Lisbon, was elected Vice-Provincial Superior; he soon erected the foundations of Bahía (1909), Belo Horizonte and Livramento (1811).

First foundation in Uruguay

The Quasi-Province of Argentina-Brazil made the first foundation in Uruguay, concretely in Peñarol, a suburb of Montevideo, in the year 1908. The General Government accepted the offer of the Archbishop by sending 6 priests and 4 brothers to the new community. Fr. Luis Lusilla, a famous orator, went as superior. The basic work started first in a small chapel and later on in the parish of the Good Shepherd, in the inner city.

The Quasi-Province of Mexico-North America

In 1904, Mexico was already a Quasi-Province and established the foundation of Monterrey. The Vice-provincial Superior, Fr. Ramón Prat, was the one in charge of bringing about the foundation. The community of Celaya was also founded (1905). At about this time, Fr. Félix A. Cepeda, back again in Mexico, founded the magazine *La Esperanza*. Fr. Ramón Prat continued as Vice-provincial Superior until the Provincial

Chapter of 1909, and was then replaced by Fr. Cepeda. At about this time the communities of Querétaro and Tépíc were founded in 1908 and 1910, respectively.

The California foundations

We must mention separately the foundations that Mexico kept carrying out in California, because they took place in three of the great missions founded in the XVIII century by Fray Junípero Serra: San Fernando (1907), San Gabriel (1908) and Los Angeles (1910). Here in Los Angeles was *La Placita*, a venerated and well-loved place among the Hispanics, because of its folkloric interest and history in the heart of the great metropolis. At that time other foundations like those of Santa Fe, San Francisco or Houston, remained simple offerings.

The Prefecture of Chocó

A series of circumstances made Fr. Martin Alsina decide to assume in 1909 the missions of Chocó, which would later give much glory to the Congregation. It was a vast territory with two provinces: San Juan and Atrato, with Istmina and Quibdó as capitals. Fr. John Gil, who was from Segovia and at the time Superior of Plasencia, was appointed first Apostolic Prefect. The first difficulties were immense and only men of untiring zeal could have been able to overcome them. Some of them however had to pay for the great effort with their own life, among them the Apostolic Prefect himself, who died shortly after drafting his first report. He was replaced with Fr. Francis Gutiérrez. The Congregation spreads in Colombia

Soon they saw the need to found a community that would act as bridge and Procure for the mission, and Cartagena was selected for this purpose in 1909. The community of Bogotá was founded in 1912 with the same objectives. Here, at the request of the bishop, they assumed the responsibility of the Shrine of the National Vow to the Heart of Jesus, with Fr. Antony Pueyo, Consultor of the Province of Betica, in charge; later on, he would be appointed bishop of Pasto.

In Bolivia and Peru

Fr. Alsina sent Fr. Tomás Sesé, quasi-provincial of Chile, to explore the possibility of founding in Bolivia and Peru. Almost unexpectedly the foundation of Bolivia came in the year 1910, starting with an invitation of the Vicar General of Cochabamba who offered them the direction of the seminary and, in his own words, the service to the best temple of Cochabamba. It was a hectic foundation. First of all, because of the compulsory dedication to a school that had not been included in the plans of the missionaries; but also because of the radical opposition of the diocesan clergy. This presence did not last long, although the farewell would not be final, since the missionaries would return in 1919 to stay there definitively.

At the same time as Cochabamba, the General Government approved in 1909 the foundation in Lima, Peru, at the request of Fr. Sesé. There were two fronts: the seminary and the shrine of Cocharcas. This was an important challenge for the Congregation. Therefore Chile took great pains over assigning there the best available missionaries, among others Fr. Sesé himself, who had ceased in his task as quasi-provincial, Juan Nacenta, Mariano Aguilar, etc.

The Missionary Sisters of Mary Immaculate

In October 1909, Mons. Armengol Coll, together with Sister Imelda Makole, founded in Equatorial Guinea the Institute of the Missionary Sisters of Mary Immaculate, who were then called Auxiliaries of the Missions. Their mission would be to evangelize Africa, collaborating with all the missionary agents who were seeking the transformation of the world according to God's designs.

Equatorial Guinea

It would be impossible to describe all the works of the Missionaries in Equatorial Guinea in the course of time. But we cannot help stating here the names that will forever form part of this great Claretian epic: Batete-María Cristina, San Carlos, Musola, Concepción, Basilé, Banapá and Santa Isabel, as well as the islands of Corisco and Annobón. More important would be to consign here the names of those who gave up their life in this generous undertaking, but selecting just a few names would be unfair, and writing all of them up, too long. Let it suffice to say that all these efforts were somehow rewarded with the creation of the Seminary and the growth of the magazine "La Guinea Española."

Missionary Expansion of the Congregation

During these years many expeditions were sent to America and Africa. The Congregation was fully missionary. The Propagation of the Faith assigned to it the missionary care of the Lower California, and the territories of Río de Oro in Africa. Many were the foundations, but many more were the offers received, which had to be rejected: The Prefecture of Arauca, the Apostolic Vicariate of Pará (Brazil), the Islands of Providence and of San Andrés...

Foundations in Spain and Portugal

The Congregation continued expanding in Spain: Seville (1906), result of the efforts of Fr. Pueyo, a man who greatly shone in the beginnings of the Betica Province. Cartagena (1906), San Fernando (1908), Berga (1909), Beire and Baltar (1910), El Ferrol, Salvatierra, Játiva...

In Portugal, however, the revolution in 1910 expelled all the missionaries; they would return however in 1920, this time to Freineda.

"Illustration of the clergy"

The section dedicated to priests in "*El Iris de Paz*" gained so much following that in 1906 it was deemed convenient to create a specific magazine for them, "*Ilustración del Clero*." From the very beginning the acceptance was great both in Spain and in Latin America. Later on it would develop to become the present "*Misión Abierta*."

The Mirror of the Postulant

This small directory, which Fr. Alsina adopted for all the postulants of the Congregation, has neither an author's name nor a date of publication. Through other sources we know that Fr. Raymond Ribera wrote it in Vic for the postulants of that centre in

1907. Several editions were made, and in 1962 it was adapted with the name of “*Manual del Seminarista Claretiano* [Manual of the Claretian Seminarian].”

Argentina-Uruguay and Brazil, quasi-provinces

In the year 1908 two independent quasi-provinces were erected: Argentina-Uruguay and Brazil. In Argentina Fr. Mariano Sahún was elected Major Superior in 1909. He dedicated himself primarily to the consolidation of the previous foundations. However some foundations were also added in this period, like those of Goya (1911) and Mendoza (1912). In Brazil Fr. Joachim Bestué, from Lisbon, was elected Vice-provincial Superior and soon he promoted the foundations of Bahía (1909), Belo Horizonte and Livramento (1911).

Situation of the Congregation in 1912

In this year there were 112 houses in the whole Congregation, with a total of 1,633 professed members and 120 novices. Since the death of Fr. Xifré, the number of houses had almost doubled, but not the number of professed members who were 1,368 in 1899. The formation centres had been stabilised and there was already a Plan and Ordination of Studies. At last, the General and Provincial organisms had been consolidated.

Internal Events in the Institute

On April 28, 1912 the XI General Chapter of the Congregation began in Vic, and lasted till May 31. In it, Fr. Martin Alsina was again elected Superior General. In This Chapter the suppression of the general consultors for the provinces was requested, the Quasi-Provinces were definitively established, the regime of the Provinces was discussed, the coat of arms of the Congregation was changed and the abbreviated name of “*missionaries*” was adopted. The following year the “*General Dispositions*” of the Chapter were published and the Constitutions were translated into Spanish.

The General Curia in Madrid

The General Chapter had made a request to the new General Government: to transfer the General Curia from Aranda de Duero to Madrid. After seeing the advantages of it, the transfer was done in the month of September of 1913 to the house in the street of Buen Suceso where the missionaries had been living since 1906.

Foundation in the United Kingdom

The first one to attempt a foundation in the United Kingdom was Fr. Ramón Genover from Gibraltar in 1901, but the good opportunity came when Fr. Antonio M. Pueyo was chosen to represent the Spanish Nocturnal Adoration in the International Eucharistic Congress in September of 1908. Two years later nothing concrete had been achieved. Finally in April 1912 the first expedition arrived from Gibraltar on board the ship *India*. Fr. Pueyo was waiting for them. At the beginning they settled down in a provisional private home to attend to the parish of the *Heart of Mary* of Hayes-Harlington, in the great London. The number of Catholics at that time was 150. Soon the pastoral work would start, with an added commitment: to give classes to the son of

the Spanish Ambassador in London. After tireless negotiations of Fr. Ramón Genover, the foundation in London (Hayes) was finally carried through, due to the efforts of Fr. Pueyo.

Trieste, first house in “Germany”

Very different was the way that led to the foundation in Trieste, a city that belonged to the then Austro-Hungarian Empire, which implied the birth of the Congregation in Germany. In 1908 a young German boy had arrived in Spain from Italy asking to be admitted in the Congregation. The admission took place in the novitiate of Cervera. There a “Memoria” or Report about the Institute was prepared, translated into German and sent to several centers in Germany. The applications for admission were not slow in coming and in 1912 there were 22 German postulants. This accelerated the desire to found in Germany. To this end the Superiors sent the experienced Fr. Genover who, after going through Germany and Austria, finally arrived in Trieste, where he founded the first house in 1912.

Again in France

Speaking of the Congregation in France was tantamount to speaking of its origins in Prades and Thuir, until the time when the Province of Castile set its eyes in Paris, a city with so many Claretian memories. The Spaniards were missing a Spanish speaking chaplaincy in Paris. The tenacity of Don Gabriel Palmer, Chaplain and Fiscal of the Royal Chapel, and the good efforts of Fr. Juan Postfús convinced King Alfonso XIII and the Government of the advantage of choosing the Claretian Missionaries for such awkward task. Thus Fr. Martín Alsina went to Paris in November 1913, with the community that was would be taking charge of the mission, with Fr. Emilio Martín as Superior. First, after a time of uncertainty, they settled down in Rue de Mesnil and exercised the ministry in a chapel of the parish of *Saint Honoré* and, after intense negotiations, they transferred to Rue de la Pompe.

Political Events

The main political events that affected the Congregation in this period took place in Mexico and Europe. In 1914 the Carranza revolution triumphed, and the missionaries had to flee. This revolution provided the Congregation with the opportunity to offer the second martyr, Bro. Mariano González, who was shot in Toluca on August 22, 1914. In Europe the First World War flared up, which only economically affected the Congregation.

Again in Cuba

In the year 1918 the Claretian missionaries established themselves anew in Cuba, but this time in Palma Soriano. By then, the memory of Fr. Claret had been quite lost, in spite of the fact that the Saint had visited that city twice, the second time accompanied by Blessed Stephen of Andoaín.

And in Portugal

As soon as the slightest chance was apparent, the first attempts to found in Portugal started. The occasion came from the Bishop of Guarda, Msgr. José Alves Mattoso, who invited the missionaries to found in Freineda. It was the year 1920. The following year, in October, some of the missionaries moved from Freineda to Tortozendo, within the same diocese, where, aside from teaching, they took the spiritual direction and other teaching commitments in the diocesan seminary. This foundation was demanded not only by the need of missionaries in the zone, but also by the laws of the Government which did not allow communities with more than three individuals.

The Cordimarian Missionary Sisters

In March 1921 Fr. Julian Collell, a Claretian missionary, together with Miss Carmen Serrano, founded the Institute of the Cordimarian Missionary Sisters. Their aim was to transmit the Gospel message to the most needy persons through catechesis, education and the communications media.

Mission to Russia

The Holy See organised in 1922 a charitable mission to bring material help to remedy, as much as possible, the hunger and its disastrous effects in Southern Russia. First, the Nuncio of His Holiness in Spain and, later, the Secretariat of State appealed to the Congregation asking for its co-operation and personnel for the Pontifical Mission. The Superiors, always eager to support the desires of the Holy See and thankful for the honour shown to the Congregation in asking it to participate in such important work, generously offered their resolute co-operation and presented to the Holy See Frs. Peter Voltas and Angel Elorz. They joined the Pontifical Mission and went to Russia where they heroically worked in helping those in need.

Brief Statistics

The main increase was in personnel. In 1922 the Congregation had 1,943 members (not counting the 834 postulants), among them 3 Bishops and one Apostolic Prefect. Till then, 2 Bishops, 388 Priests, 244 Students and 283 Brothers had died, or a total of 917. There were 10 Provinces and Vice-Provinces with 154 houses: Catalonia, Castile, Betica, Chile, Mexico, Brazil, Colombia, Argentina, Guinea and USA.

VI. FR. NICHOLAS GARCÍA'S FIRST MANDATE (1922-1934)

Main Internal Events

On March 2, 1922, after strenuous work for the good of the Congregation, Fr. Martin Alsina died in Zafra, leaving a wide, hope-filled prospect for the future. In October of the same year the XII General Chapter was celebrated in Vic. A new Superior General was elected in the person of Fr. Nicholas García, who would rule the Congregation for many years. In this General Chapter, the Constitutions were adapted to the new Canon Law that had just been promulgated in 1917, the observance of the Congregation was revised, the transfer of the General Quarters to Rome was recommended, and matters on liturgy, missions, seminaries, etc. were discussed.

In 1923 the Provinces of Guinea, Chile, Mexico, Brazil, Argentina, Colombia and the United States were created. In 1924 the Quasi-Province of Italy was also erected and in 1925, that of Peru.

On July 16, 1924 the Constitutions, adapted to the new Canon Law, were definitively approved. That year the Diamond Anniversary of the Congregation was celebrated and its prestige grew more and more among the bishops and the Roman Curia.

In Panama

In December 1923 Fr. Antonio Anglés arrived from Colombia to Panama to take charge of the chapel of Santo Domingo, in the old inner part of the Capital. It did not take long for the activity of the missionaries to extend to other places of the city and of the Republic itself, like the city of Colón. It was the beginning of a flourishing presence in the region of Central America.

In Venezuela for the first time

In 1923 the first expedition of missionaries arrived in Venezuela, concretely to San Fernando de Apure and San Casimiro, of the diocese of Calabozo. They arrived to a difficult and very vast zone upon the recommendation of the Nuncio in Caracas, Mons. Filippo Cortessi,.

In the Dominican Republic

The first three Claretian missionaries arrived in the city of Santo Domingo in the year 1923 to take charge of the direction, teaching and administration of the Archdiocesan Seminary of Santo Tomás de Aquino, in the Capital. At the same time they would serve the attached church of Santo Domingo de Guzmán and the Cathedral parish. In 1938 the foundations extended to Puerto Plata and in 1942 to Altamira. In 1946 the missionaries left the Diocesan Seminary and accepted the church of Altagracia.

USA becomes independent

On 17 July 1923 USA stopped belonging to the Vice-province of USA-Mexico and was constituted as Independent Province under the name of USA-Canada. The Curia was placed in San Gabriel and Fr. Andrés Resa was named first Provincial Superior. The following year Frs. Domingo Zaldívar and Jaime Tort founded in Chicago, Illinois, for the first time. It was a period of new foundations: Phoenix, Arizona (1925), Sweetwater and Fort Worth, Texas, (1926).

In Germany, now truly

The first house in the present-day Germany was that of Spaichingen, where Fr. Leonardo Aubele arrived in 1924. Since then the missionaries would serve the Shrine of the Most Blessed Trinity, a place of frequent pilgrimages. During this period the following houses would be founded: Weissenhorn (1925), Würzburg (1930) Heudorf (1932) and Frankfurt (1934).

The International Votive Temple of Rome

On 15 July 1925 the construction work of the international votive temple was started in Rome, in the Parioli area. The idea of this grandiose monument came from Pope Pius XI who, in his desire that the Immaculate Heart of Mary should have in the Eternal City a Temple worthy of the capital of the Catholic world, entrusted the task to the sons of Fr. Claret. There were great difficulties, because the land was not apt to support such an enormous weight, but the Popes sustained the work with their encouragement.

The Vicariate of Darién (Panama)

In 1925 the Holy See granted the Claretians a Vicariate Apostolic, composed of the Province of Colón, with the region of San Blas (Kuna Yala), the Province of Darién and the Archipelago of Las Perlas, all in Panamanian land. There was Belén which, according to tradition, has the honor of being the first Christian altar of the New World. The conditions of the first missionaries were difficult, in the midst of a tropical climate and the almost total lack of infrastructure. In 1927 the Province of the United States took charge of the Vicariate and of all the houses of the Republic of Panama. The Claretian Fr. Juan José Maíztegui was designated first Vicar Apostolic.

1925, year of Prelatures

In that year several Prelatures were created in America, besides that of Darién. The Prelature of San José de Tocantins, in Brazil, whose first Prelate was Fr. Francisco Ozamiz. That same year two dioceses of Bolivia were also given to two Claretians: the diocese of Oruro to Fr. Abel Antezana, who would later become the first Archbishop of La Paz, and the diocese of Tarija to Fr. Ramón M^a Font.

The Codex Iuris Additicii (CIA)

The usually called CIA was a compilation of all the ordinations and dispositions given by the General Chapters and Governments until the General Chapter of 1922 inclusively. It was published in 1925. Later on, it had three editions with their respective revisions and adaptations (1940 and 1953). In 1955 it was given the name of *Epítome del Derecho Adicional* in its Spanish translation.

New Persecutions in Mexico

In Mexico, a journalist attributed to the Archbishop of the capital, Msgr. Joseph Mora y del Río some declarations, according to which he had protested against some evil laws, oppressive of the Church. As a consequence of that, the Government, based on the prevailing Constitution, ordered the deportation of 18 foreign priests. Most of them were Spaniards and four of them Claretians. A victim of this persecution in 1927 was Fr. Andrew Solá, whose cause of beatification is only waiting for the beatification date to be decided upon.

In El Salvador for the first time

In 1926 we received the invitation of the Bishop of San Miguel, of El Salvador, to found a house in his diocese, assuming the direction of the Diocesan Seminary. Our missionaries from the Province of Mexico, on which this foundation depended, encoun-

tered many difficulties, especially material ones. Finally it had to be abandoned in the year 1936 in order to facilitate the foundation in Cuba. As a curious fact we wish to point out that one of the seminarians under our care during this period was the future Bishop Martyr of El Salvador, Mons. Oscar A. Romero.

Castile founds in Sao Tomé and Príncipe

As a means to stabilize and strengthen the Claretian presence in Portugal, the Province of Castile accepted in 1927 the mission of Villa Trinidad in the Portuguese colonies of São Tomé and Príncipe. The Holy See had the intention of restoring again the Episcopal See in those islands and therefore its orientations were followed in this foundation. With this action, important privileges were obtained for the missionaries on the part of the Portuguese Government, who thus recognized the Association of the Missionaries of Mary, which was the official name of the Congregation in Portugal. The parish of the capital and the direction of a School of Arts and Crafts were also entrusted to them in addition to other apostolic ministries.

The Ordo Studiorum Generalis (O.S.G.)

The Chapter of 1922 had asked for a new ordination of studies in the Congregation. A commission worked on this matter until 1929 when Fr. Nicholas García promulgated the book that came to be known as OSG. This plan of studies gathered, in addition to the orientations of the Chapter, the proposals of the Congregation, channelled through the Prefectures of Study, and other documents of the Holy See, of Religious Institutes and Congregations, of Seminaries and Church Universities. The OSG was in vigour in the whole Congregation until its adaptation in 1959.

The Well Instructed Novice

The passing of time, the publication of the new Code and the development of our particular law demanded that a new original and specifically Claretian work be published for the novices, which would pick up the original charismatic spirit of the Founder. Thus the idea of the treatise *El Novicio Instruido* [The Well Instructed Novice] was born. It was written by Fr. Raymond Ribera in 1931. The work has abundant references to the Word of God, the Heart of Mary and the Congregation.

Mission in China

In 1928 the Holy See offered the Congregation the direction of the Central Seminary of Kaiffeng in China. In October of 1929 Fr. Anastasio Rojas and his companions embarked for Shanghai. In 1933 new missionaries left to take charge of the Vicariate of Wuhu. The Congregation lived a moment of missionary euphoria through the letters that were being received. In 1937 the Apostolic Prefecture of Tunki was created and entrusted to the Congregation. Fr. Joseph Fogued was made first Apostolic Prefect. There were great difficulties: the language, the scorn with which they treated foreigners. Everything was neglected. But our missionaries immediately began to reconstruct the Christian community. It was the first time that Asia opened up to our missionaries. This adventure would not last too long, since they were expelled in 1949 by the Communist revolution.

USA assumes England

In 1928 the two houses of England, Hayes and Loughton, were incorporated to the Province of the United States. A good number of Claretians was sent there. This dependence lasted until 1936 when the Independent Visitorship of England was created. Activity increases in USA

Starting with these years, the pastoral activity in USA, especially in the zone of Chicago, kept on growing. In 1928 the Claretian missionaries took up the parish of Our Lady of Guadalupe, and the following year the Perpetual Novena to St. Jude was inaugurated through the initiative of Fr. James Tort, who in 1929 created the League of St. Jude and in 1932 the Police League of St. Jude. Other foundations of this epoch were: El Paso, Texas (1932), La Palma, Panamá and the minor seminaries of Walnut, California, and of San Judas in Mokena, Illinois (1934). In 1935 the publishing house Claretian Publications was also created.

First presence in Puerto Rico

In 1929 the Province of Mexico assumed the parish of La Carolina, which would be the first foundation in Puerto Rico, followed by that of Canóvanas. The parochial zone was really vast, with a population of about 35,000 inhabitants, and with a considerable spiritual neglect and a great poverty in the midst of the material progress of the United States. In 1950 they were definitively abandoned and with them the Claretian presence in Puerto Rico ceased, to return some ten years later.

In Silesia

In 1932 the foundation in Silesia, on that time Germany, was made in Miedary, with the Silesian Claretians who had been formed in the seminaries of Cervera, Solsona and Alagón after 1908. Since 1929 Frs. John Mehl, John Buhl and Vincent Hollik had been working in various parishes of Poland.

Beatification of Fr. Claret

On 25 February 1934 the first fruit of the efforts of the Claretians was obtained when they saw their Founder beatified. Many were the decrees, discourses and congratulations that came from everywhere immediately after Fr. Claret's beatification. But the most expressive of all was, no doubt, the allocution of Pope Pius XI and the words he addressed on several occasions to the people and to the Congregation on this particular event. Some of them: "*Congratulations to Spain... for this hero of holiness who so well knew his Spain, to which he consecrated his entire life under all circumstances, even in the midst of the turbulence and dangers of the preludes of a revolution.*"

New Major Organisms and statistics

In 1925 the Vice-Province of Peru was erected, in 1930 the Province of Italy was created and in 1932, the Visitorship of Germany.

In 1935 the professed members of the Congregation were 2,435, plus 134 novices and 821 postulants, with 204 houses.

VII. FR. PHILIP MAROTO'S SHORT GENERALATE (1934-1937)

The XIII General Chapter (1934)

In 1934, shortly after the beatification of Fr. Claret, the XIII General Chapter of the Congregation was celebrated in Rome from March 15 to April 30. In it Fr. Philip Maroto was elected as new Superior General. He was very well known in Rome for his spiritual and intellectual gifts. He had an exceptional disposition for law. He was so well known that some times the Claretians were called “*Marotines*.” In this Chapter they dealt on the Government of the Congregation, observance, ministries, studies, administration.

The General Curia goes to Rome

In 1934 the see of the General Government is transferred to Rome, in Via Giulia, “the straightest road of the world”, according to Miguel de Cervantes.

Claretian International College

One of the decisions of the General Chapter of 1934 was the establishment of the International College of Rome that, in effect, opened its classes that same year in the facilities of Via Giulia, while looking for a better place. In 1937 it began to function in Albano until 1953, when it was moved to the famous “*terzo piano*” of the house of Parioli. In 1959 the “*Claretianum*” was inaugurated.

The Seriousness of the Events in Spain

The most important event of this period and what would mostly bring about the quick death of Fr. Maroto were the events of the Spanish civil war. The Congregation started to crimson with the blood of its martyrs in July 1936. Everything happened right after the national revolt of 18 July. All apostolic ministries were paralysed, 271 professed members died, Priests, Students and Brothers, in addition to many other material losses. At any rate, this painful loss would become the glory of the Congregation that could already count with numerous martyrs in its bosom. In that period the expeditions abroad stopped almost completely.

Repercussion in the missions

The consequences of the Spanish civil war soon started to be felt in the missions, especially in Equatorial Guinea and China, and in the sources of propaganda and financing in Spain. The magazine “*El Misionero*” was suspended, the funds of the “*Pía Unión Misionera*” (Missionary Mass Fund) were stolen, the Philatelic Circle of Cervera disappeared, etc. On this occasion Fr. Maroto appealed to the solidarity of everyone by means of the circular *The Missions of the Congregation* (1937).

England Independent

In 1936 England was detached from the United States to constitute the new Independent Visitorship of England

VIII. TOWARD THE FIRST CENTENNIAL OF THE CONGREGATION (1937-1949)

New Mandate of Fr. Nicholas García

On July 11, 1937 Fr. Philip Maroto suddenly died in Rome. In Albano Laziale, near Rome, the XIV General Chapter of the Congregation was celebrated from 22 November to 7 December. Fr. Nicholas García, who had already governed the Congregation from 1922 to 1934, was again elected Superior General.

Times of disturbance

In this new mandate, the Congregation would be involved in the turmoil of disorder caused by the continuation of the Spanish civil war and the second great world conflagration.

In Spain, many of the houses that had been confiscated were returned at the end of the war in 1939. Then the publications and the expeditions to mission territories started anew. At the same time, the remains of the martyrs were transferred with all reverence.

The Second World War harmed the Congregation because of the isolation it brought about from 1941 to 1945 and because of losses of personnel in the Russian war. Fr. General made many visitations during his mandate and received several decorations for the enormous work of the Claretians all throughout the world.

Vocational Crisis

The events of the Spanish civil war caused an important drawing back in the personnel in Spain, a circumstance that was noted by the General Chapter of 1937. This inspired Fr. Nicholas García to write a circular entitled *The Missionary Vocation* (1938), in which he invited all Provinces to increase their schools for postulancy and prepostulancy and to create the figure of vocation promoter.

The Review "Religious Life" and the *Institutum Iuridicum*

As early as 1938 Fr. Arturo Tabera had presented to the General Government a project to create a review on religious life, but it was not until 1944 that he finally succeeded, and the first issue of the review entitled "*Vida Religiosa*" came to light in Madrid. It was re-structured after the Vatican II Council. This magazine is now acknowledged as the great pioneering instrument of renewal of religious life, not only in Spain but also in 85 other countries of the world.

The Heart of Mary and Claret

In 1940 Fr. Narciso García Garcés, together with a group of Spanish theologians, founded the *Spanish Mariological Society*, which would give origin to the Mariological Weeks and would publish the *Marian Studies* which would later be followed by the review *Ephemerides Mariologicae*.

The consecration of the world to the Heart of Mary was a great event for the Church and for the Congregation due to the great effort that was exerted in this work. It was made by Pope Pius XII on October 31 and on December 8, 1942. Immediately after

this consecration, many other consecrations were made in Archdioceses, Dioceses, Congregations, etc. The Claretian Congregation considerably contributed to make this dream come true. Since 1944, these consecrations were followed by coronations of the images of Our Lady, Titular of the Claretian Missionaries.

In 1946 Fr. Cristóbal Fernández published the big life of Fr. Founder: *“El Beato Padre Antonio M^o Claret.*

In the Philippine Islands

In January 1947 the Asian Continent was again opened to the Congregation with the foundation of the Catholic Mission of Santa Barbara, Pangasinan, in the Philippine Islands. Fr. Ramón Catalán, from the United States, was in charge of bringing this initiative to completion. This presence would be transferred in 1951 to the Southern area, Zamboanga and the Island of Basilan, but some missionaries would remain in Santa Barbara until 1955, when they finally abandoned it.

Statistics of 1949

On the threshold of the centennial of the foundation of the Congregation a gigantic step could be observed in the growth with respect to that taken in the time previous to 1922. The Congregation had 2,638 professed members and 160 novices. The most peculiar aspect was the expansion of the Congregation outside of Spain. The sum total was 240 houses distributed throughout the various continents: 97 in Europe, 8 in Asia, 11 in Africa and 124 in America. All of them grouped in 10 Provinces, 2 Vice-Provinces and 5 Visitorships. The publications had increased and the schools had scattered throughout the continents, especially in Europe and America. Among the hierarchical dignities of the Church, the Congregation counted in its first century of existence with 3 Archbishops, 8 Bishops, 1 Apostolic Vicar and 6 Apostolic Prefects.

IX. A NEW CENTURY FOR THE CONGREGATION (1949-1967)

An Era Ends

The year 1949 marked the end of the mandate of Fr. Nicholas García who, after a period of sickness, died the following year. The XV General Chapter was convoked from May 1 to 28, 1949 in Castel Gandolfo, summer palace of the Pope, which was let to the Congregation in gratitude for its services. Fr. Peter Schweiger, Visitor of Germany, was elected Superior General. His election was a clear exponent of the universality of the Congregation, since he was the only non-Spanish member of the Chapter. During the Chapter Fr. Augustine Lobo, Provincial of Castile and capitular, died in tragic accident.

First Centennial of the Congregation

On July 16, 1949 the Congregation celebrated its first centennial. Optimism filled the hearts of all the Claretians. Celebrations proliferated everywhere, and the General Government published a special work that compiled the circular of Fr. General and diverse articles on the Marian, Claretian and Missionary identity of the Congregation, together with various literary contributions.

Canonisation of Our Fr. Founder

The following year, on May 7, 1950, Pope Pius XII canonised the Founder of the Congregation, St. Anthony Mary Claret. It was a culminating moment in the history of the Congregation. All Claretians could call their Founder a Saint and venerate him on the altars. Claretians from all over the world attended the ceremony of canonisation. On May 8 a papal audience took place, followed by a homage act in the Gregorian University, where the Spanish poet Joseph María Pemán discoursed upon “The historical moment lived by St. Anthony Mary Claret.”

The Missionary Sisters of the Claretian Institution

In 1951 the Claretian Fr. Luis Pujol founded the Missionary Sisters of the Claretian Institution in Vic (Barcelona).

In Austria

Called by the Cardinal of Vienna, D. Teodoro Innitzer, the first missionaries arrived from Germany to the Russian sector of the Austrian capital in 1951. The objective was to take charge of the parochial service from the small chapel of Hirschtetten.

In Costa Rica

In 1951 the United States extended its activity in Central America to the Republic of Costa Rica, establishing a foundation in Mercedes de Heredia, in a sector of some 2.000 inhabitants at that time. The missionaries were going to take charge of a newly constructed chapel and a projected rectory, and they would dedicate themselves mainly to preaching. In 1953, already under the responsibility of Central America, their presence extended to the capital, San José, where they opened a retreat house.

The Congregation in Japan

Fr. Peter Schweiger proposed in General Council the foundation of a mission in Japan on the occasion of the Centennial of the Foundation of the Congregation (1949) and the canonization of Fr. Claret (1950). On 9 September 1951, the first missionaries arrived in Japan, invited by the Bishop of Osaka, Mons. Paul Taguchi. The first local government of Imaichi, place of the first foundation, started in the seminary on 1st November 1951. The transfer to the house of Imaichi was done on 30 December 1951 and the inauguration of the house, on 2 January 1952. Not much later they tried to build a school. In less than three years they had three houses there, changing its juridical status to Visitorship and to Major Organism in 1954.

Central America is born

With the creation of the Independent Visitorship of Panama and Costa Rica in 1952 we may say that we were laying the foundation of the future Organism of Central America, which would come in 1954.

Expulsion from China

In 1952 the last missionaries left abandoned China, expelled by the new Communist régime. Many memories remained there, and the bodies of two young missionaries who died shortly after arrival. The expelled personnel would make it possible to strengthen the missions of the Philippines and Japan.

Inauguration of the International Votive Temple

In the year 1952 the Pontifical Votive Temple to the Immaculate Heart of Mary was inaugurated in Rome. The Superiors gave up the construction of the dome that had been designed by Armand Brasini.

The new General Curia of Roma

One year after the blessing of the Basilica, on the feast of St. Joseph, the new general see was transferred from the previous place in Via Giulia to Parioli, beside the Votive Temple. Fr. Peter Schweiger took this opportunity to write a Circular Letter commenting on the meaning of this event for the Congregation.

The Philippines becomes independent

In 1953 the Independent Visitorship of the Philippines was created, having been reinforced with some of the Claretians expelled from China.

The leap to Canada

On 14 January 1953 the first Claretian missionaries arrived from Paris to Canada. They were Frs. Martín Sanz and Enrique Pujolrás. The foundation was under the jurisdiction of the Province of USA. Its first location was in the rectory of Victoriaville, diocese of Nicolet. It did not take long to start searching for a definitive place for the foundation, while they collaborated in the pastoral work in the area. Soon this search gave its fruit and they found a beautiful property near Victoriaville, which in a short time would become a source of numerous vocations that came up just a few months after the arrival of the missionaries.

The division of USA

On the same day of the inauguration of Villa Claret in Victoriaville, Canada, on 22 August 1953, the Province of USA was divided into two Organisms, East and West, thus giving birth to a new stage. Canada would become part of the Province of USA East till 1965, when it became a Vice-Province. Before this, in 1963, the publication of the magazine "US Catholic" had started in Chicago, to take the place of the earlier "Voz de San Judas." The new magazine would receive countless awards throughout the years.

Universalist Impulse of the Congregation

The concern for vocations and for the quantitative growth of the Congregation throughout the world was one of the main concerns of Fr. General who in 1955 wrote a Circular in which he called the attention to the inadequate growth of the Congregation and the desire for its universalisation.

In Ecuador

In 1955 Fr. Angel de María Canals arrived in Guayaquil, main seaport of Ecuador, to start the parish of the *Espíritu Santo* in a vast and extremely poor district populated by some 300,000 people without a temple, schools or social aid institutions. In 1958 the great temple was inaugurated.

In El Salvador definitively

In 1955, after repeated and fruitful steps on the part of the Visitor of Central America, the Archbishop of San Salvador authorized the opening of a Claretian community in the capital. Earlier a foundation had been made in the city of San Miguel, to take care of the diocesan seminary. This foundation was closed in 1932. This time their basic task was to collaborate in the pastoral service of the central Basilica of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, the biggest church of El Salvador.

The Congregation in Holland

In 1955 the Claretian missionaries took over the parish of Reuver Offenbeek, Holland. Although their presence lasted only till 1970, they had time to build a church and leave a seed which even today is giving its fruit, like the publication in Dutch of the biography of Fr. Claret, edited in German by Fr. Andrew Back in 1956, and a novena published by Fr. Josef Allinger.

Institute of Missionary Sisters of St. Anthony M. Claret

In March of 1958 the Claretian Mons. Geraldo Fernández and M. Leonia Milito founded in Londrina, Brazil, the Institute of Missionary Sisters of St. Anthony M. Claret.

In Switzerland

In 1958, the Bishop of Zürich, Mons. Christian Caminada, made an exception and allowed the Claretian Missionaries to start a foundation in the city with the task of taking care of the religious and pastoral service to the foreigners of Spanish, English and Italian descent, and collaborating in other auxiliary services to the parishes of the zone.

First Cardinal of the Congregation

In 1959 the joyful news of the appointment of Fr. Arcadio Mary Larraona as Cardinal of the Church reached the entire Congregation. He was the first Cardinal of the Congregation

The Theologates in Rome and Salamanca

In 1959 the "Claretianum" was inaugurated in Rome. It was an interprovincial theology study centre affiliated to the Lateran University, a large building with capacity for 80 students in Via Aurelia. Its objective was to give the students of the Congregation

an opportunity to complete their common studies and suitable specialisations in the Roman universities, subject to approval by the General Government. In 1969 this congregational Study Centre that had functioned in different stages since 1034 was closed.

In 1960 the new interprovincial theologate of Salamanca was also opened. After 11 years of successful functioning, it was closed in 1971 for reasons beyond the control of the academic institution itself, leaving behind a generous group of professors and alumni from various provinces, formed in the theological studies and in the shared Claretian charism.

Nicaragua

In 1960 the Congregation accepted the foundations of Jinotepe and Managua, in the Republic of Nicaragua. In this way, the Claretian presence in Central America continued increasing more and more.

Again in Puerto Rico

Ten years after leaving La Carolina, in Puerto Rico, the missionaries returned again in 1960. Some of them arrived after being expelled from the Dominican Republic by the régime of the Trujillos. This time it would be on a permanent basis, taking over the parish of the Heart of Mary in the capital.

XVI General Chapter (1961)

The XVI General Chapter was celebrated in Rome from April 23 to May 16, 1961, with the announcement of the forthcoming Ecumenical Council. This fact put a curb on some aspects of renewal, waiting for the conclusions of the said Council. Fr. Peter Schweiger was re-elected Superior General. In this Chapter, the use of the adjective *Claretian* was confirmed and the *Claretian Secretariat* was created. The *Claretian Collaborators* were born and *the Letter of Kinship* of the Claretian family was written.

First vocations in India

On 5 November 1961 a group of five young Indian men arrived to the General Curia in Rome, sent by the Bishop of Palai, who had passed by Germany and stayed in our communities of Würzburg and Weissenhorn. There he saw the desire of the Claretians to establish a mission in India, but were finding unsurmountable difficulties because the Indian laws did not allow foreign missionaries to enter the country. These young men would continue their studies in Europe and, in due time, some of them would turn out to be the seed of the Congregation in India.

The province of Aragon is created

In April 1962 the new Province of Aragon was created in Spain.

Belgium

In 1962 the foundation of Louvain, Belgium, was started from Angers, France. The first missionaries settled in an ample flat in the center of the city, in order to facilitate the access to the University, which was the first aim of the foundation.

Zaire

The province of Germany took under its responsibility in 1962 the mission of Kingandu, in Zaire, a mission founded by the Jesuits in 1929. The beginnings were difficult because Zaire (now the Republic of Congo), independent after 1960, was in a chaotic situation: revolts, secession movements, rebellions and degradation at all levels, which made all missionary work very difficult. The country found a certain calm after the army took the power under general Mobutu.

Vatican II Council

The year 1962 was to be a historical year for the entire Church and, therefore, also for the Congregation. The Second Vatican Council started. The Church drafted the lines of renewal of all religious Institutes.

Following the footsteps of St. Anthony Mary Claret, the only canonised saint of the First Vatican Council, nine Claretians attended the Vatican II Council. Here are their names:

Arcadio M^a Larraona, Cardinal and Prefect of the Sacred Congregation of Rites

Abel Antezana, Archbishop of La Paz (Bolivia)

Arturo Tabera, Bishop of Albacete (Spain)

Francis Prada, Bishop of Uruaçu (Brazil)

Geraldo Fernandes, Bishop of Londrina (Brazil)

Peter Grau, Apostolic Vicar of Quibdó (Colombia)

Jesus Serrano, Apostolic Vicar of Darien (Panama)

Francis Gómez, Apostolic Vicar of Fernando Póo (Spanish Guinea)

Peter Schweiger, Superior General of the Congregation.

Four experts also attended, who had been appointed by the Holy Father: Siervo Goyeneche, Anastasius Gutiérrez, Gregory Martínez de Antoñana and Antony Peinador.

The Persecutions Continue

The sign of persecution followed the Institute at close range in various parts of the world. From 1949 to 1952 the Congregation suffered an implacable persecution in China. The Church was doomed to extinction in that country and the few remaining missionaries were expelled.

In 1956 religious persecution emerged in Argentina; there too the Congregation suffered.

A few years later, immediately after the Cuban revolution of 1959, the Claretian missionaries were expelled from Cuba, and their possessions confiscated in that island that held so much significance for the Congregation.

In 1964 the Congo struggled in the midst of revolts and the missionaries were able to leave the place without much loss.

New Vicariates and Prelatures

In 1952 the Prelature of Quibdó (Colombia) was created, with Fr. Pedro Grau as its first Vicar Apostolic. Three Claretian Prefects Apostolic had ruled Chocó until 1953, when it was divided in two Vicariates. The Vicariate of Istmina was taken by the Fathers of the Foreign Missions of Yuramal and that of Quibdó by the Claretians.

In 1963 the Prelature of Isabela, (Philippines) was created and Fr. José M^a Querexeta was named its first Prelate. For several years the Claretian Province of USA West collaborated with the Prelate in the eastern part of the island, and Betica in the western zone.

And in 1965 the Vicariate of Río Muni (Equatorial Guinea) was constituted, with Fr. Rafael M^a Nzé as first Vicar Apostolic. He would later on become Bishop of Bata and Archbishop of Malabo.

With the Maronites of Lebanon

In 1964 Fr. Severino M^a Alonso was assigned to Lebanon as spiritual director of the Maronite Seminary. Its name was *Congregation of Lebanese Missionaries*, commonly known as Kraimist Fathers because they were in Kraim their mother house. Founded by Archbishop John Habid in 1865, it was leading a rather languid life. This service started with a contact with that Congregation in Salamanca and it would continue until 1967 when it would be definitively abandoned.

Guatemala

From Mercedes de Heredia the Province of Central America started the first foundation in Guatemala in 1966, concretely in La Antigua and in Santa María Jesús, a zone inhabited by indigenous Cachiuels, half way to the top of the Agua volcano.

Mission of Izábal

In 1966 the Province of USA East founded a new mission in Izábal (Guatemala): Santo Tomás de Castilla, El Estor and Livingston. The missionaries carried out a great work there among the indigenous population.

Second History of the Congregation

In 1967 Fr. Christopher Fernández published the *Historia de la Congregación* in 2 volumes. Earlier in 1941, he had published the life of “*Beato Antonio M^a Claret.*” Fr. Nicholas García and the General Chapter of 1949 had suggested this work which the author shunned. Later on, upon the insistence of Fr. Peter Schweiger, he accepted but limited his work from 1849 to 1912.

Intense Consolidation

The foundations continued but, above all, an intense consolidation took place in this period. Major Organisms were created: Germany and France (1949), Cantabria (1950), Central America (1952), Central Brazil and the present East Asian Delegation (1954), Portugal, United Kingdom-Ireland and USA East (1956), Antillas (1957), Philippines and Venezuela (1960), Aragon and Bolivia (1962), Occidental Colombia (1964), Canada (1965).

In 1966 the Congregation reached the number of 3,607 missionaries, not counting the postulants: 2,017 priests, 1,026 students and 564 brothers.

X. THE CONGREGATION RENEWS ITSELF (1967-1979)

The Renewal Chapter (1967)

Sure enough, we can say that this XVII Chapter of 1967 was the motor of the renewal that was being urged by Vatican Council II. Gathered in Rome during the months of September and October, the Capitulars accomplished the Documents that implied a spectacular change in the orientation of the Congregation. Especially emphasised was its missionary character from what is “most urgent, timely and effective;” at the same time religious and apostolic life was deeply revised, returning to the sources that inspired the charism of the Founder. In this Chapter, Fr. Antony Leghisa, a Slovene, was elected General. One of the most important endeavours was the beginning of the adaptation of the Constitutions to the norms and the spirit of the Council, as well as the renewal of our Directory. The first draft of the new Constitutions was that of 1971. Subsequently would come that of 1982 and the definitive one in 1986.

After this Chapter, a new information organ was born in the Congregation under the name of NUNC (Nuntii de Universa Nostra Congregatione).

New Provinces and New Missionary Expansion

In Spain the Provinces were re-structured in April of 1968: the Province of León was created and the Provinces of Castile and Euskalerría reorganised. Also created was the Visitorship of Austria.

Starting from the General Chapter of 1967, the Provinces looked for leading fields suitable for missionary expansion. Thus Catalonia went to Japan and Brazil, Castile to Panama and Honduras, Euskalerría to Bolivia, Betica to Argentina and the Philippines, Aragon to Brazil, Leon to Peru, USA-East to Guatemala, USA-West to Nigeria and the Philippines, Italy to Gabon, Canada to Cameroon, Germany to India and Zaire, Portugal to Angola and Mexico and Occidental Colombia did it in its own territory of Guerrero and Chocó.

To Honduras

In 1967 the Provincial Superior of Central America asked for missionaries from the Province of Castile, to take charge of some parishes in the Department of Paraíso, in Honduras. When this project failed, the Bishop of San Pedro Sula offered the two parishes of Tela and La Ceiba, to the North of the Republic. They were accepted by Fr. Cándido Bajo, who sent there some missionaries in November 1967.

The Interprovincial Conferences Are Born

As soon as the Renewal Chapter ended, Interprovincial Conferences started to be instituted in order to facilitate the work of apostolic communion and co-ordination. Concretely the Conferences of Spain and Guinea, the Latin- and the Anglo-American conferences, which later on would be adapting to the new realities:

- . ACLA: Association of Claretians of Africa.
- . ASCLA: Association of Claretians of Asia.
- . CEC: Conference of Claretians of Central Europe.
- . CICLA: Interprovincial Confederation of Claretians of Latin America.
- . IBERIA: Spain and Portugal.
- . NACLA: Association of Claretians of the North Atlantic.

Centres for Study of Religious Life

In 1968 the first course of studies of Religious Life began to function in Madrid, which would later be completed with the Theological Institute. This initiative gave place to a new important front in the evangelising task of the Congregation. Later on, it would extend to Rome (1972) and, with lesser intensity, to Mexico and the Philippines.

Cardinal Tabera

In April 1969 we received the news of the appointment of the second Cardinal of the Congregation, Fr. Arturo Tabera, then Archbishop of Pamplona (Spain). Earlier he had been the first bishop of Albacete, a great jurist and great promoter of Religious Life in Spain.

Angola

The Bishop of Luso offered the Claretian missionaries in 1968 a vast sector of his diocese and the Portuguese Province accepted the call. The zone was a veritable mosaic of tribes: *Quiocos*, *Quimbumbos*, *Luenas*... some of them with very difficult languages and quite ancestral customs. There were some faith groups that walked up to 60 kilometers by foot to attend the Sunday mass. The climate of guerrillas was something habitual. In 1974 the mission of Tchamutete was constituted. But the spiraling of violence ended up with the expulsion of the missionaries in 1977.

Prelature of São Felix do Araguaia

In 1970 the Prelature of São Felix do Araguaia, in Brazil, was created and Fr. Pedro Casaldáliga, a Claretian, took possession of it as its first Visitor Apostolic and later its Bishop. This mission had been accepted by the Province of Aragon in 1968. The repression was not long in coming: schools and dispensaries were closed and pastoral agents imprisoned and tortured. The culminating point came with the assassination of the Jesuit João Bosco Penido, a member of the team, at the feet of Bishop Casaldáliga.

Statistics in 1970

This year the Congregation had 17 provinces, 10 quasi-provinces and 3 visitorships. 349 houses. 2 cardinals, 8 bishops, 1 prelate, 2,046 priests, 721 students and 507 brothers. A total of 3,285 professed members and 80 novices.

After the Council and the Renewal Chapter, the Congregation experienced a process of considerable number of secularisations and abandonments which, together with the decrease of vocations, made it imperative to re-structure communities and, above all, seminaries.

The much awaited foundation of India

In 1970 the foundation was finally opened in Kuravilangad (India) at the request of the Province of Germany. In that same year the construction of a Claretian seminary

in Bangalore was also begun and shortly after, news began to arrive from Fr. Franz Dirnberger about the first profession and the first steps in vocational promotion.

Mission of Juanjui in Peru

In 1970 the Province of León founded this difficult mission. Around the year 1987 they started to live a period of pain and uncertainty, due to the apparition of two influential phenomena: on the one hand, the presence and activity of the revolutionary movements “*Sendero Luminoso*” and “*Tupac Amaru,*” and on the other, the progressive invasion of the zone by the cultivation of coca, which gives way to the traffic in drugs, with the consequent corruption of the people and of the estate, and to violence. In 1991 the first Claretian priest from this region was ordained.

Cameroon

When the Archbishop of Yaoundé, Mons. Zoa, explained to the Claretian Congregation the great need of a big sector of his diocese, the province of Canada responded by assuming that responsibility. Soon vocations began to come, which forced them to open in 1978 the novitiate in Akono and later the theologate for the whole of French-speaking Africa in Yaoundé.

In the old Yugoslavia

In 1971 the first foundation was opened in Yugoslavia, concretely in Nova Stifta, a small town of about 700 inhabitants between Maribor and Ljubljana, the present Slovenia. The church was dedicated to the Assumption of Mary and the work was preaching, pilgrimages and, in general, the collaboration with the pastors. The vocational work was not late in coming.

Providential foundation of Nigeria

Although the Claretian Fr. Christian Ihedoro had been working in Owerri since two years earlier, the Congregation did not decide to start a firm foundation until the year 1973 in view of the avalanche of vocations. That year the novitiate was opened in the house of the Missionaries of the Holy Spirit and Fr. Frank Ambrosi, from the Province of USA West, was sent as novice master. At the same time they started to look for a novitiate house of their own.

Persecutions in Equatorial Guinea

Once Macias had taken over the power, in March 1969, the expulsion of foreign missionaries began, among them, the Claretian bishop Gómez Marijuán. In 1972 Mons. Rafael Nzé, a native Guinean, was threatened with death. The catechists were persecuted and in December of 1976 all the Claretians residing in Bata were imprisoned and tortured and the churches were closed. The nightmare lasted 11 years, until the 3rd of August, 1979.

General Chapter of 1973

This Chapter revised the progress of the Congregation since the conciliar renewal. It was verified that dispersal (the Congregation was present in 41 nations) favoured pluralism but was an obstacle to apostolic incision, and that the 30 major organisms did not enrich the labour fronts. To this was added the preoccupation for the great number of departures from the Congregation. Basically the Chapter revised the on-going renewal, and re-oriented community life, being sensitive to the values of freedom, autonomy, participation, dialogue, co-responsibility, incarnation, commitment, etc. This revision would be completed in the General Assembly of the Congregation in Costa Rica in 1976.

The Congregation had this year 2,805 missionaries: 1,978 priests, 378 students, 449 brothers.

The mission of Northern Potosi

In the Chapter of 1974 the Province of Euskalerrria assumed the new mission of Northern Potosi, in Bolivia, where the first missionaries would arrive the following year. It was an extremely difficult mission, in the middle of the very high Andean region and with a mostly indigenous population.

Gabon

All started with the commitment of the Italian Claretians to work with the Gabonese exiled in Equatorial Guinea. When they returned to their country, they asked for these missionaries until they committed themselves to have a fixed mission. The revolution and the period of persecution had just ended. The foundation took effect in Franceville, capital of Haute-Ogooué, to the Southeast of Gabon, in 1975.

More persecutions

Starting in 1975 the persecutions started in Angola, a mission that had to be abandoned by the missionaries, some of whom were retained in prison. In December 1977 the Moslem rebels of the Philippines burned the hospital of Basilan, run by Bro. Torres, a Claretian. This was going to be the beginning of a nightmare that would continue threatening the missionaries from then on.

“The Heart of Mary and the Congregation”

This was the title Fr. General, Antony Leghisa, gave the Circular he wrote in 1977, which meant a very important step in the renewal of the Cordimarian spirituality. The purpose of the Circular was to help the Congregation overcome the critical moment it was going through, and to spur it on to a greater fidelity to the Cordimarian dimension of its vocation.

The Continental Missionary Encounters Begin

In 1978 a missionary encounter of Latin America was held, the first ever in the entire history of the Congregation. It was celebrated in February and in two consecutive moments: the first in Argentina and the second in Colombia. In November of the same year the first missionary encounter of Africa was held in Zaire, for the purpose of emphasising this important work in the Congregation, by re-discovering the prophetic

sense and the preferential option for the poor. From then on, encounters of this type have been expanding and multiplying.

Paraguay

At the beginning of 1979 the first 6 Claretian missionaries of the Province of Aragón arrived in Yhú. Between the great rivers Paraguay and Paraná, almost in the center of the country, is the Department of Caaguazú, and within the Department are the districts of Yhú, meaning *black river*, and Vaquería. These are served by the Claretian missionaries with the close collaboration of the Missionary Sisters of the Claretian Institution and the Missionary Sisters of Jesus Crucified.

The Claretian Associates

In April 1979 the first international encounter of Claretian Associates was held in Brazil. This was to be the first impulse for the emergence of the Lay Claretians Movement. At last the apostolic dream of Fr. Claret came to birth, in which the laity was to play “*an important role in the salvation of people.*”

Statistics of the epoch

In 1978 the Congregation had 368 houses, 2,752 professed and 130 novices.

XI. THE MISSION OF THE CLARETIAN TODAY (1979-1991)

XIX General Chapter (1979)

In this chapter a re-reading of the Claretian mission was made, asking for a more missionary, enculturated and liberating community. Some options were specified in the Congregation for the six-year period: missionary evangelisation from the viewpoint of the poor, with priority dedication to the formation and incorporation of lay evangelisers, to youth and to the field of family apostolate. The Chapter Document “*The Mission of the Claretian Today*” (MCT) was published and the Argentinean Fr. Gustavo Alonso was elected new Superior General. The Chapter also continued working on the adaptation of the Constitutions and the Directory.

Encounters of Missionary Brothers

In June 1980 the first encounter of Missionary Brothers was held; others would follow. The vocational crisis that affected the Congregation in general became more urgent in the matter of the lay charism. These encounters intended to study and revise the present situation of the Brother within the Congregation, and to discover possible lines of action towards a future promotion.

Courses of Claretian Spirituality

Starting in 1981 the Courses of Claretian Spirituality began to follow one after the other in Rome. To these would later be added the Claretian Priestly Weeks of Vic and other Claretian spirituality courses in India, Latin America, USA, etc. in an effort to intensify and recover the various aspects of our own spirituality. In addition, the publications on Claretian topics proliferated and, as a sign of this concern for safeguarding

the spirit of Claret, the remodelling of the new Claretian Museum in Vic was undertaken in 1991.

New Constitutions and Directory

Starting with the Chapter of renewal of 1967, the work of adaptation of the Constitutions and Directory to the norms of the Vatican II Council and to the new Code of Canon Law had begun. On 11 February 1982 the Decree of approval of the new Constitutions is promulgated and begins to be applied. Finally through a decree of 15 May 1986 the Constitutions were definitively approved by the Holy See. The Directory on 24 October of the following year. In order to go deeper into the history and the spirit of the new text, the General Government begins the publication of the Commentaries on the Constitutions.

Revision of Positions

Starting in 1982 a collective reflection was also let loose in the Congregation about the revision of positions (works, structures, services...) which ended in the General Assembly of Los Teques (Venezuela) in January 1983. The basic aim was to make possible the implementation of the objectives and options of the MCT.

“The Claretian Mission”

In 1982 the yearbook “*The Claretian Mission*” began its publication under the responsibility of the Secretariat for the Churches in formation. This publication has become a mosaic where the progress of the varied pastoral activities of the Congregation can be observed.

In South Korea

In September 1982 the first two Claretians arrived from the Philippines to South Korea, concretely to Seoul, where they were received by the Maryknoll Fathers. Soon, however, and after a two-month experience of living in the Presbyterian Seminary, they transferred to the Franciscans, because their place was nearer the school. The situation was favorable because of the growth of the Korean church. In 1983 they obtained their own first residence. In 1985, together with Japan, they constituted the East Asian Delegation.

In Australia

In 1983 the Decree was signed by which the Province of the Philippines was given permission to found a house in Darwin, Australia, in order to attend to the immigrants from Timor that were arriving to that region.

Nigeria, independent

In 1984 the new Independent Organism of Nigeria was created, after an intense growth that in a short span of time would transform it into a Province in 1990.

Symposia of the Claretian Family

In October 1984 the First World Encounter of the Claretian Family took place in Rome. Its objective was to deepen in the comprehension of the charismatic gift of Saint Anthony Mary Claret, to share the experiences of the various branches of the Claretian Family and to propose common objectives for the future. In attendance were the four original nuclei: Claretian Missionary Men and Women, Cordimarian Filiation and Lay Claretians, as well as the Institutes with Claretian intervention: Cordimarian Missionary Sisters, Missionary Sisters of the Claretian Institute and Missionary Sisters of St. Anthony Mary Claret. This encounter was to be the first of others that would follow.

XX General Chapter (1985)

This Chapter focused its attention mainly on *the person of the Claretian in his Process of Renewal*. Its fruit was a document known as CPR. This Chapter worked also on the adaptation of the Constitutions to the new Code of Canon Law, authorising the General Government to present them to the Holy See for their definitive approval. Fr. Gustavo Alonso was re-elected Superior General.

USA in Cameroon

In 1986 the Claretians of the Western Province of the USA, after they had collaborated in the development of the Claretians in Nigeria, opened a new mission field in Western Cameroon, in the diocese of Bamenda, with two missions: Babanki- Tungo and Batibo. They counted with the collaboration of Nigeria. In 1993 the mission would definitively pass under the jurisdiction of the Province of Nigeria.

Cordimarian Spirituality

Impelled by the intense moment that was the Marian Year (1988) and in view of the congregational concern over our somewhat faded Cordimarian identity, the General Government decided to ask all the members of the Congregation about their Cordimarian experience. This was carried out starting in April 1987. This initiative, together with the week of Cordimarian spirituality held in Vic in 1988 and other publications, have meant a new impulse in the Cordimarian identity of the Claretian.

The Image of Fr. Claret in the Vatican

On December 6, 1988 a mosaic of St. Anthony Mary Claret was installed beside the altar of the holy martyrs Processus and Martinianus in the Vatican Basilica. It is located exactly in the right wing, where the First Vatican Council was celebrated. It must be remembered that Fr. Claret attended this Council and is now the only canonised Conciliar Father. The image is a half-bust, with episcopal garb; it has in his left hand the Gospel with the quotation of Mk 1,14. It carries a Latin legend that says: "*S. Antonius Maria Claret Fundator C.M.F. –Pater Conc. Vat.I- 1807-1870.*"

Indonesia

The Claretians arrived in Indonesia from the Philippines in 1991. Their initial destination was East Timor (now Timor Leste). There they were offered the parish of Fohorem, which later on would become the first Novitiate, and the following year, 1992, the parish of Bobonaro was added. In the same year 1992, two missionaries went to the city of Kupang, capital of the Province of NTT (Nusa Tenggara Timur), and the first Major Claretian Seminary was established there at the invitation of the Archbishop. In 1995 the first thirteen Claretian Indonesians made their profession in Fohoren. In 1997 Indonesia was constituted into a Dependent Delegation of the Province of the Philippines. In 1999 East Timor became the “Democratic Republic of Timor Leste.” In the year 2000 a third Formation Center was opened in Yogyakarta for the last years of Theology. And in 2003 a second Major Seminary was established in Kupang, to separate de Professed Seminarians studying the third and fourth years of Philosophy from the non-professed in the first and second years. Since April 25, 2005 the Claretian organism has become the Independent Delegation of Indonesia-Timor Leste.

Ivory Coast

On 17 June 1990 the first Claretian missionaries arrived from the Province of Poland to take charge of the two mission posts in Ivory Coast: one in the place of Abidjan (Vridi), diocese of Grand Bassam, and when they had familiarized themselves with the language, they went on to Bouaflé, rural zone of the diocese of Daloà, in the inner part of the country, with 135,000 inhabitants and 22 tribes, animists in their majority.

Kenia

With this new position the Congregation became present in the Eastern coast of Africa. Since January 1991 two Nigerian priests were working in Mombasa. Their main activity consisted in learning the language, Swahili, getting to know the reality of the country and some pastoral work. In 1992 they took charge of the parish of the Sacred Heart of Jesus of Shanzu, in the outskirts of Mombasa, with 50,000 inhabitants, 3,000 of which are Catholic. Later on the parish of Kiembeni was added to it.

Sri Lanka

Sri Lanka began as a Mission of the Province of Germany, united to the Indian zone of Tamil Nadu. There were already some Claretians, native of this country, before June 1991, when the presence of the Claretians became stable in this Asian island which was called Ceylon during the colonial time. The first Claretian Sri Lankan priest was one of those who made themselves present in Colombo, the capital, since September 1991. Starting in 1993, when the Province of Chennai (Madras) was created, it remained as the only mission dependent on Germany.

The Inexhaustible Missionary Spirit of the Claretian

Inspired by the MCT and the CPR, the Claretians have been discovering new ways of reaching all people with the message of Jesus. Both in their reflection (Encounters, Conferences, Workshops, Weeks...) and in the search for new methods (popular

missions, labour with emigrants, vanguard missions, work with drug addicts, youth, formation of leaders, presence in the suburbs, commitment for peace and justice, dialogue with the Moslems, social communication media, presence in universities, indigenous promotion, women promotion...) they had no boundaries. The Claretian mission was an open mission toward the future.

Statistics and Foundations

The statistics as of January 1, 1991 give us the following data: 1,917 priests, 3 deacons, 297 brothers, 623 students, and 108 novices. A total of 2,995 Claretians coming from 48 different nationalities. The vocational resurgence of some of the major organisms such as India, Nigeria and Poland caused the future of the Congregation to acquire the light of a dream come true.

XII. SERVANTS OF THE WORD (1991-1997)

The General Chapter of 1991

Servants of the Word (SW) was the title of the document of the XXI General Chapter. It summarised the key to understand the near future of the Claretians. In view of the challenge implied by the fact that two thirds of humanity do not know Christ, the response of the Claretians was: let us be hearing servants of the Word. All this in the unity and diversity of a new face of the Congregation, more varied as regards races, languages and latitudes. For the first time a Chapter gave orientation to the Congregation in keeping with its different continental geographical situation. The New Evangelisation really had in the Congregation a new face, a new impulse, a new method. In this Chapter Fr. Aquilino Bocos, a Spaniard, was elected Superior General.

Belorussia

The Province of Poland began to work in Priwalka, diocese of Grozny in 1991. Later on the pastoral task was extended to Jeziory and Zelwa, where the church was restored. The main task lay in the catechesis at all levels due to the total absence of formation to which they had been pushed by the relentless religious persecution of the Soviet era.

The Beatification of the 51 Martyrs of Barbastro

Seeing the 51 martyrs of Barbastro on the altars on 25 October 1992 was a privilege and an unparalleled motive of thanksgiving for the Congregation. They were the Claretians who were shot in Barbastro during the Spanish civil war of 1936. With their generosity and their missionary dream, which they themselves could not make into reality, they had been a source of inspiration for many acts of heroism. Almost all of them died young, all conscious of their martyrial epic.

Finally, Russia

In 1991 a Claretian from the Province of Poland, accompanied by a postulant from Siberia penetrated into the vast region of Siberia with the intention of connecting

with this entire zone where there were still some Catholic remnants. After several other visits and a long dialogue with the Bishop of Novosibirsk, in 1992 the mission of Krasnoyarsk was accepted. There was no fixed priest or religious in the entire zone.

Again in Angola

In 1992 the Portuguese missionaries returned to Angola, but this time to Corimba, in the outskirts of Luanda, where the Congregation was reborn amid great difficulties, due to the effects of war. The missionary consolidation was quick and hopeful. Shortly after, the Claretian team took over the parish of the Immaculate Conception in the outskirts of the city of Lubango in 1997.

New Provinces

Two new Provinces were created in the Congregation in 1994: Poland and Madras (now Chennai). The first originated from the mission works of the German Province in Silesia about 1932. In 1982, in view of the abundance of vocations, it was elevated to the rank of Independent Delegation and later on, to that of Province.

The Province of Chennai (Madras) arose from the drastic increase of vocations in the Tamil Nadu region. Thus it was segregated from the Sri Lanka Delegation Dependent from Germany, and became the second Province of India, after that of Bangalore.

The Forge

Among the initiatives originated in the Provinces, The Forge must be stressed. It is a project of Claretian re-initiation that lasts 4 months, open to all members of the Congregation. It consists of four stages called, in Latin, “*Quid prodest?*,” “*Patris mei*,” “*Charitas Christi*” and “*Spiritus Domini*.” Its aim is to help the Claretian missionary relive the fundamental experiences of his vocation as a servant of the Word. The name is taken from the allegory used by our Fr. Founder to describe his own formation process as a missionary (Aut 342). It is carried out in Colmenar Viejo (Spain). The first Fragua was held in 1993.

Circulars of Fr. General

During this period Fr. General has addressed five circulars to the Congregation. The first was entitled: “*Missionary witness of our martyrs*” (1992) and was written on the occasion of the beatification of the martyrs of Barbastro. The second was published in 1994 with the title “*Towards a renewed missionary commitment*.” Fr. General points out in it the challenges of the future, and encourages the Congregation to open up with docility and generosity to the new impulses of the Spirit. The third circular was written in 1995 on the occasion of the 125th anniversary of the approval of the Constitutions. The fourth, entitled “*On the road toward the year 2000*” (1996) he urged the Congregation to accept the invitation of the Holy Father to prepare for the Jubilee of the beginning of the third millennium. In 1997 he wrote a circular on “*The Missionary Brothers*” and in 1998 another one entitled “*Heritage and Prophecy*,” on the occasion of the 150th anniversary of the foundation of the Congregation.

During these years the “October letter,” which Fr. General addresses to the Congregation on the occasion of the feast of St. Anthony M. Claret, has also become traditional.

New General Projects

One of the most salient projects of the General Prefecture of Apostolate these years was the “*Word-Mission*” Project, which is a process of reading, reflection, community sharing and prayer around the Bible. It was promoted by the General Prefecture of Apostolate, prepared by an international commission and presented in six volumes.

The commentaries on the Constitutions, called “*Our Project of Missionary Life*,” in three volumes, are the work of various members of the Congregation.

“*Claretian Missionaries*,” a work in two volumes by Fr. Jesus Alvarez, is an attempt to approach, from the viewpoint of history, the charismatic roots, the spirit and ideal of the Congregation.

During the six-year period the *General Plan of Formation* was concluded. It was promoted from the General Prefecture of Formation, with the help of an international commission. This plan has been gradually adapted to each Province by means of the Provincial Plans.

A third project that has been promoted during this period, but not set in writing, was the organisation of missionary experiences in mission zones, open to all the members of the Congregation. The first was implemented in the Philippines and Japan (1994) and the second in India (1996).

The “Heart of Mary” School of Formators inaugurated in 1996 was born with the purpose of forming formators and facilitating the assimilation of the basic lines of the General Plan of Formation.

In addition, the *Encounters of Claretian Renewal* continue in Vic and Rome and *Workshops of Evangelisation* continue being held at congregational level: urban evangelisation, inter-religious dialogue, etc.

Mission Procures and PROCLADE

Among the initiatives of this period we should emphasise the promotion of the Mission Procures in the economically stronger Provinces and the General Procures of Rome and Madrid, to support missionary projects in poorer zones. In Spain these Procures took the official form of NGO *PROCLADE* (non-government organisation Claretian Promotion for Development).

In Taiwan

In February of 1994 the first Claretian missionaries arrived in Taiwan with the intention of preparing themselves for the future and longed-for foundation in continental China. It came up as a fruit of the beatification of the martyrs of Barbastro, one of whom saw his missionary dream of going to China truncated by martyrdom. The foundation consisted of a presence in Taipei to which would be later added the responsibility of a parish in Keelung.

Restructuring of Organisms

In 1994 the Province of Castile gave up the missions entrusted to it in Panama and Honduras. In this way it collaborated in the new restructuring of the Province of Central America that would be carried out in 1995, when all its congregational organisms were reintegrated into it, including the USA mission of Izabal in Guatemala. In April 1995 the Provincials of Germany, Italy and Canada opted for the creation of a Confederation of French-speaking Missions of Africa, integrating the missions of Zaire,

In the zone of the Great Lakes of Africa

The Claretian missionaries arrived to Musoma, in Tanzania, in September of 1994. They came from the Province of Chennai with the intention of learning the language and collaborating in the pastoral project of the diocese. In this zone of Africa there were abundant vocations. Their work began in the Makoko Center, an institute for the promotion of courses and seminars for lay people.

After a careful study, the Province of Bangalore decided to found in Uganda in 1995. The missionary presence started in the diocese of Jinja, in the Southeast of Uganda. In 1996 the Bishop offered to the Claretian Missionaries the direction of the Diocesan Catechetical Center and part of the parish of Kiyunga, 55 km from Jinja, where they constructed a clinic.

Centennial of the Provinces of Catalonia and Castile

In September 1895 the first division of the Congregation was made, and the Provinces of Catalonia and Castile were created. On the occasion of the centennial of this event, both Provinces had special celebrations in Sallent and Segovia respectively.

Synod of Consecrated Life

In the year 1995 the Synod for Consecrated Life was celebrated in Rome. The Claretian Missionaries had an important role both in the preparation and in the realisation of the Synod. These are the names of those who participated in such memorable event: Fernando Sebastián, Aquilino Bocos and Matthias Augé. Abilio Pina Ribeiro also participated as auditor.

First Visits to Mainland China

From March 18 to 23, 1995, the long awaited visit to the old mission of the Claretians in China, the Vicariate of Tunki, took place. It was done by several members of the community of Taiwan, founded for the purpose of learning Chinese and preparing us for the eventual return to China. They still met some old Christians who remembered the first Claretian missionaries and who had undergone more than 30 years' imprisonment and forced labour for the sake of their faith. The mission house had become a hotel. The human remains of the two missionaries that died in the mission, Frs. Joseph Sánchez and Sebastian Soler, still lay beside the Heart of Mary chapel

In July 1995 a new visit was made to China, this time from Korea. For fifteen days, two Claretian brothers and 30 Korean Christians visited the autonomous zone of Jilin. In October of this same year, two more missionaries of Taiwan visited the zone again.

The Czech and Slovak Republics

In 1994 the first exploration for a foundation in the Czech Republic began. After studying the various possibilities, they thought of the capital, Prague, as the most appropriate place for the first foundation in 1995. After overcoming the first difficulties and the learning of the language, the work began basically with groups of young Czechs from the Faculty of Agronomy of the University.

The General Government entrusted in 1996 to the Province of Poland the foundation in Slovakia. The first steps led first to the city of Brezno, with 40,000 inhabitants, in the diocese of Banská Bystrica, but finally the service started with some parish work in the nearby localities of Podbrezova, Hromiec and Myto pod Dumbierom.

Ecclesial Appointments

In this period several members of the Congregation were promoted to the episcopacy: Fr. John Matogo, Bishop of Ebébiyin (Equatorial Guinea) in 1991, Fr. Peter Olmedo, Bishop of Humahuaca (Argentina) in 1993 and Fr. Angel Garachana, Bishop of San Pedro Sula (Honduras) in 1994.

In 1993 Fr. Fernando Sebastián was transferred from Archbishop Coadjutor of Granada to Archbishop of Pamplona (Spain), Fr. Manuel Revollo from Auxiliary Bishop of Cochabamba to Auxiliary to the Military Ordinary of Bolivia in 1993, Fr. Plácido Rodríguez in 1994 from Auxiliary Bishop of Chicago to Bishop of Lubbock (USA) and Fr. Luis Gutiérrez from Auxiliary Bishop of Madrid to Bishop of Segovia in 1995. In 1998 Msgr. Joseph Saraiva was appointed Prefect of the Congregation for the causes of the Saints.

Delegation of Syro-Malabar Rite

In 1996 a new Delegation was born, of Syro-Malabar rite, dependent from the Province of Bangalore (India). It is made up of three houses and several parishes. The aim is to be able to offer to the Claretians who belong to the Syro-Malabar Church the possibility of having a juridical structure that will allow them more fully to express their ritual identity and contribute to the development of the Congregation in that Church.

Persecution Does not End

Several places and persons have suffered the effects of violence during this period.

In December 1991, in the mission of Juanjui (Peru), 350 terrorists of the revolutionary movement Tupac Amaru seized the city of about 30,000 inhabitants, with great display of weaponry. Five at least were killed, and the house of the missionaries was burned.

About that same time violence in Zaire intensified, and the Institute of Philosophy of Kinshasa, where our seminarians were studying, was ransacked. As a consequence, the fifteen non-Zairian students had to go to Yaoundé (Cameroon). A little later some of the formators also had to go.

On April 4, 1992 a Moslem threw a grenade inside the small church where the Eucharist was being celebrated in one of the missionary centres of Basilan. Only 17 out of the 500 persons present were wounded. On March 18, 1993 Fr. Bernard Blanco was kidnapped in the same mission; on May 6, after a bizarre escape, he was able to reach safety away from the Moslem rebel groups. In March 1993, the “Claret School of Tu-

mahubong,” one of the four secondary schools of the Prelature of Isabel, was razed to the ground by criminal hands. In March 1996, two bombs exploded in the churches of San José and San Antonio M^a Claret when the liturgical celebrations were going on. There were no victims.

In the mission of El Estor (Guatemala), the missionaries also experienced threats and judicial persecution towards the end of 1994, due to the social and education work they were doing in more than 70 villages in the area.

In May 1995, a bomb exploded in the Guadalupe Church of the Claretians in Managua (Nicaragua). Neither the cause nor the author of this attack, which caused serious damage in the church and surroundings, was ever known.

The situation of Equatorial Guinea in these years has had a repercussion in the missionaries, some of whom have been imprisoned and tortured, accused of campaigning for the opposition.

In 1997 the situation that was deteriorating in Zaire became worse. The repercussions were especially important in the formative structure.

In the zone of Quibdó (Colombia) the hardships of the people, harassed by the paramilitary, have continued. In this harsh situation they have been at all times accompanied by the Claretian missionaries, in spite of the danger.

Barbastro, a Place and a Symbol

After the beatification of the martyrs, Barbastro has become a place of pilgrimage for the Congregation and for the Church in general. The creation of the museum and the construction of the Crypt where the martyrs are buried, a work of Fr. Cerezo Barredo, have greatly contributed to highlight the place. Various biographies have also been published and their name has been given to several churches, as their patron saints, in the different continents.

Artists of Universal Renown

Although their trajectory does not belong to this period, but all of them have reached, in the course of the years, artistic maturity. We just emphasise four personalities, two in the field of painting, one in sculpture and one in music: Maximino Cerezo Barredo, Peter Beruete, Segundo Gutiérrez and Luis Elizalde.

The New Economy

We can say that these years, through the efforts of the General Economic Council and the expert visitations, a new style has emerged regarding the congregational use of economy, an economy essentially based on putting it at the service of evangelisation, keeping in mind the commitment to poverty and a sense of solidarity. For this purpose several avenues have been created, such as the Aid Fund and the Claretian Cultural Fund.

The Institute of Consecrated Life in Asia (ICLA)

In June 1997 the Institute of Consecrated Life in Asia, was inaugurated in Manila, under the Pontifical University of Santo Tomás. The aim of this Institute is to offer its services to young religious not only in the Philippines but also in the whole of Asia.

In the ceremony more than 1,100 religious participated from 106 congregations. A considerable number of religious from other Congregations collaborate as professors.

In Ghana

In 1997 the first Nigerian missionaries arrived in the Diocese of Damongo, in the Northern region of Ghana, in Western Africa. It is constituted by two administrative districts, that of Occidental Gonja and the Bole district. Damongo comprises a territory of some 24,627 sq. km. It is a rural zone with more than 20 ethnic groups and a multitude of languages.

Claretians in Internet

The year 1997 has been marked for the Claretian Missionaries by their entrance en masse in the world of communication, internally and toward the outside, through Internet. The possibilities open toward the future are unforeseeable and the Claretians all over the world are preparing to integrate this privileged means in their missionary task.

Statistics (1997)

At the moment of the celebration of the XXII General Chapter the number of Claretians rose to 2,894, of which 18 were Bishops, 1981 Priests, 2 permanent Deacons, 488 Students, 271 Brothers and 134 Novices. 1,093 are Spaniards, 309 Indians, 171 Nigerians, 160 Colombians, 124 Brazilians and the other nationalities are under 100 members.

XIII. IN PROPHETIC MISSION (1997-2000)

XXII General Chapter (1997)

The XXII General Chapter of the Congregation was celebrated in Rome in the summer of 1997. Its main concern was to recover the *prophetic dimension of the missionary service of the Word* (PM). Fr. Aquilino Bocos was reelected Superior General. A special worth noting feature of this Chapter is the great variety of languages and cultures that reflect the presence of the Congregation in 56 countries.

Foundation of St Petersburg (Russia)

On 16 July 1998 the Province of Castile started the foundation in St Petersburg. For two years the first missionaries destined to the mission had been studying the Russian language in Krasnoyarsk (Siberia). Finally the foundation started in the European Russia, choosing St. Petersburg as a privileged place, because it was the only city of Russia with a Catholic seminary. This fact made it ideal both for the formation of new vocations and for the development of the teaching activity in the seminary itself. At the same time other perspectives were opened for the pastoral ministry in a zone with an orthodox majority and with scarce and almost totally foreign Catholic clergy.

Congregational Jubilee

The 150th anniversary of the foundation of the Congregation, the 50th year of the canonisation of our Fr. Founder and the centennials of the death of Frs. Clotet and Xifré have made of 1998-2000 a period of particular congregational activity. It was opened with a Meeting of Major Superiors of the entire Congregation in Bangalore (India) in October 1998, during which the Circular of Fr. General “Heritage and Prophecy” was launched. The celebration of the 150th anniversary of the Foundation was held in the cathedral of Vic, birthplace of the Congregation. On this occasion, the sepulchre of our Fr. Founder was remodelled and the body of Fr. Xifré moved to the crypt of the temple of Vic. Taking advantage of various circumstances, efforts have been made to emphasise the figure of our Founder by setting up several statues and memorial tablets: among them, those placed in the cathedrals of Vic, Madrid, Puerto Rico and Las Palmas and in the temple of the Holy Family in Barcelona.

Re-classification of Organisms

Immediately after the Meeting of Major Superiors in Bangalore, some criteria were given to re-classify the major organisms of the Congregation. For example, an organism must have at least 40 perpetually professed members to continue being considered a Province. For this reason, the General Government decided to make into Delegations the Provinces of Antilles, Central Brazil, Equatorial Guinea, Venezuela, Canada and the United Kingdom-Ireland. In the same way, Central America was declared a Formed Province.

Congregational Documents

The Congregation has always endeavoured to keep norms and life at a parallel level. For this reason the General Government has deemed it necessary to reform and update, in keeping with the times, some of the documents. Among them we must emphasise the new *Directory* (1999) and our particular liturgical books. At the same time intensive work is going on to publish the *Vocational Directory*, the *Manual for Secretaries*, the *Spiritual Directory*, the *Manual of the Claretian Novice*, *Claretian Prophetic Formation...* To this must be added the effort to translate the most significant congregational documents to the various languages.

Among the least of America: Haiti

On the occasion of the 1999 Jubilee Year, the Provinces of Latin America and the Caribe embarked upon the project of making a reality the dream of a foundation in Haiti, the poorest nation of America. The pastoral attention was focused on the center of the city of Port-au-Prince and left the masses of the human periphery unattended. This prompted the missionaries to chose this as the place of their missionary activity. It did not take long for the Claretians of the Province of Antilles to receive the first promotion of Haitian vocations in the Dominican Republic.

Interprovincial Noviciates

One of the initiatives lately promoted in the Congregation has been the integration of some formation institutions with the intention of pooling efforts in culturally neighbouring zones. Concretely we can mention the interprovincial noviciates of Iberia, Central America-Mexico-Antilles, South Cone of America, USA-Canada, India, French-speaking Africa and English-speaking Africa.

The heavenly Congregation

In the statistics of the year 2000 the number of those who constitute the greatest treasure of the Congregation was published: those who had died till that moment, the so-called heavenly Congregation. As of 31 December they reached the number of 3,708, among which there were 21 Bishops, 2,019 Priests, 1 Deacon, 968 Brothers, 419 Students and 19 Novices.

Ecclesial appointments

In January 2001 Mons. José Saraiva Martins, of Portuguese nationality and Prefect of the Congregation for the Causes of the Saints, was elevated to the dignity of Cardinal. He was the third Claretian Cardinal of the Church after Frs. Larraona and Tabera. In the same year the news received of the appointment of Fr. Rubén González as Bishop of Caguas, Puerto Rico, and of Fr. Gastar Quintana, as Bishop of Copiapó, Chile. In February 2001, Fr. Jorge I. Castaño, Bishop of Quibdó, Colombia, was appointed Auxiliary Bishop of Medellín. Also in May 2002 Mons. Romulo Emiliani was appointed Auxiliary Bishop of San Pedro Sula, Honduras. In that same month of May, Mons. Juan Matogo was named Bishop of Bata, Equatorial Guinea, and the Claretian Fr. Alfredo Oburu became his substitute in the See of Ebebiyin in 2003. In June of the same year the news arrived of the appointment of Fr. Oscar J. Vélez as Bishop of Valledupar, Colombia.

Awards and Medals

Many Claretian missionaries have received awards and medals during this period, both personal and collective, and for different reasons. Here are some of them: Jesús S. Moure, National Order of the Scientific Merit (Brazil); Gabriel Mejía, Order of the Chamber of Commerce (Colombia); Hogares Claret, Queen Sofía Award (Spain); Claret College of Maracaibo, Order of Saint Sebastian (Venezuela); José Saraiva, Grand Cross of Isabella, the Catholic (Spain); Pedro Casaldáliga, León Felipe Award (Spain), Freeman of the City of Brasilia and Human Rights Award (Brazil); Joaquim A. de Aguiar, Doctor Honoris Causa (University of St Petersburg); Joan M. Corominas, Grand Cross of Isabella, the Catholic (USA); U.S. Catholic; various awards (USA); Fernando Sebastián, Medal of Honor (University of Salamanca); Isafas Martínez, José M^a Pita da Veiga and Jesús Torres, Cross Pro Ecclesia et Pontifice (Vatican); Jesús Olmedo, International Prize as distinguished Fighter for Human Rights.

New persecutions

The persecutions in different places of the world have not come to an end. In the case of the Philippines, these persecutions have given the Congregation a new martyr, Fr. Rhoel Gallardo, tortured and assassinated in Basilan by Moslem extremists. To this persecution we must add that of East Timor, Indonesia, where not only the priests but

also the students were hounded and persecuted like the rest of the population, and the churches and properties were destroyed. Also in Chocó, Colombia and in Peru the missionaries have shared the tragic fate of the people, with death itself frequently hanging about.

In the Social Communications Media

Little by little and following the rhythm of society, the presence of the Social Communications Media was also growing in the Congregation. As for the publication of books we must stress the translation of Pastoral Bibles to Chinese in traditional and simplified characters, printed in China at the initiative of the *Claretian Publications* of the Philippines. The Latin American Agenda and the Bible Diary, both under the initiative of CICLA, had also a great international echo. In Manila also began the publication of the magazine *Religious Life Asia*. And the different initiatives that have been developed through Internet, with numerous Web sites throughout the world, have not been less important. Since 1998 the Claretian Publishing Houses (*Claretian Communications* of the Philippines, *Editorial Claret* of Catalonia, *Ave Maria* of Brazil, *Editorial Claretiana* of Argentina, *Ediurcla* of Rome, *Publicaciones Claretianas* of Madrid, *Publicaciones Claretianas* of Poland and *Claretian Publications* of Bangalore) regularly participate in the International Book Fair of Frankfurt. To them we should add *CLACOM* of Nigeria, *ECCLA* of Chile, etc. In the field of the audiovisual media we should also emphasize the opening of a TV Channel in Bermejo, Bolivia, broadcasting stations in Arosa (Portugal), La Ceiba (Honduras), Darién and Panama (Panama).

Presence in the Synods

Members of the Congregation have been present and have contributed in two Synods of Bishops held in this period. Bishops Angel Garachana and Romulo Emiliani and Fr. Francis Fierro participated in the Synod of America. Bishops Joseph Saraiva and Ferdinand Sebastián and Fr. General, Aquilino Bocos attended the Synod of Europe. And Cardinal Saraiva, Bishop Juan Matogo and Fr. Aquilino Bocos participated in the Synod of Bishops (2001).

In the Arctic Circle

In 2000 the Province of Castile took over the parish of St. Michael the Archangel in its newly opened mission of Russia, this time in Murmansk, a city with half a million inhabitants, located above the Arctic Circle, some 500 km from the North Pole. There was a small Catholic community there, which would serve as support for the new mission. Once the responsibility was assumed, they had to look for a house and a place for the celebrations, since there was no Catholic church in the city. The basic work in those so-far-north regions consists of discovering the presence of Catholics, attending to them and consolidating the community, always in dialogue with the Orthodox Church.

Congress of Spirituality

This is also an initiative that came out of the Meeting of Major Superiors in Bangalore. It consists in organising, on the occasion of the congregational Jubilee, a process of reflection on the missionary spirituality of the Claretians starting from their

own experiences. This process would conclude with a Congress to be celebrated during the year 2000.

Justice and Peace

The General Government, in addition to continuing the various encounters and courses started in previous periods, is promoting, mainly from the Secretariat of Justice and Peace, workshops of congregational sensitising on themes of justice, peace and integrity of creation. The Secretariat's aim is to promote communication and collaboration among the provincial secretariats and illumine both reflection and action from the viewpoint of God's Word by means of subsidies and publications.

Chad and Jamaica, from Africa to Afro-America

In June 2001 the General Government approved the foundation in Ndjamena, capital of Chad. The mission would be under the responsibility of Nigeria. They take care of the pastoral needs of the parishes of St. Therese and of the Blessed Tansi in Amtoukol and the express dedication to the missionary work with basic communities.

Meanwhile in America, by wish of the Archbishop of Kingston, the Eastern Province of the USA opened in August of 2001 a mission in Kingston, in the island of Jamaica, in order to take care of the parish of Our Lady of the Angels, where they have programs of evangelization, formation of the laity, attention to families and to the youth.

Blessed Patrocinio Giner

On 11 March 2001 Mother Patrocinio Giner, a Claretian missionary martyr, was declared Blessed. With her, the number of Blessed members of the Claretian family was increased. Mother Patrocinio had been born in Tortosa, Spain, in 1874 and dedicated herself basically to the formation in the congregation of Claretian Missionary Sisters, in which she professed in 1893. She died a martyr in Carcagente in 1936 during the religious persecution in Spain.

Institute of Consecrated Life in India

In March 2001 the creation of an Institute of Consecrated Life in Bangalore, India, was approved under the name of *Sanyasa Jnana Kendra*, that would start functioning in 2002. Its origin goes back to 1998, when the General Government requested the Claretian Provinces of India to open an Ecclesial Institute of Higher Learning. With this, the number of Institutes of Consecrated Life in the Congregation was four: Bangalore, Madrid, Manila and Rome.

Continental Missionary Projects

During this period the Encounters with the General Government by Continents took place one after the other. Each one of them concluded with a Missionary Project that was published and which contained the points designed for each by the General Chapter.

New Formation Centers

Throughout these years the creation of new formation centers in Asia and Africa was intensified due to the abundance of vocations. These are some of them: Bata (Equatorial Guinea), Yogyakarta and Benlutu (Indonesia), Morogoro (Tanzania).

International Formation Center

In March 2001 the General Government requested the Province of Castile to open its seminary and Theological Study center of Colmenar Viejo (Spain) to students of other Organisms of the Congregation. Its purpose was to respond to the challenges of interculturality that demand a new effort toward mutual understanding and toward co-operation in the missionary life within the cultural pluralism that is being experienced throughout the Congregation. It was a matter of preparing missionaries who would be open to and assimilate other cultures, thus preparing themselves to collaborate in the universal mission, without losing their cultural identity.

Circular Letters

In addition to the letters that Fr. General regularly wrote on the occasion of the General Councils and other events, twice he addressed himself to the whole Congregation in this period by Circular Letters: *Heritage and Prophecy* (1998) and *Missionary Vocations for the Third Millennium* (2001).

Belize and Zimbabwe, from Afro-America to Africa

In September 2002 the missionaries of the Delegation of the United Kingdom-Ireland began their work in Dangriga and in the district of Stann Creek of Belize. Belize is a small nation of the Caribbean region, which obtained its independence from Great Britain in 1981. Dangriga has 5,000 inhabitants and is the largest *garifune* shanty town of Belize (*garifune* is a mixture of the Indian Caribbean and Negro-African cultures, the latter coming from the slaves). The parish has a church dedicated to the Heart of Jesus. The district of Stann Creek reaches the 12,000 inhabitants and has 17 chapels or stations.

In January 2002 the first missionaries arrived to Zimbabwe from the Province of Bética. Their final destination was Gokwe. The diocese of Gokwe, established in 1991, with 26,000 Km², has 500,000 inhabitants, of which only 55,000 are Catholic. There are 17 Priests: diocesan, of the IEME (*Spanish Institute of Foreign Missionaries*) and of the Holy Spirit, besides 24 women religious.

World Congress of Claretian Educators

In July 2002 the first World Congress of Claretian Educators of the Claretian Family took place in Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic. There were 166 participants. Their aim was to evaluate the educative activity, to exchange experiences, to consolidate the processes of specific Claretian formation and to create strong bonds of communion.

Apostolate of the Congregation

In 2002 the General Prefecture of Apostolate published a report on the pastoral activity of the Congregation in the whole world, where data like these were gathered: The Congregation has 272 parishes with 636 Claretians serving them; 89 schools,

boarding schools and college residences, with 165 Claretians dedicated to this activity and about 77,000 students attended; 35 missions with 166 Claretians; 31 specialized teams with 83 members, and 8 higher institutes with 56 professors.

Claretians from Eastern Europe

In February 2003 the people-in-charge from the General Government and from the provinces of Poland and Castile gathered in Wroclaw, Poland, with representatives from all the Claretian communities present in Eastern Europe: Belorussia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Czech Republic, East Germany, Poland and Russia. After a reflection on the social and religious reality of Eastern Europe, the first lines were drafted for a future project for this European zone, so much in need of the presence of evangelizers.

Chair of Saint Anthony M. Claret

In the month of March of 2003 the Chair of *St. Anthony M. Claret* was inaugurated in the Pontifical University of Salamanca. The inaugural act was opened by Mons. Fernando Sebastián with the presence of the Bishop of the diocese and of the academic and Congregational authorities. The objective of the chair is the investigation, teaching and divulgation of anything related to popular religiosity from a theological, anthropological and pastoral perspective.

Restructuring of Organisms in Spain

After a joint reflection of several Provinces of the Congregation in Spain in April 2003, the Provinces of Aragón, Castile and León took the decision of uniting in a regionalized Province after a transition period as Confederation. This process was a response to the needs of the evangelization in Spain and to the better organization of the Claretian missionaries.

The contacts with China continue

Little by little qualitative steps have been progressively taken to open the way to a definitive presence in China. One of them was the construction of a chapel towards the end of 2000 in Huangshan, in the old Claretian mission of Tunxi which was entrusted to a Chinese diocesan priest. Another important step has been the publication of the first Pastoral Bible in Chinese, with a subsequent version in simplified characters.

Vocations in Southeast Asia

In the year 2003 the General Government, the Province of the Philippines, the East Asian Delegation and the Institute for Consecrated Life in Asia (ICLA), of Manila, agreed to establish a joint program of collaboration in the formation of the vocations that might arise in zones out of the jurisdiction of the already existing Major Organisms in Asia. To this purpose they elaborated some Statutes and Regulations that will guide the desire to serve the Church and the Congregation in countries like Vietnam, China, Myanmar, Laos, Cambodia, Bangladesh, etc.

Ministry with Emigrants in Europe

In 2003 a Pastoral Encounter with the emigrants of Europe was convoked in Fatima, Portugal. In view of the urgency of the situation of the extracommunitarian emigrants in the new Europe, the Congregation reflected on the need to include this concern in its project for Europe.

With one foot in Vietnam

In 1994 the General Government worked on the preparation of a foundation in Vietnam. It could not be realized for various reasons. In these last years, the Institute for Consecrated Life in Asia (ICLA) of Manila has been rendering pastoral services among the religious men and women of Vietnam. As a fruit of these efforts there have already been some vocations to the Congregation. This has given a reason to start some contact visits to Vietnam from the Philippines, that opened the way to a future presence of the Congregation in that nation. In July 2002 the first Claretian arrived to start the new foundation while dedicating himself to learn the language and to the formation of the first Vietnamese candidates.

Statistics

In 2003 there were in the Congregation 462 houses, with 2,918 professed and 145 novices.

ATTENTIVE TO LIFE (2003-2009)

XXIII General Chapter (2003)

August of 2003 saw the celebration in Rome of the XXIII General Chapter. After careful revision of the sexenium and following the light of the last exhortations of the Pope after the distinct continental synods, followed the election of a new General Superior, a charge that fell on the person of Father Josep M^a Abella, and a new Council. In continuation the Chapter concentrated on the study and formulation of a guiding Declaration for the next sexenium titled: "That they may have life". The Holy Father, in the Audience of 8 September encouraged the Congregation to "announce firmly and with love to men of our time the Gospel of life".

Center of Claretian Spirituality

In November 2003 the General Government created the Center of Claretian Spirituality (CESC) with its seat in Vic. The objective was to take care of, deepen and diffuse the spiritual patrimony of Saint Anthony Mary Claret, especially in the ambit of the Congregation and of the Claretian Family. This would require transferring of all the library of Father Claret and other important documents from Rome to Vic. This new Center was inaugurated in August 2004.

In Sumatra

At the petition of the Bishop of Medan, the Delegation of Indonesia opened on the first of February 2004 a new mission in Onam Runggu, principal population of the island of Samosir, to the north of Sumatra. The parish given to the Claretians has 9.000

Catholics distributed in 22 outstations, all of them with their chapel. The first parish priest would later be an Indonesian Claretian.

Supporting Human Rights

Following the orientations of the last General Chapters the Claretian Missionaries of Latin America and the Caribe signed an agreement with *International Franciscans* to participate in the sessions of the Commission of Human Rights of the United Nations thereby articulating Works in defense of life. Various missionaries were present already in April of 2004 in the 60th period of the sessions of the Commission of Human Rights celebrated in Geneva.

The Province of Saint Thomas

On the 16th of July 2004 the Independent Delegation of Saint Thomas, India, became a Province. This new Province was born to respond fundamentally to the felt need by the Claretians of Siro-Malabar rite. The same structures it had as a Delegation were maintained.

In the Parliament of Religions

In July 2004 a group of Claretians participated in the Parliament of the Religions of the World celebrated in Barcelona. The logo was “paths of peace: the art of knowing to listen, the power of compromise”. Many missionaries exposed in that parliament the personal lived experiences in their respective ministries.

Assembly of Major Superiors in Vic

Following the practice of various sexenium, the General Government convoked all Superiors of Major Organisms in Vic in September 2004. The fundamental objective of this important Assembly was to bring together some conclusions agreed by all, from the Action Plan published by the General Government. These conclusions would as orientations to the General Government at the time of carrying out its service of animation.

Coordination in East Africa

In November 2004 the present missions in East Africa (Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda) made the first step towards coordination in view of a future congregational Organism given the development acquired in this part of Africa. The principal objective was to strengthen the communion and coordination of the missionaries in different countries, to evaluate and push for a program of formative collaboration and to establish the bases of a future mission program.

The Tsunami

The great tragedy of Tsunami that happened on the Christmas of 2004 also affected the Congregation in Indonesia, India and Sri Lanka. Some Claretians, especially seminarians, lost their loved ones or saw their homes destroyed or lost their fishing instruments and other means of subsistence. The destruction and loss of life in general

moved missionaries in other areas to look for ways of helping those affected. And missionaries, the whole Congregation and their mission procures mobilized in helping both Claretians and other villages affected.

Year of awards

Throughout 2004 different types of recognition to members and institutions of the Congregation were received. Fr. Ibelele (Juan José Davies) Medal award of the Order “Manuel José Hurtado” for his great contribution to national education; Fr. Ting Pong Lee, Order “Armador Guerrero” in the degree of Commender in attention to his many years of service in the Universities of Rome; Brother Antonio Fernández, Illustrious Son of the city of Andacollo; Fr. Irio Risi, Araçatubense Citizen; Bishop Carlos M^a Ariz, Order of “Manuel Amador Guerrero”, for his work in favor of the needy; Fr. Marco Antonio Pineda, Cross “Pro Ecclesia et Pontifice”, for his service in the Pontifical Secretariat of Panama; Leprosy of Sumanahalli, Price for the good services rendered to their patients.

World Social Forum

This time the 5th edition of World Social Forum was celebrated in Porto Alegre (Brazil) in January of 2005. And this time 13 missionaries in the name of the Congregation assisted, thereby showing their sensibility and worry about related themes with Justice and Peace. This forum is a pilgrimage place for those who believe that “another world is possible”. From here the Claretian missionaries decided to be present in other Social Forum at the world level.

New Claretian Bishop of Darien

On the 12th of February 2005, Fr. Pedro Hernández, from Guatemala was named the Apostolic Vicar of Darien, Panama. Before then he was in charge of the Claretian Center of formation for seminarians in Kinshasa, Democratic Republic of Congo. He succeeded in the charge Bishop Romulo Emiliani, then auxiliary bishop of San Pedro Sula.

John Paul II dies

The death of the Pope John Paul II on the 2nd of April 2005 was a significant event for the whole Church and also for the Congregation. With this motive, the many times the Pope came by our way were remembered. Among them, the five speeches he made during the General Chapters (1979, 1985, 1991, 1997 y 2003). In them he made it stated clearly the charismatic foundations in which the Congregation is based: ministry of the Word, Ecclesial sense, Mary, examples of the Claretian Martyrs, etc. To these speeches we would add the ones during the beatification of the Martyrs of Barbastro, the letter with regard to the celebration of the 150th Anniversary of the Foundation and of the arrival of Claret to Cuba.

A Claretian in the Conclave

For the second time in the history of the Congregation a Claretian participated in the Conclave for the election of the sucesor of Peter the Apostle. Por segunda vez en la

historia de la Congregación participó un claretiano en el Cónclave de elección del sucesor del Apóstol Pedro. The first was Cardinal Larraona, who in 1963 participated in the election of Pope Paul VI. This time it was Cardinal José Saraiva. In the conclave Benedict XVI was elected the new Pope.

Indonesia-East Timor, Major Organism

On the 25th of April 2005 a new Major Organism was constituted in the Congregation: the Independent Delegation of Indonesia-East Timor. At that time the Delegation had already five houses in Indonesia and two in Timor with 12 native members and 67 students. This Delegation begun as a common project of ASCLA in 1990 with the arrival of two Philippine Claretians and one from India. Later a major seminary was opened.

Third Claretian Bishop in Honduras

Till then there were two Claretian Bishops in San Pedro Sula. To them was joined a new Bishop, this time from Honduras, Bishop Juan José Pineda, as the auxiliary of Tegucigalpa. The news came in May 2005. He taught Canon Law at the Claretian Institute in Manila, and lately was posted to San Salvador though he was shuttling regularly to Tegucigalpa, where he was a professor of the Major Seminary and secretary of the archbishop.

Central Africa, Independent Delegation

The Independent Delegation of Central Africa made up of Cameroun, Gabon and Democratic Republic of Congo, was constituted on the 16th of July 2005. Before then it was a Dependent Confederation of the Claretian missions of Canada, Italy and Germany. Kinshaba became the central seat of the Delegation.

150th Anniversary of the Claretian Missionary Sisters

On the 27th of August 2005 within the frame of the General Chapter, the Claretian Missionary sisters celebrated the 150th anniversary of their foundation. Many members of the Claretian Family accompanied them while the Archbishop of Tarragona presided over the Mass with Father General as the homilist where he emphasized the missionary spirit and motivated them to widen the horizon through a “new birth of water and spirit”.

Taking the impulse to the economy

This time it was in Colmenar Viejo, Spain, the place for the Encounter of Bursars of Major Organisms of the Congregation. There they met in September of 2005 to evaluate the economic health and the financial situation of the Congregation. They elaborated some proposals to the General Government and to the Major Organisms to give orientation to the economy. They also treated the theme of formation of bursars and the organization of the General Procure was presented. Finally they studied a guide to elaborate a plan for self-financing and economic development.

Shared Mission

To satisfy the worries that were presented in the General Chapter concerning Shared Mission, the General Prefecture of Apostolate organized in Guatemala in October 2005 a workshop to reflect and give theory and practical orientations on the theme. The mode of realizing shared mission in the diverse ambits of the life and activity of the Congregation was studied: spirituality, apostolate, formation, vocation ministry, community and life of the government. The fruit of the workshop was the publishing of a small book in Spanish and English languages titled: “Hacer con otros”, “Do with Others”.

Synod of Bishops on the Eucharist

Also in the synod of Bishops of 2005 dedicated to treating the Eucharist as source of life and mission of the Church, some members of the Congregation participated: Bishop Jose Saraiva, Bishop Juan Matogo and the Father General. It was, as usual, in the month of October. Three of them made their personal contributions on different aspects: the paschal dimension, the Sunday celebration and the formation of persons and communities that love and serve.

Blessed Andrés Solá

On the 20th of November 2005, the ceremony of beatification of the Claretian missionary, Andres Sola, and martyr of the Mexican revolution of 1927 was celebrated. The ceremony that took place in the Jalisco stadium of the city of Guadalajara was presided over by the Claretian cardinal, Jose Saraiva, and a great number of Claretians assisted. Together with Father Sola two other of his colleagues, martyrs of the Ranch of Saint Joaquim were beatified. They were the priest, Trinidad Rangel and Leonardo Perez, a lay person.

A new Claretian magazine in India

The Institute for Consecrated Life of the three Provinces of India (Bangalore, Chennai and Saint Thomas), with the seat in Bangalore, launched in January 2006 the first edition of the magazine that carries as title *Sanyasa. Journal of Consacrated Life*. It was a service to many religious men and women within and outside India. We have to understand that Sanyasa is the only Institute for Consecrated Life in India.

Korea, Dependent Delegation

Taking note of the development and the circumstances of the place, the General Government approved in January 2006 the Dependent Delegation of East Asia. The official foundation in Korea goes back to 1985. At the time of its declaration as a Delegation it had only two houses and one residence, twelve priests, a brother, five professed students, two novices and three aspirants.

In Mozambique

After a long meditation and a very careful visit, the two Organisms of Brazi, with the collaboration of Portugal, sent the first missionaries to the new mission of Gilé, in Mozambique. They arrived on the 23rd of March 2006. The mission belongs to the

diocese of Gurué. Of great help for this foundation has been the collaboration of the Dehonian religious. Later, the Province of Saint Thomas from India joined in this project.

At last in the Continental China

The fruit of the encounter of Manila in 2005, the month of February 2006, 77 years after the first Claretian foundation in Asia, a Claretian residence was opened in Macao, China. From Macao a publishing center in China was opened and contacts were maintained for the publishing of the pastoral Bible in China and in view of other connections for new foundations in the interior of China. Other service that was offered from there was attending to the thousands of Philippines who live in the zone though publishing of Christian formation and biblical books. Later new Claretian presence in Beijing and Harbin, at the north of the country was opened.

The new Province of Santiago

After a long process, on the 25th of July 2006 the new Province of Santiago in Spain was created. It was the union of three former Provinces: Aragon, Castilla and Leon. With this re-organization, in line with the orientations of the General Chapter, the idea was to put in better order the organizing structures and to favor the missionary vigor of the Congregation in Spain. At that time the members integrated were 359.

A new Portuguese Bishop

In November 2006 we got the news of the nomination of Fr. Manuel A. Mendes as the bishop of Sao Tomé and Príncipe. Already he worked in that mission of the Portuguese Province from 1993-1995.

More recognitions

There were many Claretians whose labor was publicly recognized in this epoch. We indicate some of them: Fr. Anthony San Cristobal, Golden key of Cajamarca; Fr. Fausto Valencia, Batataense citizen; Bishop Rómulo Emiliani, Franciscan Morazan Order; Brother René Lepage, Price of the Religious Council of Los Angeles; Bishop Pedro Casaldáliga, International Price of Catalunya; Cardinal José Saraiva, Medal of the Order of Legislative Merit of the State of Minas Gerais; Fr. Javier Travieso, the chosen son of Don Benito. Fr. Francisco Rodríguez, Member of the Historic and Geographic Institute of Rio Grande do Norte.

Northeast India, Major Organism

In March 2007 the General Government approved the creation of a new Independent Delegation in India, calling it the Northeast India. That was the fourth major Organism in India. The Claretian Province of Bangalore sent missionaries to the Northeast of India in 1984 for the first time. Since then it has been consolidated getting to have at the moment 33 priests, 12 professed students and three novices. The Claretians of the new Delegation were present in the States of Arunachal Pradesh, Assam and Meghalaya.

Claretians at the Conference of CELAM

In May 2007 the V Conference of CELAM was celebrated in Aparecida, Brazil, where 4 claretian Missionaries: three bishops and the Major Superior of Antillas participated.

***Studium*, new Claretian magazine**

With the speech of the Director the Claretian Theology magazine *Studium* was inaugurated in Curitiba in May 2007. It was the realization of an old dream in Brazil. The intention was to make other people know the theological events that happened there and to offer a space to professors of other centers to share with them their reflections. It is with this motive that the first edition was produced.

FUCLA

These are the abbreviations of Claretian University Foundation created in Colombia in June 2007. The idea of creating FUCLA came up in 1994. It has five proper courses: anthropology, social work, religious education, theology and artistic and cultural education. Its seat is in Quibdo and it has ten centers in many other cities of Colombia.

The Forge in English

On the 1st of July 2007 the first Forge in English language began in Bangalore with the participation of 18 Claretians from six English speaking Organisms: Bangalore, Chennai, Saint Thomas, Northeast India, Nigeria and Sri Lanka. Though reduced to two months it maintained the same structure as the Forge in Spanish. A member of the CESC directed it.

Workshop on the Transmission of the Faith

In September 2007 a group of Claretians from different Organisms of Europe met in Poland to reflect on one of the points that appeared in the General Chapter: "Look for new ways of waking up the faith and accompany its growth in discouraged persons in the church or those who consider themselves unbelievers". Fruit of this workshop is a small book titled: "To know you and Make You Known".

Year of Bicentenary

The 23rd of December 2007 marked the 200 years of the birth of the Father Founder. With this motive the Congregation began a great number of celebrations at all levels with the intention of utilizing the Bicentenary to awaken in the Congregation and in the Church spiritual and missionary renewal. The anniversary was begun in Sallent on the 21st of October and was closed in Tanzania in August 2008. With this motive all the Claretian Family was convoked to Claretian places and a new congregational museum was inaugurated in Sallent. Throughout the year many acts and celebrations were had following the orientations given in the circular letter of the Father General: "From remembrance to commitment".

West Nigeria, Independent Delegation

On the 24th of October 2007 the new Independent Delegation of West Nigeria was born with a Eucharist presided over by the Cardinal of Lagos. Geographically it is comprised of Northwest States of Nigeria, including the capital, Abuja. At that time it had 20 priests, 1 deacon, 1 brother, 20 students and 3 postulants.

New Province of Brazil

After a careful process of re-organization, on the 20th of November 2007 the new Province of Brazil was constituted, born of the unification of the Province of Meridional Brazil and the Delegation of Central Brazil. This Organism had also the mission in Mozambique in Africa. In future the incorporation of the mission of the Province of Catalunya in Guapore will be considered.

Assembly of Major Superiors

The main objective of this new Assembly of Provincial Superiors was for the preparation of the next General Chapter. It began on the 14th of January 2008 in Jundiá, near San Paulo, Brazil. 20 Major Superiors and 16 Delegations participated with the General Government. Each Organism presented briefly their situation and priorities before indicating future expectations for the Congregation. Fruit of this Encounter was the publishing of “Called to evangelize. How to live today our missionary vocation”, in view of preparing and receiving contributions of all Organisms to the General Chapter.

The “new” Autobiography

We are referring to a new edition with new notes, bibliography and other new contributions. The author of this new edition was Father Jesus Bermejo. Apart from the Autobiography other “complimentary writings” that complete the autobiographic material were included. The last edition in Spanish dates back to 1981. At the same time the English translation of the text and notes is being prepared.

In the South of Sudan

The inter-congregational Project of being present in South Sudan began its march when a General Peace Agreement was signed in January 2005. The bishops invited the superiors of religious congregations to collaborate in the education and sanitary attention of the zone. The congregation responded positively and began searching for and preparing volunteers for the new Project that would be completed throughout 2008 by sending personnel as well as economic support.

Immigration, priority in Europe

In April 2008 a group of missionaries and some lay people met in Einsiedeln (Switzerland) to reflect on the new immigration reality in Europe. That was the IX Encounter in Europe. Representatives from Switzerland, France, Germany, Italy, Byelorussia and Spain assisted. After the difficulties and challenges we go to the future projects that appeared in a brief document.

The processes of canonization and beatification

As at summer of 2008 the processes of canonization and beatification in the congregation were like this: those beatified, waiting for miracle for their canonization. The martyrs of Sigüenza and Fernán Caballero (16 in all), included in the next group of martyrs to be beatified. Still waiting are the martyrs of Barcelona, Lleida, Solsona-Cervera, Vic, Valencia and Santander (in all 109). Those of Tarragona with those of La Salle, the Venerables Avellana and Clotet, are conditioned to miracle. Fathers Francisco Crusats and Angel Cantons and the brothers Miguel Palau and Pedro Marcer are servants of God having had their causes introduced.

Calcuta, Dependent Delegation

On the 16th of July 2008 a new Dependent Delegation of Chennai, the one of Calcuta was constituted. Included in this Delegation are all the houses of the northern mission that depended on the Province of Chennai, with its seat in Calcuta.

Claretian World Education Congress

Ninety educators, men and women from 19 countries met in Vic in July 2008 to celebrate the II Claretian World Education Congress. Various conferences and experiences formed the central body of the Congress that ended with a dense document of concrete proposals for all the Claretian Family.

Centenary of the Missionaries of Mary Immaculate

The Missionary Sisters of Mary Immaculate began their first centenary the their foundation in the cathedral of Malabo, Equatorial Guinea, on the 5th of October 2008. Theirs was born in the then city of Santa Isabel with the consecration to Dios of Imelda Makole. The Bishop, Armengol Coll collaborated in installing the first group, dedicated to the service of the sick of the hospital of the city. It is now in the process of being converted to a Congregation of Pontifical right.

Intercultural centers

In November 2008 15 Claretian formators of intercultural centers met in Vic to study this new formation modality, that is getting more extended in the Congregation. The participants came from 12 different countries. The theme was “the challenges of inter-culturality”.

New distinctions

In this epoch the following have received some kind of distinction: Fr. Theodore Arranz, Illustrious son of Temuco; Fr. Tomas Gallarta, Adoptive son of Segovia; Claretians of Zürich, Medal of Honour of the emigration in their category of gold; Claret College of Seville, Medal of the City; College Pius XII of Lisbon, member of Honor of the Order of Merit; Fr. Anastasio Gutiérrez, given a name in one of the streets of Rome; Sumanahalli, Better organization in attending to disables; Bishop Fernando Sebastián, Bravo Price; Fr. Darío Echeverri, Gentleman in the National Order of the Legion of Honor.

New Claretian Bishop in Peru

On the 7th January 2009, Pope Benedict XVI named Fr. Jose Javier Travieso, auxiliary bishop of the Archdiocese of Trujillo (Peru). The new bishop was until then, collaborator in the Claretian College of Trujillo and Professor in the seminary and in the Catholic University of the same Peruvian city. He was born in Don Benito, Badajoz (Spain), on the 5th of February 1952. In 1988 he was sent to Peru where he was, among other things, Professor, Academic secretary and director of studies of the John XXIII Institute.

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CHAPTER III

CLARETIAN MARTYRS

FRANCIS CRUSATS, PROTOMARTYR OF THE CONGREGATION (1868)

The first sparks of the storm flashed in 1864. As early as then Fr. Serrat in Segovia took some precautions thinking of places of refuge and even counting on the not at all unlikely contingency of people's being assassinated, given the anti-religious character the Revolution seemed to be taking.

In the height of the revolution the Claretian Missionaries of La Selva del Campo heard rumours that they would be beheaded unless they renounced their vocation. Fr. Crusats answered: "*Lord, pierce my heart lest I abandon my vocation. Would that I could shed my blood for Christ!*" The revolutionaries arrived at the house on 29 September. No one resisted them. Fr. Reixach, in a moment of negligence and taking advantage of the night's darkness, escaped after knocking down one of the captors. They took revenge with Fr. Crusats. Enraged with fury, they beat him up till he lost consciousness and then shot him twice. But Crusats was still alive. At last they pierced his throat with a dagger and he died on the spot. Fr. Crusats was the Congregation's first martyr.

When the news reached Fr. Claret, he wrote: "*I eagerly wished to be the first martyr of the Congregation; but I was not worthy, another one beat me to it. I congratulate the martyr and saintly Crusats and compliment Fr. Reixach for the privilege of being wounded. I give my congratulations to the entire Congregation too, for the bliss of being persecuted.*"

CLARETIAN MARTYRS IN MEXICO

Since the revolution of Benito Juárez, the Government had been drafting an ever more secularised legislation that proclaimed the separation between church and state, the sale of ecclesiastical properties, the civil marriage, the suppression of ecclesiastical exemptions and the expulsion of religious from the country.

Mariano González (1914)

In March 1913 there was a revolt against the regime of General Huerta: that of Venustiano Carranza. The Church made a call to peace, an act that Carranza interpreted as support of Huerta. This unleashed the anticlerical wave: persecutions, exiles, assassinations.

The Claretians of Tepic were put in jail together with the bishop. Most of them were able to escape, but Bro. Mariano González remained to take care of the house and church of Toluca. At the beginning, because he was a native Mexican, they let him be, but later on he was imprisoned. Because he refused to reveal the whereabouts of his

community brothers, he was shot on 22 August 1914. After the execution he was exposed to the public with a placard that said: “*For being a thief of national properties.*”

Blessed Andrew Solá (1927)

When Plutarco Elías Calles took over the presidency in 1924 the situation became tense. The Church’s Hierarchy, after consulting with Rome, decided to close the churches and suspend the services throughout the country. The reaction of the people was immediate and the government expelled all bishops, priests and lay people involved.

In this atmosphere the assassination of Fr. Andrew Solá took place. He was working as a priest in hiding. He went about baptising, celebrating marriages and distributing the Eucharist round the houses. He stayed in a private house together with another Jesuit priest who was imprisoned. Some acquaintances of both took interest in the situation of the Jesuit with the intention of bringing food and clothes to him in jail. The police followed them and found the whereabouts of Fr. Solá. They accused him and a young man of raiding a train and condemned both to death. On the way to execution, Fr. Solá harangued his companions, encouraging them to suffer for Christ. He gave his watch to one of those who were executing him and forgave them all. He crossed his arms before his breast and, before he received the shots, he shouted: “*Long live Christ the King!*” He did not die on the spot, but his executioners left him lying on the floor until he bled to death. He had time to give instructions to those present and a message for his mother.

Fr. Solá was beatified in November 20th 2005 in Guadalajara (Mexico) by the Cardinal Josph Saraiva, Claretian, with the others martyrs of Saint Joachim. These were the words of the Pope Benedict XVI in his message: “*On this Solemnity of Christ the King, whom they called upon at the supreme moment of giving up their lives, they are a permanent example and an incentive to us to give a consistent witness to our own faith in contemporary society*”.

CLARETIAN MARTYRS IN SPAIN (1936)

What happened in the Spain of 1936 that almost 7,000 persons including bishops, priests, religious men and women were assassinated in the republican zone merely for being so?

Ever since the French revolution, the church and the modern world have followed parallel ways in Spain as well as in the whole of Europe. Some times one prevailed, at other times the other. During the Bourbon Restoration (1875-1931) the Church recovered its previously lost privileges and maintained an intransigent and belligerent attitude in front of anything that sounded liberal. When the throne fell and the Republic was established, the confrontation between the two ways of understanding Spain came to the fore. For the radical republicans and the leftist groups, the dominant role of the Church in the Spanish life was the fundamental cause of its social, political and economic backwardness. For the Catholics, Spain could only be understood from the standpoint of the nation’s Catholic unity.

The Constitution of 1931 declared the lay State. Religion was under suspicion. Among so many problems that were posed to the II Republic, the religious question gave the impression of being the key for everything. The bishops’ reaction to the measures taken against the Church was immediate and the Catholics decided the rightist

victory of Gil Robles in the 1933 elections. But dialogue and tolerance were lacking again.

At last on 18 July 1936 the national revolt took place. The initial indecision of the Government of Madrid caused Spain to be divided in two. The resolution of putting guns in the hands of the people fostered the uncontrolled, indiscriminate and bloody repression starting from 19 July. From that moment on, the persecution of the Church in the republican zone was cruel and bloody such as few have ever been there. The sum total of Church persons killed was 6,832. Only in the diocese of Barbastro, 90% of its clergy were assassinated. Fire devoured thousands of churches and public worship disappeared. It is true that the awareness of the Spanish Church with regards to social justice was scarce; but it is evident that the contacts with the bourgeois oligarchy was a mere excuse in the case of religious like the Claretians of Barbastro. All of them were as poor, or even poorer, than those who shot them. Neither was hatred due to complicity with the coup. Present studies demonstrate that the Church's hierarchy did not participate in the coup. In fact, a good portion of the revolted soldiers did not precisely shine for their piety or church sympathy.

Then, why the religious persecution during the civil war? The answer "is still in the wind."

Blessed Philip of Jesus Munárriz and 50 Companions, Martyrs of Barbastro

Everything started with the revolt of 17 July 1936. In the city of Barbastro (Huesca) life went on in a serene tension. 59 Claretian missionaries, most of them young students, trusted in the words of Col. Villalba: "*The troops are in the barracks. At a moment's notice they will respond.*" On the 20th, Monday, at 5:30 p.m., they came to search the house. All the members of the community were sent to jail amidst insults and threats. The jail was full to bursting. In the same square there was the school of the Piarist Fathers, with a relatively large hall. That would be the prison for the Claretians. They still could hear words of hope from the Piarists, but soon the scenery began to get gloomy. The few mattresses were taken away, they could not change and they had to wash their handkerchiefs with their drinking water. Only three times could they shave in three and a half weeks. All together they were 49 persons in a hall 25 metres long by 6 metres wide. That month of August was especially hot.

Two Argentinean students who were liberated a few days ahead of the shootings have conveyed to us the moments of moral suffering to which they were submitted. One of them, Parussini, wrote: "*One day they told us that the supper would be our last meal. Once I heard the happy news, I looked for a piece of paper and I wrote a few farewell lines....*" More than four times they received the general absolution believing that death was imminent. The long prison days provided time for many things, including anecdotal memories and humour. They were always full of peace, calmness and joy. One of the Argentinean students declared: "*They constantly repeated to us: We do not hate your persons. We hate your profession, your black habits, your cassock.*" The cause for imprisonment and execution was clear.

On Monday, August 10, although they did not know it, the last week of their life began. Eight days earlier, they had already shot Fr. Superior and the two consultants together with other priests and lay persons from the city. They had also shot the Bishop of Barbastro, Msgr. Asensio Barroso. On August 11 they received the visit of a representative of the committee. The accusations of possessing weapons and planning conspiracies could not hold water in the face of the young religious' innocence. They were forbidden to speak in a loud voice and to group themselves more than two at a time. The

Rector of the Piarists brought some books to them, but there was no more time to read: only to prepare for death.

The 12th of August would be an unforgettable day for our young men. It was 7 o'clock in the morning. Someone from the committee burst into the hall asking for the names. The black list was already made. One of the two Argentinean students wrote later: *"All confessed for the last time and spent the day in prayer... All were happy to suffer something for the sake of God. All forgave their executioners and promised to pray for them in heaven."* Reading their writings gives one the shivers. They wrote in music books, on the piano stool, on chocolate wrappers: *"With my heart full of holy joy, I trustfully await the greatest moment of my life: martyrdom."* *"They have found no political cause. They have made not a single trial. Happily we all die for Christ, for his Church and for the faith of Spain."* *"Dear parents, I die a martyr for Christ and for the Church. I die at peace fulfilling my sacred duty. Good bye, I'll see you in heaven."* That day they took away the six eldest.

On a chocolate wrap the last words of the whole group to Mother Congregation are kept for posterity. They are headed by a crucial name: Faustino Pérez, student. The farewell reads:

"August 12, 1936, in Barbastro. Six of our companions are already martyrs: Soon we hope to be, too. But before this happens, we want to make it clear that we die forgiving those who are taking away our life and offering it for the Christian ordering of the working world, for the definitive reign of the Catholic Church, for our beloved Congregation and for our beloved families.

THIS IS THE FINAL OFFERING TO THE CONGREGATION, FROM HER MARTYR CHILDREN!"

(Forty signatures follow, preceded by cheers to Christ and to the Heart of Mary). And it ended: *"Live immortal, beloved Congregation. As long as you have children in the dungeons such as those you have here in Barbastro, have no doubt that your fate is eternal. Would that I had fought in your ranks: Blessed be God!"*

The night from the 12th to the 13th was going to be the last for some of them. All had confessed and prayed. The foreign students had heard their last confidences and had wiped away the last tears. All had lain down to rest. Two hours had not yet passed when, at midnight, the doors were opened and two militiamen entered with ropes already stained with blood. *"Attention, all those who are over 26, come down from the stage,"* No one moved, as there was no one that age. Nor 25, either. Then they put on the lights and read the first twenty names. After each name, a firm voice: *"Present!"* and they descended from the stage. They formed a single file along the wall, while their hands were bound at their backs, and their elbows two by two. *"All were composed and at peace: their faces had something that seemed supernatural, impossible to describe. In all of them could be seen the same courage, the same enthusiasm; no one fainted or gave signs of cowardice."* Those who remained on the stage looked upon the scene with astonishment. They heard some forgive those who were binding them; others were seen taking the ropes from the floor, kissing them and giving them to those who were binding them. Some one shouted: *"Farewell, brothers, we'll see you in heaven!"* One of the guards commented addressing those who remained on the stage: *"You still have one whole day to eat, laugh, enjoy, dance, and do whatever you please. Tomorrow at this same time we shall come looking for you, as we have done with these, and we will bring you for a walk in the cool air up to the cemetery. Now you may turn the lights off and go to sleep."* The shots were heard by those who remained in the hall.

At last, at 5:30 in the afternoon, they freed the two Argentinean students Hall and Parussini who, with tears in their eyes, said good bye to those who a short time later would die martyrs. Now we have to mention one name: Faustino Perez. Heroism was evident in him with more forceful signs. Among other things, it was he who wrote the farewell dedicated to the Congregation, a farewell one cannot read without feeling a deep shiver of emotion: *“Beloved Congregation. The day before yesterday, the 11th, six of our brothers died with a generosity befitting martyrs. Today, the 13th, twenty more have won the palm of victory, and tomorrow, the 14th, the remaining twenty-one of us expect to die. Glory to God! Glory to God! And how nobly and heroically your sons have borne themselves, beloved Congregation! We are spending the day encouraging one another and praying for our enemies and for our beloved Institute. When the moment comes to designate the next victims, we all feel a holy serenity and an eagerness to hear our names called, so that we can join the ranks of the chosen. We have been looking forward to this moment with generous impatience. When it came to those already chosen, we have seen some of them kiss the ropes that bound them, while others spoke words of pardon to –the armed mob. As they drove off in the van towards the cemetery, we could hear them shouting, ‘Long live Christ the King!’ while the angry mob answered, ‘Death to him! Death to him!’ –but nothing daunted them. They are your sons, beloved Congregation, these young men, surrounded by pistols and rifles, yet they have the calm courage and daring to cry out ‘Long live Christ the King!’ on their way to the cemetery. Tomorrow the rest of us will go, and we have already chosen the passwords we will shout, even as the shots are being fired: to the Heart of our Mother, to Christ the King, to the Catholic Church, and to you, the common Mother of us all. My comrades tell me that I must begin the ‘Viva’s’ and they will respond. I will shout at the top of my lungs, and in our enthusiastic cries you will be able to discern how much we love you, beloved Congregation, since we will bear the memory of you even into those deep regions of suffering and death.*

We all die happy, with no regrets or misgivings. We all die praying God that the blood that falls from our wounds will not be shed in vengeance, but will rather transfuse your veins and spur your growth and expansion throughout the world. Farewell, beloved Congregation. Your sons, the martyrs of Barbastro, greet you from prison and offer you our sufferings and anguish as a holocaust of expiation for our failings and as a witness to our faithful, generous and everlasting love. The martyrs of tomorrow, the 14th, are fully aware that they die on the eve of the Assumption. And what a special awareness it is! We are dying because we wear the cassock, and we are dying precisely on the same day we were invested in it. The martyrs of Barbastro greet you, as do I, the last and least worthy of their number, Faustino Pérez, CMF. Long life Christ the King! Long live the Heart of Mary! Long live the Congregation! Farewell, beloved Institute. We are going to heaven to pray for you. Farewell, farewell!”

In spite of all threats, the entire 13th and the 14th went by with no incidents. When they were sleeping on the night from the 14th to the 15th of August, a group burst into the hall. All rose as one man. Bro. Raymond, the community cook, was excluded. They embraced each other while they were being bound and beaten. It was night when the 17 young men left the hall-jail. They were singing as they boarded the van. One fell on the van itself, for the blows with the rifle. Positioned by a steep slope, some standing, others kneeling, some with their arms in cross, others with the rosary or a crucifix in their hands, heard the last proposition: *“You are still on time. What do you prefer: to go free to the battlefield or to die? Muffled by the gunshots, the answers were heard: TO DIE! LONG LIVE CHRIST THE KING!”* There was almost absolute quiet. From the

shrine of El Pueyo the blessed Virgin, on her feast day, with infinite tenderness opened her arms and received them in her HEART.

Some simple monuments occupy now the exact places of their martyrdom. Their remains rest in the church of Barbastro, in their new mausoleum. 51 in all. The story of these young men has gone round the world. Their Congregation has taken care of their memory like a treasure. Today finally we can all recognise publicly their holiness. They are “*Beati*,” Blessed. Their feast day is celebrated on August 13.

These were the Pope’s words during the ceremony of their beatification on 25 October 1992: “*It is a whole seminary that generously and courageously face their offering of martyrdom to the Lord... All the testimonies received allow us to assert that these Claretians died because they were Christ’s disciples, because they would not deny their faith or religious vows. Therefore, with the blood they shed they inspire us all to live and die for the word of God we have been called to proclaim. The martyrs of Barbastro, following their founder, St. Anthony Mary Claret, who had also suffered an attempt against his life, experienced the same desire to shed their blood for love of Jesus and Mary, expressed in this frequently sung exclamation: ‘For you, my Queen, to give my blood.’ The same saint drew up a plan of life for his religious: ‘A son of the Immaculate Heart of Mary is a man on fire with love, who spreads its flames wherever he goes. He desires mightily and strives by all means possible to set everyone on fire with God’s love.’*”

These are their names: Philip of Jesus Munárriz, Joseph Amorós, Joseph Badía, John Baixeras, Xavier L. Bandrés, Joseph Blasco, Joseph Brengaret, Raphael Briega, Manuel Buil, Antolín Calvo, Sebastian Calvo, Thomas Capdevila, Stephen Casadeval, Francis Castán, Wenceslao Claris, Eusebio Codina, John Codinach, Peter Cunill, Gregory Chirivas, Antony Dalmau, John Díaz, John Echarri, Louis Escalé, Joseph Falgarona, Joseph Figuro, Peter García, Raymond Illa, Louis Lladó, Hilary Llorente, Manuel Martínez, Louis Masferrer, Michael Masip, Alphonse Miquel, Raymond Novich, Joseph Ormo, Secundino Ortega, Joseph Pavón, Faustino Pérez, Leoncio Pérez, Salvador Pigem, Sebastian Riera, Edward Ripoll, Joseph Ros, Francis Roura, Theodore Ruiz de Larrinaga, John Sánchez, Nicasio Sierra, Alphonse Sorribes, Manuel Torras, Atanasio Viadaurreta and Agustín Viela.

James Girón and 59 Companions, Martyrs of Cervera

On July 21, 1936 the community was composed of 117 missionaries, 51 of them students. At 4:00 in the afternoon the mayor phoned the Superior and ordered him to evacuate the University within one hour. In a few moments the community was transformed. After changing their habit and taking with them only what was indispensable, soon they were all in the buses on their way to Solsona or the boundary. In midway they stopped in the square of Torá. They could not enter Solsona. Soon people began threateningly to surround the buses. They retraced their steps and they reached the Mercedarian convent of San Ramón, in La Manresana. Two days later they obtained their safe-conduct and the individuals were distributed. Before being separated, several students renewed their vows in an atmosphere of deep emotion. By mid-afternoon the five groups were scattered. The most numerous one went to Mas Claret.

Fr. Jové and 14 young men were discovered after two days’ walk. It was 3 o’clock in the morning. The search was thorough and done amid insults and ill treatment. One of the militiamen snatched a crucifix from Fr. Jove’s chest, threw it to the ground and wanted to force him to step on it. “*I’ll rather die*,” was his answer. Toward eight in the morning, bound two by two, they were loaded in a van to be brought to Lé-

rida, but midway they turned round. Before they were shot, they were asked, one by one: “*Do you also want to die for God?*” “*Yes, also,*” they answered one by one. It was two in the afternoon.

Another group stayed in the hospital. On September 2 they were asked to leave the hospital. On the 26th they killed the chaplain. On October 17, at 11:30 in the evening, some militiamen appeared to take them out of the hospital, allegedly to bring them to a sanatorium. They knew they were going to their death. In effect, the van went directly to the cemetery where the shots were heard at first hour in the morning of the 18th. Eleven more martyrs were born to life.

There were too many people in Mas Claret in the month of July. Time went by amidst anxieties, shocks and threats. On the 19th of October, they gathered the community to take a picture. Once there, some armed men entered and invited them to go out. On the way, the priests were giving the absolution. They received the rifle shots kneeling down. Their bodies were burned and for many hours they were seen burning until they were consumed in the blaze of martyrdom.

One of the martyrs of Cervera was Bro. Fernando Saperas, called “*martyr of chastity.*” His biographical sketch appears in another chapter.

Joseph Maria Ruiz Cano, Martyr of Sigüenza

On the night of July 25, 1936, before they abandoned the seminary to disperse, the priests, brothers and postulants gathered in the seminary chapel of Sigüenza. Fr. Joseph Maria Ruiz, prefect of the postulants, eagerly exhorted the young men to trust in divine providence and in the protection of Mary. At the end of the talk, in a burst of fervour, he knelt down saying: “*Lord, if you want a victim, here I am. Choose me. But do not let anything to happen to these innocent ones who have done evil to no one.*” Then they dispersed. Fr. Ruiz took the larger group of about 35 with himself to Guijosa. Later they divided themselves. On the 26th the group of Fr. Ruiz was discovered. On the following day they seized him, brought him to hill Otero de Sigüenza and shot him there. His cause of beatification is only waiting for the date to be decided upon.

Jesus A. Gómez, Thomas Cordero and 13 Companions, Martyrs of Fernán Caballero (Ciudad Real)

On 23 July 1936 the people’s militias took possession of the Claretian seminary of Ciudad Real and at dawn of the 24th they all had to abandon the convent of the Carmelite Sisters where they had taken refuge. They had not yet finished eating that same day when one of the Fathers spoke with the Governor, but he couldn’t get anything of it. A few hours later, a Government delegate appeared ordering them all to remain in the house as prisoners. Four days did they remain there as such. Finally they obtained their safe-conduct to leave Ciudad Real and go to Madrid where they could be better controlled. When they reached the station, a great uproar rose up. Shouts were heard: “*They are priests, don’t let them board the train, kill them....*” The train departed, but when they reached the station of Fernán Caballero, two militiamen gave the order to stop the engines. The 14 students got off the train, they were placed in a row and some 37 shots were heard. Their cause of beatification is only waiting for the date to be decided upon.

Joachim Gelada and 2 Companions, Martyrs of Santander

On July 20, 1936, a formal order was received to evacuate the seminary of Castro Urdiales. Fathers Carrascal and Gelada went to the asylum of the Heart of Jesus. Meanwhile, the seminary was transformed into military quarters, although the Popular Front agreed to let them use part of the building. Bro. Barrio lived there until July 18 when he joined the other two in the Asylum. On October 13, at 11 in the morning, a group of militiamen surrounded the property demanding the immediate surrender of the three missionaries. After an attempt to escape, they were taken prisoners and brought to the convent of Saint Clare, made into a prison. They took them out from there that same night and brought them on the way to Santander, amid insults and blows that the missionaries received with the resignation of martyrs. Soon they stopped and made them get out of the car. At the early hours of October 14 the three corpses were found in Torrelavega and buried as unknown.

Frederick Codina and 10 Companions, Martyrs of Lérida

In the morning of July 21, the entire community was at home, except Bro. Grau. Very early the Masses began behind closed doors. Fr. Superior had to suspend the 8 o'clock Mass in view of the threat to set fire to the building. Quickly he ordered all to remove their habits and to disperse. Bro. John Garriga was caught a few steps away from home and Bro. Bergua could not even get out and was able to hide, which saved his life. They were soon discovered and taken in two groups to be assassinated, some on 25 July and the others on 20 August. Fr. Frederick Codina was interrogated apart, then led to jail on foot, but after a short distance the squad of militiamen that led him separated themselves and a discharge resounded. Fr. Codina fell dead, increasing the number of Claretian martyrs.

Marcelino Alonso and 3 Companions, Martyrs of Valencia

When the revolution broke out in July 1936, in the old kingdom of Valencia only the house of San Vicente, established in the capital of the diocese, remained. On 23 March 1936 the mobs had assaulted and burned the house of Requena. On April 10 the members of the community of Jativa had to abandon their house too. A little later, in the beginning of May, the house of Grao was closed down. For this reason, most of them were gathered in the community of Valencia. On July 27 Fr. Francés, in view of the threats and the burning of churches, fled toward the town of Serra together with Bro. Vélez. Soon he remained alone in that town, where on July 20 he was taken prisoner and confined in the Carthusian monastery of Porta Coeli. On the 21st he was assassinated in Olocau. Frs. Alonso, Gordón and Galipienzo, after many tribulations, were made prisoners in the flat of San Vicente and brought to court from which they emerged convinced that they would be killed. They confessed each other and dedicated themselves to prayer. At midnight they were ordered to get out. Some armed men were waiting for them with a car. Three kilometres from Valencia, away from the road, they got off. Fr. Gordon told them: "*We wholeheartedly forgive you.*" They received the discharge with prayers in their lips. The bullets did not hit Fr. Galipienzo who was able to escape in the night, but a few days later he was apprehended and killed.

Joseph Arner and 14 Companions, Martyrs of Vic

On July 21, 1936, at three in the afternoon, the burning of religious buildings began. Frs. Joseph Arner and Casto Navarro were shot in the night of August 7 to 8. Frs.

Joseph Puigdessens and Julio Aramendía were taken prisoners in the house of the former's sister, brought to the City Hall and from there directly to the place of sacrifice, along the road to Manlleu, where they were shot and finished off. Frs. Codinach, Codina and Casals took refuge in the house of the martyr Mr. Franch, in Mas Vivet. On October 8 some militiamen arrived and, seeing the defence of the family, they waited for other comrades from Vic and then they seized them and brought them to Vic. In the night of the 9th of October they were shot in the township of Malla. Bro. Isidro Costa was taken prisoner in the so-called "*Valle del Hambre*" (Vale of Hunger) because of some labourers who cautioned the Committee of Cervera. He was questioned, condemned to death and immediately executed being shot in the same place of his brothers of Cervera, uttering words of forgiveness for his executioners. Bro. Michael Facerías took refuge in a country house where he was taken prisoner on March 1, 1937. While they were conducting him to Vic, they assassinated him beside the bridge of the Lobo; first they shot him and then flung him down.

On the 20th of July the community of Sallent was dispersed after a laconic warning: "*Get out!*" Successively they apprehended Frs. John Mercer and James Payás and Bros. Mariano Binefa and Marcelino Mur. At four in the morning of the following day, feast of St. James the Apostle, they shot the four of them in the heart, in front of the cemetery. Fr. Payás left a precious written document about his dispositions, entitled "*My last will.*" Fr. Joseph Capdevila, superior, fled to his house near Vic and later went to a country house where he was discovered on September 24. They arrested him and threw him in jail in Vic and the following day they shot him along the road to Manlleu. Fr. John Blanch was assassinated on the 31st of August in the territory of San Pedro del Arquells, between Cervera and Mas Claret.

Cándido Casals and 7 Companions, Martyrs of Barcelona (Gracia-Ripoll)

On July 19, 1936 the members of the community began to be upset because of the news of the burning of churches. At 3:30 in the afternoon bullets began to rain on the house. Fr. Superior ordered them to put on lay suits and disperse. Fr. Cándido Casals was arrested on 27 July. With blows of rifle butts they forced him into a van and he disappeared. The student Adolph Esteban was assassinated on 31 July, behind the St. Paul Hospital. Fr. Thomas Planas, who was staying in a flat with his brother, absolutely refused to deny his condition of priest in his declarations. Fr. Anton Junyent towards the 18th of August he left the house of his sister to look for a way to flee to Argentina where he had been assigned. His body was found in Pedralbes. Fr. Jacinto Blanch was arrested in the residence of Eugene Bofill; what they did to him is not known. Bro. John Capdevila went to lodge in the offices of Coculsa. On July 25 a car full of militiamen arrived at the house, they took him and assassinated him. Fr. Cyril Montaner, after some impressive moments in the house and in the police station, on July 20 he went to a house to lodge there. There he lived those fateful days full of fervour, offering himself to the Lord as a martyr. On November 25 he was taken prisoner and brought to the jail of San Elías from where he left a short time later to receive his martyrdom by the cemetery of Moncada. Fr. Gumersindo Valtierra, superior of the house of Ripoll, when the community dispersed on July 20, took shelter, together with Fr. Blanch, in the house of Mr. Bofill. On the 26th he went away with the intention of going to Sarrió, but he was arrested when he was leaving. Put in a van of militiamen, they brought him out at the alleyway of Julio Antonio, where he was assassinated.

Matthew Casals and 7 Companions, Martyrs of Barcelona (Sabadell)

At dusk of July 19, 1936, the Missionaries of the community went out of the house and lodged at private houses of the town, where they stayed for several days. Early morning of July 25, some militiamen apprehended Fr. Joseph Reixach and shot him in the middle of the street. Father fell seriously wounded. He was taken to the clinic and died there on the afternoon of that same day, offering all his sufferings to Jesus and Mary. During the following days Frs. Matthew Casals, superior, Joseph Puig and Bros. Joseph Clavería, Joseph Cardona, John Rafí and Joseph Solé Maimó, the last one from the community of Cervera, were taken by surprise in the houses where they were hiding. Once in jail, the situation of the prisoners became worse about the beginning of September. About these days, the FAI (Iberian Anarchist Federation) took over the jail, tortured our missionaries forcing into their mouths a mission crucifix and finally assassinating them on September 5 in diverse places. Fr. Casals, together with some lay people, was killed in San Quirico, shouting "*Long live Christ the King!*" moments before being shot. Later on, in autumn of 1936, Fr. John Torrents was arrested in Barcelona, imprisoned in San Elías and assassinated in one of the feigned transfers of prisoners from San Elías to the Model prison.

Frederick Vila and 6 Companions, Martyrs of Tarragona

In Tarragona the burning of religious buildings started on 21 July. The community dispersed. The situation lasted only a few days. Soon some members of the scattered community were apprehended in a vessel, to wit: Fr. Frederick Vila and Bro. Antony Vilamassana. On August 25 Bro. Vilamassana was taken out of the vessel and shot in Valls. Fr. Vila was shot on November 30 along the road to Torredembarra, together with other priests and lay people, for praying the rosary before the corpse of a prisoner in the vessel where they were prisoners. Fr. James Mir was assassinated on July 29. On the way through Mollerusa, Bro. Antony Capdevila was assassinated in Vimbodí on July 23. Bros. Castellá and Andrew Feliú, natives of La Selva del Campo, lodged in their respective houses, from which the Committee of Reus brought them out on October 26, 1936 and assassinated them in that township. Bro. Sebastian Balsells was shot in a similar way.

Other 87 Claretian Martyrs

All in all there are 51 Blessed and 132 Servants of God with their cause of beatification introduced. But there are still 87 other Claretians killed during the civil war in other places of Spain, like Don Benito, Jaén, Madrid, Úbeda, San Vicente de la Barquera, etc. The sum total was 270. In the national zone Fr. Joseph Otano, a Basque nationalist, was also assassinated. Ours was the Congregation with the largest number of martyrs during the civil war. We are not interested at all in emphasising at any moment the attitude of those who put an end to their lives. We only wanted to bring to light the wealth of a Church and a Congregation capable of forming heroes such as these, whose oblivion would be a historical omission.

MODESTO ARNAUS, MARTYR IN CHOCÓ, COLOMBIA (1947)

The 15th of March, 1947 was the eve of the elections in Chocó, a region of the Northern Colombian forest. The Claretian missionaries had assumed, among other responsibilities, that of defending the Indians against economic and political exploitation.

Fr. Modesto Arnaus had observed the movement of the chiefs who were buying the Indians' votes and cheated them because the majority was illiterate. On March 15, Fr. Arnaus saw that one of the chiefs returned from gathering Indians to vote. He was bringing with him 40 so they could cast their vote. The missionary, making use of his title of protector of the Indians as a representative of the central government, reached the river and ordered the Indians to get down to the ground. Joseph Acosta, which was the chief's name, upbraided him: "*And why do you interfere with politics?*" Father answered: "*Sir, I am not dealing with you but with the Indians who are under my protection.*" This said, he made a half turn to go back to the boarding school of which he was the director. A shot was heard and Fr. Arnaus fell to the ground without even a sigh. His last words and his last missionary action had attested to a whole life of self-offering to the cause of the poor.

**RHOEL GALLARDO,
MARTYR IN BASILAN, PHILIPPINES (2000)**

The young Filipino Claretian Fr. Rhoel Gallardo, with hardly six years of priesthood, was assassinated on May 3, 2000 after suffering a true Calvary. He was tortured by his captors who plucked out the nails from his hands and feet. His body was found with three bullets in his back. The Moslem fundamentalists of the Abu Syyaf group assailed the Claret School of Tumahubong, in Basilan island, Southern Philippines, on March 20, 2000, taking as hostages Fr. Rhoel, four teachers and 22 students. After long negotiations between the rebels on one side and the bishop, Fr. Provincial of the Claretians and a Moslem Ulema on the other, they could not come to an agreement: their demands were totally unacceptable.

The Philippine army was forced to attack the rebel camp in the forest in order to rescue the hostages. They found the body of Fr. Rhoel with several bullet wounds and signs of the tortures they had inflicted on him. They also killed three teachers and five children.

In spite of the kidnapping of Fr. Blanco in 1993 and the burning of the Claret School of Tumahubong, as well as many other attempts of the Moslem extremists with bombs against the faithful in Catholic churches, the Claretians still decided to continue their task, knowing that this was a high risk zone.

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CHAPTER IV

CLARETIANS WHO LEFT A TRACE

We present the profile of some of our Claretian Missionaries who left a trace. The criteria we have followed have not been based exclusively on their outstanding virtue, but also on their personal qualities, be they intellectual, artistic, etc., as well as on the important role they played on behalf of the Congregation.

COFOUNDERS OF THE CONGREGATION

Stephen Sala

He was born on 28 May 1812 in a farm that belonged to the parish of Saint Martin of Sescors (Barcelona), distant one hour from Manlleu and three from Vic. In 1828 he began the study of Philosophy in the seminary of Vic and, later on, took up Theology in Cervera. In 1839 he was ordained a priest. In 1843 he met Fr. Claret during the Spiritual Exercises that the latter gave to priests in Gombreny. These Exercises meant a radical change for Fr. Sala. Fr. Benito Vilamitjana, future Archbishop of Tarragona, who shared the room with Fr. Sala, gave testimony of his conversion. From then on, he accompanied Fr. Claret in many of his missions. He was the first person Fr. Claret recruited for the foundation of the Congregation which his brother Bernard was also to join later on. When Fr. Claret went to Cuba as Archbishop, he appointed Fr. Sala his successor as Superior General of the Congregation. He also directed the newly founded Congregation of the Carmelite Sisters of Charity. Fr. Xifré wrote about him: *“he was of regular height and pleasant figure; with a clear voice and good diction. He was well mannered and educated... His modesty was well known: his mere presence was enough to soothe everyone... He was most humble and meek of heart, zealous and, above all, so chaste and pure of heart that we do not hesitate to assert that he never in his life lost his baptismal grace. He was one of the best talents in the then University of Cervera. As a preacher he was among the best reputed of his time in the principality of Catalonia.”* Fr. Claret managed to have him named his successor in the archdiocese of Cuba, but the sickness and death of Fr. Stephen Sala on 18 April 1858 prevented that wish from becoming a reality. He was 45 years old.

Joseph Xifré

Joseph Xifré Mussach was born in a farm in the neighbourhood of Vic (Barcelona) on 18 February 1817. In 1829 he started his ecclesiastical career in this same city. At that time it was not possible for anyone to be ordained priest in Spain because of the civil war situation. As a consequence, Joseph Xifré went to Rome in 1839 and lodged at the convent of Saint Basil. There he providentially met Fr. Claret who had gone there

with the intention of joining the Propagation of the Faith. On 16 February 1840 he was ordained priest and returned to Spain. His apostolic spirit was very similar to Claret's. From a very early stage he felt the desire to devote himself to preaching, leading a poor life and travelling by foot; for several years he followed this style of apostolate. Together with Fr. Claret, he founded the Congregation of Missionaries. He possessed a sharp talent and intelligence, was tall and slender, of dark complexion and bright eyes, quite a character. Beneath an austere appearance he concealed a big, magnanimous heart, imperturbable in dangers, an ardent entrepreneur. After the death of Fr. Stephen Sala, he was designated third Superior General on May 1st, 1858 and held this office until his death. While the Founder was still alive, Fr. Xifré always considered him as the Superior, and maintained with him continuous correspondence; it was he who ordered Fr. Claret to write his Autobiography. Exiled in France after the revolution, he accompanied Fr. Claret during the last days of his life in Fontfroide, gave him the last sacraments and received his religious profession. From then on, his entire life was a continuous dedication to the Congregation, making it grow to its greatest expansion up to the very day of his death, which occurred in 1899 in Cervera.

Manuel Vilaró

Was born in Vic (Barcelona) on 22 September 1816. He was short in stature but of pleasant bearing, kind, cheerful and modest. He was among the first to accompany Fr. Claret in his apostolic works. Because of his outstanding qualities, he was chosen for the foundation of the Congregation. He it was that, upon hearing Fr. Claret's statement, *"Today we start a great work,"* with a humorous smile, retorted: *"What can we do, since we are so young and so few?"* Claret answered, *"You will see. If we are young and few, the more God's power and mercy will shine."* Father Vilaró was also chosen to accompany Fr. Claret when the latter went to Santiago de Cuba as Archbishop. There he worked tirelessly preaching missions, retreats and conferences but, victim of his great zeal, he had to return to Vic in 1852. There, at the request of his family, he stayed in his house and not with the community; he did this perhaps in order not to distract the attention of the missionaries with caring for him, since they were very few. But in his heart he was always with them till his death that occurred a few months later. In his sickness he was always attended by Fr. Clotet in whose arms very likely he died. Due to the last events of his life, Fr. Xifré considered him excluded from the Congregation. The General Chapter of 1922 rehabilitated him and put him again on a level with the rest of the cofounders.

Fr. Claret writes in his Autobiography about Fr. Vilaró (n. 592): *"I made him my secretary and he fulfilled this job very well. Besides acting as my secretary, he also preached and heard confessions frequently. He was well educated, virtuous, zealous and a hard worker. He fell ill and, because the doctors in Cuba could do nothing for him, they ordered him back to Spain, where he died in his hometown of Vic."*

Dominic Fábregas

Was born in Orís (Barcelona) on 10 July 1817. He was rather short, simple and timid, of a somewhat melancholic character, industrious, with a clear and penetrating voice that drew large audiences to his sermons. Like Xifré, and perhaps together with him, he also had to go to Rome and stay at the convent of St. Basil. There for the first time he had contact with the famous "Mosén" Claret, whom very likely he already knew, since he was only two years ahead of him in the seminary. He was ordained

priest in Rome. Back in Spain, he devoted himself to the cure of souls until one day he was called by Msgr. Casadevall who invited him to get in touch with Mosén Claret. On 16 July 1849 he founded the Congregation together with Claret and the other companions. He was general counsellor of the Congregation. He was responsible for the foundation of the house of Segovia in 1861 and dedicated himself to preaching throughout the entire region. He was also tasked with the foundation of Huesca. After several appointments throughout Catalonia, already advanced in years, death caught up with him in Solsona in the year 1895.

Jaime Clotet

He was born in Manresa (Barcelona) on 24 July 1822. He studied Philosophy and Theology in Barcelona, and Moral Theology in Vic. Then he went to Rome where he was ordained priest. Back in Spain, he performed various pastoral duties but soon he realised that the cure of souls was not his vocation. Advised by Dr. Passarell, secretary to the Bishop of Vic, he had an interview with Fr. Claret whom he only knew by hearsay. This happened in June 1849. In July he joined Fr. Claret to found the Congregation. Soon after he took charge of the first Brothers of the Congregation. In 1858 he was designated Subdirector General of the Congregation. In 1870 he accompanied Fr. Claret in his last days in Fontfroide, and later on he wrote a Summary of his Life. In 1888 he stopped being Subdirector General and became Secretary. In 1898 he died in the house of Gracia (Barcelona) with the reputation of holiness. His cause of Beatification has already been introduced in Rome. We end with this brief profile by a biographer: *“well loved and venerated by all, tireless forger of his own Christian and religious perfection; solicitous for the welfare of everyone; he passed by this world leaving behind a delicate scent of sanctity. He had no enemy at all.”*

SUPERIORS GENERAL

Saint Anthony Mary Claret, Founder. (See his biography)

Shortly after the foundation of the Congregation, he was appointed Archbishop of Santiago de Cuba. For this reason he had to leave the responsibility over the Congregation in the hands of one of the cofounders. However, he always continued being the last point of reference for the subsequent Generals. He attended all its Chapters and was concerned for its expansion, economic situation, approval of its Constitutions. At the end, shortly before he died, he explicitly made his profession in the Congregation at the hands of Fr. Joseph Xifré.

Stephen Sala, Cofounder: 1850-1858. (See his life)

He succeeded the Founder of the Institute when the latter had to go to Cuba as Archbishop of Santiago. His main task as Superior General was the consolidation and spiritual formation of the newborn Congregation. He transferred the community from the Seminary to the house of La Merced in Vic. The Congregation's growth was meagre during this stage; it was composed of 12 Priests and three Brothers at the time of his death. The presence of Fr. Founder in Madrid was a relief for him. He died when he had in mind the foundation of the house of Gracia (Barcelona), at a time when he had been appointed Archbishop of Santiago de Cuba.

Joseph Xifré, Cofounder: 1858-1899. (See his biography)

He has been called the second founder of the Congregation. He received it with only one house and 15 members; when he died, there were 70 houses and 1,782 members scattered throughout Europe, Africa and America. The legacy of his teachings still survives in his circulars, meditations and in his book *"Spirit of the Congregation."* During his incumbency as General, the *"Anales de la Congregación"* and the long-lived magazine *"Iris de Paz"* were born. In his farewell to the Congregation before his death he wrote: *"My dear Congregation: I have loved you as much as I could, till the end, and I will not forget you throughout eternity."*

Clement Serrat: 1899-1906

Was born in Gurbs (Barcelona) on 12 January 1832. He joined the Congregation ten years after it was founded. Fr. Claret, speaking with Fr. Xifré, complimented him with these words: *"Xifré, take good care of this young man; he will be a treasure for the Congregation."* During his first years in the Congregation he actively devoted himself to the ministry of the Word. From 1869 on, he was assigned to positions of formation of young novices and professed and to government posts in the study houses of Thuir, Vic, Gracia, Santo Domingo de la Calzada and Cervera. Assigned by Divine Providence to attend to the still young Congregation and to strengthen it with his conscientious organisation, he was present in all the important meetings and government Counsels that were held ever since he joined the Institute. He held first the office of General Consultor, then that of Subdirector General and finally that of Superior General in 1899, as successor to Fr. Xifré. While the latter had inherited the traditions and the energy of the Founder, Fr. Serrat inherited his sensitivity, prudence and love. He directed the Congregation for six years and founded about twenty houses and seminaries, particularly in Africa and Latin-America. At exactly 10 o'clock in the morning of 6 January 1906, a bronchial cold, complicated with self-intoxication and shattering of strength, extinguished his existence in Segovia.

Martin Alsina: 1906-1922

He was born in Manresa on 4 September 1859. As a seminarian he was a serious, hardworking and zealous young man. He entered the Congregation at the end of his first year of theology. He was ordained priest in the year 1883. At an early stage his Superiors entrusted him with the task of formation. As a basis of the spiritual building he demanded from his formandi a great degree of loyalty and truthfulness. Simple, kind, serious and well balanced, he possessed innate leadership qualities. In 1894 he was appointed Superior of the Theology House of Santo Domingo de la Calzada. When Fr. Xifré died in 1899, Fr. Alsina was elected Subdirector General. In 1906, at Fr. Clement Serrat's death, he was elected Superior General in the Chapter of Aranda de Duero. Later he was to be confirmed in this position in 1912 and to remain in it until his death in Zafra on 2 March 1922. He caused the Institute to expand greatly with some thirty foundations, most of them in the two Americas; he also accepted the difficult mission of Chocó. He gave a great impetus to the apostolate of the press through the foundation of publishing houses and important reviews such as *"Ilustración del Clero"* (now *"Misión Abierta"*), *"Tesoro Sacro Musical,"* *"Commentarium pro Religiosis,"* and several oth-

ers in Latin-America. He made special efforts to propagate the veneration to the Immaculate Heart of Mary.

Nicholas García: 1922-1934 and 1937-1949

He was born in Hormicedo (Burgos) on 23 December 1869. He was a postulant in Segovia. He made his first vows in Alagón (Zaragoza) on 16 December 1886. He was ordained priest in Santo Domingo de la Calzada on 13 May 1894. He was elected Superior General in Vic on 11 October 1922 and re-elected to the same office on 4 December 1937. He died in Rome on 24 February 1950. During his two periods as General, a total of 24 years, the Congregation grew by almost a hundred new foundations. He accepted the Vicariate of Darien, the Prelature of Tocantins, the mission of China; he emphasised the teaching charism of the Congregation, shaped its juridical structure, its propaganda and organisational techniques, and instructed its members with remarkable circulars loaded with doctrine. In his time the outstanding magazines "*Palestra Latina*" and "*Vida Religiosa*" came to life.

Philip Maroto: 1934-1937

Was born in Garcillán (Segovia) on 26 May 1875. He entered the Claretian seminary of Segovia as a postulant and began his studies of Humanities, which he concluded in Barbastro. He made his Noviciate in Cervera and, after he finished his studies of Philosophy and Theology, he was ordained Priest in Santo Domingo de la Calzada on 13 May 1900. He was a professor in the University of San Apolinar in Rome. He was an outstanding canon lawyer and wrote one of the most interesting books of his time in his speciality: "*La promulgación del Derecho Canónico.*" His intelligence and his clairvoyance could not be overlooked and his name reached the highest dicasteries of the Roman Curia where his counsel and juridical know-how were insistently sought. He was the promoter and first director of the prestigious canonical magazine "*Commentarium pro Religiosis.*" He was appointed General Procurator in 1912 and Superior General in 1934. In Rome many people knew the Claretians only by the name of "Marotines." Fr. Maroto was always a true religious. His obedience to the Superiors was exemplary. His position as General afforded him bitterness and worries. In Spain his children were being imprisoned and assassinated. Being an indefatigable worker, death caught up with him on 11 July 1937, with the pen in his hand at his work desk.

Peter Schweiger: 1949-1967

He was born on 6 May 1894 in Trasching (Bavaria, Germany). Although he was a German, he was formed in the Claretian seminaries of the province of Catalonia and was ordained priest in 1920. He was a professor in the Roman Seminary and, since 1930, he held important posts in the Claretian communities of Germany. He was elected Superior General in the General Chapter of 1949 and reelected in that of 1961. During his incumbency important works were carried out, such as the International Colleges of Rome (Claretianum) and Salamanca. The great enterprise of the International Votive Temple of the Immaculate Heart of Mary in Rome was completed. Magazines of renown like "*Ephemerides Mariologicae*" were founded. The Congregation was organised in various Visitorships, Viceprovinces and new Provinces. He brought the Congregation into new countries and intensified its traditional ministries, illumined by his motto, "*Ad maiora et amliora.*" He died in Spaichingen on 18 August 1980.

Anthony Leghisa: 1967-1979

Fr. Leghisa was born in Trieste with Yugoslavian nationality, from a Slovene-Austrian family. He made his first studies in the seminaries of the Claretian province of Italy, then he went to Spain to take up Philosophy and Theology in Zafra (Badajoz). Ordained priest in 1945, he taught in the boarding school of Don Benito. At his return to the province of Italy, he took up university studies in the Pontifical Oriental Institute of Rome. He was secretary of the magazine "*Commentarium pro Religiosis.*" During the period 1952-1960, when the communications of the main Yugoslavian Bishops with the Holy See were not easy, due to the Communist system, he was their official representative in the Roman Curia. He was general vice-assistant of the Union of Major Superiors of Italy (U.S.M.I.), director of the review "*ALA*" (Revista delle Religiose), organiser of the first Italian group of the Cordimarian Filiation, founder of the publishing house "*Alma Roma,*" General Postulator of the Causes of Beatification and Canonisation of the Institute and Provincial Superior of Italy. In addition to his vast knowledge in theological and juridical matters, he possessed a wide linguistic culture. The Special General Chapter of 1967 had entrusted him the difficult task of putting into effect the renewal of religious life demanded by the Second Vatican Council. This process was carried out all through Fr. Leghisa's incumbency. During the years that the Congregation was under his leadership, great impulse was given to the missionary work and its expansion by fostering the practice of making the different missions dependent on the Provinces with greater personnel resources. He resigned from the Congregation in 1992.

Gustavo Alonso: 1979-1991

He was born in Santiago Temple, Province of Córdoba (Argentina) in 1931 from a Spanish father and an Argentinean mother. He entered the seminary of Rosario at the age of 11 as a result of Fr. Eduardo Garriga's preaching. He was ordained priest in August of 1955 and was sent to Rome to study spiritual theology at the "*Angelicum,*" where he obtained the doctorate in 1957. He returned to Argentina as a professor of Theology. In 1967 he was appointed General Secretary of the Congregation. He returned to Argentina as Provincial Superior and became President of CICLA (Interprovincial Conference of Claretians of Latin America). He was elected Superior General in 1979 and reelected in 1985. During his incumbency the Congregation acquired a more universal character spreading mainly in Africa and Asia where the number of vocations grew constantly. Also during this period the new Constitutions and Directory were definitively approved and an intensive Revision of Positions in the Congregation took place. Fr. Alonso participated in the Synod of Bishops of 1990 and wrote several circulars, especially one on Formation.

Aquilino Bocos: 1991-2003

He was born in Canillas de Esgueva (Valladolid) in 1938. He entered the Congregation in the seminary of Segovia; was ordained priest in 1963 and subsequently took up higher studies in Psychology and Religious Life. He was professor of Philosophy and Theology, formator of the Lebanese Missionaries (Maronites) and of the Claretian theologians in Salamanca and Madrid. He was also director of the magazine "*Vida Religiosa*" and subdirector and professor of the Institute of Religious Life in Madrid. He wrote several books on religious life, priesthood and Christian education. In

1980 he was elected Provincial Superior of Castile and in 1981 President of FERE (Spanish Federation of Teaching Religious). He was elected General Consultor in 1985, Superior General in 1991 and reelected in 1997.

Josep M^a Abella: 2003-

Born on the 3rd of November 1949 in Lleida (Spain). He made his religious profession on 22nd August 1966. He was sent to Japan as a seminarian and later incardinated in the Delegation of East Asia in 1969. He was ordained a priest on the 12th of July 1975. Apart from his priestly career he studied the Japanese language and culture. There, he lived his first missionary stage. For 6 years he was the coordinator of the Diocesan team for the missionary animation of the Archdiocese of Osaka; he worked in the parish ministry, youth ministry, education and formation of the laity. During his stay in Japan he carried out the following responsibilities: local superior, local bursar, Major Superior of the Delegation of East Asia, novice master, formator of aspirants and postulants. The last 12 years he has been a Consultor general of the Claretian Missionaries and General Prefect of Apostolate. He was also the religious assessor of the Lay Claretian Movement. Elected the Superior General of the Congregation on the 1st of September 2003, he occupies the 12th position among the Superior Generals since the time of the Founder, Saint Anthony Mary Claret.

SELECTION OF PROFILES

Donato Berenguer (+1882), missionary in Chile.

Born in Cedó (Lérida), Spain, he personally knew our Fr. Founder. He was an indefatigable missionary in Segovia and in Chile. He had a strong character, was level-headed and cheerful, and capable of undergoing the greatest sufferings. He carried out the construction of the temple to the Immaculate Heart of Mary in Santiago de Chile; his remains now rest in its presbytery.

Michael Xancó (+1887), a Lay Brother with the reputation of being a saint in Chile.

This saintly brother arrived in Chile with the famous expedition of 1872. Outstanding in him were his deep prayer, his charity and his spirit of sacrifice. He was the personification of the ideal brother. God granted him extraordinary gifts and graces. He died in Curicó in 1887 and his cause has already been introduced in Rome.

Diego Gavín (+1893), an indefatigable missionary.

Fr. Gavín was one of the best missionaries the Congregation had in its beginnings. He made his profession in the hands of our Fr. Founder in 1864. He immediately went with the Founder himself and with the Subdirector General to Segovia and from there he devoted himself for thirty years to preaching throughout Spain. He founded the houses of Barbastro, Calahorra, Pamplona, Alagón and Bilbao and initiated the minor seminaries or schools for postulants.

Paul Vallier (+1895), front line missionary in Chile.

He was born in Huesca in 1833. Six months after he started the noviciate with the Dominicans in 1860, Paul Vallier left the Order to return to the diocesan seminary. In 1864 Fr. Xifré admitted him in the Congregation. During that year of his noviciate he had the privilege of living with our Fr. Founder for three months, during which time he accompanied the Founder in giving Spiritual Exercises to priests. He held several positions in formation and government. He founded the Congregation in Chile, where he had to overcome many difficulties. He was a Visitor and attended two General Chapters. He was loved and respected, and was the soul of that group of genial missionaries who constitute the glory of the Congregation in Chile.

Julian Butrón (+1901), venerated in Portugal.

Born in Rigoitia (Vizcaya) in 1874, he entered the Claretian Congregation at the age of 12. Right after his ordination to the priesthood in 1899, he was sent to Portugal. With great zeal he dedicated himself to the ministry, especially that of hearing confessions and giving popular missions. He died very young, exhausted by fatigue and a sudden illness in 1901. He was buried in Vila Cha de Beira. His body was found intact in 1922. Since then, many people visit his urn where he can be seen, and both believers and unbelievers find great peace.

Mariano Avellana (+1904), a holy missionary in Chile.

He was born in Almodévar (Huesca), Spain, in 1844. In 1868 he was ordained as a diocesan priest on 19 September, the day of the revolt of Cádiz. In 1870 Fr. Avellana joined the Claretian Missionaries in Prades, (France). There he chose his motto: *“either a saint or dead.”* He was never to return to his country. In 1873 he was assigned to Chile. For 30 years he was the apostle of Northern Chile, where he was known as *“the holy Fr. Mariano.”* Nothing stopped his gigantic missionary spirit that reached also hospitals and prisons. Notwithstanding a big open wound in his leg, he never ceased in his apostolic zeal. He received veritable inspirations from God and he had made a resolution always to do what was more perfect. He died in the hospital of Carrizal Alto in 1904, commending himself to the Heart of Mary. The process of his beatification is well advanced.

Eusebio Bofill (+1904), a saintly student.

He was a very virtuous young man who died at the outset of his ecclesiastical career as a professed student of our Congregation; he had made his first vows only five months earlier. His motto was: *“I will rather lose my skin than my vocation or the observance of the most insignificant rule.”* He was humble, kind, self-sacrificing, detached, and had a great devotion to the Blessed Virgin and, above all, to Jesus in the Eucharist.

Manuel Giol (+1909), lay Cordimarian spirituality.

He spent his childhood and young adulthood working in the farm. Right after the revolution of 1868 he was forced to enlist in the Alphonsine ranks. Once he entered the Congregation, Brother Giol stood out as a discreet man, kind, serious in his tasks, intelligent and magnanimous. The secret of his composure lay in his profound spirituality. He experienced inspirations from God, such as the foreknowledge of his impending

death, among others. He is a real teacher in the devotion to the Immaculate Heart of Mary.

Joachim Juanola (+1912), a missionary in Equatorial Guinea and a member of the Academy of Natural Sciences.

In 1884 he was sent to establish a foundation in the island of Annobón. Without a house, rejected by the natives, he was isolated for the first three months, together with his four companions. He bravely defended the Spanish sovereignty over the island by displaying the Spanish flag in the Mission; thus he was able to maintain at a distance the German warship Cyclops that had arrived with the intention of taking over the island. He was the first European to see the king of Moka in Fernando Poo. He wrote a grammar of the Bubi language.

Armengol Coll (+1918), first Bishop of the Congregation.

At age 17 he went to Thuir (France) to enter the noviciate of the Claretian Missionaries. In 1881, at the age of 22, he was ordained priest. At the age of 31 he was designated Apostolic Prefect of Fernando Poo, where he had never been before. Fr. Xifré himself presented him in a circular in 1890. In 1904 Fernando Poo was declared Apostolic Vicariate and Fr. Armengol was designated its first Bishop. Pope Pius X was enchanted with the holiness of this man of God. His enormous work in Guinea did not prevent him from attending several General Chapters of the Congregation. He created the outstanding magazine "*La Guinea Española*." He was a man of great virtue and love for the Congregation.

Aloysius Álvarez (+1918), a saintly Mexican Student.

Born in Mexico, he came in contact with our Claretian missionaries very early in life, though he studied with the Marist Brothers and the Jesuits, and then entered the diocesan seminary where he began to lead a highly spiritual life. When he decided to enter the religious life in our Congregation, he went to Spain together with two other companions. His life was a continuous reference to Saint Aloysius Gonzaga, to whom he was frequently compared. After some years of intense spiritual life, and when the date of his priestly ordination was already at hand, he died of the flu that he contracted while tirelessly attending to his sick brothers in the community. He was 27 years old.

Isaac Burgos (+1920), first Provincial Superior of Castile.

In 1877 he founded the house of Toledo Street in Madrid; but he was, before anything else, an active preacher and soon he left Madrid. He shone above all by his qualities of government: he was the first provincial Superior of Castile (1895) and visited the houses of Brazil. He became Subdirector General of the Congregation in 1912.

Peter Marcer (+1927), a holy Brother.

He died with the reputation of being a saint in Santiago de Chile. He was highly devoted to prayer, zealous for the glory of God, self-sacrificing and faithful in everything. For 47 years he performed his duties as janitor or receptionist in the house of Santiago, in that sordid quarter of Belén. God had granted him the gift of transforming the

reception room into a centre of apostolate. He dedicated himself to the work of preparing many ill-united couples for the legitimisation of their marriage. There were years when he was able to arrange the marriage of more than 500 couples, and never did the number go below 400. He died surrounded by an extraordinary popular reputation of sanctity. The cause of his Beatification has already been introduced in Rome.

Aloysius Iruarrizaga (+1928), a genius in music.

He was born in 1891 in Igorre-Yurre (Vizcaya), Spain. Towards 1904, when he was already in the Claretian seminary, Aloysius began to write music; by the time he was 16 or 17, he already composed several works for several voices. After his ordination to the priesthood in 1916, he was assigned to Madrid as an organist of the Shrine at Buen Suceso. He founded the Higher School of Sacred Music and the magazine "Tesoro Sacro Musical." Starting in 1921 he was able to transcend the Spanish frontiers to give concerts in London, Paris, etc. In 1927 he established the Polyphonic Choir composed of 80 voices, with a presentation in the La Zarzuela Palace, with the attendance of the King and Queen and some ministers. He had no rest until his death. Side by side with him we can place his brothers, also Claretians, John, Gervasio, Francis, Crescencius and Ruperto, all of them musicians.

Antony Mary Pueyo (+1929), a vocation to bishopric.

Ordained to the priesthood in 1886, as early as 1888 he was already doing marvels in the house of Cordoba. From there he exercised a fruitful apostolate for many years, and restored the church of Saint Paul in that city. Appointed General Consultor, he was responsible for several foundations, among which were those of Hayes (England) and Paris (France). When there were talks of making him a bishop in Spain, he was assigned to Bogotá (Colombia) where he arrived in 1912. In 1917 he was designated Bishop of Pasto. He gave himself entirely to his diocese where he built many churches. He was always outstanding in his devotion to the Heart of Mary, the Pope and the Congregation.

Michael Palau (+1929), a saint of the little things.

His name was always surrounded by a reputation of holiness. He led a life of extraordinary modesty and prayer, saturated with special graces. He spent all his life among masonry tools, almost always in Cervera where he died. The cause of his beatification has already been introduced.

Felix A. Cepeda (+1930), a Chilean with charism for government.

He was born in La Serena (Chile) in 1854. He was ordained as a diocesan priest. In 1887, after listening, in a church of the Claretian Missionaries of La Serena, to a sermon on the Heart of Mary, he decided to enter the Congregation. Assigned in Spain, he was designated first Provincial Superior of Catalonia. He was also Visitor and Viceprovincial Superior of Mexico and the United States. When he returned to Spain, in 1920 he was elected General Consultor. He wrote many works and died in 1930, away from his beloved Chile.

Francis Naval (+1930), a learned man and a distinguished archaeologist.

Like his brother Antony, he occupied important posts in the Congregation including that of Subdirector General. However he was known mainly for his vast knowledge and his few but profitable books. It is said that Pope Benedict XV used his "*Sermonario Breve*" for his allocutions. He also published a "*Curso de Teología Ascética y Mística*." He was an institution in the field of archaeology in his time and wrote numerous articles in prestigious magazines. Fruit of his vast knowledge in this field was his book "*Curso de Arqueología y Bellas Artes*" which also acquired great renown.

Mariano Aguilar (+1931), our first great historian.

Of a great intellectual capacity (he already had three doctorates from Rome before his priestly ordination), he wrote the life of Fr. Claret in two volumes. For this work he was praised by Pope Pius X, by Queen Elizabeth II and by Menéndez y Pelayo himself. Shortly after, he was entrusted with the writing of the History of the Congregation. He was assigned to Peru and later on to Chile where he died. He also wrote other biographies such as those of Frs. Crusats, Sala and Clotet.

Fernando Saperas (+1936), martyr of chastity.

He was one of the martyrs of Cervera. He was born in Alió (Tarragona), Spain, in 1905. While he was a shop assistant in a business shop in Barcelona, he entered the Congregation. The revolution of 1936 caught him in Cervera. In August, escaping from the persecution, he took refuge in La Rabassa, a nearby country house. Soon he was arrested as a suspect during a search. When they tried to force him to blaspheme, he reacted: "*I am a religious and I will never do that.*" In view of that confession, they forced him to take off his clothes right there in the vehicle. He resisted all pressures. In Cervera, while they were eating, they tried to get him drunk and paraded him through several brothels. When they saw that they could not break his moral stamina, they tortured him to such extent that the prostitutes themselves had to come to his defence. From there they took him to Tárrega. At dawn of the 13th they conducted him to the cemetery. Facing his assassins he asked permission to speak and he said: "*Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they do.*" Shots were fired and finally he gave his life for his faith.

Jesus Aníbal (+1936), a Colombian martyr.

He was born in Tarso, Colombia, in 1914. He entered the Claretian seminary at a very tender age, and made his first vows in 1929. He was suffering from an acute sinusitis that he bore with admirable patience. In 1935, together with 27 other seminarians, he left for Spain to finish his priestly career. He studied in Santo Domingo and Segovia, and ended up in Zafra for reasons of health. Forced by threats, he had to leave Zafra in May 1936, on his way to Seville and Ciudad Real. Not far from there, in the railway station of Fernán Caballero, on the way to Madrid, he met his death together with his 13 companions. He was the only non-Spaniard among the 273 Claretian martyrs of the civil war.

John Buxó (+1936), physician and martyr.

He was born in Moncada, Spain. In 1895 he began his career in Medicine in Barcelona. In 1905 he obtained the degree of Licentiate and started his practice. In 1914 he entered the Congregation in Cervera. After his ordination to the priesthood, he practised as professor in the university of Cervera; later on he took up teachers' training. He was always an exemplary man. The 1936 revolution caught him in Cervera. For three months he practised in the hospital serving the sick and during one month he even took care of the person who was to be his own assassin. He was shot, together with ten other missionaries shouting, "*Long live Christ the King!*" with cross-shaped arms.

Julian Collell (+1937), founder of the Missionary Sisters of the Heart of Mary.

Early in his missionary life he was assigned to Mexico, where he devoted himself to popular missions. In the Carranza revolution he was imprisoned and exiled to USA. He returned to Mexico, ready to promote the "*good press*." He was assigned to Puebla where Miss Carmen Serrano collaborated with him in the work of catechesis and practice of charity. In 1913 she proposed to him the idea of founding a Missionary Congregation that would dedicate itself to the teaching of Catechism to native children and peasant people. After going through many difficulties she was able to establish the Congregation in 1921, and gave it the name of Cordimarian Missionary Sisters.

Antony Naval (+1939), great master of asceticism and a man of government.

He was more renowned than his brother Francis and excelled in many aspects, but especially for his virtue and prudence. Like him, he was also General Consultor of the Congregation. He was an accomplished teacher in spiritual direction.

Manuel Sierra (+1943), a noteworthy musician in Peru.

He was assigned in Peru where he arrived in 1930. He had completed his studies of Gregorian chant with the Benedictines and the other branches of music under renowned masters in Barcelona. He founded the magazine "*Tesoro Sacro Musical*" and created the Claret Choral Group. He wrote a large amount of musical compositions.

Damian Janáriz (+1947), an apostle of La Ribera (Burgos), Spain.

He was born in Miranda de Arga (Navarre), Spain, in 1870 and entered the Claretian seminary at the age of 12. All his life he enjoyed an excellent health. He was ordained priest in 1894 and was assigned to Chile where he devoted himself to the ministry among the common people and to the development of Marian devotion. Back in Spain in 1898, he established the *Visita Domiciliaria*, or *home visitation of the Lady's image*. In 1904 he arrived in Aranda de Duero where he was to carry out an indefatigable activity all throughout the La Ribera zone. He created a great number of associations and led innumerable vocations to religious life. His biography and photo, as well as those of Frs. John Postíus and Narciso Domínguez, may be seen in the ESPASA Dictionary.

John Postíus (+1952), an eminent canon lawyer.

He obtained the doctorate in both laws in Rome in 1903 and held that chair in Santo Domingo de la Calzada. His main activity however was carried out in Madrid,

where he founded the magazine “*Ilustración del Clero*” and was director of “*Iris de Paz*.” He promoted International Marian Congresses, and in 1911 he was appointed by Cardinal Aguirre Secretary of the International Congress of Madrid. He became Subdirector General of the Congregation, General Procurator and Postulator of the Cause of our Fr. Founder. He was in charge of the security of the Claretians during the Spanish Civil War, and he himself was imprisoned. He piously died in Solsona. We can find a summary of his life in the ESPASA Encyclopedia.

Joseph Fogued (+1954), first Apostolic Prefect of Tunki (China).

He was born in Ojos Negros (Teruel), Spain in 1885. He had a precarious health and did not especially shine during his studies. After his ordination to the priesthood in 1912 he was assigned as prefect of postulants and of students. In 1929 he was appointed seminary Rector in Kaiffeng (China), where he arrived in October of the same year, together with Fr. Anastasius Rojas. In 1933, after going through a profound loneliness because of the departure of Fr. Rojas, he was sent to the mission of Hweichowfu and, shortly later, to Tunki, which was erected independent Prefecture in 1937 with Fr. Fogued as first Prefect. There he experienced the war with Japan, World War II and the Communist revolution. After unbelievable sufferings and vicissitudes, he was expelled from China in 1952. Back in Spain, he died in the house of Gracia in 1954.

Joachim M^a Sialo (+1957), the first Claretian coloured African.

He was born in the island of Bioko, Fernando Poo in 1899. He studied in our schools and at an early stage he manifested his inclination to the priesthood and went to prepare himself in Banapá, the Canary Islands and Barcelona. He studied for the teaching profession and returned to Guinea. Finally he reached the priesthood in 1929. He was the first Guinean priest. At age 32 he entered the Claretian noviciate in Jerez de los Caballeros. Back in his homeland, he devoted himself to missionary life as an excellent catechist. He wrote in several magazines, especially in “*La Guinea Española*” and ended his taxing life with the reputation of being a saintly religious.

Isaac Retes (+1959), an artist at heart.

He was gained for the Congregation by Fr. Gavín. He was not ordained to the priesthood until 1930, or 36 years after his profession and after many years of teaching Natural Sciences. After his ordination, he intensely dedicated himself to preaching. But above anything else, he was an artist and, as an artist, he stood out together with Fr. Martin Roure. His favourite inclination was painting. He was a disciple of Manuel González in Seville and painted a great many works about the Congregation.

John M. Gorricho (+1960), a legend of charity.

A man of great activity and accurate discernment. He was made a prisoner of the republicans at the outset of the Spanish Civil War in 1936. In the jail of Porlier—a Calasanz college in Guzmán el Bueno Street, in Madrid—he became the protagonist of an event that took place there, and was described in the daily “*Ya*” by Javier Martín Artajo. When a lieutenant colonel with nine children was called to be executed, Fr. Gorricho offered himself in his place. He was not accepted by the chief of the militiamen and was sent back to the prisoners’ cells. However, as a result of that gesture, the lieutenant

colonel was pardoned. Shortly after that, the rest of the prisoners ended their days in the common grave of Paracuellos. He promoted the devotion to the Heart of Mary and published several books on that theme.

Siervo Goyeneche (+1964), a famous jurist and mitred Abbot of Santiago of the Spaniards of Naples.

Immediately after his ordination to the priesthood in the Claretian Congregation, he was sent to Rome where he received a degree in both laws in 1918 and, two years later, he was nominated professor of the *Anselmianum*. His entire career was a continuous ascent in the Roman cathedrae. Together with Frs. Maroto and Larraona, he founded the magazine "*Commentarium pro Religiosis*." He was a prolific writer and a much-consulted man in the Roman institutions. He was Consultor of four Sacred Congregations and was invited as an expert to the Vatican II Council. He received noteworthy awards. Among his virtues we should note his equilibrium and his kindness, coupled with a great affability.

Dominic Massieu (+1965), a Canarian politician and journalist.

He was born in Las Palmas, Canary Islands, in 1898, studied Law in Madrid, quit his practice to dedicate himself to politics: he successfully led the electoral campaign for the Monarchist Representatives and became deputy mayor of Las Palmas. In 1943 he became a journalist and founded the journal "*Hoy*." At age 48 he entered the novitiate of the Congregation, and was outstanding for his prayer, sacrifice and humility.

Aloysius I. Andrade (+1966), minister, ambassador and candidate to the Presidency of Colombia.

He was born in Altamira (Colombia) in the year 1894. Around the age of 20 he went right into the political life of his country. As early as 1919 he was a member of the Parliament. Later on he became Ambassador to the Holy See, Minister and even candidate to the Presidency of the Republic. When his wife died, he asked to be admitted in the Congregation, leaving behind children and numerous grandchildren. He was 64. In 1959 he was ordained in Rome. As a learned man he was enthralling, but his simplicity as a religious was obvious. Back in his country, he never again participated in politics, but dedicated himself to social promotion and the priestly ministry.

Angel Cantons (+1967), a reference in Italy.

He was born in Mollerusa (Lérida), Spain in 1895 and entered the Congregation at the age of 12. His dream was to go to the Missions but he was assigned to Italy. He was a missionary, an artist and a saint. He left behind many spiritual writings. He had a real passion for the Eucharist. He died in Palermo, and the cause of his beatification has already been introduced.

Abel Antezana (+1968), first Archbishop of La Paz (Bolivia).

Born in Taranta (Bolivia), he made his vows in the Congregation in 1911 when he was already a priest. Not long before, the Claretians had arrived in Cochabamba to

take charge of the seminary where Fr. Abel was teaching. Once the Claretians had established themselves in Oruro after numerous difficulties, in 1919 Fr. Abel tirelessly devoted himself to missionary work. Then in 1924 he was appointed Bishop of Oruro at the same time that Fr. Raymond Font was appointed Bishop of Tarija. He gave a great impulse to the Missionary Crusader Sisters of the Church. In 1939 he was appointed Bishop of La Paz and later on, in 1924, Archbishop. He became President of the Episcopal Conference and one of the Fathers of the Second Vatican Council. He was a great defender of the rights of his people and he professed a profound love for the Church and the Congregation.

Christopher Fernández (+1969), our great historian and biographer of our Fr. Founder.

After receiving his licentiate in classics in Madrid, he went to Santo Domingo de la Calzada as professor. Soon after, he was entrusted with the writing of the life of the then Blessed Fr. Claret and the History of the Congregation which was without any doubt the master work of his life and a continuous reference for any Claretian desiring to know our past.

Arcadius M^a Larraona (+1973), illustrious jurist and first Cardinal of the Congregation.

Born in Navarre, Spain, he entered the Claretian seminary in Alagón (Zaragoza) in 1900 and was ordained a priest in 1911. Immediately he was assigned to Rome where he studied law in El Apolinar college. He was a Consultor of the Italian Province and of the Congregation. In 1929 he began to climb in the Sacred Roman Congregations and in 1950 was appointed Secretary of the Congregation for Religious. In 1959 he was made Cardinal and in 1962 Prefect of the Sacred Congregation of Rites. On that same year he was consecrated bishop. He presided over the Liturgical Commission of the Vatican II Council. In 1968 he resigned from his position as Prefect and was appointed camerlengo of the Sacred College of Cardinals. He received numerous awards and distinctions.

Arthur Tabera (+1975), first Bishop of Albacete and Cardinal.

Born in Barco de Avila, Spain, he was soon influenced by a Claretian uncle who brought him to the seminary of Segovia. He was ordained to the priesthood in Rome in 1928. He formed a formidable team of jurists together with Maroto, Larraona and Goyeneche. Back in Spain he became the subdirector of "*Ilustración del Clero*" and founder of "*Vida Religiosa*." In 1946 he was appointed titular Bishop of Lirbe and Apostolic Administrator of Barbastro and in 1950 he became first Bishop of Albacete. From there he moved to Pamplona as Archbishop. He took part in Vatican II Council and in 1969 he was made a Cardinal. In 1971 he was appointed Prefect of the Sacred Congregation for Divine Worship and, in 1973, of the Congregation for Religious. He was a great protector of the Cordimarian Filiation and obtained for it the approval as a Secular Institute. He always kept alive his Claretian identity and his love for the Heart of Mary.

Joseph de Matos (+1976), missionary bishop in Brazil.

He was born in Taiuva (Brazil) in 1918 and was ordained priest in 1945. He devoted himself first to formation and later on to parochial work. He became Episcopal

Vicar of São Paulo and later on first Bishop of the new diocese of Barreto. During the three years and two months of his episcopacy he earned for himself the love of his people, integrated the laity, in whose formation he put special efforts, as well as in the care of religious women. Death caught up with him unexpectedly and, at the end of his life, he showed signs of a great Christian spirit and a refined love for the Congregation.

Aloysius Pujol (+1976), founder of the Missionary Sisters of the Claretian Institute.

Born in Taradell (Barcelona), Spain, he entered the Congregation at the age of 12 and was ordained to the priesthood in Rome in the year 1927. On May 25, 1951 he founded the Congregation of Missionary Sisters of the Claretian Institute in Vic, with the help of Mother Mary Dolores Solá.

Alfonso Milagro (+1981), an apostle of the pen in Argentina.

Born in Añatuya (Argentina) in 1915, he was one of the first Argentines to enter into the Congregation. During his life, he promoted mainly two apostolates: the preaching of the Word and the apostolate of the pen. He published a great amount of books and booklets, and was the promoter of the Claretian publishing house of Buenos Aires. He also devoted himself to the other social communication media like radio and television. He greatly promoted the devotion to Mary.

Gerard Escudero (+1981), eminent master in canon law.

He was a great scholar of Law. He became a Consultor of the Congregation for Religious. In 1960 he took over as director of CLAUNE, giving his full time to helping the enclosed orders. He also was cofounder of the magazines "*Commentarium*," "*vida Religiosa*" and "*Claune*." He published a great number of books on religious life and law.

Felix Juaton (+1981), a Philippine promise nipped in the bud.

Born in Ayala, near Zamboanga in Southern Philippines, in 1954, as early as 1971 he was already a student in the Claretian seminary. Soon his missionary spirit begins to bear fruit and he converted five Moslems to the Christian faith. In 1979 his life was about to take a turn when he was elected to participate as a student in the General Chapter in Rome. From there he went on to Spain to finish his studies, and there he made his perpetual vows. In full process of spiritual maturation, while he was preparing his ordination to the diaconate and his return to the Philippines in 1981, he encountered his death in a highway near Colmenar Viejo.

Joseph M^a Torres (+1982), a physician in the Philippines by popular acclamation.

Born in 1910 in Miralcamp (Lérida), Spain, Bro. Torres entered the Congregation in 1921 and made his profession in 1927. In 1937 he embarked with the third Claretian expedition to China where he soon created a dispensary. At that time China was at war with Japan and all over there was famine and death. In 1946 the communist revolt broke out. On November 1, 1952 he left China on his way to the Philippines. From then on, he developed an indefatigable activity in the island of Basilan. He suf-

ferred great persecutions. In 1977 they even burned his hospital. A new hospital was his last gift to the Philippines shortly before his death that occurred in 1982.

Gerald Fernandes (+1982), Archbishop and Founder of the Missionary Sisters of St. Anthony Mary Claret.

He was born in Brazil in 1913. He joined the Claretian Missionaries and was ordained to the priesthood in Rome, in 1936. He returned to Brazil where he became a professor and Provincial Consultor. In 1957 he was designated Bishop of Londrina (Brazil) and later promoted to Archbishop. Together with Leonia Milito he founded in 1958 the Congregation of Missionary Sisters of St. Anthony Mary Claret, whose aim was to collaborate with the Church in the expansion of the Reign of Christ. He also held the position of Vice-President of the National Bishops' Conference of Brazil.

Augustus Andrew Ortega (+1983), our glory in Philosophy.

He was born in Villavedón (Burgos), Spain, in 1904, professed in 1922 and was ordained to the priesthood in 1929. He received the degree of Doctor in Philosophy in the Roman universities, with his doctoral thesis on the analogy of being. He taught in various ecclesiastical centres: Sigüenza, Zafra, Burgos, Granada, Seville, Salamanca (all in Spain) and in Rome. He was a professor and a member of the Institute of Political Studies and organised seminaries in the Menéndez Pelayo University. He found it difficult to write, and therefore he left a scarce literary production. He was a friend of Eugene d'Ors, Zubiri, Conde, Ridruejo, Laín Entralgo, Sopeña, Aranguren, Valverde, Panero... and other eminent Spanish philosophers.

Joao de Freitas Alves (+1984), Apostolic Administrator of São Tomé.

Fr. Alves was born in the island of Madeira (Portugal) in 1930. After he had been Provincial Superior of Portugal, he voluntarily offered himself for the mission of São Tomé and Príncipe where he went in 1980 and soon after his arrival he was appointed Apostolic Administrator of the mission. All throughout his life he was a model of a Claretian missionary, and he always radiated human warmth, congeniality, openness of mind and heart and a very fine sense of humour. His missionary work in São Tomé was short-lived but very fruitful.

Javier Ochoa (+1989), a well-known jurist.

Born in Santo Domingo de la Calzada, Spain, Fr. Ochoa was ordained a priest in Paris in 1947. In 1954 he obtained the degree of Doctor in both Laws by the Lateran University in Rome. Later on he became a professor of the same and other universities. He held important posts in the Roman Curia, such as Judicial Vicar of the Vatican City. He was personally consulted by the Pope on the new Code of Canon Law and published books of considerable importance. He also held the position of Postulator of the Causes of Canonisation of the Claretian Congregation.

Jesus Erice (+1990), a life dedicated to the service of the Cuna Indian people.

Fr. Erice arrived to the islands of San Blas (Panama) in 1940. His body now rests in one of those islands, as if it were that of a native Sahila. He developed an in-

credible missionary activity, founding new houses and building churches. At times, he went to the extent of extracting coral rocks from the bottom of the Caribbean Sea with a simple crowbar, in order to reclaim the sea and build there his missionary centres. He baptised the Nele Kantule, the chief of the region and wrote a grammar and a dictionary of the Cuna language. He elicited some priestly and religious vocations from among the natives and was the first non-Cuna to be buried with the exclusive songs of their dead and side by side with a Sahila who had given his life in defence of a Catholic Missionary.

Raphael M. Nzé (+1991), first Archbishop of Malabo (Equatorial Guinea).

He was born in Bata (Equatorial Guinea). At an early age he entered our seminary and was ordained a priest in Santo Domingo de la Calzada in 1954. He was the second Guinean priest of the Congregation. After teaching in Guinea and Spain, in 1965 he was appointed Apostolic Vicar of Río Muni, which later became the Diocese of Bata. He was the first coloured bishop of the Congregation. Due to the persecution of the dictator Macias, he had to abandon his office in 1974. When the country returned to normalcy, he was restored to his position and in 1982 he was made first Archbishop of Malabo. That year he took charge of the reception of Pope John Paul II in his visit to Equatorial Guinea.

Francis Dirnberger (+1993), the Father of the Congregation in India.

He was born in 1916 in a little German town called Flischberg of Bavaria. He was the 13th child of a peasant family. In the religious atmosphere of his family, his desire to become a priest sprang at an early age. He first entered the diocesan seminary of Regensburg, but he left it for reasons of health. In 1938 he entered the Claretian novitiate. He took part in the World War, after which he was ordained to the priesthood. After holding some posts as formator, he was appointed Provincial Superior. He planned the foundation in India, and later on he offered himself to go there. Thanks to him the Congregation developed there extraordinarily, and he himself was the promoter of many foundations. He liked to be called "*Thatha*," grandfather. He died in India and was buried, as was his wish, in the garden of the house of Karumathur.

Thomas Louis Pujadas (1994), a versatile Catalanian.

He was born in 1904 in Sabadell (Barcelona), Spain. He excelled as a writer of numerous works and as a prolific musician and composer. He was a teacher and professor, director of youth and of magazines; he founded the Federation of Friends of the Cinema and was a missionary in Equatorial Guinea and in Darien.

Alcides Fernández (+1995), the Colombian Pilot.

He was a Colombian Missionary in Chocó for many years. He arrived there in a small monoplane using his pilot's license for the first time. He designed elementary airports along the banks of River Atrato and built villages for settlers of the interior, in the rich zone of the Chocoan Urabá. He came unharmed out of two accidents, one of which wrecked his small plane.

Marcelino Cabreros (+1995), an extraordinary jurist.

He was born in Cerecinos de Campos (Zamora), Spain in 1901. He received his formation in Segovia, Beire and Santo Domingo, all in Spain. In 1924 he went to Rome where he specialised in Law. He taught in our seminaries and in the Pontifical University of Salamanca, where he became Dean. His life was totally dedicated to teaching and he has enjoyed international renown as a professor. One of the awards he received was the Commendation with a plaque of the Civil Order of Alfonso X the Wise. He published many works that were widely circulated.

Alfonso Sánchez (+1997), Colombian bishop.

Born in Bogotá (Colombia) in 1913, he was ordained a Claretian priest in 1937. For many years he was a formator of young Claretian seminarians. He also excelled as a musician. He was the first native Colombian to become Provincial Superior. He coordinated religious life in Colombia and in 1969 was appointed Bishop of Alto Sinú.

Joseph M^a Querexeta (+1997), a Prelate in the Philippines.

He was born in Urrestilla (Guipúzcoa), Spain, in 1921. From the tender age of 8 he felt an irresistible vocation towards the missions. In 1948 he was assigned to China, from where he was expelled in 1951. From then on he developed his missionary activity in the Philippines and took charge of the foundation of the house of Quezon City. In 1964 he was appointed bishop of the newly created Prelature of Isabela in the Basilan island. He was outstanding in his dialogue with the Moslems and in the defence of human rights.

George Nedumpalakunnel (+ 2007), Pushed for the congregation in India.

Born in 1943 in Palai, India. Answering to his Claretian vocation he left for Germany where he studied philosophy and went to the novitiate making his first religious vows in 1964. He studied theology in the Claretianum, Rome where he got his Licentiate in Spiritual Theology in the Gregorian University. He was ordained priest in 1974. Returning to India he was elected the Delegate of this Organism after Father Dimberger in 1982. And in 1984 he was named the first Major Superior of the Province of India. In 1991 he was elected a General Consultor of the Congregation. When he finished his term he returned to India where he lived his last years sick in Kuravilangad, then Province of Saint Thomas. He was a man of clear vision with strong sense of purpose, sacrifice and austere.

Antonio San Cristóbal (+ 2008), great erudite of art in Peru.

Born in Segovia in 1923 and ordained a priest in Santo Domingo de la Calzada in 1947. After many years of teaching in Spain he was sent to Argentina as a professor of those in formation in Cordoba. In 1952 he moved to Lima, Peru, where he immediately became a professor in the Catholic University. He founded the Universities of Ricardo Palma and Mary Immaculate in Lima. As a professor he was outstanding in Arts and painted architecture. He was a professor in various faculties until his death. He wrote many books on the theme, of which he was the greatest in the country. He was the Head of Department of various History Academies.

Domingo Moraleda (+2008), great missionary in the Philippines.

He came from Los Yébenes, Toledo, Spain. He was ordained priest in 1967 in Rome. He began his missionary task in Equatorial Guinea becoming sometime the Provincial Superior. Expelled from Equatorial Guinea by the dictator, Macias, he was destined to the Philippines where he was also named the Provincial promoting the foundation of the Congregation in Korea, Australia and Indonesia. In 1998 he moved for the foundation of ICLA (Institute for Consecrated Life in Asia). He died in traffic accident. He was always a man of great and worthy initiative.

PROPER NOUNS

Francis Berenguer (+1886), pioneer in Chile.
Francis Vilajosana (+1887), saint inured to suffering.
Raymond Genover (+1927), prestigious apostle.
John Iruarrízaga (+1936), musician and martyr.
Joseph Puigdessens (+1936), illustrious writer and martyr.
Julius Aramendía (+1936), expert in mystical theology and martyr.
Peter Mardones (+1937), student most faithful in virtue.
Peter Guevara (+1941), virtuous superior.
Paul Medina (+1943), apostle of great qualities and virtue.
Joseph Dueso (+1943), apostle of the press.
Ezekiel Villarroya (+1945), a man of leadership.
Raymond Ribera (+1949), writer and spiritual guide.
Aurelius Calero (+1955), companion of the cross.
James Tort (+1955), promoter of faith in the USA.
Antonio Soteras (+1957), model superior.
Francis Onetti (+1958), tireless missionary of Chocó.
Anastacio Vazquez (+1958), a Claretian reference in Brazil.
Eulogio Nebreda (+1959), theologian with great personality.
Julian Munárriz (+1962), a man with leadership qualities.
Paul Juvillá (+1963), missionary in Colombia and writer.
John Agustí (+1965), formator of generations of students and great counsellor.
Angel de M^a Canals (+1967), great missionary and writer.
Cándido Bajo (+1969), scholarly man of leadership.
Gregory Martínez de Antoñana (+1970), famous liturgist.
Dictino de la Parte (+1971), in-charge of the Pontifical Mission Works in Brazil.
Toribio Pérez (+1972), renowned for his virtue.
Joseph de Sojo (+1977), inventor.
Antonio Peinador (+1978), master in moral theology.
Joachim M^a Alonso (+1981), prolific theologian, expert in Mariology.
Thomas de Manzárrega (+1988), musician and genial maestro.
Charles E. Mesa (+1989), tireless Colombian writer.
Narciso García Garcés (+1989), renowned Mariologist.
Francis Juberías (+1991), formator and spiritual director.
Luke Gutiérrez (+1991), theologian renewer of religious life.
Timothy de Urkiri (+1993), a Basque Claretian.
Jesus Hernández (+1995), an exemplary Lay Brother.
Hilarius Apodaca (+1995), above all, a promoter of the Heart of Mary.
Peter de Grandis (+1997), great missionary in Japan.
Anastasius Gutiérrez (+1998), excellent roman jurist.
Joseph M^a Mir (+2000), distinguished Latinist.
Eutiquian García (+2000), congregational memory.
Joseph M^a Gil (+2000), expert on Claret.
Gabriel Martínez (+2001), colombian historian.
Joseph Penalva (+2002), brasilian musician.
Edward F. Cisterna (+2005), prestigious argentinian biblicist.
Joseph Adä (+2006), pioneer on Congo missions.
Gabriel Campo (+2007), biographer of the Martyrs of Barbastro.
Ignatius Ying Pong Lee (+2008), great panamanian jurist with Chinese origins.

DECEASED CLARETIAN PRELATES

Anthony Mary Claret (+1870), Archbishop of Santiago de Cuba (1850), Titular Archbishop of Trajanópolis (1860).

Ciriaco Ramírez (+1888), first Apostolic Prefect of Fernando Póo, Equatorial Guinea (1888).

Peter Vall-Llovera (+1890), Apostolic Prefect of Fernando Póo, Equatorial Guinea (1888).

John Gil (+1912), first Apostolic Prefect of Chocó, Colombia (1890).

Armengol Coll (+1918), Apostolic Prefect of Fernando Póo, Equatorial Guinea (1890), first Apostolic Vicar of Fernando Póo and Titular Bishop of Thignica in Numidia (1904).

Anthony Mary Pueyo del Val (+1929), Bishop of Pasto, Colombia (1917).

Francis Ozamiz (+1929), first Prelate of San José de Tocantins, Brazil (1926).

Nicholas González (+1935), Apostolic Vicar of Fernando Póo, Equatorial Guinea (1918).

Florentino Simón (+1935), Prelate of San José de Tocantins, Brazil (1931).

Francis Gutiérrez (+1941), Apostolic Prefect of Chocó, Colombia (1912).

John Joseph Maíztegui (+1943), first Apostolic Vicar of Darien, Panama (1926), second Archbishop of Panama (1933).

Raymond Mary Font (+1947), first Bishop of Tarija, Bolivia (1925).

Francis Sanz (+1953), Apostolic Prefect of Chocó, Colombia (1931).

Joseph Fogued (+1954), Apostolic Prefect of Tunki, China (1937).

Leoncio Fernández (+1957), Apostolic Vicar of Fernando Póo, Equatorial Guinea (1935).

Joseph Mary Preciado (+1963), Apostolic Vicar of Darien, Panama (1934).

Abel Antezana (+1968), first Bishop of Oruro, Bolivia (1925), Bishop of La Paz (1939) and first Archbishop of La Paz (1943).

Arcadius Mary Larraona (+1973), Secretary of the Sacred Congregation of Religious (1950), Cardinal (1959). Titular Archbishop (1962).

Arturo Tabera (+1975), Apostolic Administrator of Barbastro (1946), first Bishop of Albacete (1950), Archbishop of Pamplona (1968). Cardinal (1969).

Joseph de Matos (+1976), first Bishop of Barretos, Brazil (1973).

Francis Gómez (+1979), Apostolic Vicar of Fernando Póo, Equatorial Guinea (1957), first Bishop of Santa Isabel (1966).

Geraldo Fernandez (+1982), first Bishop of Londrina (1956), first Archbishop of Londrina (1970).

Joao de Freitas Alves (+1984), Apostolic Administrator of São Tomé y Príncipe (1980).

Raphael Mary Nze (+1991), First Apostolic Vicar of Río Muni, Equatorial Guinea (1965), Bishop of Bata (1966), Archbishop of Malabo (1982).

Joseph Mary Márquez (+1995), Prelate of Humahuaca (1973).

Francis Prada (+1995), Prelate of San José de Tocantins, Brazil (1946), Bishop of Uruazú (1957).

Alfonso Sánchez (+1997), Prelate of Alto Sinú, Colombia (1969).

Jesus Serrano (+1997), Apostolic Vicar of Darién, Panama (1956).

Joseph Mary Querexeta (+1997), Prelate of Isabela, Philippines (1963).

Peter Grau (+2002). First Apostolic Vicar of Quibdó, Colombia (1953).

Marc Zuloaga (+2002). Apostolic Vicar of Darien, Panama (1976).

Alfred Oburu (+2006), Bishop of Ebibeyin, Equatorial Guinea.

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CHAPTER V

CLARETIAN MISSIONS

CLARETIAN MISSIONS IN AFRICA

ANGOLA

Luanda (Founded in 1992) Province of Portugal.

The Bishop of Luso offered in 1969 to the Claretian missionaries a vast sector of his diocese and the Portuguese province accepted the call. The zone was an authentic mosaic of tribes: Quiocos, Quimbumbos, Luenas... Some of them with very difficult languages and quite ancestral customs. Not infrequently there were faith groups that walked as much as 60 km. by foot in order to attend the Sunday Mass. The guerrilla climate was something habitual. In 1974 the mission of Tchamutete was established. The increase of violence, however, ended up with the expulsion of the missionaries in 1977.

In 1992 the Portuguese missionaries returned to Angola, but this time they went to Corimba, in the outskirts of Luanda, where the Congregation started in the midst of great difficulties, due to the effects of war. The missionaries had to attend also to the refugees. The missionary consolidation seems to grow rapidly and full of hope.

Lubango (Founded in 1997) Province of Portugal

This is a new foundation whose aim is to attend to a vast pastoral zone –around 100,000 people, many of which are war refugees—and to collaborate in the formation of native Angolan candidates to the consecrated life. The Claretian team takes care of the parish of the Immaculate Conception, in the outskirts of the city of Lubango.

CAMEROON

Akono (Founded in 1970) Delegation of Central Africa.

When the Archbishop of Yaoundé, Msgr. Zoa, explained to the Claretian Congregation the needs of a vast sector of his diocese, the province of Canada responded accepting the responsibility.

Although the official languages are French and English, it is necessary to know the native language in order to reach the people. There are several mission centres from which the missionaries must distribute the work throughout an area of 860 km². The centres are Akono, Abang-Mindi and Nkol-Bisson. The people are poor but not miserable. They live in a subsistence economy. Almost all of the 15,000 inhabitants that compose our mission are already Catholic, thanks to the previous work of the Missionaries of the Holy Spirit. Therefore the work to be done is not always that of implanting Chris-

tianity, but rather of cultivating what is already there. The pastoral work of the missionaries is centred on the formation of lay leaders and native catechists. To this effect they take care of the Lay Formation Centre of Akono (CEFOLA) where they impart formation sessions to the laity of a diocesan zone.

In addition to this pastoral work they also participate in the formation of the Claretians of Central Africa. The noviciate is in Akono. The first noviciate was established in 1978 and it marked a new stage in the experiences of the mission. The Claretian theologate of the entire Central Africa (Ivory Coast, Cameroon, Gabon, Central African Republic, Zaire, Guinea and São Tomé) is operating in Yaoundé since 1988. In 1983 the first Claretian from Cameroon was ordained.

Bamenda (Founded in 1986) Province of East Nigeria.

In 1986 the Claretians of the province of USA West, after helping in the development of the Claretians in Nigeria, opened a new missionary field in West Cameroon, diocese of Bamenda, with two missions: Babanki-Tungo and Batibo. Lately the latter was abandoned and, for reasons of community life, the parish of Ndop was assumed. We are referring to the English speaking zone of Cameroon in the boundary with Nigeria.

It has 30,000 inhabitants, about 10,000 of which are Catholic. The geography of the place is mountainous woodland and located 900 meters above sea level, enjoying a mild and not very humid climate. The roads are generally dusty and relatively good, except during the rainy season. The Christian communities are rather young, hardly 15 to 20 years, and the customs of the traditional African religions are predominant. The missionary work mainly consists in making almost initial evangelisation, and presenting the Good News with simplicity.

In 1993 the mission was placed under the jurisdiction of the Province of Nigeria.

IVORY COAST

Abidjan (Founded in 1990) Province of Poland

The first Claretian Missionaries arrived from the Province of Poland on 17 June 1990, to take charge of the two mission posts in Ivory Coast. One is in the zone of Abidjan (Vridi), diocese of Grand Bassam; once they familiarised themselves with the local language, they spread to the second in Bouaflé, a rural zone of the diocese of Daloà, in the interior of the country, with 135,000 inhabitants and 22 tribes, mostly animists. Since 1970 the Religious Sisters of St. Anthony M. Claret work in Ivory Coast.

Being a Catholic in Ivory Coast is, in a sense, a distinctive sign of social uplift. Only 10% of the population are Catholic, and they belong to the upper middle class. There are committed lay persons, but they are few. The growing material welfare chokes all spiritual interests and leads to a comfortable uncommitted Christianity. The Church-run schools have indeed offered faith, but without real missionary rooting. On the other hand we must not forget that the evangelisation started in Ivory Coast scarcely one hundred years ago and, in some regions, less than 50 years ago.

The need for more missionaries is urgent, due to the proliferation of sects. In 1993 the first native Claretian missionaries of Ivory Coast made their profession. The prospects of the mission are indeed optimistic. In 1997 the first native Claretian priest was ordained.

GABON

Franceville (Founded in 1975) Delegation of Central Africa.

Everything started when the Italian Claretians committed themselves to work with the Gabonese exiles in Equatorial Guinea. When they returned to their country, they asked for these missionaries until they decided to commit themselves to start a fixed mission. The revolution and the period of persecution had just ended.

Franceville is the capital of Haute-Ogooué, to the Southeast of Gabon, with some 18,000 inhabitants and near 7000 Christians. The Claretian mission has some 25,000 inhabitants in 3 parishes: Mingara, Okondja and Akieni. They speak their native tongue in addition to French, which is the official language. The number of Catholics is about 11,000.

Their priorities are the building up of Christian communities and the youth ministry. Human development is always at the basis of any missionary animation. Lately a Church has been constructed in Okondja, a symbol of the effort and growth of this community. A great step is also being taken with regards to literacy. In this work, the Claretians of Nigeria are collaborating and are currently thinking of the possibility of taking charge of some mission area. The Missionary Sisters of St. Anthony M. Claret are also collaborating in this mission. In 1997, the first two native Claretians of this missionary zone were ordained priests.

Libreville (Founded in 1995) Delegation of Equatorial Guinea.

In 1995, the Province of Equatorial Guinea deemed it appropriate to found the new community of Libreville as a welcome house for the missionaries from the interior of the country, or those who are passing through; also as a Mission Procure for the French-speaking Africa. At the same time they serve a parish.

GHANA

Damongo (Founded in 1997) Province of East Nigeria

The diocese of Damongo is located in northern Ghana, West Africa, and is made up of two administrative districts, namely West Gonja and Bole. Damongo comprises a territory of about 24,627 square kilometres. The area is now divided in five parishes. The diocese is estimated to have presently a population of 221,000 inhabitants and is predominantly rural in nature, with very few towns that exceed 5,000 people. The transport network is rather poor, with secondary roads that are impracticable during the rainy season. The postal service is also extremely poor; even today traditional means of communications are being used, such as drums, musical instruments and messengers. The literacy level is very low, to the extent that in some places for every 10 communities, only one person can be found who can read.

In the diocese, besides the Catholic Church, there are also the Pentecostal and the Methodist churches, the church of Musama Discop Christo, Islam and the traditional religions. There are more than 20 ethnic groups in the diocese and it is very difficult to communicate the Christian doctrine in an illiterate milieu. The multiplicity of dialects or

languages prevents the missionary from learning one that may serve as a means of communication for all.

EQUATORIAL GUINEA

Bioko and Río Muni (Founded in 1883) Delegation of Equatorial Guinea.

These were the first missions taken by the Claretian Missionaries. This fulfilled the dreams of Fr. Xifré. The first expedition was composed of 12 missionaries, selected from among very many volunteers. A great many missionaries died there, victims of the inclement weather and the arduous apostolate, but the enthusiasm was constantly increasing among them. *“The Most Rev. Fr. General, wrote Fr. Armengol Coll, at his return from the Eternal City, manifested to the Noviciate the hopes that Rome had placed in us. He described with vivid and, sometimes, dreadful colours the reality of the equatorial countries: the many wild beasts, serpents and poisonous animals that swarm there, etc. And seeing how eagerly we listened to his stories and how ardently the young men desired to be sent there in spite of all these difficulties, he was filled with joy.”* The missionary adventure took the lives of many missionaries: the statistics tell us of 50% dead and 25% rendered useless through sickness in just a few years. This however never daunted the missionaries.

In 1968, Equatorial Guinea obtained its independence. The Claretian missionaries, both Spaniards and natives, including the Claretian bishop Msgr. Nze, were working in 10 schools, the press, radio and TV, 23 colleges, in addition to the parochial work. Almost 80% were Catholic: the most Catholic nation of Africa. But the events came suddenly. Soon trials and persecutions began and the missionary activity gradually diminished. In 1970 the first missionaries were expelled and in 1971 the Claretian bishops too abandoned the place. In 1975 all seminaries, schools and colleges were closed. The Church was reduced to silence. Only the native missionaries and one Spaniard were able to remain in the country, though they were arrested, first in their houses and later in public prisons.

The coup d'état put an end to the nightmare. Since then the mission has been reorganised. The Congregation is presently trying to promote missionary life in Guinea through the provinces of Spain. Its objectives are: to rebuild the morale of the Christian communities through the servants of the Word, education and promotion of the people. There are three dioceses in Guinea: Malabo, Bata and Ebebiyin. The Claretian missionaries, one of which, a native, is Bishop of Ebebiyin, are working in all three of them. Emerging from their own ashes, the Claretians started gathering promising young men in 1980; the first ones have already been ordained. The present challenges are: the formation of the laity, the training of catechists and the promotion of lay ministries.

KENYA

Mombasa (Founded in 1991) Province of East Nigeria.

With this new position, the Congregation makes itself present in the East coast of Africa. Since January 1991, two Nigerian priests are working in Mombasa. Their main activity is learning the native language, the Swahili, the understanding of the reality of the country and some pastoral work. In 1992 they were entrusted with the care of

the parish of the Sacred Heart of Jesus of Shanzu, in the outskirts of Mombasa, with 50,000 inhabitants, 3,000 of which are Catholic. They dedicate themselves in a special way to the tourists who visit Mombasa, Kenya's second industrial city and its main port.

The diocese where this Claretian enclave is rooted has 51 diocesan priests, most of which are native. Almost all of the 18 religious working there are foreigners.

A project is on the move to establish in Nairobi the Mission Procure and the Claretian theology house for Eastern Africa, comprising Tanzania, Uganda and Kenya.

MOZAMBIQUE

Gilé (Founded in 2006) Provinces of Brasil and Saint Thomas

On the 23rd of March, 2006, three missionaries from Brazil and Portugal happily arrived Mozambique. The new mission was established in Gilé, in the diocese of Nam-pula, a mission that lacks even the elementary needs; without installations, water, light. They attend to about 200 communities. Some are only reached after walking for some 40 kms. Only 15% of the population in this area is catholic. Others from the Province of Saint Thomas, India collaborate in this mission. Mozambique is a country of 800.000 square kilometers with a population of about 20 million, of which 30% is catholic; 20% Muslim, the rest practice traditional religions.

NIGERIA

Owerri (Founded in 1973) Province of East Nigeria.

The Claretian seed that was to bear fruit in Nigeria was providentially carried by Fr. Christian Ihedoro who worked first in Guinea as a teacher for the Nigerians. He studied in Spain and when he was about to return to Guinea after the civil war, he was denied entry because, during the trip, his passport and visa were stolen, and he was forced to go to Nigeria.

The Claretian work started in the diocese of Owerri, territory of the Ibos, 65% of which are Catholic. The basic work was vocation promotion and formation. This ministry soon gave positive results, and Nigeria became one of the organisms of the Congregation with highest number of vocations. The missionary work they were already performing in the parish of St. Patrick, near the formation centre of Maryland and the noviciate of Utonkon spread in 1987 to other parishes: Bacita, Jebba and Ogbomoso, where Islam and the traditional religions are dominant. This zone is inhabited by a great number of workers from neighbouring industries belonging to many ethnic groups with a strong tribal conscience, which makes mutual understanding and even communication very difficult.

Lagos (Founded in 2003) Delegation of West Nigeria.

Lagos is the center of the Delegation of West Nigeria, formed by communities belonging to the former Province of Nigeria. It shares the same history like the Province herself but it is in a zone inhabited by other tribes other than Ibo. In October of 2007 it separated from the Province becoming an Independent Delegation. Geographically the Delegation comprises of the Nigerian States of Edo, Ekiti, Kogi, Kwara, La-

gos, Níger, Ogun, Ondo, Osun, Oyo and the territory of Abuja, the federal capital. Activities are fundamentally parish activities.

DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO

Kingandu (Founded in 1962) Delegation of Central Africa.

In 1962, the German province took under its care the Mission of Kingandu, which had been founded in 1929 by the Jesuits. The beginnings were difficult because the Republic of Congo (former Zaire), independent after 1960, was in a chaotic situation: revolts, secession moves, rebellions and degradation at all levels, which made missionary work most difficult. The country came into a relative calm when the army took over the government under the command of General Mobutu. The Mission went through a difficult period in the 70's, especially in 1972 and 1975. The recourse to authenticity provoked a serious conflict between Church and State under president Mobutu: prohibition of Christian names, of religious movements, closure of seminaries, etc., all of which greatly limited all missionary activity. Many missionaries abandoned the country, others were expelled; but from 1975 on, the situation began to normalise. The Church came out of its conflict strengthened: the conflict had elicited in many lay people a positive awareness of their responsibilities. In addition, the conflict had also been positive for the resurgence of vocations.

The countryside is made up of a series of plateaux deprived of trees and covered with wild grass about one meter tall. There are two missionary zones: Kingandu-Pay with more than 100,000 inhabitants and Mukila-Kindi (a mission accepted in 1982) with about 20,000 inhabitants. These zones are poor, with great dependence from the chiefs of clans, lack of communications and of health and education infrastructures. In 1964 the first native priest was ordained, and the team began to increase. In Mont Ngafula a great number of Claretians from various African nations are being trained since 1982.

The basic work is initial evangelisation, formation of catechists, youth ministry, vocation promotion and human promotion: teaching, health and agricultural development. Lately the situation has again become most difficult for the missionaries.

SÃO TOMÉ AND PRINCIPE

São Tomé and Príncipe (Founded in 1927) Province of Portugal.

These islands are located in the midst of the Atlantic, astride the Equator. The climate is tropical, hot and humid. The Congregation came to these islands on 1 November 1927. No priest had set foot there for eight years. The great religiosity of the natives was all mixed with superstition and polygamy reigned there as a normal thing. The Claretian missionaries had to face many obstacles and they strove to overcome them with a great spirit of patience and perseverance.

In 1974 the revolution changed everything. Starting in 1978 a persecution began which culminated in the confiscation of the central house of the Claretians of São Tomé. In just a few years, a long period of apostolic work came to nothing. In 1981 a new dawn of faith broke again. The diocese is being basically run by Claretian missionaries. The population is approximately 100,000 inhabitants. The Claretian Fr. Joao Freitas Alves became the Apostolic Vicar and with great decision he restructured the entire

pastoral plan. The basic priorities were: catechetics, youth and family ministry and formation of catechists. In September 1944 for the first time there were priestly ordinations in the island: three Claretian young men were ordained. The missionaries are fully committed to catechetics, teaching, radio, press and the lyceum.

TANZANIA

Musoma (Founded in 1994) Province of Chennai.

Musoma is located in the eastern part of the country, on the banks of Lake Victoria. It has a population of one million inhabitants, about 5% of which are Catholic. The Missionaries of Africa or White Fathers were the first evangelisers of this region of Tanzania.

The Claretian missionaries arrived in September of 1994, coming from the Province of Chennai with the intention of learning the language and collaborating in the pastoral plan of the diocese of Musoma. In this part of Africa there is abundance of vocations. They are working in the Makoto Centre, a centre that offers courses and seminars for lay people.

Morogoro has been selected to house the postulants of the entire Eastern Africa (Uganda, Tanzania and Kenya).

UGANDA

Jinja (Founded in 1995) Province of Bangalore.

After serious study, the Province of Bangalore decided to found a mission in Uganda. Our missionary presence started in the diocese of Jinja, to the Southeast of Uganda. In 1966 the Bishop offered to the Claretian Missionaries the direction of the Diocesan Catechetical Centre and part of the parish of Kiyunga, 55 km from Jinja. The interreligious school of philosophy of Jinja was chosen for the formation of the Claretians in the Eastern part of Africa and in 1999 the noviciate of Eastern Africa was inaugurated.

ZIMBABWE

Gokwe (Founded in 2002) Province of Betica

The first missionaries of the province of Betica arrived Gokwe, Zimbabwe in January 2002. The diocese of Gokwe, founded in 1991 with an area of 26.000 sq km has a population of 500.000 inhabitants, of which only 55.000 are Catholics. There are 17 priests, diocesans from IEME and the Spiritans. There are also 24 female religious. Gokwe is inhabited mainly by people who emigrated from other districts, forced to abandon their original zones. Eighty percent are from the Shona language while the rest speak Tonga or Ndebele. The most important activity is agriculture; especially the cultivation of cotton and maize, there are also coal reserves. They have problem with water supply which depends on wells. In 2007 a new parish was accepted at the outskirts of

Harare which made possible the erection of a new foundation. At this time, the mission was strengthened with two members from the Nigerian province.

CLARETIAN MISSIONS IN AMERICA

ARGENTINA

Humahuaca (Founded in 1968) Province of Bética.

The Prelature of Humahuaca is located in North-western Argentina, adjacent to Chile and Bolivia. It has an extension of 33,000 sq. km. and a population of about 78,000 inhabitants: the Collas. The heights vary between 2,500 and 5,000 m. above sea level, with a tough climate in winter and torrential rains concentrated in the summer months. In the highest part we find the Puna, the Andean high plateau, immense, lonely, with scarce vegetation, high mountains and abundant hills. Toward the South, the Quebrada goes along the great river up to the Capital of the Province, San Salvador de Jujuy. Finally, toward the East we penetrate the foothill valleys with more abundant vegetation spread among tablelands, slopes and short cuts, especially dangerous during the rains.

The Colla people, descendants of the Incas, are patient, hospitable, simple and deeply religious. They raise llamas, sheep and goats, they spin their wool by hand, cultivate the land where the climate is more benign, and extract minerals from their hills in their mine exploitations, most of which belong to a multinational company. It is a subsistence economy and the people are rooted in their land, their Pachamama. Many of the ancestral traditions of the Colla culture, marginalised today, are still kept alive.

A team of Claretian missionaries shares with these people a fruitful ecclesial experience engaged in three great fronts: ecclesial basic communities, formation of evangelising leaders and human promotion, carried out mainly by the Claretian Development Work (OCLADE). Several hundreds of animators of the Word, distributed among some two hundred communities, who in turn are also forming their own animators of catechesis and social promotion, already constitute a solid hope in this young Church. To complete the number of evangelisers of the Prelature, whose bishop is a Claretian, there are the Mercedarian Religious Sisters, the Daughters of Christ the King, the Claretian Missionary Sisters and three native diocesan priests.

Río Negro (Founded in 1969) Province of Argentina-Uruguay.

As early as 1969 the Congregation was established in Austral Patagonia, more than 1,600 km south of the city of Buenos Aires. We are referring to two missionary parishes: Pilcaniyeu and Bariloche, in the diocese of San Carlos de Bariloche. The geography of the place goes down rolling from the Andes to the Atlantic, with very scarce vegetation: only poplars can withstand the fury of the wind that in winter can blow at speeds from 120 to 160 km/hour. The temperature can descend down to 25° C below zero.

Pilcaniyeu is a purely rural parish, with an extension of 12,000 sq. km. and 5,000 inhabitants. These are mostly of Araucanian descent and their only means of subsistence is taking care of sheep.

Bariloche can be considered a semiurban parish. It attends to several peripheral suburbs, where some 15,000 Chilean immigrants and peasants live surrounded by poverty problems, unemployment, alcoholism, family disintegration and prostitution.

The missionaries pursue in their work a double concern: to make people's faith grow, especially that of children and youth, with the collaboration of some religious Sisters and catechists, and to accompany the popular promotion and development organisations, especially by means of production and consumption co-operatives.

BELIZE

Dangriga (Founded in 2002) Delegation of United Kingdom and Ireland.

The missionaries commenced their work in Dangriga and in the Stann Creek district. Belize is a small Caribbean nation which gained her independence from Great Britain in 1981. It has an area of 23.000 sq km, with a population of 225.000 inhabitants. The official language is English, but Spanish and other local languages are also spoken. More than half of the population is catholic. Dangriga has 5.000 inhabitants and is the major garifuna settlement in Belize (Garifuna is a mixture of the Caribbean Indian culture and the black african culture brought by the slaves). The parish has a church dedicated to the Sacred Heart of Jesus. The Stann Creek district has about 12.000 inhabitants and has 17 chapels. There are catechists and eucharistic ministers.

BOLIVIA

Bermejo (Founded in 1968) Delegation of Bolivia

The Delegation of Bolivia took charge of this mission in 1968. It belongs to the department of Tarija and is located 220 km South of this city in the border with Argentina. It is a tropical zone, rich in oilfields and sugar cane. They have a population core, that is the city of Bermejo, with some 25,000 inhabitants, and 50 more rural communities scattered throughout the 3,000 sq. km. that comprise the mission. Some of these communities can only be reached by foot or on horseback, after many hours of traveling. Except for a small length, all the roads are dirt tracks and during the rainy season they become impassable. There is a mission project that is yearly evaluated in an assembly attended by all pastoral agents. One of the means of evangelisation they use is a radio station that covers the entire zone.

Santa Ana (Founded in 1976) Delegation of Bolivia

This is a rural zone, also in the department of Tarija, but closer to the city, which comprises 38 rural communities scattered in 800 sq. km. It is a poor and quite inhospitable terrain, generally more than 2,000 m. above sea level. The Delegation took charge of this mission in 1976. Since 1995 the team of the Claretian community of Tarija is attending to it. The entire region is adversely affected by the emigration of young people. Its inhabitants are already less than 12,000 and there is no population centre of any importance.

Guayaramerín (Founded in 1993) Delegation of Bolivia

This is a zone located in the Northern part of the country, in the confluence of Bolivia with Peru and Brazil. It is a fully Amazonian region of about 8,000 km². From Guayaramerín to Bermejo there are almost 2,000 km: if we fold the map of Bolivia, the two would coincide. The mission comprises the city of Guayaramerín (25,000 inhabitants) and some 4 rural communities. The access to most of them is only possible by river. From the ecclesiastical viewpoint, it belongs to the Apostolic Vicariate of Pando which, in an extension bigger than Portugal, has only 7 priests, three of whom are Claretian.

The Claretian Missionaries took charge of this zone in 1993, in a moment when the Apostolic Vicar could find no one to take care of it. The mission is located in front of the one held by the Catalonian Claretians in Grajará-Mirim. Only the large river Mamoré separates them. Among the means of evangelisation, the mission has a TV station of limited range.

Northern Potosí (Founded in 1975) Province of Euskalerrria.

This mission was entrusted to the Claretians of Euskalerrria in January of 1975. It is an eminently mountainous region, with a varied climate, in tune with the diverse heights, between 2,300 and 4,800 m. above sea level. Villages are linked by bridle paths, some dirt roads that are increasing, and there are also isolated zones.

The number of inhabitants is estimated in about 75,000. About 60% belong to the Quechua culture and speak their own language. About 30% belong to the Aymara culture. About 10% are mestizos or Cholos and speak basically the Castilian language. There is a mixture of three cultures: the Colla or Aymara, the Inca or Quechua and the Spanish. Their values are: family, work, community-solidarity, respect and dignity of the person, love of language and motherland, the omnipresence and immanence of the divine in their life. Their relevant mode of expression is the feast, both human and religious, around birth, marriage, death, land, peak moments of agriculture. Since the mestizo or Cholo dominates the socio-economic apparatus, there are two clearly distinguished worlds: that of the mestizo who lives in the cities or provincial capitals, and that of the native peasant who lives in the agricultural communities.

The Sisters of Providence, lay missionaries and Medicus Mundi of Navarre are collaborating with the Claretian Missionaries. The project of the missionary team that works in 3 provinces: Alonso Ibáñez, Charcas and Bilbao Rioja, takes care of human and Christian promotion, the education and preparation of catechists, liberation from illnesses and promotion of women, the promotion of agriculture and the knowledge of Jesus, the great Liberator.

BRAZIL

Matto Grosso (Founded in 1981) Province of Meridional Brazil

Paranatinga, diocese of Sinop and centre of the Claretian mission is located in the State of Matto Grosso, with an approximate area of 42,000 sq. km. It borders to the Northeast on the Prelature of Msgr. Pedro Casaldáliga. Today it has a population of 35,000 inhabitants that belong to more than 40 communities in formation, attended to from the mother community. The pastoral priorities are the formation of small communities or ecclesial prayer and reflection groups, the formation of pastoral agents, family

ministry, vocation ministry and ministry with the natives. In the last years the Province tried to promote the mission of Matto Grosso, by sending more missionaries and assuming new mission fronts.

In addition to Paranatinga, the missionaries take care also of Campinápolis and Nuevo San Joaquín, of the diocese of Barra do Garças. At the beginning of 1997, with the creation of the municipality of Caúcha do Norte, another group of missionaries was established there. All these municipalities are more or less 200 km from the centre of the Mission. The total area of the mission is approximately 60,000 sq. km., with a population of 50,000 inhabitants. In the mission territory there are two groups of natives: the Bakairí and the Chavantes. Religious Sisters and lay missionaries are also working there.

Sao Miguel do Guaporé (Founded in 1982) Province of Catalonia.

Guajará-Mirim is situated in the Brazilian State of Rondonia, in the midst of the Amazonian forest, bordering on Bolivia. The Claretians collaborate with the diocese in the construction of the local Church, attending to four parishes and co-operating in diverse diocesan activities, especially in the Seminary.

At present the missionary community is divided in three small nuclei: Guajará-Mirim, the centre of the mission, Nova Marmoré, some 50 km. away, and San Miguel de Guaporé, almost 900 km. away. There are several lay missionaries, who usually make a commitment of collaboration with the missionaries for a minimum of two years. They live in community and work especially in the promotion of small farmers through various associations, and in the education of children and adolescents from destitute families. Special attention is given in the pastoral work to the formation of catechists, leaders of basic communities and the promotion of the laity in general, as well as to the formation of the future local clergy.

The population is composed of small autochthonous groups and of emigrants of the most diverse origin. The majority of them are people who are seeking in the immense Amazonian region for an opportunity to own a little parcel of land that may guarantee the future of their family, an opportunity that they could not have or was denied them in their places of origin. The entire mission zone still has important deficiencies in transport services and communications, electric energy, education and health. Illnesses such as malaria, hepatitis or the most varied types of verminosis have always been endemic.

Maceió (Founded in 2002) Province of Brazil.

Responding to the request of the Archbishop, the Claretians of the former two Organisms of Brazil decided in 2001 to have a shared mission in Maceio, a city of about one and half million people at the Atlantic coast. Since then, our missionaries run a parish of about 50.000 inhabitants, with a church and 7 outstations. The house and the church belong to the diocese but the Province has a house in front for vocation ministry since there are possibilities for vocation in the region. The central church is being widened. They work in the outstations with novenas to their patrons in these areas considered truly mission areas.

COLOMBIA

Chocó (Founded in 1909) Province of Occidental Colombia

The missions of Chocó have created a long and solid tradition in the Congregation. Three Apostolic Prefects administered Chocó until 1953. This year the mission was divided into two Vicariates: Istmina was left to the Fathers of the Foreign Missions of Yuramal, and Quibdó to the Claretians under the direction of Msgr. Peter Grau, Claretian. Among the many material difficulties, communications was not the least important, since they had to make use of the slow canoe. The climate, the plagues of mosquitoes and the ensuing malaria earned for this mission the reputation of being the most difficult of Colombia. Seeing the innumerable trials that the Missionaries had to suffer there, Fr. Martin Alsina proposed to abandon the mission, but the missionaries preferred to continue their huge task in spite of the enormous difficulties.

In 1988 the mission was made a diocese with the Claretian Msgr. George I. Castaño as its Bishop. Our missionaries work at the pastoral ministry of Quibdó, among the rural and indigenous population, teamed up with Claretian lay missionaries. Presently there are three missionary centres. The Medio Atrato attends to 40 settlements of black population, located on the banks of the Atrato river; the Centre for Pastoral Care of the indigenous natives accompanies all the indigenous communities of the diocese; and the Biblical Centre takes care of the popular biblical pastoral and the formation of evangelising agents of the entire diocese.

In the diocese of Apartadó, partly formed with territory segregated from the diocese of Quibdó, the Claretian missionaries attend to a mining post in Riosucio, from which they pastorally serve 140 rural communities scattered along the rivers and they also attend to the indigenous communities of the entire diocese. In this territory a true war is being presently waged between the guerrilla and the paramilitary forces. The civil population has been the main victim of this confrontation and, in order to save their life they have had to abandon their lands and move to other regions, forming new communities of refugees that are also attended by the Claretians.

In 1996 the first Emberá native Claretian was ordained priest in Riosucio, his birthplace.

Espriella (Founded in 1995) Province of Occidental Colombia.

This mission is 40 km. away from Tumaco, at the South-western end of the country, adjacent to Ecuador. It comprises an extensive territory with three well characterised zones. They are the settlements on the banks of the Mira river that marks the boundary between Colombia and Ecuador, with a basically black population; the mountain zone or “piedemonte,” where indigenous settlements predominate; and the road area, with some thirty “veredas” or villages, and the urban part of Espriella with 1,000 inhabitants.

The Vicariate of Tumaco has about 230,000 inhabitants, the majority of them below 50 years of age. Infant mortality doubles the national rate. 90% of the population are black, 2% indigenous (4,000 Awás, 600 Emberás) and 8% mestizos. Illiteracy reaches 51%, but in the rural areas it rises to 80% and 90%. About 60% live in absolute poverty and 38.7% in squalid condition.

Tierradentro (Founded in 2005) Province of Oriental Colombia

After almost thirty years we went back to found a mission in Tierradentro in January of 2005. It is the heart of the beauty, rich and conflictive cordobese land. It

belongs to the diocese of Montelibano, inaugurated by a Claretian bishop, Alfonso Sanchez. He the missionary pilot, Father Alcides Fernandez worked intensively. There is a parish and a parish center with 16 outposts each. There is a Claretian college they visit. This population is well distanced and difficult to reach. The missionaries live in the former house of the Claretian sisters. They collaborate in a local radio station.

CUBA

La Havana (Founded in 1930) Delegation of Antilles.

Although in its first period Cuba could not be considered a mission, given its present circumstances, today we have to include it among the other missions of the Congregation. Cuba has always been one of the most beloved centres of the Congregation, whose presence goes back to the time of our Fr. Founder who arrived there as Archbishop of Santiago in 1851 and left in 1857. Fr. Manuel Vilaró, one of the co-founders, accompanied him.

In June 1880 eleven Claretians arrived in Santiago, but this foundation was a failure because of the yellow fever. By September nine missionaries had already died and the other two returned to Spain to save their life.

In 1918 a community was established in Palma Soriano, and others soon followed: Santiago, La Havana and Cárdenas. In 1961 the revolution came and the number of Claretians was reduced. In 1979 only two Claretians remained in La Havana, one of which died in 1986. Providentially in September of 1986 our missionary presence was finally strengthened with two additional Claretians, and two more in August of 1988, who started a new post in Guantánamo. In 1995 two Claretians began the new foundation of Santiago de Cuba and in 1995 in Guáimaro.

In La Havana efforts are made to care for and strengthen the Christian community of the Shrine of the Heart of Mary in a situation of re-evangelisation, welcoming, attention to popular devotion, formation of the laity, participation and Christian presence in society. Two rural parishes were attended to until 1991, when the missionaries were entrusted with the parish of El Cerro, very near the Shrine of the Heart of Mary. They also work in the Seminary, in the organisation of the teaching of Catechism in the Diocese, in the Centre Associated to the Institute of Theology at a Distance and in the animation of Religious men and women.

In Guantánamo the missionary work is done in the two parishes of the city: Santa Catalina and La Milagrosa, plus several other communities in the countryside. Forming a team with the Claretian Missionaries are the first group of Claretian Sisters who, after many years, were able to enter the country where their Congregation was founded.

The parish of Santiago has a good pastoral plan for the city and the suburban developments drafted by duly prepared lay people. Guáimaro is a small city, but the pastoral work extends also to other surrounding communities.

ECUADOR

Latacunga (Founded in 1985) Province of Oriental Colombia - Ecuador.

This mission comprises two ecclesiastical "*parishes*" composed of some 20 villages, most of which have a church or chapel. The central house of the missionaries is

the parish called “*11 de Noviembre.*” From there they attend to all the communities. Poaló, in addition to being an ecclesiastical parish, is also a shrine with a tradition of nearly two centuries of popular religiosity that has gathered a great number of indigenous communities and peasants of various provinces of Ecuador.

The main work of the missionaries is: catechesis, formation of Christian communities, very intense liturgical and sacramental worship in those regions because of the strong religious tradition of that people. They are native people who live in the mountains at a height of more than 3,600 m. They raise llamas and sheep. Their poverty and marginalisation are absolute. The native Maca has been subjected and exploited not only by the governments, but also by the Church itself.

In 1955 the mission house was inaugurated in the indigenous community of Maca-Grande. It is the symbol of the process of inculturation with a native-faced Church. This house has been enlarged to become a Missionary Formation Centre.

GUATEMALA

Izabal (Founded in 1965) Province of Central America.

Guatemala looks out of a broad window between Belice (British Honduras) to the left and the nation of Honduras to the right. There the Claretian Province of Central America has its mission, scorched by an implacable sun. The territory of approximately 13,000 sq. km. has a population of about 70,000 inhabitants. Some members of other religious Congregations and a group of diocesan priests who live in community are also collaborating with the Prelate. Their style of life and work is imposed by the reality of the field of apostolic operations and realisations. There is an atmosphere of atavistic Christianity, basic poverty, and a need of education and evangelisation at a personal, family and group level.

Until 1994 this mission was attended by the province of USA East in collaboration with that of the United Kingdom and Ireland, and their personnel is still there. Claretians, Claretian lay missionaries, De La Salle Brothers and three more Congregations of Religious Sisters are working in a team both in the pastoral care and in the socio-religious field. They have more than 300 delegates of the Word and catechists who collaborate with them in the region.

Santa María de Jesús (Founded in 1966) Province of Central America.

Five kilometres away from La Antigua, to the North, in the slope of the Agua Volcano, is found Santa María de Jesús, a village of Cakchiquel Indians, unique in America, a pure race and secular tradition. In the midst of a marvellous landscape, the multicoloured clothing of women catches the eye, when they go to the public square fountain to fetch water for their kitchen. This is a population of about 12,000 Indians of simple faith and ancestral type religiosity.

At the beginning the Claretian missionaries attended to them from the Bishop's Palace of San Juan del Obispo but later on they moved to their village.

HAITI

Puerto Principe (Founded in 1999) Delegation of Antilles

On the occasion of the Claretian Jubilee Year, the Provinces of Latin America and the Caribbean region decided to make their dream of founding in Haiti, the poorest nation of America, come true. It is an Afro-American country whose white population is only 4%. There are no natives either. Its origin comes from the transfer of African slaves. It is overpopulated, boisterous and creative. More than 7 million inhabitants in only 27,000 sq. km. The country is extremely poor, in full political chaos, with a great ecological disaster. It has its own language, the Creole, derived from French, with elements of English and of the African languages. The illiteracy is very high. The people are very religious. Pastoral attention is concentrated in the centre of the city, leaving the masses of the periphery abandoned. There is a great variety of sects in addition to the voodoo, an Afro-American religion.

There is an abundance of priestly and religious vocations in Haiti. The Claretians of the Province of Antilles already have a first promotion of Haitian vocations in the Dominican Republic.

HONDURAS

Atlantida (Founded in 1967) Province of Central America.

The Atlantida, a department with an extension of 4,251 sq. km. exposed to the tropical sun, shelters a human community scattered in some 185 towns and villages with 18,000 blacks, 30,000 whites and 80,000 mestizos. Not all of them occupy continental land. In front of the torrid balcony that goes from the mouth of the Ulúa to that of the Balfate River, we can see the islands of the Bay.

The Claretian missionaries are there since October of 1967. The first ones to go there were from the Province of Castile. The earlier missionaries (Vincentian Priests) left to the Claretians deep channels of sacramentalisation and associationism. From the two most important cities, La Ceiba and Tela, the task of evangelisation meets great challenges: deepening into the Gospel, formation of lay leaders, promotion of material and cultural development of the natives, dialogue with other Christians, appreciation of autochthonous culture and promotion of the local Church by means of native vocations.

In 1972, in the capital of the Diocese, San Pedro Sula, a vast parish called La Guadalupe was established. In 1988 the first two Honduran priests were ordained. In 1994 the mission was transferred to the Province of Central America and, since that time, the bishop of the diocese is a Claretian missionary.

MEXICO

Tlacoapa (Founded in 1960) Province of Mexico

Since 1960 the Province of Mexico has, within its own territory, an arduous and difficult mission, enclosed in a very rugged geography. It is located in the Sierra Madre del Sur that reaches a height of 3,000 m. above sea level, and whose chief town is Tlacoapa. The mission is made up of several “rancherías” or settlements many hours away from one another, and they can only be reached by foot or by mule. Its agriculture is scanty because the land is poor and for lack of irrigation. Its inhabitants earn their livelihood by making overcoats and huaraches or sandals; some raise goats. Malnutri-

tion is the main cause of infant mortality. The population is indigenous, made up of Tlapanecs, Mixtecs and Nahuas, each one speaking their own language with practically no knowledge of Spanish.

From the very outset the Claretian missionaries undertook the task of evangelisation beginning with human promotion itself; thus the first primary school emerged, then the first arts and trades centre, the first dispensary and even the first airfield. There is a profound religiosity, albeit mixed with superstitions, myths and legends. Catechesis is given and they are accompanied in processes of hygiene, health, agriculture, apiculture and other programs beneficial to the community. There is a good number of lay collaborators who place their persons, their profession and their goods at the service of the Mountain people. The migration of Tlapanec youth is very high, up to 70%, which brings new challenges to the missionaries: to prepare the youth to respond to the reality they will find in the new milieu, and help the old folks who must remain in the Mountain, with their hunger, poverty and loneliness.

Santa María de Zacatepec (Founded in 1980) Province of Mexico.

Santa María de Zacatepec has a population of 25,000 inhabitants. It is located in the western part of the state of Oaxaca, in the Sierra Madre del Sur, near the great Mixtec Nudo. The climate is hot with abundant rains. The population is distributed in “rancherías” or communities scattered throughout the entire mountain range, many hours away from one another. The first settlers were the Mixtec ethnic group. The territory where the Claretian missionaries work is composed of three different ethnic groups: the Tacuates, the Mestizos and the shepherd-Mixtecs. The Mestizos are absorbing all the ambits of the population: civil posts, commerce, land parcels with the usual dominance and authority as well as the rejection and scorn on the part of the Tacuates. The latter like to call themselves “naturales” or natives and retain the organisation of communitarian services, *fiscalías* or prosecution offices, or the responsibility of organising the religious feast of some of the patron saints, *Mayordomías*.

The Claretian missionaries, from the outset of their work here, have centred their attention on preparing new evangelisation agents: catechists and celebrants of the word, in such a way that they may become effective builders of the kingdom. They have also cultivated the Bible ministry in different ways: spreading and distributing of materials at a low cost, biblical initiation classes and practical application courses. Finally, the accompaniment of youth has been intensified, with very positive results: personal commitment, collaboration in evangelising work and even vocational consciousness.

PANAMA

Kuna Yala (Founded in 1925) Province of Central America.

Cuna Yala, traditionally called San Blas, is an archipelago inhabited by *Cuna* Indians in the Atlantic coast. About 28,000 Indians live in this region of more than 400 islands, only 40 of which are inhabited. These Indians retain their own culture and language until today. Transportation from one island to another is made by *cayuco* or dug-out canoe; those belonging to the missionaries are normally provided with an outboard motor.

The history of this mission is closely united to that of Colón. Many a missionary dedicated long and arduous years to this mission, among whom Fr. Erice deserves spe-

cial mention. He wrote a dictionary and a grammar of the Cuna language. Soon his work resulted in a number of vocations and now there are several Cuna missionaries, some of them Claretians.

Darien (Founded in 1925) Province of Central America.

The Darien zone is located in the easternmost part of Panama, just where the *inter-American* road disappears. It is a vast forest and unpopulated zone. The last census speaks of 27,000 inhabitants divided in Afro-American Darienites, Afro-American Chocoans, peasants and *Emberá* and *Uanana* Indians. The population is poor and scattered, economically regressive. The natives live on the banks of the rivers in the middle of the forest, where they can only reach by means of canoes. The typical dressing of women is noteworthy. They are friendly and simple people. Their food and health care, as well as their education, are deficient.

The apostolate is done through BEC (Basic Ecclesial Communities) that are slowly being formed in each village. In 1988 the present Vicariate of Darien was established and separated from the new Diocese of Colón; a Panamanian Claretian was appointed Apostolic Vicar with his see in Metetí.

PARAGUAY

Yhú (Founded in 1979) Province of Santiago.

At the beginning of 1979 the first six Claretian missionaries arrived in Yhú from the province of Aragon. Between the great Paraguay and Paraná rivers, almost in the centre of the country, we find the Department of Caaguazú and, within the Department, the districts of Yhú, meaning *black river*, and Vaquería, attended to by the Claretian missionaries. The district of Vaquería has an extension of 1,165 sq. km. and 15,000 inhabitants; that of Yhú, 1,105 sq. km. and 35,000 inhabitants. There is a great number of people scattered throughout the countryside and organised in Colonies and Compañías or villages.

The main problems of Yhú are the speculation of the land, which is rich, but most of it is in the hands of foreigners or very rich people of the capital. The Guaraní peasant is poor and a victim of all sorts of illnesses, mostly for lack of hygiene and adequate nutrition. The nearest hospital is 100 km. away. There is lack of schools and apt teachers. More than 60% of the children cannot finish their primary education and from every 100 children who do, scarcely two go on to secondary level.

The average Paraguayan of Guaraní language and culture is very religious, but of little formation. The Claretian missionaries take care of numerous Christian communities organised and directed by catechists or Christian leaders. The visit of the missionary and the celebration of the Eucharist takes place when the rains, the distance, etc. allow it. Each community takes care of building their respective meeting place and chapel.

Since 1983, the Missionary Sisters of the Claretian Institute collaborate very closely with the missionaries, especially in the health ministry and, since May of 1991, the Missionary Sisters of Jesus Crucified too. Some Spanish volunteers also help with occasional health works.

PERU

Atalaya (Founded in 2007) Delegation of Peru

This mission given to the Claretian Missionaries is located in the Vicariate of San Ramon, run by the Franciscans. The bishop, Father Gerardo Zerdin of Croatian nationality worked for many years as a missionary in this zone. The seat of our community is in the village of Atalaya, close to the river. The village has a small seaport as well as a small airport with a little aircraft that belongs to the Vicariate. Until recently they had daily flights to Lima but it has been suspended. The population is about 25.000. The parish priest is of Polish origin. The Claretians have been assigned a chapel at the outskirts of the village called Little Mary, which allows for pastoral work in this Atalaya zone as long as they remain in the zone. But fundamentally they are in charge of attending to the 50 communities of about 20,000 inhabitants, with majority living by the riverside of Ukayali and Unini. They are indigenous populations (ashéninkas, etc.) bilingual, even though there are some who do not understand the Spanish language. It is a poor and marginalized zone without minimal attention: education, health, electricity, water, etc.

DOMINICAN REPUBLIC

Puerto Plata (Founded in 1938) Delegation of Antilles.

During the first years it was the entire province of Puerto Plata. At present the civil province has several parishes. In the city there were two parishes, each of which was ascribed one part of the territory. The parish attended by the Claretians was in the oldest and poorest part of the city, and it included the port area. The church was San Felipe, the mother church of the city.

Not long ago the Diocese of Puerto Plata was erected and the church of San Felipe became the cathedral see and was turned over to the diocesan clergy. The Claretians moved to the parish of the Perpetual Help, with other sectors of the city and other rural communities. From there they are trying to start their work again in these new sectors with no chapel in their villages and with undeveloped communities. Within the parish and in one of the rural zones, Lajas de Yaroa, is located the Centre of Spirituality and Social Promotion, from which the Claretians also exercise their apostolic work.

VENEZUELA

Delta Amacuro (Founded in 1985) Province of Venezuela

This Claretian Mission belongs to the Vicariate of Tucupita, entrusted to the Capuchin Missionaries. It comprises a vast extension of the lands and *caños* or small navigable rivers at the mouth of the Orinoco river that crosses almost all of Venezuela.

The Claretians serve the native *Waraos*, the first dwellers of the zone, who live in small settlements, the peasant Creoles coming from other Venezuelan states, and a small group of English speaking Guyanese emigrants.

In this socially abandoned zone there are small villages such as Sierra Imataca, El Triunfo, Los Castillos, Piacoa, Santa Catalina and Sacupana. Scattered among these

there are 36 more settlements, situated in the many caños of the river, which can be reached by *curiara* or canoe.

The Claretians have a pastoral plan inspired in the documents of the Latin-American Church and the options of the Claretian Congregation. The missionaries of Venezuela want to incarnate the Kingdom of God into history and open new avenues for the integral development of all women and men of the zone. To this end, they accompany the Christian communities, facilitate both the formation and access to labour of the laity, foster youth ministry by which new leaders are raised and formed, and promote all activities that tend to develop health, education and community organisation.

During these years the Sisters of the Guardian Angel, the Parochial Missionary Sisters and the Marist Brothers have laboured and constituted the Missionary Team together with the Claretians. During vacation time, volunteers from Spain and from other parts of Venezuela support with their personal work the labour of the religious.

CLARETIAN MISSIONS IN ASIA AND OCEANIA

CHINA

Beijing (Founded in 2006) Delegation of East Asia

After a careful discernment on which place is better to locate in central China (Xiam, Nanjin or Beijing), Beijing was chosen with the support of Mr. Liu Bai Nian, in charge of relations between the Catholic Church and the government of China. So, in august 2006 a new small community was established in Beijing with the intention of having a place where those to be sent will learn the Chinese language, and also see the possibility of teaching in the diocesan seminary and at the same time, be a place to receive and nourish vocations coming to the congregation. They live in the diocesan seminary, they teach the seminarians; also they teach English classes at the nursing school of Fengtai, Beijing. They collaborate in the Inter-University Institute of Beijing. They celebrate on Sundays with the Argentines from the Embassy. A very important activity is the visits they make to the local churches: Shijiazhuang, Hengshui, Shenyang, and in particular to Huanshang, former Claretian mission, then called Tunxi, where the Claretians built a house and a chapel.

Macau (Founded in 2006) Delegation of East Asia

For some years now the Claretian Missionaries, through the work of Claretian Publications of Philippines, are giving biblical service to the church of China. The first pastoral edition of the Bible has been published in China with 280.000 copies. A second edition is being prepared whose distribution will be helped by Mr. Liu Bainian. There is a Project on line in trying to prepare some simple publications that can help in deepening the study of the Bible like other pastoral subsidies, of which we also count on the help and support of Mr. Liu Bainian. Together with the publications contacts have been maintained always with the team that worked on the elaboration of the Bible ministry in China and that, in this moment, continues to carry out interesting activity in biblical ministry.

The city of Macau is presented as the best place to establish the coordination of this biblical and editorial apostolate. The Bishop, Jose Lai, showed his willingness in

accepting a Claretian community and wished that an apostolate of this type can begin immediately. On the part of the Claretians there is this openness to collaborate in the pastoral work of the diocese both in attending to the foreigners as well as helping in the Chinese pastoral activities. The publishing team of Macau has the intention to begin the work of translation and publication of some good Theology Manuals that can be of great help in giving better quality formation to the seminarians and religious men and women of China. Obtaining residential permit in Macau will facilitate travelling to other parts of China which appears very important for the missionaries. Finally, the Congregation possesses a house in the inland city of Zhuhai, in front of Macau.

INDIA

Bangalore (Founded in 1971) Province of Bangalore.

In 1971 the Claretians are already in Bangalore. In 1982 their missionary activity spreads to Bhattiprolu, Medchal and Nallajerla (Andhra Pradesh), a mostly Hindu zone. In 1984 the Province of India is erected and becomes independent from Germany that continues working in Tamil Nadu and Sri Lanka.

The Claretian presence in the Northeast of India goes back to the year 1984. The Claretian Missionaries were invited by the Bishop of Tura Meghalaya, a zone inhabited by tribal groups coming from Mongolia, China and Burma whose orography includes great mountains and hills, impenetrable forests, rivers and wild animals... About 50% of the inhabitants are Catholic. Catholicism had arrived to this area one hundred years earlier. In 1986 the house of studies of Shillong was opened. In 1988 the Archbishop of Bangalore invited the Claretians to assume a rural zone of his diocese, an area of 30 sq. km., 40 km. from Bangalore, with only 17 Catholic families. That same year the mission centre of Peddabayalu was opened. This is an exclusively tribal zone of Andhra Pradesh, where the very word *missionary* is suspicious due to earlier political intrigues of the missionaries. For all practical purposes, there are no Catholics in the zone. In 1989 the mission of Wardha, state of Maharashtra, was inaugurated. Also in 1989 the “*All Saints*” mission was established in Rongra, a centre of 45 villages along the border with Bangladesh. And in the same year the “*Saint Anthony M. Claret*” mission was assumed in Ampathi, in the centre of the tribal zone of Garo, with 44 villages in a radius of 20 km.

In 1994, a dependent Delegation is established within this Province for the Catholics of Syro-Malabar rite, comprising the houses of Kuravilangad, Wardha and Uythiri missions, and the parishes of Bangalore.

Karumathur (Founded in 1976) Province of Chennai.

In 1974 the native Claretians of India started their first mission in Karumathur, spiritual centre of the Kallars, 25 km. away from Madurai, Tamil Nadu. When the Claretians started working in India in 1970, they considered raising autochthonous vocations as their priority. To this end they placed a missionary in this zone with the intention of establishing a Seminary and a mission. Because the *Kallars* are poor and dwell in small villages, they started with the “*Claret Social Service Centre*,” that began by digging out drinking water wells, creating schools and organising health centres.

The Province of India was separated from Germany in 1984, while Karumathur, the zone of Tamil Nadu and the mission of Sri Lanka became that same year a Delegation.

tion dependent from Germany. It also kept Barrackpore, diocese of Calcutta, to the north. In Karumathur, in addition to the Seminary, a mission parish is also attended in non-Christian territory, with an impressive work of human promotion among the Hindus.

In 1993 the new Claretian Province of Madras, today Chennai, is created, comprising the Tamil Nadu, West Bengal and Orissa areas and South-eastern Bihar. That same year the missions of Silda, Amarda and Tolahar are founded. The Sri Lanka mission continues as a mission of Germany.

Kuravilangad (Founded in 1970) Province of Saint Thomas.

To the south of the immense Indian territory we find one of the most flourishing regions of Christianity: Kerala, of oriental rite, where Kuravilangad belongs. The Congregation saw there the possibility of establishing a mission centre that could in time extend to the entire peninsula. The German Province threw itself into this task from the very beginning and to this end it did not spare any means to bring about this work that appeared to be so promising. The first vocations were sent to Germany for their studies. At present the native missionaries are many and the number of vocations continues increasing. The first Seminary was founded in Kuravilangad in 1970.

The independent Delegation of Saint Thomas, of Syro-Malabar rite was created in 2001. It was created as dependent delegation in 1996. It comprised of the Syro-Malabar missions of India located in Kuravilangad, Kochi, Vythiri, Marthidi and the Bangalore parishes of the Syro-Malabar rite. In the year 2004, the organism was made a Province.

Shillong (Founded in 1984) Delegation of North East India.

The Province of Bangalore sent her first missionaries to this North East zone of India in 1984 following the request of the diocese of Tura. We can say that the whole zone is a mission zone. Since March 2007 the whole zone became an Independent Delegation. This Delegation is comprised of 6 States of India and 14 ethnic groups with their proper languages. Actually they are working in 7 dioceses, Arunachal Pradesh, Assam and Meghalaya. Basically the work consists of first evangelization, education, health care and human development. They attend to approximately 40.000 Catholics that live in 340 communities. In the area of education they attend to more than 8.000 children in about 50 schools.

INDONESIA

Kupang (Founded in 1992) Delegation of Indonesia-East Timor.

Since 1992 the Major Seminary has also been functioning in Kupang, provincial capital in West Timor.

Lately there has been a great increase of vocations. The Claretians too have thrived in this field. We already have Claretian Seminarians and our own Seminary. In 1995 the first 13 native Claretian Seminarians made their first profession. At present a new formation post is being created in Yogyakarta. In 1997 this territory was constituted as a Dependent Delegation of the Philippine Province. In 1999 the first native priest was ordained.

JAPAN

Osaka (Founded in 1951) East Asian Delegation.

Fr. Schweiger proposed to the General Council the foundation of a mission in Japan on the occasion of the Centennial of the Foundation of our Congregation (1949) and of the Canonisation of Fr. Claret (1950). On 9 September 1951, the first Claretian, Fr. Anthony Briskey, arrived in Japan. He was shortly followed by others who lodged in the old diocesan seminary in Osaka, where *“at the gate they had prepared for them about 20 pairs of slippers to change their footwear.”* The first local government of Imaichi, place of the first foundation, took possession of office in the seminary on 1 November 1951. The transfer to the house of Imaichi took place on 30 December 1951 and the inauguration of the house on 2 January 1952. Soon they decided to build a school. In less than three years they had three houses there, and it became a Visitorship and a Delegation in 1954.

The first difficulties they experienced were the language and the inculturation into a cultural reality so different and rich, and new in the Congregation. Their main work was the parish ministry. They created some kindergartens attached to the parishes in order to connect with the people. From there, the apostolic work was extended to the families and the youth. Expansion was quick: the parishes of Kori, Takatsuki, Hirakata, Kadoma. In 1957 the Keiko Gakuen school was founded; in 1959, the parish of Ibaraki, and in 1962, that of Shijonawate. Later on Nagoya was constituted, the first foundation outside the limits of the diocese of Osaka. At the beginning it was intended as a Seminary, but it only functioned as kindergarten, because that same year the vocation crisis came. Also, the missionary centre of Nagoya became a parish under the name of Midorigaoka, dedicated to Fr. Claret. In 1978 a community was founded in the capital city of Tokyo, dedicated to formation of seminarians and to youth ministry.

The missionary concern has been expanding toward neglected and working-class zones of Osaka, where the missionaries work in ecumenical collaboration with other Christian and non-Christian groups, and with civic organisations. At present they are working in several parishes, a school and in the field of missionary animation and the marginalised world. In 1994 the parish of Ibaraki, where we had been working for 30 years, was turned over to the diocese and a new residence was constructed in a neglected zone of Kamagasaki.

PHILIPPINES

Basilan (Founded in 1951) Province of the Philippines.

This island received the Gospel for the first time in the XVII century from the Spanish Jesuits. All throughout the years its Christian community went through many vicissitudes and was without pastoral attention for long periods of time. Out of its 280,000 inhabitants, only 30% are Catholic and the rest are Moslems, distributed in different ethnic groups or cultural minorities; Yakans, Samals, Badjaos and Tausugs.

Some of the Claretian missionaries expelled from China arrived there in 1951. Some years later, one of them was appointed bishop when the mission was made a Prelature in 1964. For several years, the Claretian USA West Province collaborated with

Bishop Querexeta in the eastern part of the Island, and the Betica Province in the western zone. In addition to the pastoral service to the Christians, several schools, clinics and a radio station were opened at the service of the human and cultural development of all the inhabitants of the island. The cultural and religious barriers, lately aggravated by fundamentalist attitudes, have always been a serious challenge to the missionary activity. In addition to English, Visayan and Chabacano (a sort of Creole Spanish language or Pidgin Spanish) spoken by the Christian sector, it was necessary to learn also Yakan, Samal, Badjao and Tausug in order to bring the missionary activity closer to the Moslems.

Bro. Joseph M. Torres became especially popular through his work in the clinic of Lamitan. In 1972 a new very sad phase began in the history of this young Church, with the declaration of Martial Law on the part of the dictator Marcos and the secessionist rebellion on the part of the Moslems. War broke out with unprecedented violence and death. Just when Moslem fundamentalism was becoming more and more radical, the Church opened up to a dialogue of life with them. During these years the work of indigenisation of clergy and religious was intensified, turning over to them most of our pastoral and cultural institutions, while the Claretians went towards the front lines of the dialogue of life with the Moslem brothers. At present we still keep three small parishes with a Catholic minority of 10%. The main efforts are carried out through many programs among the Moslem cultural minorities, with whom we try to establish an authentic dialogue of life and faith by accepting them with their religion and culture and promoting the cause of reconciliation, of justice and of peace.

SOUTH KOREA

Seoul (Founded in 1982) East Asian Delegation.

In September of 1982 the first two Claretians arrived from the Philippines to South Korea, concretely to Seoul, where they were welcomed by the Maryknoll Fathers. Soon, after an experience of two months' stay in the Presbyterian Seminary, they moved to stay with the Franciscans because their residence was near the school. The situation was favourable due to the growth of the Korean Church. In 1983 they obtained their first own residence. In 1985 they formed, together with Japan, the East Asian Delegation.

Soon after, they started their pastoral activities in parishes, hospitals and religious communities, as well as their vocation promotion work. In 1987 they accepted a parish in the diocese of Inchon. The number of Christians was about 1,000, mostly peasants and workers. The greatest difficulty is the learning of the language and the adaptation to the cultural reality of Korea. They are trying to go into other non-parochial work, especially among the youth, workers, Justice and Peace groups, the sick, etc. The formation of religious is another challenge they have to meet. The first formation structure they built was the noviciate. In 1992 the first priestly ordination of two Korean Claretians took place.

In 1994 a formation house and a centre for Retreats and Recollections was established in Kwangju, a city of one and a half million inhabitants.

SRI-LANKA

Colombo (Founded in 1991) Province of Germany.

Sri-Lanka started as a Mission of the German Province together with the Indian zone of Tamil Nadu. There were already several native Claretians from Sri Lanka even before June 1991, when the presence of the Claretians became stable in this Asian island which was called Ceylon during the colonial time. The first Sri Lankan Claretian priest was one of those who took residence in Colombo, the capital, in September of 1991.

The work of the Congregation in Sri Lanka had started in the 80's, through a Sri Lankan religious Sister who was working with the Claretians in India. After her vacation, she brought some young men to India. There they studied the Humanities and Philosophy and made their Noviciate. Since they could not take up the theological studies in India for political reasons, they continued their Theology in the Philippines. Sri Lanka is mostly a Buddhist country (69.5%), but it has a higher percentage of Christians than other Asian countries. With its 7.5% Christians (6.8% Catholics) it is the third Asian country, after the Philippines and Vietnam, with higher number of Christians. The Congregation has a house in Jaffna, to the North of the country, but the pastoral work is next to impossible there because of the veritable civil war that is being waged there, which has already taken many lives of priests, sisters and lay people. For this reason work has already started in the capital and in the Centre among the labourers of the tea plantations. In 1994 a formative community was founded in Guyudeniya (Kandy), and in 1997 the first Noviciate was started.

Since 1993, when the Province of Chennai (Madras) was created, Sri Lanka is the only Mission that remains dependent from Germany.

TAIWAN

Taipei (Funded in 1994) East Asian Delegation.

Since January 15, 1994 the Claretians are in this island as a step towards Continental China. It arose as a fruit of the beatification of our martyrs of Barbastro, some of whom saw their dream of going to China shattered. In Taipei they are presently serving a parish and a residence. For the time being, the greatest difficulty of this mission is the language that requires at least two years of study. The political regime of Continental China does not allow as of now the entrance of foreign missionaries. However, they were able on two occasions to visit the old Claretian mission of Tunki and even to contact a catechist who remembered that mission as it was before the Maoist revolution.

TIMOR LESTE

Suai (Founded in 1991) Delegation of Indonesia-Timor Leste.

The first contact with East Timor – the old Oriental Timor – was through the Timorese residents of the Claretian parish in Darwin, (Australia). In 1987, the first visit to the place was made with the view of founding a community there. East Timor has 12 Provinces and 12 cities with more than 710.000 inhabitants of which 90% are Catholics. Fohorem (20.000 inhabitants) is about 25 km away from Suai, and from Suia to Dili - the capital of East Timor - there are 205 km. It is a mountainous area with heights of up

to 1.500 mt. The roads are not very good. One has to cross some 20 rivers, some of which have no bridges and it is difficult to wade across because of the rain and the heavy currents. Tetum is the vernacular language of East Timor. After their independence, English and Portuguese were also adopted as official languages. The people are simple and hard working, very open to a profound evangelization. Statistically, the majority are Catholics. The churches are filled during eucharistic celebrations even on weekdays. The Claretians work at Our Lady of Fatima parish. The foundation of the mission was commenced on this feast. After some time, the province of Bobonaro contiguous to the Fohorem mission was also assumed. Against the backdrop of the August 1991 referendum in which the majority voted for independence from Indonesian, a sector of the Indonesian armed forces launched a devastating offensive against the region. All our houses and missions were practically destroyed. Once the National Assembly – the first to be democratically elected - recognized the result of the referendum in November of the same year, the new nation had to face an immense work of reconstruction and reconciliation in which the Claretians have participated actively and unconditionally. Since 2005 it is part of the Independent Delegation of East Timor and has become independent of the Province of Philippines

VIETNAM

Ho Chi Min (Founded in 2002) Province of Philippines.

The first Claretian arrived in 2002 in order to begin the foundation while dedicating his time to language learning and to the formation of the first Vietnamese candidates.

CLARETIAN MISSIONS IN EAST EUROPE

BELORUSSIA

Grozno (Funded in 1991) Province of Poland.

We started to work in Priwalka, diocese of Grozno. Later on the pastoral work was extended to Zelwa (1991), where the church had to be restored. The main task is catechesis at all levels, due to the total lack of formation brought about by the implacable religious persecution during the Soviet era. One of the great difficulties the missionaries have to face is the language: the old folks speak Polish, the middle-aged Russian, and the children Belorussian. The other great difficulty is the lack of priests. The Claretians are serving seven parishes.

Mohilev (Founded in 2008) Province of Poland

The city of Mohilev is a hundred kilometers from the boundary with Russia. It has about half a million inhabitants with just one Church, the cathedral and two priests. Four years ago it was divided into two parishes and we were given half of the city. A provisional chapel is being built with the hope of building a second church. Catholic

presence is scarce with orthodox community dominating. In this city reside two Claretians, one of them is Byelorussian.

CZECH REPUBLIC

Prague (Founded in 1995) Province of Germany.

In 1994 the first exploration was made towards the foundation in the Czech Republic. After studying the various possibilities, it was deemed better to found in the capital, Prague. Once the first difficulties and the learning of the language were overcome, work began basically with of young Czechs from the Faculty of Agriculture of the University where the Claretians are chaplains. Out of these groups a small active contingent has already been formed, willing to work summers in Belorussia. They also collaborate with various parishes and serve the Spanish-speaking colony, ambassadors, embassy employees and a good number of Cubans residing there. In 1999 a parish was accepted in the diocese of Plzen.

Sokolov (Founded in 2001) Province of Poland

The community has the responsibility of a parish of about 25.000 inhabitants with a pastoral movement that is well limited due to the religious situation that is lived in this atheist. Sunday services are reduced to 1%. The community lives in a house that belongs to the diocese a somehow far from the central church. There is another church, some 2 kilometers away that has a parish house joined to the same religious edifice and also a Marian sanctuary from Germany. They also attend to the village of Bochoy, some 40 kilometers away.

RUSSIA

Krasnoyarsk (Founded in 1992) General Government.

In 1991 a Claretian from the Polish Province and a postulant from Siberia went deep into the vast Siberian region with the purpose of connecting with all this zone where there were still remnants of the Catholic religion. After several subsequent visits and a thorough dialogue with the Bishop of Novosibirsk, the mission of Krasnoyarsk was accepted.

The zone belongs to the Asian part of Oriental Siberia. The entire extension of the parish would be about 7 times the territory of Poland and more than 5 times that of Spain: the second largest parish of the world. The city of Krasnoyarsk has 950,000 inhabitants and the zone about 3,600,000, with a great variety of nationalities, among which there are also Polish, Lithuanians, Germans... The climate is cold: polar in the north. The surface is covered with forest and tundra. Its main industry are coal and metal mines.

The religious situation is going through a moment of revival. Their faith is generic. The most practised religion is the Christian Orthodox and there is also a resurgence of Protestant groups. Religious books are abundantly used. The absence of Catholic priests is very noticeable and in the zone there are at present no priests or religious with fixed residence.

An important work is being done through the *Claretianum* Publishing House by means of the publication and distribution of Catholic books; in fact the Claretians have been the first to publish the Liturgy of the Hours and the Lectionary of the Mass in Russian. In 1997 the Parish-Community was divided in two: Krasnoyarsk and Atschinsk.

St. Petersburg (Founded in 1998) Province of Santiago

In 1995, on the occasion of the Centennial of the Province, and having integrated the missions of Panama and Honduras in the Province of Central America, the General Government entrusted to the Province of Castile the foundation of a community in European Russia. Toward the end of 1996 the first two missionaries were sent to the community of Krasnoyarsk, in Siberia, to learn the Russian language. On 16 July 1998 took place the foundation in St. Petersburg, a city of 5 million inhabitants, old capital of the Czarist Russia until the Bolshevik revolution. The majority of the population are Orthodox but it still has a small number of Catholics, despite the persecutions of the Soviet era. During all this time the properties of the Catholic Church are being recovered, among them, the seminary, the cathedral and several churches. St. Petersburg belongs to the archdiocese of Moscow. The basic work of the Claretians till now has been the formation of the candidates in the one Catholic seminary in Russia. At the same time, the seminary for the postulants of the Province has been created. In addition to this, other activities in the service of the Word are being done, such as retreats, conferences, ecumenical dialogue, etc. The Claretians have also been made Dean of Studies in the seminary and President of the Conference of Religious in Russia.

Murmansk (Founded in 2000) Province of Santiago.

In April 2000 the Bishop of Moscow has given to the Claretians the parish of Murmansk, a city with half million inhabitants, some 1,400 km North of St. Petersburg, in the Arctic Circle. It is the Northernmost Catholic parish. Since this parish was founded in 1916, there has been no religious presence until the fall of Communism. The number of Catholics is very scarce and one must begin from zero.

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CHAPTER VI

THE CLARETIAN FAMILY

THE CLARETIAN FAMILY

Religious Sisters of Mary Immaculate, Claretian Missionary Sisters

St. Anthony Mary Claret, in one of his apostolic trips to Tarragona in the year of 1850, met the novice Maria Antonia París. During the dialogue they held, she expressed to him what she had understood to be God's Will regarding the foundation of a new apostolic Institute for the proclamation of the Holy Law of God. He assured her that the work would push through.

The Venerable Maria Antonia París was born in Vallmoll, a small town of the Province of Tarragona in Spain, on June 28, 1813. The following day, feast of the Holy Apostles Peter and Paul, June 29, she was baptised in the Parish of St. Mary of Vallmoll. In keeping with her religious vocation, she enters the noviciate of the Society of Mary on October 23, 1841. In 1842, while in prayer, she has a mystical experience in which the Lord makes her understand her calling as a foundress. She is to found a new Institute of apostolic life, in which the living of evangelical poverty and the proclamation of the Holy Law of God play a very important role in promoting the renewal of the Church. In 1851 she leaves the noviciate in order to be more free to carry out the work God had shown her. For one and a half years she devotes herself to the formation of the young ladies who join her in order to share her own ideal. On August 15, together with them, she makes the vow not to leave the group and to cross the ocean, should this be God's will. On February 22 of the following year, called by St. Anthony Mary Claret, newly consecrated Archbishop of Santiago de Cuba, she embarks, together with her four companions, headed for the pearl of the Antilles. After a journey full of dangers and vicissitudes, she reaches Santiago on May 26, 1852. A little time later they begin their apostolic labour among the Cuban children, thus collaborating with the pastoral plan of the Archdiocese.

On August 25, 1855 Archbishop Claret signs the Decree of Foundation and, two days later, on August 27, Maria Antonia makes her profession in the hands of the saintly Archbishop, Founder together with her of the Religious of Mary Immaculate, Claretian Missionary Sisters. In 1859 St. Anthony Mary Claret, who was in Spain at the time, calls Maria Antonia to the Peninsula for the purpose of establishing a noviciate house in Tremp, Province of Lerida, for the missionary formation for the New World. Then follow the foundations of Reus, Province of Tarragona, Carcagente, Province of Valencia and Vélez-Rubio in Almeria, in Spain, and Baracoa in Cuba. On January 17, 1885, after a long sickness, Maria Antonia dies in Reus. Her cause of Beatification and Canonisation has already been introduced. The Decree on the heroicity of her virtues was signed on December 23, 1993. At present the Sisters, faithful to the mission bequeathed to them by their Founders, are working in the spreading of the Gospel throughout all the different parts of the world where the Congregation is established.

Cordimarian Filiation

Between 1840 and 1850 a singular idea started to haunt the heart of Claret and to “keep him busy before God:” Is the external structure of religious life essential to the consecrated life? How can the opportunity of embracing the gospel radicalism be offered to those who wish to remain in the world or are compelled to live in it? Furthermore, should the process of de-Christianisation, which was then beginning, continue its progression, how to bring the Good News to people when they should come to reject whatever was presented to them as a visible sign of gospel demand? Claret then began to glimpse the need of introducing in the very heart of the world the transforming force of people who should have made of Christ the supreme value in which all other values could find their place and meaning. Little by little this idea was taking shape until it became a dream and, later on, a joyful reality.

The first step was the publication of a booklet, “*The Daughters of the Most Holy and Immaculate Heart of Mary,*” which was published in the spring of 1850. The ideal presented was almost revolutionary at that time: living the fullness of consecrated life in the world, side by side with the rest of people, having the Heart of Mary as cloister. In the time of Claret nothing more could be done, and Cordimarian Filiation could only be a water spring born in silence, a current perceived only by those who, like Claret, received a prophetic vision projected toward the future. But the life of that inexhaustible spring unhurriedly pushed from inside. More than a century would go by before the Church would realise that a new current had been born in her inner self, that was struggling to permeate the most hidden corners of the world with Gospel transparency. That current would come to be known as Cordimarian Filiation.

Plasencia (Spain), 1943. A group of Claretian Missionaries lovingly picks up the lamp lighted by Fr. Claret and decides to make the dream come true. The Claretian book becomes the “*rule of life*” for a core of enthusiastic young girls, decided to constitute themselves into a “*family*” within the Church. At the same time, the same spark ignites in several places of Europe and America and several groups are organised. All of them are animated by the same spirit and a strikingly rich unity can already be seen in that diversity that had brought it to life. In 1947 Pius XII promulgates the apostolic constitution *Provida Mater Ecclesia*, that recognises and approves the Secular Institutes among the forms of life that imply Gospel radicalism. Fr. Claret’s dream has already got its own channel within the Church, and the organisational efforts are now directed to obtain its definition as a Secular Institute. On November 21, 1973, feast of the Presentation of the Blessed Virgin, Cordimarian Filiation is approved by the Church as a Secular Institute of Pontifical right. It was the end of a long journey and the beginning of a horizon hopefully open toward the third millennium of the Christian era.

Following Christ virgin, poor and obedient in the midst of a world dominated by selfishness, consumerism and self-sufficiency, thus making of one’s own life a self-sacrifice for the sake of the brethren: this is Cordimarian Filiation today. Claret did not want the Daughters of the Heart of Mary “*separated*” from the rest of society. They were born in the Church to “*remain and act in the world until it is transformed in Christ.*” Through their life and their word, the radicalism of the Gospel must be made present in daily life, in the common conditions of the world, in the general law of work, with its risks and insecurities.

Lay Claretians Movement

“In these last days it seems that God wants the laity to play an important role in the salvation of souls ” (St. Anthony M. Claret).

The Lay Claretians Movement has its origin in the groups of lay people St. Anthony M. Claret organised for the work of evangelisation. Among these groups stand out: the Fraternity of the Heart of Mary (1847), the Fraternity of Christian Doctrine

(1849), the Academy of St. Michael (1858) and the Popular and Parochial Libraries (1864). This same year he planned to create an association with the name of Archconfraternity of the Heart of Mary that he conceived as a great army of evangelisers with three branches: the Missionaries, Sons of the Heart of Mary, dedicated to itinerant evangelisation, the Diocesan Clerics who would carry out their apostolic mission through fixed and stable structures of evangelisation, and the laity.

Claret's death (1870) and the difficult situation brought to the Spanish Church by the coming of the revolution of 1868 made it very difficult for the lay groups created by Claret to survive. In effect, in the course of a few years all of them disappeared. The groups disappeared, but many lay persons remained who, animated by the spirit of Claret, co-operated in the evangelising work, usually side by side with the Claretian Missionaries.

The process of reorganisation of the Claretian laity began in the year 1938, when the Superior General of the Missionaries created the association of "*Claretian Collaborators*." This association that was conceived as a "*proper work*" of the Congregation, was approved by the Holy See in 1943. In its statutes it is stated that those who wish to live in keeping with the spirit of the Congregation and collaborate in its apostolate may be Claretian Collaborators.

In 1972 the Claretian Collaborators begin to be called *Claretian Associates*. The General Chapter of 1973 says that Claretian Associates are clergymen and lay people that share in the Claretian charism and commit themselves, in various degrees and in a permanent way, to live that charism in communion with the Congregation of Missionaries.

In 1979 they take the name of Lay Claretians. The General Chapter of this same year gives a new orientation to the Claretian laity. It states that the promotion of the Lay Claretians should not be done for the sake of the needs or the interests of the Congregation. The Lay Claretian vocation has in itself its own inner value and there is a need to support the action of the Spirit who from the beginning has also called the lay people to fulfil the Claretian mission.

The laity and the religious are two different manners of being Claretian. The Lay Claretians do not share in the charism of the Congregation, as used to be said in earlier times, but rather in the charism and mission of Claret.

OTHER MEMBERS OF THE GREAT CLARETIAN FAMILY

Cordimarian Missionary Sisters

The Institute was founded in Mexico City on 19 March 1921, by two persons. On one hand, Ms. Carmen Serrano y Rugama, a very humble woman, endowed with a profound love of God and of the Heart of Mary, who had received the inspiration in 1913. On the other, by Fr. Julian Collell y Guix, a daring and tenacious man, exemplary priest, member of the Congregation of Missionaries, Sons of the Immaculate Heart of Mary. Both were tireless catechists, very zealous for the glory of God.

The Mission of the Congregation is to spread the Gospel Message, with great burning zeal, to all those in need of it, especially to the lowliest: the peasants, natives, imprisoned, disabled persons. Among them, priority is given to women, youth and children, through catechesis, education and social communication media.

The spirituality of the Congregation is rooted on the spirituality of St. Anthony M. Claret, as lived and perceived by its founders. The spirituality of the members is characterised by a profound intimacy with the Heart of Mary, in order to learn from her how to live in intimacy with the Lord. Thus they should follow Christ the Missionary,

who offers himself to the Father as a living host, and delivers himself to Him as a victim for the redemption of people.

Missionary Sisters of the Claretian Institute

Fr. Luis Pujol Todera was born in Taradell (Barcelona, Spain) in 1903. At the age of 12 he joined the Congregation of Claretian Missionaries. He was ordained priest in the Basilica of St. John Lateran in Rome, in 1927. On 25 May 1951, he founded the Congregation of Missionary Sisters of the Claretian Institute, together with the present Superior General, Mother Mary Dolores Solá Carol, in the new Retreat House of Vic. Their Father Founder, a man of prayer and mission, went to the Father's house in Vic, on 8 May 1976, shortly before his favourite work reached its 25th anniversary of its foundation.

“The Claretian Institute is a religious-apostolic Institute for the evangelisation, in keeping with the experience of the Spirit as lived by its Founder, Fr. Pujol, in the style of Claret. In answer to this divine vocation, we adopt the lifestyle of Jesus, which the Blessed Virgin Mary embraced in faith, and we conform ourselves with Christ virgin, poor and obedient in the Church” (Constitutions, n. 5).

In 1998 the Archbishop of Barcelona approved the work as an Institute of Religious Life of diocesan right.

Missionary Sisters of Saint Anthony Mary Claret

Mother Leonia Milito was born in Sapri, Italy, on 24 June 1913. Since her childhood, she was known for her love of God and neighbour. In her adolescence she joined the Catholic Action where she opened her spirit to great and noble ideals. Later on she felt called to the consecrated life and, after much prayer and reflection, in the midst of struggles, sufferings and opposition, she entered the religious state at the age of 22. Moved by the Holy Spirit, she placed herself totally at the disposal of the Church. Under the guidance of Msgr. Gerald Fernandes, she founded the Congregation of Missionary Sisters of St. Anthony M. Claret, *to take care of the poor*, motivated by a vibrant missionary zeal. On July 22, 1980 death caught up with her on the road, but her work continued alive, faithful to her religious and missionary ideal.

Drawing inspiration from the ideal of St. Anthony M. Claret, the Congregation's spirituality is grounded on the devotion to the Eucharist, which is the secret of its perennial vitality. In front of the tabernacle, the life and apostolate of each member is transformed into an oblation, together with Jesus, who sacrifices himself for the glory of the Father and the salvation of humankind, becoming one with Him.

Msgr. Gerald Fernandes was a dynamic and fervent apostle, concerned only with doing the will of the Father always and in everything. Being a Claretian fully convinced of his vocation and of his mission, full of zeal for the spreading of the Reign of Christ, he manifested a special concern for the poor. He took upon himself to be a true father and spiritual guide of the Congregation of Missionary Sisters of St. Anthony M. Claret. Born in Contagem (State of Minas Gerais), in Brazil, on 2 February 1913, he joined the Congregation of the Claretian Missionaries, and went through the stages of preparation for the priesthood with great dedication and fidelity. He was ordained a priest in 1936. In 1957 he was appointed Bishop of Londrina, and made Archbishop of the same diocese in 1970.

As the Father of the Congregation, he followed up its development for 25 years, giving it orientation and ample proof of his pastoral concern. He consumed his life in the service of his people whom he always loved and guided, aware that *“this world*

could still be happier,” as he states in his spiritual testament. Msgr. Fernandes left for the Father’s house on 29 March 1982, in São Paulo, Brazil.

Missionary Sisters of Mary Immaculate

This African Institute was born in Equatorial Guinea under the loving concern of the Sons of the Heart of Mary and the Missionary Sisters of the Immaculate Conception (Conceptionists). Its founder, Fr. Armengol Coll Armengol, Claretian, first Apostolic Vicar, and Imelda Makole, its foundress, communicated their spirit to the first Sisters, Regina, Clotilde, Eugenia and Felisa. The Institute was born on 7 October 1909.

Fr. Armengol was so busy with his pastoral visitations and the care of the entire Church of Guinea, that he could not personally attend to the formation of the Sisters. For this reason, he entrusted this task to Fr. Cyril Montaner Fabr . At this time they were still known as “*Auxiliary Sisters of the missions.*”

Their mission was to evangelise Africa, a continent of poor, alienated, dispossessed and humble people. To this end, they were to collaborate with all those who seek the transformation of the world in accordance with the designs of God, especially with the bishops and missionaries of the young Churches of Africa. They collaborate with human and Christian formation of African women, and prepare them for their mission in the ecclesial community and in the world.

INSTITUTES RELATED TO FR. CLARET

Carmelite Sisters of Charity

Saint Joaquina de Vedruna founded the Institute in 1826. Claret met her when he was still a student. The foundress asked him to examine the Rules. He also worked towards the definitive approval of their Constitutions and was the Director of the Institute until he was substituted by Fr. Stephen Sala. The basic work of the Institute is centred on education and health.

Sisters Adorers Handmaids of the Blessed Sacrament and of Charity

This Congregation was founded by St. Michaela of the Most Blessed Sacrament. Fr Claret was her neighbour and spiritual director in Madrid. He advised her to write her autobiography and to maintain her friendship with Queen Isabel II. He encouraged the Institute and collaborated in its foundation in 1950, giving his approval to the Constitutions. In 1964 Paul VI made St. Anthony M. Claret the principal Patron of the Institute. The apostolate of the Sisters Adorers is basically focused on the re-education and re-insertion of young girls afflicted by problems of marginalisation, but they also engage in education and attention to rest homes.

Missionary Handmaids of the Immaculate Heart of Mary

Maria Esperanza González y Puig founded this Institute in L rida, Spain, in 1862. As early as 1846, in the course of a mission that Fr. Claret gave in that city, he had a decisive influence in her Cordimarian spirituality. Later on, in Madrid, he was consulted through Fr. Joseph Escol  regarding the intentions of Mother Esperanza. At the beginning Fr. Claret was reluctant to give his support to a new foundation, since there were already many institutes with the same aims. However, during a visit to L rida in 1864 he showed himself in favour of the new Institute. At present, the aim of the

Missionary Handmaids is the education of children and young girls and the protection and re-education of estranged children and young girls.

Daughters of Christ the King

They were founded by Fr. Joseph Gras y Granollers towards 1887 in Granada, Spain. They were influenced by Fr. Claret through their founder who frequently consulted him about his founding projects and received encouragement and advice through numerous letters. This Institute works mainly in the field of education, as well as in the university and parish milieu and in foreign missions.

Handmaids of Jesus of Charity

Their foundress, St. Mary of the Heart of Jesus, approached Fr. Claret regarding her doubts about her vocation. After hearing her in general confession, as she herself tells, he guided her in her vocation and predicted the role she would play in the Church. In 1871 she founded the Congregation in Bilbao, Spain. The specific aim of the Institute is the assistance to the sick in their homes, in hospitals, clinics, dispensaries, rest homes for the elderly and day-care centres.

Sisters of St. Philip Neri

Fr. Claret was also involved in the foundation, consolidation and promotion of this Institute founded in Mataró, Spain, in 1858 by the brother-sister Mark and Gertrude Castañer. Ever since he preached a Lenten retreat in Mataró, Spain, in 1845, he kept a close friendship with both of them. In 1859 he gave his support to the foundation and in 1870, in Rome, he had the opportunity to stimulate them in their work, in spite of the persecution in Spain, encouraging them to spread beyond Mataró. At present their work evolves in the field of education, houses of spirituality, hostels for young girls and ladies, parish and social work, youth movements and prayer groups.

Missionary Sisters “Immaculate Heart”

Rev. Joachim Masmitjá, founder of this Institute, became acquainted with Fr. Claret in Olot, during a mission. Later on, after he founded the Institute in Olot in 1848, he always received the comfort and affection of the saint, who wrote to him several times encouraging him in his task of promoting the Institute. The basic work of the Institute centres in catechesis, Christian education and evangelisation, with special attention to estranged women.

Missionary Franciscan Sisters of the Mother of the Divine Shepherd

This Institute was born in Ripoll, Spain, in 1850. Both Fr. Joseph Tous and the Blessed Mary Ann Mogas had contacts with Fr. Claret. He, from their common origins in Sallent; she, later on, together with Fr. Sala. Both encouraged the two founders in the difficult task of forming and consolidating the foundation. At present the Missionary Franciscan Sisters carry out their mission in the fields of education, health and social assistance, rural parochial ministry and retreat houses.

Dominican Sisters of the Annunciata

They were born in Vic in 1856, under the impulse of their founder the Blessed Fr. Francis Coll, friend and companion of Fr. Claret. His influence in this Institute was not merely spiritual; he also made efforts to obtain the government approval for the Institute. From several letters to Fr. Coll we can obtain data regarding his invaluable interventions. The basic work of the Dominican Sisters of the Annunciata is focused on Christian education, presence in marginalised quarters and the missions.

Oblate Sisters of the Most Holy Redeemer

The founder of the Congregation, Msgr. Joseph Maria Benito Serra, Bishop of Daulia, kept correspondence with Fr. Claret regarding his intentions as a founder. In 1862 they had an interview. According to a letter of Benito Serra to the foundress of the Oblate Sisters, Antonia Maria de Oviedo, the three-hour conversation, was about the foundation of the Benedictines. However, there is no doubt that it had something to do with the foundation of the Oblates themselves, who were founded two years after this conversation.

Daughters of Mary, Sisters of the Pious Schools

There is no evidence of any personal relationship of Fr. Claret with the foundress, the St. Paula Montal, even though she was a Catalanian. However, it is known that, during the life of the foundress, he did have some influence in the convent of St. Elizabeth of this Institution in Madrid. In fact, during the time that Fr. Claret stayed in the Montserrat Hospital at the Plaza Antón Martín, every year he gave Spiritual Exercises to the Sisters in that convent while the foundress was there.

Sons of the Holy Family and Missionary Daughters of the Holy Family

When St. Joseph Manyanet, founder of the Sons of the Holy Family and of the Missionary Daughters of the Holy Family, was beneficiary of the collegiate church of Tremp, he had relations with Bishop Caixal and with the Claretian Missionary Sisters. For this reason, there is no doubt that he also had personal relationship with Fr. Claret. From a letter to Fr. Francis Naval in 1900, even though it is unsigned, we can infer that he knew Fr. Claret, even ate with him several times, and consulted him about matters of importance, some of them related to his foundation.

School of Christ

It's an old Institute founded definitely in 1953 by Juan Bautista Feruza, of the Oratory of Saint Philip Neri, who was the Administrator of the Hospital of the Italians in Madrid. This institution was composed of priests and lay people and had some constitutions approved by the Archbishop of Toledo. Father Claret lived for two years in this Hospital from 1857 to 1859. In this epoch and after, not only he was a member of the School but he gave new decisive impulse in Madrid. The aim was to aspire to the fulfillment of the will of God according to the proper state, and to practice works of charity.

INSTITUTES RELATED TO THE CLARETIAN MISSIONARIES

Missionary Sisters of Charity, Daughters of the Immaculate Heart of Mary

Mother Mary Güell, native of Valls, Spain, founded this Institute in 1899 in Cervera (Lérida), Spain, under the direction of Fr. Francis Naval. The Claretians have always accompanied them in their spiritual itinerary. Their Constitutions and congregational documents are inspired in their own spirit. The Cordimarian Sisters, whose specific charism is the practice of charity, have opted for the most destitute members of society: the sick, the elderly and children, as their preferential subjects. They are spread throughout Spain, Brazil, France, Portugal and Italy.

Missionary Sisters of the Immaculate Conception (Conceptionists)

Their foundress, Blessed Carmen Salles y Barangueras was born in Vic in 1848. Being an adorer novice, she joined the Institute of Tertiary Dominican Sisters of the Annunciata. After a time of probation, and supported by Bishop Manuel Gómez Salazar, she founded the Conceptionist Sisters in 1892. They have Fr. Claret as the special Protector of their Institute, and there has always been a fraternal relationship between them and the Congregation of Claretian Missionaries. For this reason in 1954 they were granted a Letter of Kinship by the latter.

Missionary Sisters of the Immaculate Conception

They were founded in Mataró, Spain, by M. Alfonsa Cavin Millot, a native of France. In 1884, in answer to a request made by Fr. Joseph Xifré, they went to the mission of Guinea, where they entered into a deep contact with the Claretian Missionaries. They received the Letter of Kinship in 1954, and they still maintain a close fraternal relationship.

Sisters of the Immaculate Heart of Mary

Their mother house is in Porto Alegre, Brazil. They are dedicated to teaching. They also received their Letter of Kinship in 1954 and still keep constant communication with the Claretian Missionaries of Brazil.

Missionary Sisters of Mary Immaculate and Saint Catherine of Siena

They are also known as “Missionary Sisters of Mother Laura,” from the name of their founder, Blessed Laura Montoya. In 1924, Mother Laura found in Fr. Ezekiel Valera the sure orientation she needed to carry out her missionary project. Later on they maintained constant communication, above all with Cardinal Larraona. They collaborate with the Claretian Missionaries, especially in Darien and Chocó. In 1985 they were granted the Letter of Kinship.

Handmaids of the Mother of God

In 1984 the Letter of Kinship was granted to this Institute founded in Colombia, due to the spiritual affinity that unites both Congregations. The foundress, Mother Elisa Jaramillo, for many years had Fr. Martin Jové, a missionary in Colombia and Venezuela, as spiritual director. From him she received enlightenment for her own life and for the foundation of her Institute. Subsequently, the Claretians continued to be their assistants and advisers.

“Follow Me”

“Follow Me” had its origin in an agreement made by some lay persons in 1965 during a Mass celebrated in the Catacombs of St. Calixtus in Rome. On that occasion they agreed to constitute, under the leadership of Fr. Anastasio Gutiérrez, cmf, a lay association for human and Christian promotion. The soul of the group was Paula Majocchi who, in her classes, had contrived to arouse in some girls the interest for a committed life. In 1984 it received the definitive pontifical approval. In line with the new Code it adopted the form of mixed private, lay association of pontifical right. It is not an Institute of consecrated life. Presently it has groups in Italy, Spain, Albany, and it is spreading through Africa and Latin America.

Miles Iesu

Miles Iesu is a family of faith, made up of two independent branches (masculine and feminine); it was founded in the United States in 1964 by Father Alfonso María Durán, claretian, who accepted the challenge of forming dynamic catholic leaders. Members are celibates, priests and lay people who live in Christian houses of formation; also by single or married members who live in their proper homes; by priests and affiliated diocesan priests. They work in USA, Mexico, Italy, Puerto Rico, India, Nigeria, Poland, Cheq Republic and Ukrain.

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CORDIMARIAN MISSIONARY SISTERS

Monasterio, F.: *"Almas heroicas"* [Heroic souls], 1964.

APPENDICES

GENERAL CHAPTERS OF THE CONGREGATION

City	Date	Members	President	Themes
1. Vic	28- 5-1859	9	A. Claret	Constitutions
2.Barcelona	7- 7-1862	11	A. Claret	New CC. & Dir.
3.Vic	3- 7-1864	10	A. Claret	Definitive CC.
4.Barcelona	9- 7-1876	9	J. Xifré	Life and Apost.
5.Madrid	8- 6-1888	11	J. Xifré	Revision
6.Cervera	3- 9-1895	11	J. Xifré	Div. of Provinc.
7.St.Domingo	15- 3-1896	10	J. Xifré	Our own Epacta
8.Vic	19-12-1899	9	C. Serrat	Nº of Gen. Cons.
9.La Selva	24- 4-1904	15	C. Serrat	Betica. 3 Vicar.
10.Aranda	5- 6-1906	19	M. Alsina	Cuasiprovinces
11.Vic	15- 4-1912	28	M. Alsina	Elections
12.Vic	15- 8-1922	30	A. Naval	OSG.Amer. Prov.
13.Roma	15- 3-1934	43	N. García	Elections
14.Albano	30-11-1937	40	N. García	New See. Fundus
15.Castel G.	30- 4-1949	44	N. García	Claretian.
16.Roma	23- 4-1961	42	Schweiger	Claret Collab.
17.Roma	1- 9-1967	61	Schweiger	Renewal
18.Roma	1- 9-1973	75	A. Leghisa	Revision of CC.
19.Roma	3- 9-1979	78	A. Leghisa	Rev. CC. MCT.
20.Roma	25- 8-1985	78	G. Alonso	CPR.
21.Roma	26- 8-1991	80	G. Alonso	SW.
22.Roma	26- 8-1997	85	A. Bocos	PM.
23.Roma	19- 8-2003	76	A. Bocos	TML

IMPORTANT DOCUMENTS OF THE CONGREGATION

Agenda Claretiana: a biennial agenda in which are compiled statistical data, anniversaries, addresses and telephones of all the houses of the Congregation and of the entire Claretian family.

Annales Congregationis: this is the official bulletin of the Congregation that is sent to all its houses. In it are published the important documents of the Church and of our Institute that are of interest to all Claretians.

Autobiography: Autobiography of St. Anthony M. Claret. This is the life of our Fr. Founder, written by himself at the request of Fr. Xifré, General of the Congregation.

Bulletins: these are the magazines in which each Province of the Congregation publishes its news and the directives of the respective Provincial government.

Catalogue of the Congregation: this is a book containing the most important personal data of each living member of the Congregation, arranged in alphabetical order. It also includes the complete statistical list of the Provinces and of the state of the Congregation.

Circulars: these are exhortations, in the style of pastoral letters, written by the Superiors General for all the members of the Congregation.

Claretian Calendar: a collection of histories of claretian missionaries and other events related with the claretian charism, distributed along the year.

Constitutions: the fundamental norms of our Congregation. The original text was drafted by our Fr. Founder and was approved by the Church. In the course of time they have been modified or renewed. They contain the charism of our Congregation in the Church.

Directory: this is the book of our own legislation. In it are gathered the practical norms and rules of governance by which we are to be guided in keeping with the C.I.C. (Code of Canon Law).

Chapter Documents: these are the documents emanated from General or Provincial Chapters of the Congregation.

The Claretian Mission: is an annual publication that compiles particular aspects of the Mission that is being carried out in the Congregation.

Claretian Necrology: this is the Catalogue that contains the name, place and date of the death of all the deceased members of the Congregation.

NUNC: is the publication that gathers the main news and information of the entire Congregation. Its name is the acronym of "Nuntii de Universa Nostra Congregatione".

Formation of Missionaries: or General Plan of Formation for the whole Congregation.

Studia Claretiana: a publication of themes related to Fr. Claret and to the Congregation in general.

SOCIAL COMMUNICATION MEDIA

IMPORTANT PERIODICAL PUBLICATIONS

COUNTRY	CITY	ORGANISM	TITLE
Argentina	Humahuaca	Betica	Animadores
Argentina	Cordoba	Argentina-Urug.	Anatélei
Brazil	São Paulo Curitiba	Brazil Brazil	Ave María Studium
Chile	Santiago de Chile	Chile	Puelche
India	Bangalore	Bangalore-Chen	Sanyasa
Italy	Rome	General Gov.	Claretianum Comment. pro Religiosis
Italy	Lecco	Italy	MC
Mexico	Mexico	Mexico	Presencia Apostólica
Philippines	Manila	Philippines	Religious Life in Asia
Poland	Wroslaw	Poland	ZYCYE
Portugal	Lisboa	Portugal	Onda Claretiana
Spain	Colmenar Viejo	Santiago	Diálogo Filosófico
	Madrid	Santiago	Ephem. Mariologicae Vida Religiosa
	Madrid	Santiago	Iris de Paz
United States	Chicago	USA West	Nuestra parroquia U.S. Catholic

PRINTING HOUSES

COUNTRY	CITY	ORGANISM	TITLE
Brazil	São Paulo	Brasil	Gráfica Claret
Portugal	Carvalhos	Portugal	Gráfica Claret

PUBLISHING HOUSES

COUNTRY	CITY	ORGANISM	TITLE
Argentina	Buenos Aires	Argentina-Uruguay	Editorial Claretiana
Brazil	São Paulo	Brazil	Ave María
China	Macau	East Asia	Pastoral Bible F.
India	Bangalore Chennai	Bangalore Chennai	Claretian Publicat. Claretian Publicat.
Nigeria	Owerri	Nigeria	Claretian Publicat.
Philippines	Quezon City	Philippines	Claretian Publicat.
Poland	Warsaw	Poland	Publicac.Claretianas
Russia	Krasnoyarsk	Krasnoyarsk	Claretianum
Spain	Barcelona	Catalonia	Editorial Claret
Spain	Madrid	Santiago	Public. Claretianas
Tanzania	Dar es Salaam	Chennai	Claretian Public.

BOOKSTORES

COUNTRY	CITY	ORGANISM	TITLE
Argentina	Buenos Aires	Argentina-Uruguay	Editorial Claret
Brazil	São Paulo	Brazil	Editora Ave María
India	Chennai Ranchi Bangalore	Chennai Chennai Bangalore	Claretian Public. Claretian Public. Claretian Public.
Philippines	Quezon City	Philippines	Claretian Publicat.
Portugal	Carvalhos	Portugal	Claret
Spain	Barcelona	Catalonia	Editorial Claret
Sri Lanka	Colombo	Germany	Claretian Public.
Tanzania	Dar es Salaam	Chennai	Claretian Public.

CLARETIAN PRESENCE IN THE HIERARCHY OF THE CHURCH

Cardinals:

José Saraiva Martins, Tit. of Tuburnuca. Ex-Prefect of the Congregation for the Saints Causes.

Archbishops

Fernando Sebastián, Archbishop Emeritus of Pamplona (Spain).

Bishops

Plácido Rodríguez, Residential Bishop of Lubbock (USA).

Juan Matogo, Residential Bishop of Bata (Equatorial Guinea).

Angel Garachana, Residential Bishop of San Pedro Sula (Honduras)

Rubén González, Residential Bishop of Caguas (Puerto Rico)

Gaspar Quintana, Residential Bishop of Copiató (Chile)

Óscar J. Vélez, Residential Bishop of Valledupar (Colombia)

Manuel A. Mendes, Residential Bishop of Sao Tomé e Príncipe.

Jorge Iván Castaño, Auxiliary Bishop of Medellín (Colombia).

Rómulo Emiliani, Auxiliary Bishop of San Pedro Sula (Honduras).

Juan J. Pineda, Auxiliary Bishop of Tegucigalpa (Honduras).

Javier Travieso, Auxiliary Bishop of Trujillo (Peru).

Pedro Hernández, Apostolic Vicar of Darien (Panama).

Pedro M^a Olmedo, Prelate of Humahuaca (Argentina)

Alfredo Mario Expósito, Bishop Emeritus of Zárate (Argentina).

Manuel Revollo, Auxiliary Bishop Emeritus of the Military Ordinary (Bolivia).

Pedro M^a Casaldáliga, Prelate Emeritus of São Félix (Brazil).

Carlos M^a Ariz, Bishop Emeritus of Colón-Cuna Yala (Panama).

Luis Gutiérrez, Bishop Emeritus of Segovia (Spain).

STATISTICS OF THE CONGREGATION

Year	Houses	Bishops	Priests	Students	Brothers	Novices	TOTAL
1849	-	1	6	-	-	-	7
1858	-	1	12	-	-	-	13
1864	-	1	33	4	22	-	60
1871	-	-	44	12	30	16	102
1872	-	-	57	16	33	-	106
1876	14	-	92	15	50	60	217
1877	15	-	100	27	65	61	253
1878	16	-	117	41	71	99	328
1880	21	-	129	69	108	84	390
1882	22	-	153	107	150	98	508
1883	25	-	161	151	160	105	577
1884	29	-	164	161	203	113	641
1885	32	-	171	199	241	121	732
1886	37	-	196	243	265	122	826
1887	38	-	204	245	295	164	908
1889	38	-	238	302	337	92	969
1890	39	-	255	299	352	107	1.013
1891	40	-	281	310	371	125	1.087
1895	50	-	252	370	396	126	1.144
1900	60	-	463	430	475	108	1.476
1901	62	-	476	434	439	-	1.349
1903	69	-	523	435	479	85	1.522
1905	78	-	631	363	492	75	1.561

1907	81	-	664	342	484	83	1.573
1908	100	-	735	290	505	100	1.630
1909	108	-	760	285	509	95	1.649
1911	112	-	810	278	536	85	1.709
1913	116	-	829	297	527	83	1.736
1918	-	1	875	398	537	112	1.923
1921	-	2	916	392	542	78	1.930
1924	151	3	991	322	520	91	1.927
1926	177	5	1.060	374	546	116	2.101
1928	192	6	1.092	447	556	154	2.255
1931	203	6	1.186	574	609	134	2.509
1935	204	7	1.263	576	587	134	2.567
1939	218	7	1.302	358	502	123	2.292
1947	232	8	1.369	594	510	172	2.653
1950	241	7	1.454	676	501	160	2.798
1955	267	8	1.631	754	518	240	3.151
1960	296	9	1.705	962	561	227	3.464
1970	349	11	2.046	721	507	130	3.415
1976	367	11	1.952/2	340	429	149	2.883
1982	431	12	1.907/3	500	362	142	2.926
1988	394	18	1.882/3	598	333	188	3.022
1995	336	18	2.001/2	492	277	104	2.894
1997	356	18	1.981/2	488	271	134	2.894
2001	429	15	2.020/3	636	265	136	3.075
2003	462	15	2.027/4	633	239	145	3.063

LATEST STATISTICS BY MAJOR ORGANISMS (2008)

Organismos	Ca- sas	Ob.	Sac.	Diac.	HH.	Est..	Nov.	Total
África Central	12		58		6	61	8	133
Antillas	11	1	37		1	13	3	55
Argentina-Uruguay	13	1	58	1	7	6	2	75
Bangalore	24		96			41	1	138
Bética	20	1	122		15	5	2	145
Bolivia	6	1	24		1	8		34
Brasil	24		105	1	9	11	1	127
Canadá	4		18		3			21
Cataluña	11		66		16	4		86
Centroamérica	15	4	90		2	13		109
Chennai	21		101			68	10	179
Chile	9	1	24		1	2		28
Colombia Occidental	18	2	62		9	12	4	89
Colombia Or-Ecuador	15		44		7	19	3	73
Deutschland	11		57		7	21		85
East Asian Delegation	10		31		2	10	1	44
East Nigeria	16		127		2	92	12	233
Euskal Herría	10		60	1	9	2		72
France	4		13		3			16
Guinea Ecuatorial	9	1	30			12	3	46
Indonesia-Timor Or.	7		34		1	74	10	119
Italia	5		24		1	3		28
México	13		58		4	1		63
North East India	12		34			12	7	53
Perú	8		32		2	3		37
Philippines	12		50		1	23	3	77
Polska	13		65		10	13	6	94
Portugal	13	2	61		7	10	3	83

Saint Thomas Del.	17		70			51	12	133
Santiago	47	4	289		48	6	1	348
United K-Ireland	6		14		1			15
USA East	9	1	35		4	8		48
USA West	8		55		6		1	62
Venezuela	9		25		1	8		34
West Nigeria	7		20		1	21		42
Casas Generalicias	9							
Total:	458	19	2.089	3	187	633	93	3.024

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