

BROTHERS OF THE CHRISTIAN SCHOOLS



LASALLIAN SAINTS

OF YESTERDAY AND... TOMORROW



Rodolfo Cosimo Meoli, FSC
Postulator General

2nd edition



LASALLIAN SAINTS

OF YESTERDAY AND...

TOMORROW





LASALLIAN SAINTS OF YESTERDAY AND ...TOMORROW

A gallery of Lasallian saints who represent only a part of that set of examples of human richness - immense and very different - that comes from the imitation of a unique model: Christ. They range from very captivating personalities (Miguel, Raphaël-Louis, Exupérien,...) to the “everyday saints” (Benildus, Mutien, Gregorio,...) and then to those who signed their fidelity to Jesus Christ with their blood (Solomon, Jaime Hilario, James Miller,.).

Are the saints merely leftovers from the past and useless today, or on the contrary, do we need models of lives full of meaning, today more than ever? It is up to the reader to think about it and to provide the answer.

Rome, May 15th 2007

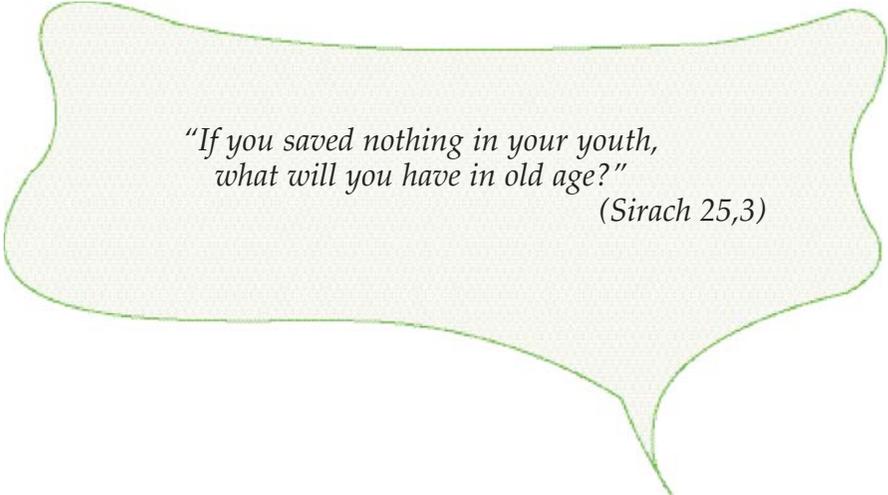
In the Institute: Feast of St. John Baptist de la Salle

2nd edition: November 1st, 2013

The known stories of holy Brothers are many, but much more numerous are those stories written only in heaven. These represent a secret treasure, on which the Institute has relied since the time of Saint John Baptist de La Salle. They are an underground spring which flows into the furthest and least known corners of our Institute's map.

It would be good to relate the unknown holiness of the dozens of Brothers who never went beyond an everyday existence and who passed all of their lives unknown and unsung, making the ordinary actions of each day a masterpiece; their total self-giving and love of God, their food; their sacrifices and self-restraint, their daily act of worship.

This would be important and supply us with a good model, but it is not possible in a booklet like this. It is only right, however, before bringing forward some of the lives known to us, to pay tribute, recognition and praise to all of our "unknown saints" who have made a precious contribution to the remarkable history of our Congregation. Their holiness, even if it never makes it to the altar, has transformed many apparently ordinary lives into masterpieces of grace and has attracted so many blessings on the apostolic labours of all. On the other hand, if we were to compare the lives of these men of God with those of our saints officially beatified or canonized, we would find that the patterns they followed were the same, and that the choices, the lifestyles and their response to the call of grace were similar.



*"If you saved nothing in your youth,
what will you have in old age?"*
(Sirach 25,3)

SAINT JOHN BAPTIST DE LA SALLE

Here is a saint who, though he lived between the 17th and 18th centuries, has much to teach Catholics of today. First of all, there was his intuition that education is everyone's right, a right that is as valid today as at any other time, even if those receiving the education are poor. Second, that schooling is a very serious matter, requiring people who are very well prepared once they choose to become teachers.

Born into a noble family on 30th April 1651, following the custom of his time for those aspiring to the priesthood, he was tonsured at the age of 11, installed as a canon at 16, a Master of Arts at 17 and a priest at 27. But he was not a priest pre-cast for a career that was chosen for him by others. De La Salle took his vocation very seriously, enthusiastically, and full of faith. He encountered well-meaning persons, keen on helping poor young people, but he soon realized that these well-meaning persons were inadequately prepared and were disorganized. He helped them create a community of teachers who would be inspired by Christians ideals, ideals that would help them understand the nature of a good school. But he soon ran into the short-sightedness of the clerical establishment, especially because his plan relied on lay religious – a



kind of heresy in those days and something which also anticipated Vatican II's insights by nearly three centuries.

To free himself from every hindrance, de La Salle resigned his canonry, distributed his wealth to the poor, made a vow to beg for his food if need be, and decided to live in common with the teachers in order to truly form them. That is how the Brothers of the Christian Schools came into being. To ensure that they stayed close to the common people and to their culture, he even forbade the Brothers to study Latin, the language of clerics and those in advanced positions.

He underwent much suffering in order to see his plan grow and develop, both because he remained faithful to the Pope (and this was a time of rampant Gallicanism) and because of the novelty of his schools, places where languages, commerce and technical drawing were taught.

Because of the machinations of the Writing Masters, whose monopoly in teaching writing was challenged by De La Salle's schools, and the opposition of other vested interests in society, De La Salle's leadership was disputed at the same time that some of his closest Brothers from the early foundation abandoned him. He accepted these and other crosses that followed. He died believing with serenity that this work was God's will. Time was to prove him right. He was beatified in 1888, canonised in 1900 and proclaimed Patron of teachers in 1950.

Angelo Montonati ()*



*With the authorization of the author

SAINT JOHN BAPTIST DE LA SALLE

1651 - 1719

Principal events of his life

- 30.04.1651 Born in **Rheims** (France) of Louis de La Salle, magistrate and Nicole Moët de Brouillet. First-born of 11 children (8 boys and 3 girls); received his primary education within his family.
- ? 09.1661 Enrolled at the Collège des Bons Enfants:
- Teaching is done via Latin; Greek is studied also.
- Obtains his Maître-es-Arts.
- 07.01.1667 He is named Canon of the Rheims cathedral.
- 18.10.1670 He enrolls at the Seminary of St. Sulpice, in Paris and follows courses in theology at the **Sorbonne**.
- 20.07. 1671 His mother dies (at the age of 38!).
- 09.04.1672 His father also dies (at the age of 47!). John is obliged to return to Rheims to take care of his siblings and of the family business.
- .. .08. 1675 Obtains a Graduate degree in Theology.
- 26.01.1678 Completes a Doctorate in Theology.
- 09.04.1678 De La Salle is ordained as a **priest**. His spiritual directors were wise and holy priests: **Nicolas Roland**, founder of the Sisters of the Child Jesus, and after Nicolas Roland's death, **Nicolas Barré**, a Minim priest; he too was the Founder of a Congregation of Sisters.
- 09.03.1679 De La Salle meets **Adrien Nyel** at the door of the Sisters of the Child Jesus convent. Nyel came from Rouen, carrying a letter of recommendation from a cousin of John's, Madame **Maillefer**. John promises Nyel to help him in the setting up of schools for poor boys in Rheims.
- 1679 - 1682 Landmarks in the foundation of this new society of the Christian Schools:
- a) In order to improve both the minds and the manners of Mr. Nyel's teachers, and to train them morally, John rents a house close to his own for them in 1679, since Nyel himself tended to be constantly on the move.
 - b) **June 24th 1680**: John offers these same teachers the hospitality of his own home and invites them to sit at table with his family. It is this date that is considered as the **begin-**

ning of the Congregation of the Brothers of the Christian Schools.

c) De La Salle assumes complete responsibility for these teachers. He rented a house at Rue Neuve and he himself went to live with them (June 24th 1682).

1683 - 1684 **Radical Option for God:** He becomes aware that he could not reconcile the duties of a Canon with those of directing and guiding the teachers. Following the advice of Father Barré:

- **he renounces his canonry** in favour of a poor priest; a *Te Deum* with the Brothers...and *a storm* within the De La Salle family followed this event.

- **He gives away his patrimony to the poor** (autumn 1684, while a serious famine hits that part of France). His patrimony was not used to endow the new foundation. He chose to rely fully on Providence.

10.06.1686 De La Salle goes on pilgrimage to Our Lady of Liesse (40 Km. from Rheims) and makes a vow of Obedience with 12 of his disciples.

27.02.1688 First school in **Paris:** Rue Princesse, in the parish of St. Sulpice.

1689 – 1690 Misunderstandings with members of the clergy... A number of his own Brothers walk out on him.

21.11.1691 **He makes "The Heroic Vow"** together with Nicolas Vuyard and Gabriel Drolin. They bind themselves "to maintain the schools, even if we were obliged to beg for alms and to live on bread alone".

06.06.1694 **De La Salle makes perpetual vows** together with 12 Brothers.

... 09. 1702 Sends Brothers Gabriel and Gerard Drolin to **Rome** in order to:

- witness to his fidelity to the Roman Church (he used to sign his correspondence "Roman priest")

- open a "papal school" in Rome.

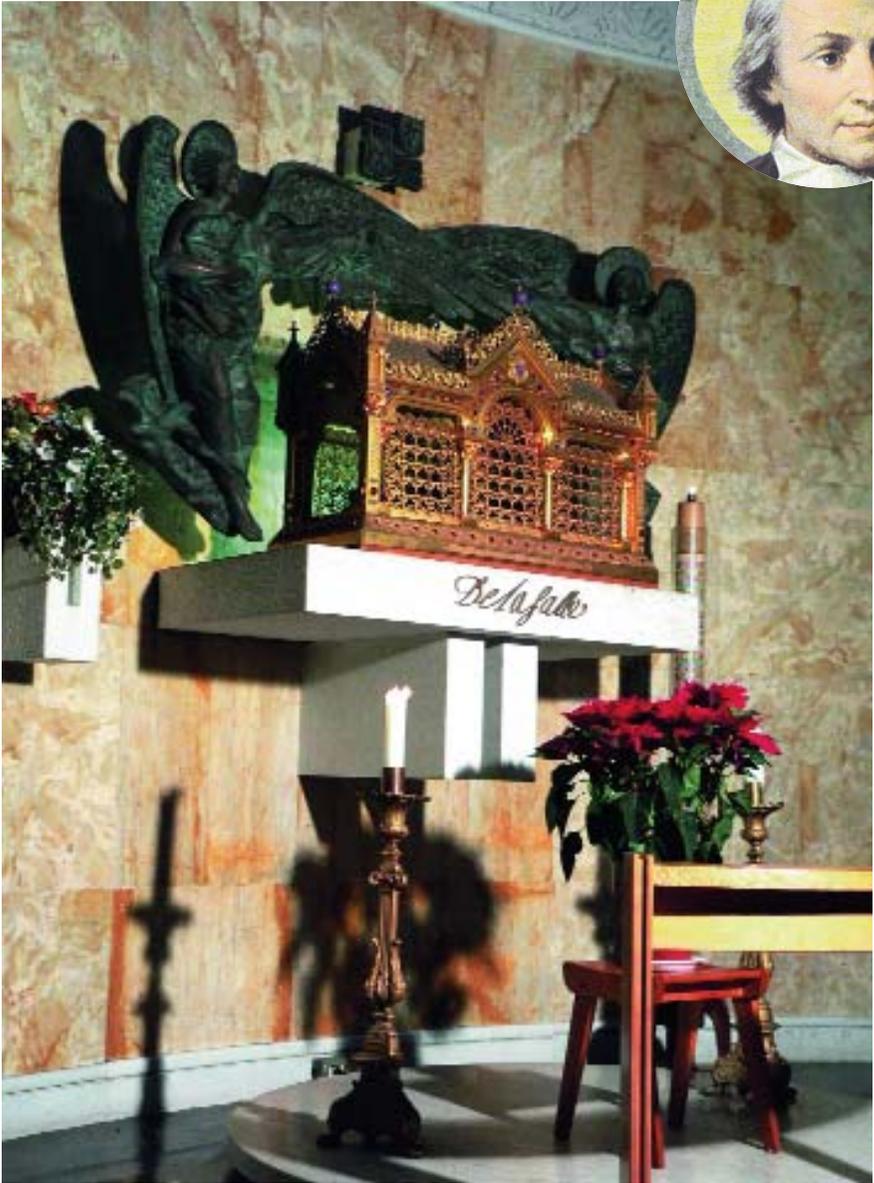
1703 - 1705 The onset of a crop of difficulties:

- with members of the clergy: a new Superior is imposed on the Brothers, and the Brothers refuse to have him!

- with the writing masters who attack his schools and destroy its furniture...

- with the municipal authorities of Paris who fine him and forbid him to open new communities of teachers.
- ?...08.1705 John transfers the Novitiate (training school for young Brothers) to **Saint-Yon**, on the outskirts of **Rouen**.
- ... 1705 Good news from Rome: Bro. Gabriel is finally appointed as a teacher, although without a fixed post, without a salary, but in charge of a class at "Agli Otto Cantoni" (now Largo dei Lombardi).
- 1705 - 1706 Opening of schools in the South of France: Avignon, Grenoble, Marseille...
- 1709 Further good news: Bro. Gabriel has now been given charge of a Papal School in Via dei Cappuccini.
- 1711 De La salle travels to the south of France
- 1713 -1714 Once again difficulties and persecution...John withdraws from the public eye and seeks the peace of **Parménie**.
- ?...1714 The Brothers discover his whereabouts, order him to return and to resume direction of the Society.
- 22.05.1717 The first General Chapter elects Brother Bartholomew as Superior, the first after De La Salle.
- 07.04.1719 De La Salle dies in **Rouen**, in the early morning of Good Friday.
- 26.01.1725 Pope Benedict XIII issues the Bull "*In apostolicae dignitatis solio*", approving the Society.
- 19.02.1888 Pope Leo XIII proclaims John Baptist de La Salle **Blessed**.
- 24.05.1900 Pope Leo XIII proclaims him a **Saint**.
- 15.05.1950 Pope Pio XII, proclaims him "Patron of All Teachers of Youth".

"Don't speak about me with nostalgia because I am gone; speak with gratitude, because I lived."
(L. Zukowskij)



Rome, Generalate FSC – Relics of St. John Baptist de La Salle



**NOTABLE
BROTHERS**

SAINT MIGUEL FEBRES CORDERO

Cuenca (Ecuador), 11.07.1854 – Premiá de Mar (Spain), 02.09.1910



Brother Miguel came from an upper middle class family in Ecuador, a family that did not appreciate the idea of one of its family members going off to join a religious Institute dedicated solely to teaching. This, they thought, would not allow him to follow a prestigious church career and would even exclude him from following some other honorable career such as that of a magistrate or a civil servant or a career in the army. His vocation as an educator began on the benches of the first school that the Congregation opened in Ecuador, thanks to the beneficial daily contact that he had with his teachers.

Brother Miguel was endowed with uncommon intelligence and wisdom. He understood the importance of education and decided to dedicate himself to it with all of his energy and without hesitation. "My mission needs two organs - Mother Teresa used to say - hands for serving and a heart for loving." In Brother Miguel's case, the "hands" were his extraordinary intelligence and his incredible capacity for work, including his full time teaching and at all levels. From the primary grades to higher classes, from military academy cadets to catechism in first communion classes, he succeeded in amassing a vast culture and in producing a considerable number of publications and textbooks (over a hundred titles)

which were used not only in Ecuador but also in other Latin America's countries. He lived completely for God and for his students. Roberto Espinosa, the esteemed Ecuadorian professor, wrote: "Brother Miguel has been the best promoter of education in Ecuador, as a teacher, a headmaster and a writer."¹ His cultural and pedagogical contributions earned him membership in the National Academy of Ecuador and a Fellowship in the Royal Academy of Spain - this was on August 2nd 1892.

On that occasion he gave an Inaugural Lecture entitled "The influence of Christianity on morals, on the sciences, on letters and arts." From the theme that he chose for his inaugural lecture, one that would introduce him to his colleagues and to the academic community of his country, he showed who he was. Having learned the art of talking with God, he spoke of God and in the name of God! "This spontaneous and candid man, whom so many people everywhere missed, offers himself to you as a possible example of spiritual experience of undoubtable value and of great attraction, inviting you above all to love, because before being anything else, Brother Miguel was in love with God and with humanity, God's own image."²

The canonical process started by the diocese of Cuenca on January 19th 1925, led to his beatification on October 30th 1977 and later to his canonization on October 21st 1984.

We celebrate his liturgical feast on February 9th.

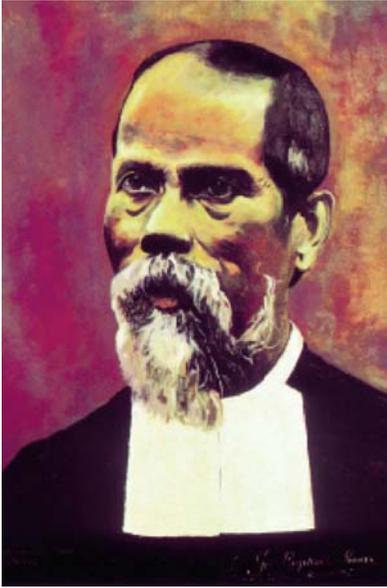


¹ Rivista Lasalliana, LI (1984) 4, 28.

² R. L. Guidi, *Un cuore per la scuola. Vita di Fratel Miguel delle Scuole Cristiane*, LIEF, Vicenza 1977, p. 141.

BLESSED BROTHER RAPHAËL-LOUIS RAFIRINGA

Antananarivo (Madagascar), ...? 1856 – Fianarantsoa, 05.19.1919



Brother Raphaël's life journey is not very different from that of the Ecuadorian Brother Miguel, of whom he was a contemporary, except that Brother Raphaël's life journey occurred in a totally different human, cultural, civil and religious context. Brother Raphaël was an authentic champion of the Catholic Faith in Madagascar.

He too belonged to what might have been called the middle-class of the time in Madagascar, in service to the royal family. He certainly had attractive prospects ahead of him. But God's plans and the young man's choices pointed in a different direction.

He too was the first student of the Brothers in that country. He too was endowed with a brilliant intelligence and a strong will, both of which helped him challenge his family's ambitions for him and become a disciple of those dedicated missionaries – admittedly somewhat unusual – who had arrived in the Island a little earlier. He insistently asked to join them. The Brother who was responsible for accompanying him and forming him acceded to his request only after seven years' apprenticeship. And with a marvellous result!

The future Brother Raphaël-Louis matured quickly and grew culturally, religiously and humanly. He was to show his character as a teacher, a translator of Malagasy works into French works, and a writer of textbooks – in this work he was tireless. But a time came when, following riots and agitation for independence that rocked the Island, all foreign missionaries were expelled and Brother found himself elected *vox populi* as leader of the Island's Catholics. This was an unexpected role, and it turned out to be incontrovertible proof of his uncommon abilities: forming catechists, organizing meetings, gatherings and paraliturgies in all parts of the Island, composing pamphlets and compendia of Catholic doctrine, as well as writing hymns and poems. His influence was evi-

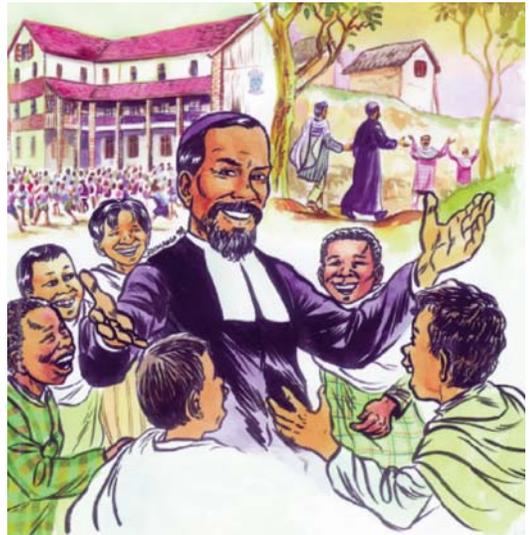
denced by the fact that when after three years' absence foreign missionaries were allowed to return, they found with amazement that the Catholic communities were quite numerous and that the people had as much fervor as when they had left them.

In recognition of his literary output, when the Academy of Madagascar was created in 1902 Brother Raphaël was immediately named as a member, and his portrait is part of the gallery of eminent citizens of the great Island.

But he was not spared a humiliating cross. He was accused unjustly by one of his former catechists as having belonged to a secret society to which a number of intellectuals also belonged. As such he was arrested and imprisoned. But his other followers rallied to the rescue and succeeded in having him acquitted, carrying him back to his community in triumph. The stay in the unhygienic prison cell, unfortunately, had an adverse effect on Brother Raphaël's health. To help him recover, he was sent to Fianarantsoa on the coast, but he did not recover, and it was there that he died on May 19th 1919.³

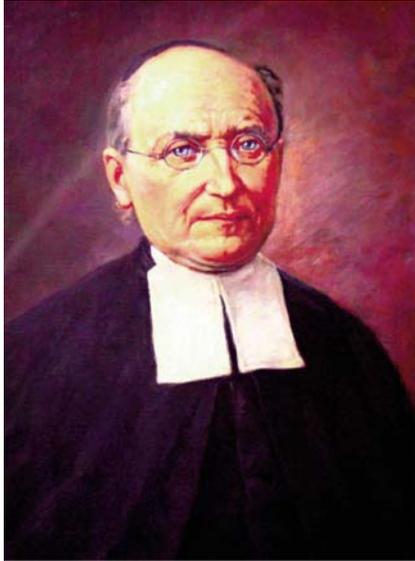
The canonical process, started in the diocese of Antananarivo on June 1st 1995, reached the final stage in Rome on December 17, 2007 with the "Decree on the heroic virtues", which gave him the title of Venerable. On January 17, 2009 the Decree on the miracle cleared the path for his beatification, which was celebrated with great solemnity in Antananarivo on June 7th, 2009, and which was attended by an enormous number of people.

His liturgical feast is celebrated on May 19th.



³ J.-L. C. Ramahery, *Le C.F. Raphaël-Louis Rafiringa*, Catholic Printing works, Antananarivo, 1989; R.Martin, *Le C.F. Raphaël-Louis Rafiringa des Écoles Chrétiennes (1854 – 1919), Contribution à une étude de sa vie* (A thesis, Faculty of Letters and Human Sciences of Madagascar, 1970).

VENERABLE BROTHER EXUPÉRIEN MAS
Poujol (Montpellier), 06.07.1829 – Paris, 01. 31.1905



Portrait by A. Mariani

There were some who considered him to be excessively strict, demanding, and insensitive. Maybe he was. He was certainly strict and exacting, primarily in regard to himself. Those who have examined the testimony of people who knew him well, and who have looked closely at his character as a man and as a religious, have also discovered many other qualities, qualities that place him among the outstanding figures of the Institute in the 19th century. Georges Rigault, who wrote a monumental history of the Institute of the Brothers of the Christian Schools (Librairie Plon, Paris, 1953), sees him above all as a promoter of “spiritual renewal.”⁴ A more recent publication, the work of the historian Gérard Cholvy, recognizes him as a “teacher of spiritual energy”.⁵ We should remember also that his influence was quite extensive likewise in

⁴ G. Rigault, *Un rénovateur spirituel*, Liget, Paris 1953.

⁵ G. Cholvy, *Un maître d'énergie spirituelle*, Salvator, Paris, 2008.

the social field. His vocation developed in an unusual way. The Mas family was well off, but their religious practice was tepid. Their plans for their eldest son Adrien had no religious dimension. To distract him from his religious inclinations, his father sent him to Nice to stay with a friend of the family. In this way the father thought that his son's vocation would weaken and would melt away when faced with the worldly luxuries and easygoing ways of the city. But exposing him to these allurements in no way affected Adrien's resolve, and when he returned to his native village he was even more determined to become a religious. This he did at the age of 18, becoming Brother Exupérien. He grew to be an excellent teacher of literature in the secondary school that the Brothers ran at Béziers. Later he was appointed Director of Novices in Paris, in rue Oudinot, and in 1873 he was called to shoulder even higher responsibilities. Subsequent appointments enabled him to devote himself more freely and more effectively. He was very interested in the improvement of training for young Brothers, for whom he set up an advanced Scholasticate. And Brothers who had several years of teaching behind them also joined these courses in order to update their knowledge, their teaching methods, and their religious studies. For Brothers who were older he set up a course of spirituality which still exists in the Institute, even if under another name and following a different methodology, modelled on the Jesuits' "third Year." He planned and inaugurated this course of spirituality for Brothers between the ages of 40 and 50, and he called it the "Second Novitiate." Its modern version is found in the Centre for International Lasallian studies (CIL).

Also noteworthy was the organisation he set up for lay collaborators in the 76 Brothers' schools in Paris at the time. In addition to organising regular retreats promoting their spiritual and Lasallian formation, he set up a kind of insurance company for them very much like those existing today.

During the Franco-Prussian war (1870 – 1871), Brother Exupérien was put in charge by the municipal authorities of the largest field hospital in Paris, both to set it up and run it. It was called the "grande ambulance de Longchamp." He mobilised hundreds of Brothers and other helpers to serve as nurses and stretcher bearers. He was also the brains and support behind several initiatives in the Paris region that benefitted young people from all walks of life. Among these:

- *The Seine youth clubs*: they operated in the Brothers' schools and offered a whole range of after-school activities;
- *The Saint Benedict Joseph Labre Society* for those who wanted more

than what the Youth clubs offered, and wanted to be better able to support others.

After some years the number of members rose to around 1,000. In the course of forty years, some 300 priestly and religious vocations were nurtured in its ranks, plus hundreds of truly Christian families, along with the founders of the CFTC (Confédération Française de Travailleurs Chrétiens - French Federation of Christian Workers), the French JOC (Jeunesse Ouvrière Chrétienne – Young Christian Workers), and the Wooden Cross Singers. And what were the pillars of their formation? Spiritual direction, frequent communion and an annual 3-day retreat.

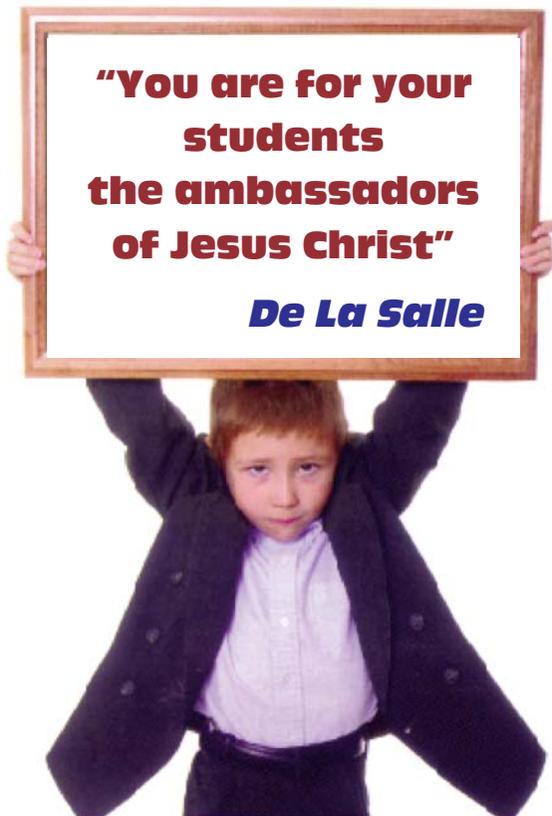
- *The Franks-Bourgeois Fellowship* and the St. Nicolas Fellowship. The first served young Catholic students belonging to the middle class; the second was established for young workers who were obliged to live away from their families;
- *The Maison d'Accueil*, a kind of Dining Club for business employees, in order to help them dine and meet in good company;
- *The Business and Industry employees Union*, the first Catholic trade Union in France, from which would grow the CFTC.



Rome, Generalate FSC - Sanctuary of St. John Baptist de La Salle

From 1897 to 1904 Brother Exupérien formed part of the Higher Council of Public Instruction, serving as a representative of non-State schools. The supernatural influence that he radiated broke down the resistance of some of the members of this national body and led to real conversions, as in the case of Xavier Marmier and François Coppée. On January 31st 1905, at the age of 76, Brother Exupérien passed away, mourned by many close to him, but also revered by many as a saint.

In 1922 his Cause of beatification and canonization was introduced in the diocese of Paris; In 1990 the Cause made a definite step forward with the publication of the decree of his heroic virtues and the title of Venerable.



VENERABLE BROTHER BERNARD – PHILIPPE FROMENTAL CAYROCHE

Chauvet (France), 06.27.1895 – Mexico City, 12.05.1978

Commonly known as *Hermano Juanito*

The foundation of the first Lasallian Congregation of Sisters – the Hermanas Guadalupanas de La Salle – came about because of the enterprising zeal of this religious. Born in France, he spent his formation years in Spain. He spent the following years in Cuba and Mexico, returning subsequently to France, where he spent 19 years in a kind of “exile”. Finally, he went back to Mexico, where he ended his life.



This Servant of God did not have an easy life, not only because of the misunderstandings and obstacles that accompanied his foundation, but also because several times he had to forsake people and places that were particularly dear to him. With these challenges came suffering, but also spiritual reinvigoration. He learned to treasure these crosses and to revise and evaluate his methods directly and humbly, to the point of obtaining full self-mastery...achieving a serenity that enabled him to bear both

moral and physical pain.

He was a religious who found strength in prayer, in interior tranquility, and in a faith that enabled him to overcome innumerable trials and to fully accept the orders of his canonical superiors as expressing the will of God himself. He never failed to respect his superiors nor to express his deep gratitude, when close to the end of his life, they allowed him to live close to “his” Sisters and to accept their loving care.

In Brother Juanito’s case we do not find the “classical” type of holiness, such as tradition might lead us to expect, but rather one that provides inspiration to the kind of faith that inspires us today, at grips with new problems. What we rediscover is a certain quality of neighbourli-

ness, of discovering others' needs. We might even discover the value of his "fault", if one might call by this name his free and easy adhesion to his superiors' directives; that refreshing embrace of the gospel of charity, of which we often speak, but to which, in practice, we do not give high priority. "By their fruits you shall know them" (Mt. 7, 20) It cannot be denied that his work has transformed hundreds of lives, lives that might have become lives full of faith, hope and charity, of dedication to others, but without purpose or focus. What we are referring to, of course, are the hundreds of excellent religious of the Congregation which Brother Juanito founded and which keeps on growing, having already sunk its roots into three Continents".⁶

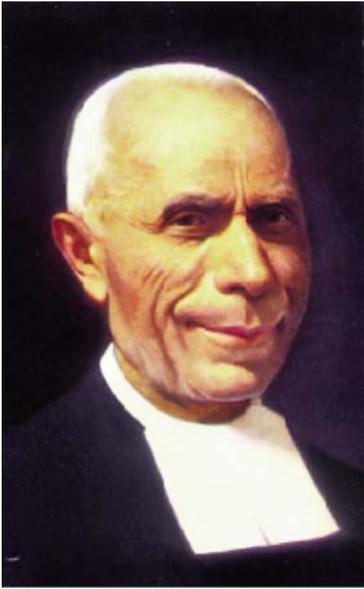
Brother Juanito died on December 5, 1978, seven days before the feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe, patron of Mexico, which he celebrated in heaven. But, before he closed his eyes, he had the joy of seeing the Congregation of the "Hermanas Guadalupanas de La Salle" approved by the Holy See on April 10th 1976. The two letters sent by him - one to the archbishop of Mexico City Card. Miguel Darío Miranda, the other to Pope Paul VI - asking for this recognition, are the only ones in which he calls himself clearly the founder.

The Cause, having reached Rome, had the theologians' examination on January 2012, followed by that of the cardinals and bishops. The Decree of his heroic virtues led him to the Venerability.

⁶ Cfr. L.Lauraire, F.Mazariegos, *Hermano Juanito*, Impresora Ideal, Ciudad de México 1996.

VENERABLE BROTHER TEODORETO GARBEROGLIO

Vinchio d'Asti (Italy), 02.09.1871 – Turin, 05.13.1954



In creating the “Unione Catechisti del SS.mo Crocifisso e di Maria Immacolata” Brother Teodoreto appears to be “the prophet newly-inspired,” having given the Church a religious family made up of laymen from every rank of society.

Without a shadow of doubt, he was a real prophet in promoting the laity. Vatican II was to do this with all its authority but would do it fifty years later! The phenomenon of secular Institutes was quite new in the Church’s life, and the novelty of his contribution was greater than first appears. At that time in the Church’s history, we had not yet witnessed any attempt to unite aspects of religious consecration with living in the world. “They live in the world, that is,

they are engaged in each and every work and business on the earth and in the ordinary circumstances of social and family life, which, as it were, constitute their very existence. There they are called by God, so that, being led by the Spirit of the Gospel, they may contribute to the sanctification of the world, as from within (LG, 31).

Lay people, living closely with other people, were able to show how they could be fully faithful to the Gospel without separating themselves from the world. They do so rather by acknowledging authentic Gospel values. In this way these lay people become bearers of light, and salt that gives taste, in the midst of their companions, those who are taken up with running human affairs, showing by means of their practice of poverty how one can use things without the heart becoming attached to them; how one cannot reconstruct the world unless one obeys the laws that God has implanted within the world; how all human love is worthless unless grafted to the love of God, and unless it is open to including all people as brothers and sisters.

Brother Teodoreto’s foundation is fully Lasallian. Former Postulator,

Brother Leone di Maria wrote: “Brother Teodoreto is the first and so far the only Brother who has attempted, and succeeded, in establishing an institution which in no way departs from the spirit of the Institute founded by De La Salle. On the contrary, one must assert with full conviction that it belongs fully and completely, since it expresses the quintessence of the original foundation. With his foundation, Brother Teodoreto brought to full fruition the enterprise of Christian education the holy Founder had set before the Brothers’ Institute, guiding the best disposed among the students to the high peaks of Christianity, namely the evangelical counsels; grounding them firmly in that full belonging to the Christian life that is consecration to God: pouring into them that sanctity he himself lived, the spirit of his religious family and his same passion of educator and catechist.

Looking upon Brother Teodoreto’s institution as if it stood at the periphery of the Lasallian project would be to disown it and to distort it. Whoever studies the subject intelligently will agree that his institution holds a central position, perhaps near the very top of the Lasallian project, crowning the splendid pyramid based on the solid ground of basic instruction and civil and religious education, and eventually reaching the heights of faith and love, of authentic holiness. Certainly not everything makes it to the top, but Brother Teodoreto has mapped a possible, although not easy, way. From the Lasallian school perspective, and standing next to its religious educators, we now see the nature of this fruitful offshoot, these lay religious, workers who are living in the midst of the world and who, within their own family, provide a bright catechetical flame, bringing light to all sorts of environments and professions.”⁷

The cause for his beatification and canonization was introduced in the diocese of Turin in 1961. On April 30th 1990, Pope John Paul II promulgated the “decree on the heroism of his virtues”, and declared Brother Teodoreto Venerable.

⁷ Fr. Leone di Maria, *Fratel Teodoreto*, A&C, Torino 1956, p. 209.

SERVANT OF GOD BROTHER NYMPHAS-VICTORIN ARNAUD
Onzillon (France), 09.07.1885 – San Juan de Puerto Rico, 04.16.1966



Soon after he joined to the Brothers, he was forced to go into exile, because of the religious persecution in France at the beginning of the 20th century. This was in 1905. In that year, the Brothers of the Christian Schools in France numbered 10,826 and they had 1,359 schools. A thousand of them were confiscated; the others continued to operate with “secularized” Brothers. Some 3,000 Brothers chose this “ambiguous” option in order to continue running some schools. About 2,500 Brothers went to retirement communities, and 1,500 left the Institute. The remaining 3,000 went abroad. To these groups we have to add the 350 Brothers who died, and the 450 called up for military service.

Brother Nymphas-Victorin was one of the 3,000 who chose to go abroad. He went first to Canada, but, after a brief stay in Montréal, offered to go and found new schools in Cuba. He did not think at the time that Cuba would become his country of choice and predilection.

Cuba welcomed him and it was there that he worked from 1905 until 1961, when a second persecution meant another and more bitter exile. In Cuba he had adapted himself to his new country in a marvellous way, and had created great enthusiasm among those he helped through his numerous apostolic activities. He founded:

- The La Salle Association in 1919
- The Federation of the Cuban Catholic Youth, in 1928. A Federation for both men and women, also in 1928.
- The University Catholic Hostel, in 1946
- The Catholic Family Movement in 1953.

They were all initiatives that had an enormous success and made him personally very popular. This success and popularity extended also to the avant-garde work promoted, in the absence of priests, by his fellow-

Brothers from abroad.

On the arrival of Fidel Castro in Cuba, he was exiled for the second time. From his second exile, after 1961, until his death, he devoted all his energy to trying to reorganize the various Associations among the Cuban refugees in New York, Miami and Puerto Rico.

He died in the latter country on April 16th 1966.

The diocesan enquiry, opened in San Juan de Puerto Rico in September 8th 2000, ended on January 8th 2003. At present, the “positio” document on his life, virtues and reputation of sanctity is at the Congregation of the Causes of the Saints in Rome.



Flag of the Acción Católica Cubana, designed by the Servant of God Hermano Victorino



“EVERYDAY” SAINTS

Side by side with the Brothers whom we mentioned earlier and who, thanks to their strong personality, marked the age in which they lived, there are others, also raised to the honours of the altars, but who took a more ordinary road. We could call them “everyday saints,” because they are less eye-catching, less extraordinary and for this reason, much closer to us. Their road to sanctity grew day by day, through the difficulties of community life: intolerance, antipathy, offences and rudeness, sorrows and opposition. All of them brought about acts of virtue, transforming what appeared as negative into grace, shadows into light. For them every difficulty provided an opportunity to master themselves; the humblest services were carried out as if they were the preferred ones, the more onerous tasks were carried out with total dedication.

In the case of all of these men and in the case of others also, it is their everyday holiness that impresses us. They transformed a simple existence, bound up with their school or town, and with the humdrum repetition of ordinary duties and actions, into a continuous gift of themselves to God and to others. “Holiness is not attached to extraordinary acts, but to common, everyday acts performed in an uncommon way”: these were the authoritative words with which Pius XI, as we have already recalled, endowed with a heroic quality “the wearisome tediousness of daily existence”, the “*terribile quotidianum*”.

SAINT BENILDE ROMANÇON

Thuret (France), 06.14.1805 – Saugues, 08.13.1862



He is the first of these everyday saints, canonized in 1967. He came from a farming family, those who earned heaven and their bread from the land. He lived during the Restoration times, with a war raging, while political storms shook Europe. None of this succeeded in shaking his total dedication to the one purpose in his life, his apostolic ministry in the primary schools of Aurillac, Limoges, Moulins, Clermont and Billom, before moving to Saugues, where he laboured for the last twenty years of his life.

Nothing very exciting marked his character, his intellect or his apostolic work. There is no grand apostolic undertaking to record; no learned speeches, no pedagogical or ascetical publications, no new foundations or reforms initiated. There was nothing special about him, one might say. Unbelievable, but true. This modest existence proved to be a serious obstacle to his canonization. I would like to quote here what Brother Leone Napione, Postulator at that time said when he introduced the new saint in the "aula magna" of Rome's Sacred Heart University, on October 28th 1967, on the eve of his canonization: "When Sainte Thérèse of Lisieux

was canonised, her 'little way' was not formally recognised. It was similar to the 'very little way' of Brother Benilde. It was then inevitable that the Promoter of the Faith, popularly called 'the devil's advocate,' should use this statement of 'nothing extraordinary' to deny the heroism of Brother Benilde's virtues. And with what ardour he did so ! That was his role, no doubt, but perhaps it was out of conviction that he raised this animadversion, or objection, at every stage of the process - in the introduction and then at the three successive stages. The defence lawyers used the cleverest pleading imaginable to oppose the objection: first one lawyer, then a second who finally gave up and was replaced by a third, who argued more boldly and mustered even stronger arguments. It was Pope Pius XI who saved the humble Brother Benilde from this so often repeated objection. He was a great Pope, one with eyes looking toward heaven and with his Alpine climber's feet firmly planted on the ground. It was he who made the proclamation, first in somewhat restrained words in the more intimate setting of the general Congregation, but later fully orchestrated in the public address of January 6th 1928. The Pope affirmed the possibility of reaching heroism by fulfilling perfectly one's daily duties. This truth had remained eclipsed until then. The Pope felt that it should be fully displayed, to shine for ever. In these words – I only quote the gist – Pope Ratti expressed himself:

*“What is extraordinary, great events, splendid enterprises – simply by becoming known arouse and awaken our best tendencies, acts of generosity, dormant energies often hidden deep in the soul... But what is common, what occurs everyday, what does not stand out, what is not brilliant, does not excite us and fascinate us. But the life of so many people is like that. It is usually woven around common, daily events. For this reason the Church appears to us very wise when we are invited to admire examples of the commonest and humblest everyday virtues, all the more precious because humble and common. How often do we have to face extraordinary events in life? Very seldom. Woe to us if holiness were to be tied solely to those extraordinary circumstances. What would most people do? And yet the call to holiness is made to all without distinction... Here then is the great lesson this humble Servant of God brings us once again: holiness is not attached to extraordinary acts, but rather to common, everyday acts performed in an uncommon way”.*⁸

In this way Brother Benilde, without intending to and without want-

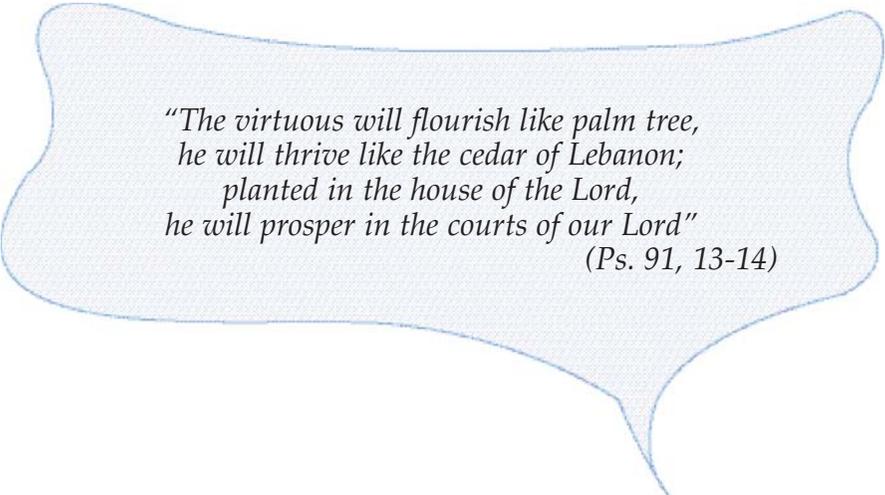
⁸ Rivista Lasalliana, XXXIV(1967) 4, 327.

ing to, furnished a great Pontiff with the opportunity to move in the direction of a better interpretation when it comes to valuing heroism through the practice of virtue – from one that is based on the exceptional and the extraordinary to one that is based on the normal and the commonplace.

In this way, holiness came to be presented as unsophisticated, as built into the very fabric of everyday life, family life, professional life, civil life, religious life. What a difference there lies between what we see and a reality that was extraordinary, as in Brother Benilde's case".⁹

His was a very long process. It started on November 23rd 1899 at Le Puy, France, and it was not until April 4th 1948 that he was beatified by Pius XII, and on October 29th 1967, he was canonized by Paul VI.

His liturgical feast is on August 13th.



*"The virtuous will flourish like palm tree,
he will thrive like the cedar of Lebanon;
planted in the house of the Lord,
he will prosper in the courts of our Lord"*
(Ps. 91, 13-14)

⁹ G. Savoré, L. Napione, *Il santo Fratel Benildo*, A&C, Milano 1967.

SAINT MUTIEN-MARIE WIAUX

Mellet (Belgium), 20.03.1841 – Malonne, 30.01.1917



This humble Belgian Brother followed the trail of the “everyday” saints. After his primary schooling, he worked at his father’s blacksmith business in Mellet. But this was not to be his life, because he felt attracted to the life of those teachers whom the Lord had brought into his life.

He joined the Brothers, but he realized that before engaging in the apostolate of education, he had to study. This was not his strong point. He did eventually obtain the necessary qualification to teach a class, but he did so at the risk of being shown the door should he prove to be unfit to teach. It was a hard trial, but he discovered those modest services that he could provide: supervision, supplementary lessons in design and music at the big college of Malonne, where he stayed from 1859 until his dying day. Supervision, rehearsals and prayer; these were the three occupations of his life, animated by that total love of God and neighbour that earned him, while he was still alive, the description of “the saint”, “the Brother who prays always”, “the ardent devotee of the Eucharist and of the Holy Mother”.

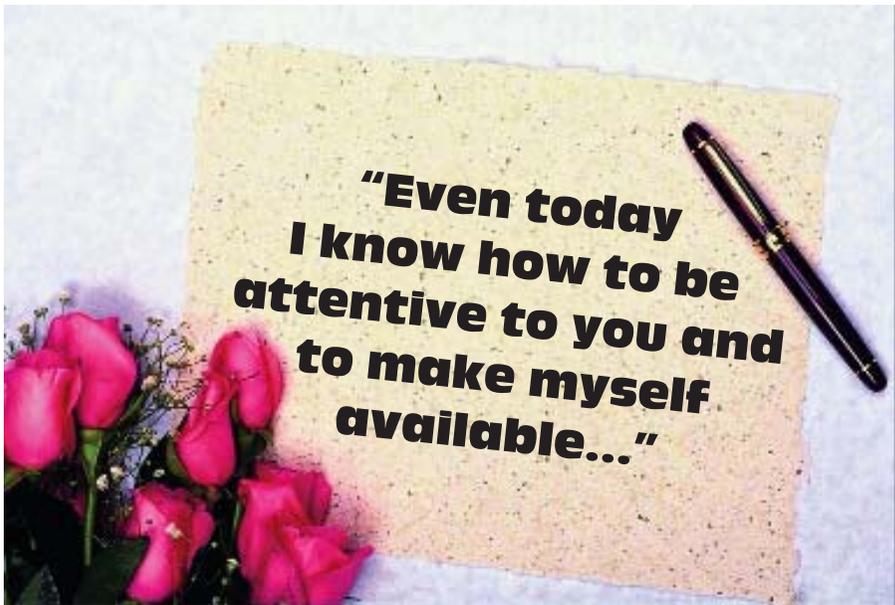
The fidelity to the daily duties was the characteristic of his life. “For

him nothing was more important than obedience, nothing more joyful than poverty, nothing more urgent than the obligations of the common life, than welcoming his students or whoever went to him. Faithful to the humble tasks that had been confided to him, day after day, Brother Mutien gifted his life to God, in a self forgetfulness that became natural for him”¹⁰

On the day of his death, people claimed that they had received favours thanks to his prayers.¹¹

Less than six years after his death, his canonical process was opened, one that led him to the glory of sainthood. On October 30th 1977 he was beatified by Paul VI, and on December 10th 1989 canonized by Pope John Paul II.

His liturgical feast is on January 30th.



¹⁰ From the Homily of John Paul II for his canonization (AAS LXXXII, 1990, 551-556).

¹¹ F. Mélage, *Fratel Muziano*, ed. italiana a cura di M. Sborchia, Casa Generalizia FSC, Roma 1990.

BLESSED BROTHER ARNOULD RÈCHE

Landroff (Lorraine) September 2nd 1838 – Rheims October 23rd 1890

First child of a family of modest condition, he attended the village school until the age of 11, and then started work to help to support his family. Those who knew him noticed his sincere piety, combined with a notable ability to entertain and to organise his companions. It was the sign of the mission to which God had called him.

At the age of 24, he entered the Novitiate of the Brothers of the Christian Schools, where he began his religious life with great commitment and seriousness.

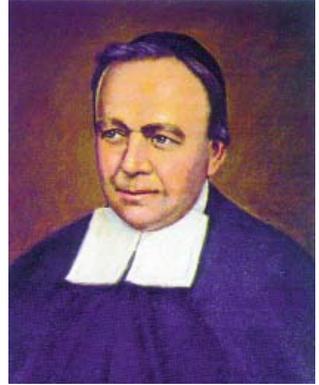
Kindness, equanimity, and an unvarying patience marked his 13 years of teaching youngsters at Saint Joseph's College in Rheims.

He was 39 when he was appointed Master of Novices. This was a very sensitive role, not to be entrusted to just anyone, because a Novice Master has to raise up the future Brothers of the Christian Schools. He showed great zeal in training novices, who would go on to provide a Christian education to young people. He remained in this post until his death on October 23rd 1890, at the early age of 52.

After his death in Rheims, he was revered as a holy person.

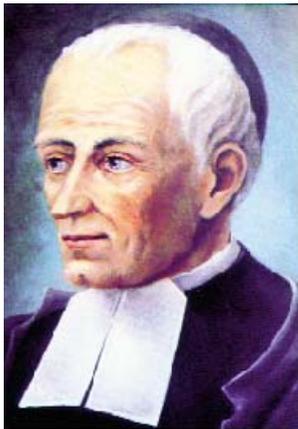
His cause of beatification was introduced in 1938, on the occasion of the centenary of his birth, but his cause made no progress for many years. It was only in 1986 that the Decree was promulgated on the heroism of his virtues. A miracle had already been accepted, so the beatification followed quite quickly. It was Pope John Paul II who beatified him on November 1st 1987.

His feast is celebrated on October 23rd.



BLESSED BROTHER SCUBILION ROUSSEAU

(1797 - 1867)



John Bernard, the future Brother Scubilion, was born during the French revolution, that is at a time when France was caught up in the sweeping social, political, cultural and religious upheaval that occurred in the last decade of the 18th century. The child was baptized on the day he was born, but at the house of his grandparents, because from 1792 onwards, baptisms, confirmations, and first communions were not entered into parish registers. His father was a stonecutter and his mother a housewife, as was usual at that time. But the wealth of the family lay in its faith in God and in his providence; and so there was always bread on their table.

When the revolutionary storm was over, parishes began to function, and the new parish priest saw the virtue of the boy and helped him to continue the studies that opened for him the doors of religious life. He was 25 years old when he knocked on the door of the novitiate of the Brothers of the Christian School in Paris. During the years of his formation, John Bernard, now Brother Scubilion, understood that sanctity was not something vague : it was sufficient to follow the way indicated by the holy Founder of the Brothers; to read and meditate on his writings and, little by little, to put into practice what they say.

In 1833, after 10 years in France, he expressed the desire to go where the need for the evangelising work of the Church was more urgent. With two companions, he set sail for the island of La Réunion, in the Indian Ocean. After 85 days of sailing and doubling the Cape of Good Hope, the small group of three religious landed on the island, considered to be the "pearl of the Indian Ocean".

For 34 years Reunion Island was the site of his apostolate as a teacher and as a catechist of the local people, and as a defender of the weak and of the slaves. Thanks to him, Christ came to be known, loved and glorified, not only by the poor and the marginalized, but also by the slaves who, without bloodshed, and through his tireless action, were able to

obtain their emancipation. It was on December 20th 1848 that slavery was abolished on the island. Brother Scubilion is remembered with good reason as “the apostle of the slaves”.

He died at Sainte Marie, Réunion, on April 13th 1867. His tomb is continually visited by pilgrims.

The process of his beatification was very long: Opened at La Réunion in 1902, it was interrupted for a long period. Finally it was resumed in Rome in 1981 and resulted in his beatification, which was proclaimed in La Réunion by John Paul II on May 2nd 1989.

His liturgical feast is held on September 27th. On the Island itself, his feast is held on December 20th, a national holiday commemorating freedom from slavery.

VENERABLE BROTHER GREGORIO BÜHL

Villingendorf (Stuttgart – Germany) 13.09.1896 – Torre del Greco (Napoli) 13.12.1973

German born, he lived in Italy. When he was 17, he came to Italy from his native Villingendorf, where he was born. After the Novitiate he expressed a desire to serve on the missions, but God willed otherwise. After some years working in the boarding schools of Benevento, Martnafranca and Saint Joseph College in Rome, in August 1923, he was appointed to the Novitiate community where he was to serve for 50 years, first as teacher and then as sub-Director.

His deep spiritual life thrived on prayer, on devotion to the Eucharist and on a filial love for the Blessed Virgin Mary.

He practised all the virtues, but he showed a predilection for poverty: he had understood the essence of the Gospel. In fact, we cannot love our neighbor if we do not love truly God; and we cannot truly love God and practise virtue, if first we are not completely detached from all earthly goods, and, first of all, from ourselves, from our own mind, intelligence,



will and even from our body. Brother Gregory lived this kind of poverty. "He is the poorest man I knew", we read in one testimony of the canonical process. "To begin to belong entirely to God, we need to make ourselves poor. We even need to have as much affection for poverty as people of the world have for riches. This is the first step that Jesus Christ wishes us to make when we enter the way of perfection".¹²

He died a holy death at Torre del Greco (Naples) on December 11th 1973.

The cause for his beatification was started in Naples on 15 December 1981, and closed in Rome on April 6th with the proclamation of the heroism of his virtues and the title of Venerable. As for all the Venerabili, a miracle following his intercession, will bring about his beatification.

VENERABLE BROTHER ALPERT MOTSCH

Eywiller (Alsace), 26.05.1849 – Paris, 06.04.1898



He was entrusted with an important apostolic work, the headmastership of a large and splendid school, the "Mission St. Joseph", in Rue Lafayette, Paris, a school for boys of families who had emigrated to Paris from Alsace and Lorraine following the Franco-Prussian war of 1870-71.

The heads of these immigrant families were employed building two of the main railway stations of Paris, the "gare de l'Est" and the "gare du Nord". The children of these families frequented this school, where the headmaster, like them, came from Alsace.

A capable educator, he combined kindness with firmness in the formation of young students. They responded generously to his zeal by taking part in evening adorations at Montmartre and by joining the St. Benedict Labre Association, founded by Brother Exuperian. He became seriously ill during the Franco-Prussian war, contracting creeping paralysis. It was something that he accepted as a grace from God, "bringing

¹² S. JB. de La Salle, Meditation for the feast of St. Ambrose (7 dec.). Works, Med. 81,1, p. 367, Lasallian Publications, 1994 by Christian Brothers Conference U.S.A.

him to the foot of the Cross, in union with Christ crucified, the Lord of glory”, as would be later said of Edith Stein.

“As members of Jesus Christ, you ought likewise to consider it an honour to suffer like him and for him. After the example of Saint Paul, you glory only in the cross of your Saviour (Gal. 6, 14)”¹³ He remained in his apostolic work up until the final moment of his life. He died in Paris on April 6th 1898. His body rests now in Saint Joseph’s parish church, the same church where he used to bring his pupils.

He was declared Venerable by Pope John Paul II on January 12th 1996.

VENERABLE BROTHER ANDRÉS HIBERNÓN

Beizama (Spain), 09.03.1880 – Madrid 03.11.1969



He began his apostolate as a primary school teacher. As a young headmaster, he gave proof of his excellent ability as an educator, promoting both the human and Christian education of teachers and pupils. In particular, he loved prayer, because “we speak to God”, he used to say. He explained prayer and taught how to pray and to trust in the power of prayer which can change your life. He always repeated: “Prayer is what gives sense to your life, because it brings to life our friendship with God and brings us close to Him”.

He devoted himself with great zeal to the formation of the young Brothers in the Scholasticate. Later, when he was appointed Provincial Visitor, he showed great charity towards his Brothers, especially the younger ones, appreciating their devotedness and encouraging them.

“If you were to say that you need to be saint in order to enter a religious community, you would be told that we embrace the religious state not because we are saints , but because we wish to become such.”¹⁴

¹³ S. JB. de La Salle, Meditation for the Holy Saturday, n. 28, 3, p. 84, Lasallian Publications, 1994 by Christian Brothers Conference U.S.A.

¹⁴ S. JB. de La Salle, Meditation for the Friday after the Octave of the Most Blessed Sacrament, Med. n. 55, 2, p. 125, Lasallian Publications, 1994 by Christian Brothers Conference U.S.A.

During the Spanish Civil War, he suffered several months' imprisonment.

He died at Griñon on March 11th 1969.

His Cause of beatification, was introduced in Spain on October 7th 1974 and arrived to Rome in 1989. It was examined by theologians in 2006 and judged favourably; and by the commission of cardinals and bishops in 2008. He received the title of Venerable on July 3rd 2008.

VENERABLE BROTHER ADOLPHE CHATILLON

Nicolet (Canada), 31. 10.1871 – Laval, 28.04.1929

He was born into a family of artists and fervent Christians. As a youngster he was a model student. He entered the novitiate of the Brothers of the Christian Schools where he received the name of Théophanius Leo. For 10 years he worked as a teacher, and then as Director of a school, before being appointed Director of Novices and Provincial in the United States. His motto was: "Make people happy in order to make them better".

"He will have and show an altogether special affection and tenderness of heart for all the Brothers who are under his guidance, and he will take care not to harbour any ill-feelings within himself toward any of them and never allow such feelings to appear".¹⁵ This was the point in the Rule of the Founder which inspired the Venerable Brother as he fulfilled his important duties as a superior.

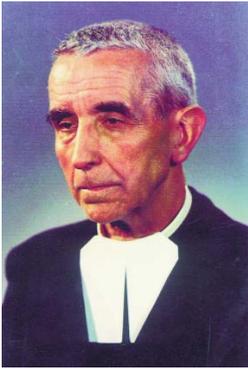
He died on April 28th 1929.

His Cause of beatification, introduced in Montreal (Canada) in 1987, arrived to Rome in 1991. It was examined by the theologians on 2010 and by the cardinals and bishops on 2011. He received the Decree of Venerability on April 2nd 2011.



¹⁵ S. JB. de La Salle, Rule of the Brother Director, p. 209, Lasallian Publications, 1994 by Christian Brothers Conference U.S.A.

SERVANT OF GOD BROTHER ADOLFO LANZUELA (1894 – 1976)
Cella (Spain), 11 – 08 – 1894 – Madrid, 03 – 14 - 1976



He taught for 40 years at La Salle - Montemolín College in Saragozza. His whole life was marked by his love of God and his love of others as brothers. Those who knew him remember him as a religious model, level-headed and serene.

He practised the teachings of his Founder to the letter: “Let your first care be to act by the spirit of faith and not by caprice, inclination, or whim. Do not let yourself be governed by human customs, by those of the world, or by mere reason, but solely by faith and by the words of

Jesus Christ, making them the rule of your conduct”.¹⁶

His main concern was to mould all those he came across into authentic Christians, faithful followers of Christ. He died with a reputation for sanctity on March 14th 1976.

On June 13th 1980, his remains were transferred to La Salle – Montemolín, where they were interred in the chapel of the college.

The diocesan commission ended its work on December 15th 1990 and sent its report to Rome.

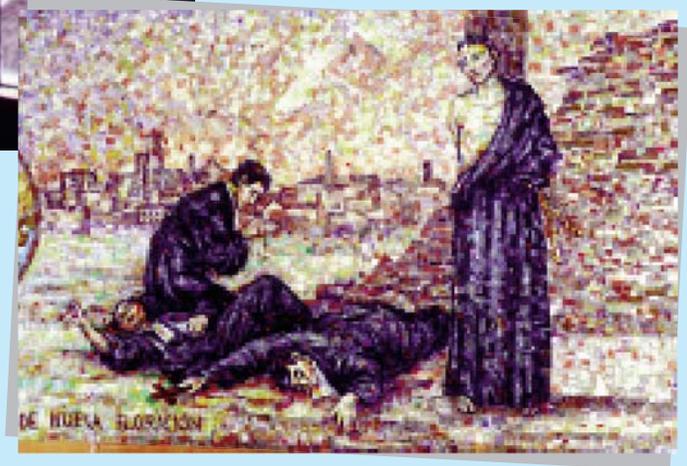
At present, the “positio” document on the heroism of his virtues is at the Congregation for the Causes of Saints.

¹⁶ S. JB. de La Salle, Collection of Various Short Treatises, p. 66-67, Lasallian Publications, 1994 by Christian Brothers Conference U.S.A.





**FAITHFUL...EVEN
TO GIVING ONE'S LIFE**



The Lasallian Martyrology“ is not simply a list of names, but it is rather the living witness of members of our Institute who have shared the fate of the disciples of Christ, even to the point of shedding their blood. This kind of response has occurred repeatedly since Christ said to his disciples: “I am sending you out like lambs among wolves“ (Lk 10,3).

The wolves that kill them do not realize that by leaving a trail of death behind them they demonstrate, paradoxically, the extent to which the example of the self-sacrifice of Christ on the Cross continues to be powerful and relevant: “By their sacrifice they prolong and diffuse in the world the victory of Christ over sin and death“ (*John Paul II, Angelus, 24/3/1996*).

Death by martyrdom is not something that is improvised. It is prepared for by the daily martyrdom of an everyday life lived generously in the service of God and of others. The testimony of those who knew them along with their own writings are an eloquent proof of this. Their acceptance of death through martyrdom was the culmination of a long period of preparation. And when the moment arrived, they went to their death not with the resignation of the condemned but with the joy and exultation of the victorious.

In our Institute the long row of heroic witnesses of faith, even to the point of giving their lives, is formed by an impressive number of Brothers. They number almost 200! The list begins with the lives violently cut off during the French Revolution and goes on until the present with the shots fired at Brother Jaime Gutierrez by assassins hired by drug dealers on May 21st 1991.

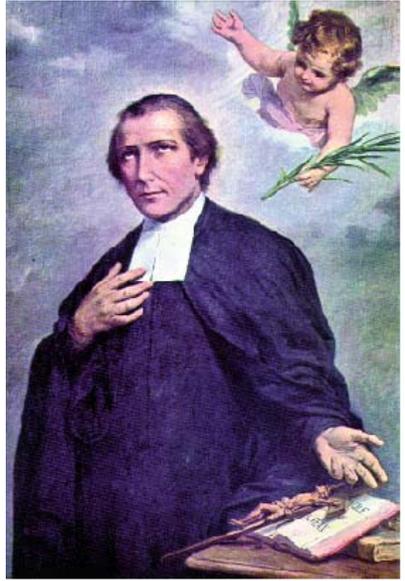
Among this number are included Brothers of all ages: the youngest, *Brother Raimundo Bernabé* was only 18 years old, the oldest, *Brother Raphaël Pataillot*, was 74. They belong to various nations: France, Spain, United States, Viet-Nam, Mexico, Poland, Philippines, Romania. We can't write about all of them in a booklet like this, and so we will limit our examples to some of the more significant cases.

Blessed Brother Solomon Leclercq

Boulogne-sur-Mer, 14.11.1745 - Paris, 02.09.1792

Our first martyr.

Guillaume-Nicolas-Louis Leclercq belonged to a middle-class family. When he was 22 he entered the Novitiate of Saint Yon in Rouen. He was then successively a science teacher, the headmaster of an important school, Director of Novices, and a teacher at the Scholasticate. When the French Revolution broke out, inflicting on France the most violent years it had ever experienced, he was secretary to the Superior General of the Institute, Brother Agathon. There followed an unending series of outrages and abuses and, as always, the Catholic Church was one of the first victims. Those who could, tried to escape.



On August 15th the house on Rue Neuve where the superior general of the Brothers lived was attacked, and Brother Solomon, the only person there at the time, was arrested and brought to the Carmelite convent, which had been transformed into a prison, together with other priests and religious. After some days he was executed in the garden. This convent was the site of one of the most atrocious massacres perpetrated during the French Revolution.

166 bishops, priests and religious, imprisoned for having refused to take the constitutional civil oath, were subjected to a quick trial and immediately executed. We do not know the details of Brother Solomon's death, but there is no doubt that he was one of the victims of the massacre on September 2nd 1792. Some days before his death, unaware of the fate that awaited him, Brother Solomon wrote the following words to one of his sisters: "Let us endure with joy and thanksgiving the crosses and afflictions that he will send us. As for myself, I am not worthy to suffer for him, for I have not yet encountered any problems, and yet there are so many others who are suffering". (*Bull.* 244, p. 8) 1.

Brother Solomon holds the 57th place among the 151 martyrs that are listed in the *Teterrima ac miseranda seditio*, which is the bull of Pius XI that was issued for their beatification on October 17th 1926.

A miracle, which was examined by the diocesan commission in Caracas (Venezuela) in 2011, is now being considered by the Congregation of the Causes of the Saints in Rome.

The liturgical feast is celebrated on September 2nd.

THE MARTYRS OF THE "PONTONS" IN ROCHEFORT (France)

The changes that followed the outbreak of the French Revolution very quickly developed into a persecution of religious ideas, specifically of those of the Catholic church. The faithful, with their pastors at the head, were conscious of this persecution which sometimes and in many places became bloody with the death of numerous priests, religious and laity.

The Civil Constitution of the Clergy was voted on by the French Assembly on July 12, 1790. In the Constitution a Church structure for France was imposed which, in effect, was the equivalent of a separation from Rome, and which made priests State civil servants.

A few days later, on July 24, a Decree was made which obliged all priests to swear an oath of loyalty to that Constitution. Many bishops and priests decided in conscience that they could not do so, because to do so would constitute an apostasy of the faith.

As numerous priests refused to take the oath, another Decree was promulgated on November 27, 1790, which imposed sanctions on the priests who resisted, who were known as «recalcitrants».

As resistance to taking the oath was now widespread, on May 27, 1792, exile was imposed on all «recalcitrants». Finally, on March 20, 1793, another decree, ordered the arrest of all recalcitrants and their immediate deportation to Guyana or Madagascar.

From all over France successive waves of detainees were sent to the embarkation ports of Bordeaux, Blaye and Rochefort. The normal mode of transportation was by oxcart, with the detainees crowded together and at the mercy of the elements. The journeys took several days or even weeks, depending on the distance. As they passed through inhabited areas, they were often welcomed by taunting and insults. Nevertheless, in other places the people looked at them with pity and with sympathy. There were

many different scenarios. In some places the people had been alerted about the detainees' passage so as to welcome them with hostility.

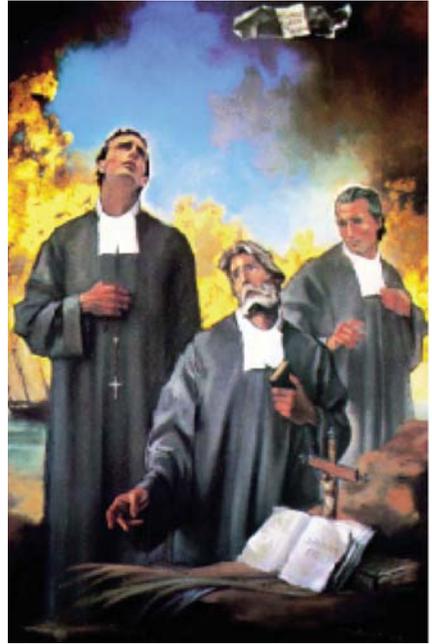
In Rochefort the number of prisoners grew as the different groups arrived. At the end, there were altogether 829 prisoners there, crowded together on two "pontons" or old hulks, used for storage, prisons or barracks. Deprived of everything, even of breviaries and rosaries, crowded together in very restricted conditions, with little and poor food, and no hygiene, and subjected to continuous abuse, they began to fall ill and to die.

Initially, they lived in hope of setting sail soon, but as days passed this hope faded, the French boats being unable to leave port because it was block-

aded by the English fleet. In those months of imprisonment, some 542 prisoners died. The remaining 287 survivors were released on April 12th 1795.

It was possible to collect trustworthy documentation regarding the lives and last days of these heroic victims only in the case of 64 persons out of a total of 542 who died. These are the 64 proclaimed Blessed on October 1st 1995 by Pope John Paul II, in the occasion of the 2nd centenary of their martyrdom.

Their liturgical feast is September 2nd.



Among the 64 there are 3 Brothers of the Christian Schools.

Blessed Brother Roger (Pierre Faverge)

Orléans, 25.07.1745 – Île Madame, 12.09.1794

Pierre-Sulpice-Cristophe Faverge was born in Orleans on July 25, 1745. The Faverge family lived near the Brothers' school in the parish of Saint Euvert, and Pierre began his studies there. And it was there that he felt called by God to be a Brother like his teachers.

He entered the Maréville Novitiate, near Nancy, in 1767, and received the name of Brother Roger. He continued his pedagogical formation in the same house.

We know little about the apostolic work of Brother Roger as a teacher. But after some years as a teacher he was appointed Director of the school at Moulins.

Regarding his qualities as a teacher, Father Labiche de Reignefort wrote: «He was a kind person and a very enthusiastic teacher for young people; he showed uncommon ability in the administration and direction of the Moulins school. He enjoyed a high level of public esteem». Another testimony says: «He was one of the best...He had very fine qualities.”

On June 11, 1793, Brother Roger was jailed in the former convent of the Sisters of St. Clare, who had been expelled. On that same day Brother Leon was also jailed and he shared the prison with his Brother Director and with many other religious and priests. All were going to be deported to Guyana.

Brother Roger left for Rochefort in the caravan that set out on November 25, 1793. After numerous setbacks and abuse, he had to wait in Saintes until March 28, 1794. On April 12, he boarded «The Two Associates» where he was to suffer the appalling conditions already described, and shared by all the prisoners. He fell victim to an epidemic on board, and was transferred to the island of Madame where he died on September 12. He was buried in the sand with a large quantity of lime which served to accelerate the decomposition of the body.

Blessed Brother Uldaric (Jean-Baptiste Guillaume)

Fraisans (Besançon), 01.02.1755 – Rochefort, 27.08.1794

Brother Uldaric, John Baptist Guillaume, was born in Fraisans, in the parish of Dampierre, Diocese of Besançon, on February 1, 1755.

Little is known of the life and activities of Brother Uldaric during his eight years in the apostolate in Nancy which followed his novitiate.

After the revolutionaries closed the school, Father Guillon says that Brother Uldaric «was very attached to the poor children of Nancy; he stayed in this city for them, where he secretly continued instructing them in piety and in the art of reading and writing».

Discovered, he was arrested on May 17 and condemned to deportation at the age of 38.

The caravan left for Rochefort on April 1 at 7.0 am and it arrived on the 28th. Brother Uldaric was incarcerated on «The Two Associates». A victim of the epidemic on board and of much suffering, he died on August 27, 1794, and was buried on the island of Madame.

Blessed Brother Léon (Jean Mopinot)

Reims, 12.12.1724 - Rochefort, 21.05.1794.

Jean Mopinot, as he was known in the world, was born on September 12, 1724. in Rheims, in the parish of Saint Jacques, which figured in the early history of the Lasallian Institute. He was baptized by Father Hubert Vuyart, a priest of the parish. He studied with the Brothers at the Thillois school.

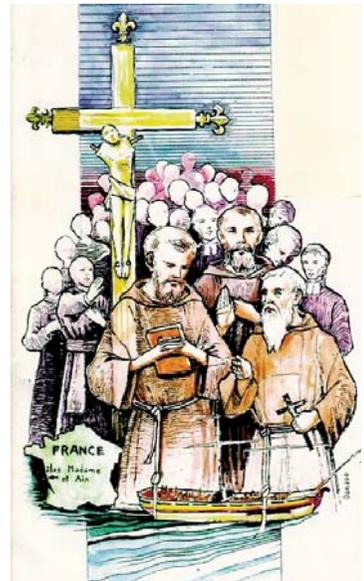
He entered the St. Yon Novitiate on January 14, 1744, at the age of 19. Along with the habit he received the name of Brother Léon.

He pronounced his final vows in 1749.

Concerning his stay in Moulins, there is some testimony which says: «Almost all distinguished persons in the city had received their primary instruction from Brother Léon».

He was also arrested, like Brother Roger, on June 11, 1793. Brother Leon was 68 years old when he was jailed. Like other prisoners, he had hoped that because of his advanced age he would not be deported. But the authorities showed him no mercy on this account.

He was put on the “Two Associates”, but his stay on the ship did not last long as he died on May 21. They buried him on the island of Aix.



Brother Moniteur (Maurice Martinet)

Mezières, 26.04.1750 – Rennes, 06.10.1794

Maurice Martinet was born in Mezières, in northeast France on April 26, 1750.

He entered the Institute of the Brothers of the Christian Schools at the Maréville Novitiate, where the Scholasticate also was located, and where Blessed Brother Solomon was stationed for a time.

In 1787 he was sent to the school of Saint Malo. On July 3, 1792, the Brothers were “invited” to swear the oath in the presence of the civil authorities. On July 6, they responded unanimously in writing, refusing to take the oath. As a consequence of their action, they had to pay the price and so on September 29, 1792, the General Council forbade them to open their school on October 1. On January 19 all the Community goods were confiscated and sold at auction. The three Brothers had to part company and seek refuge where they could. Brother Monitor found shelter in Pierre Michel’s house, the father of a student that he had taught. Less than 48 hours later, at 10:00 pm on March 8, 1794, eight policemen and six other officials surrounded the house of his benefactor. Brother Monitor was awakened, advised of the situation, scarcely had time to dress and went to hide in the hay loft. It was not long before they found him and he was arrested.

The following day he was locked up in the strong Solidor Tower which was being used as a prison and soon afterwards he was transferred to the Saint Malo prison. Brother Monitor was there when his benefactor, Pierre Michel, was also imprisoned in the same place for having provided shelter to a “recalcitrant”. For this crime, he was later exiled.

The two of them spent some six and one-half months in jail until September 30, when they were transferred to the jail in Rennes.

The court appearance could not be delayed and on October 5 they were brought before the court.

Brother Monitor’s declaration before the court has been preserved. It is an extraordinary testimony of faith, fidelity and integrity. The following day, October 6, he received his sentence. Along with Brother Monitor three priests were executed.

The cause for the beatification of Brother Moniteur is included in the group called “The Bretons”, and it was introduced in 1938 on the initiative of the diocese of Rennes.

Brother Raphaël (Jacques Pataillot)

Bouhans (Besançon), 22.01.1720 – Uzès, ...? 1794)

Brother Raphael, Jacques Pataillot, was born in Bouhans in the diocese of Besançon on January 22, 1720. He entered the Avignon novitiate at the age of 30 on April 10, 1750. He made his perpetual profession in 1757.

What is known is that he exercised his school apostolate in Uzès from 1771 to 1782. In 1789 Brother Florence, Superior General, sent him from Avignon, where he was residing, back to the community at Uzès so that he could spend his golden years in a place that held good memories for him.

When the persecution was unleashed, the Brothers of Uzès were so seriously threatened that they had to flee. Two escaped.

The story of the death of Brother Raphael comes to us from a Brother Jean-Louis, who attests that his sources are all reliable ones.

It seems that once the expulsion of the Brothers was made public and their refusal to swear the oath came to light, a group of citizens from the area rose up and attempted to storm the Brothers' residence. Two Brothers escaped, but Brother Raphael could not, since he was in bed, ill and in a state of such pain that he could not move easily.

Once inside the entrance to the house, they invaded everything and they found Brother Raphael in bed. They took out their anger on him and began to beat him with a whip, according to written testimony.

After they maltreated him in that way, some picked him up in the air and threw him over the balcony. The result of the fall from the second floor only aggravated his illness. On top of all this, when he was on the ground, one of his assailants approached him and cut off one of his ears which he showed to the others as a trophy.

When the assailants left, some persons who took pity on him brought him to the city hospital. But he was not able to overcome the damage of his wounds and in spite of the medical treatment he was given, he died three days later.

Unfortunately the cause of beatification of this Brother has never been introduced.

Let's now jump a century and look at other corners of the world.

Mexico

Two Brothers, Adrien-Marie (Marvejols (France), 04.06.1860 – Zacatecas, 24.06.1914) and Adolphe-François (Cubières (France), 27.08.1869 - Zacatecas, 24.06.1914). Because of the French laws of 1904 against Religious Congregations, especially those involved in the education of the young, these two went to Mexico where they were appointed to a recently opened school in the town of Zacatecas. The former was the Director and the latter was responsible for discipline. After a few years in Mexico, revolution broke out, which included a strong persecution against religion. The town of Zacatecas was controlled by the troops of Pancho Villa, and the two Brothers were arrested on June 23rd 1914.

The next day, they were ferociously assassinated, together with Fr. Rafael Vega Alvarado, chaplain of the school.



Brother Adrien-Marie



Brother Adolphe-François

Viet-Nam

Two Brothers Aglibert Nguyen Van Thanh (05.11.1927 - ...? 1968) and Sylvestre Nguyen Van Diep (12.12.1943 - ...? 1968) carried on their apostolic work in a school for poor children of Phú Vang, on the outskirts of Hué. In February, 1968, the communists fought tooth and nail in order to establish Marxism in the country. The first to pay the price were Catholics. And so the two Brothers were arrested and put into prison. During the day they were forced to fill out information forms regarding their work, their families, the people they knew, the places they used to frequent, and so on. What could they write as religious? A childhood at home with their family, a youth spent among the Brothers of the Christian Fratel Adrien-Marie Fratel Adolphe-François schools, teaching in the school - almost no real connections. On the pretext that they had lied, without any trial, they were condemned to death. With their arms tightly tied with telephone wire, they were flung, still alive, into a hole, where they subsequently perished.

Servant of God Brother James Miller

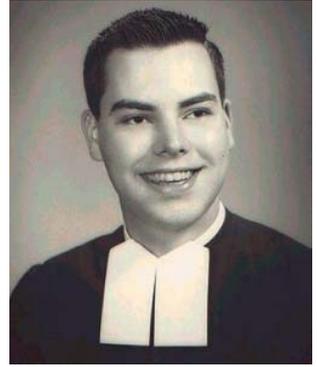
Stevens Point (WI, USA), 22.09.1944 – Huehuetenango (Guatemala), 12.02.1982

He was a young Brother from the United States, guilty only because he was religious and on the side of the oppressed, an apostle of Christ's love and messenger of his justice and peace.

He defended his youngsters from the evil and worked for their better future, removing them from the school of violence, ignorance and crime. As many other apostles, he knew how to combine evangelization with human promotion, at the risk of his own life. He was murdered, shot pointblank, while he was repairing a wall of the school where his boarders lived at Huehuetenango (Guatemala) on February 13th 1982.

He was 37 years old. Now this Center bears his name.

His cause of martyrdom was set in motion by the diocese of Huehuetenango in 2009 and received the Decree of Validity in Rome in July 2010. The relevant documents are now being examined by the experts of the Congregation of the Causes of Saints in Rome.



Brother Javier Gutiérrez Alvarez

Pácora (Caldas, Colombia), 04.01.1924 – Campoamor (Medellin), 21.05.1991

Headmaster of De La Salle school in Campoamor, Medellin (Colombia), he was shot 6 times in the face and died simply because he tried to protect his students by opposing the drug dealers. And these criminals thought that the best way to warn other generous people who dared to prevent their deadly traffic was to murder him.

Brother Jaime was a teacher, a headmaster who carried out his educational mission with generous dedication. At a certain point in his life he met the threat and the risk. Even if he was



aware of the threats to his person, he remained where he was... and he was killed!

The “witness” risks his life for love of Christ, for the diffusion of God’s reign. He chooses to follow Jesus Christ knowing from the beginning the danger he faces with that choice. Jesus in fact said: If they persecuted me, they will persecute even you”

He was 66 years old.

Back in Europe, we have a Polish Brother who, like Father Maximilian Kolbe, gave his life heroically to save others.

Brother Wojciech Trocha

Wieruszow, 17.05.1894 – Majdanek,
31.03.1943

In 1943 this Brother was teaching in Saint Joseph’s School in the town of Lwow (Lemberg). He was arrested by the nazis and confined in the concentration camp of Majdanek, near Lublin. We knew nothing about what had happened to him until the end of



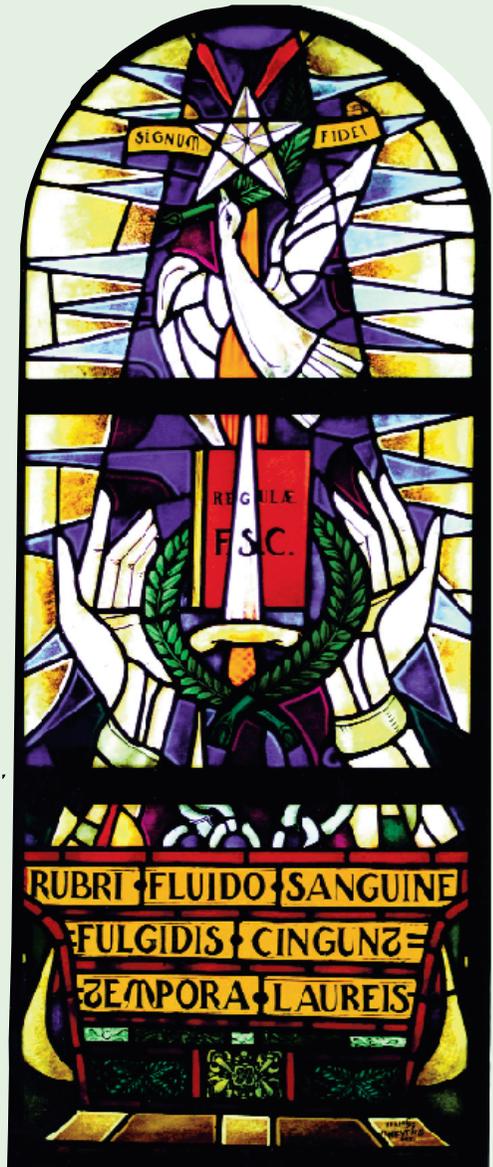
the war, when a survivor reported that the Brother had been killed on March 31st 1943, because he had intervened in defence of another prisoner. Brother Wojciech was born in Wieruszow May 17th 1894, made his profession at Athis-Mons (Paris) on September 1929, taught mainly in the school of the Brothers in Czestochowa, where he had been also director of Novices.

*“If the world hates you,
keep in mind that
it hated me first”*

(John 15, 18)



**A BLOOD-STAINED
SPAIN**



*Rome, Generalate FSC
Martyrs' Chapel*

From the Pontifical Yearbook we know that in 1936 there were 29,902 priests in Spain and a little more than 10.000 religious. During the persecution, the total killed included 13 bishops, 4171 priests and seminarians, 2,648 religious men and women, and an unknown number of lay committed Catholics. In all, 13% of the diocesan clergy and more than 25% of religious, Brothers and Sisters included, were slaughtered.*

In the same year there were 1,087 Brothers of the Christian Schools in Spain, divided into 3 Provinces: Barcelona, with 353 Brothers, Madrid, with 311, and Valladolid with 423. During the persecution 165 Brothers were killed, 15,7% of the total number. 97 Brothers were killed in Barcelona province, that is, 28%; 60 in Madrid, that is 17%; and 8 in Valladolid, that is 2%.**

The Spanish Brothers killed during the religious persecution number 165. We know all of the details, of their sad and heroic lives, because we have the testimonies of direct witnesses, sometimes given by the their executioners as part of the official canonical processes.

Up to now, 9 Brothers have been canonized and 144 beatified from among the martyrs of Spain.

(*) Data taken from *Historia de la persecución en España (1936-1939)* di A. Montero, pp. 762-763, Biblioteca de Autores Cristianos, Madrid, 1961.

(**) Data taken from the Archives of the Generalate FSC, Rome, Via Aurelia 476.

8 Brothers of the Community of Turón (Asturias)

They were the first victims in order of time, from the mining village of Turón, in the province of Asturia, killed together with their chaplain, in front of the school which was attended by the sons of some of their killers.

It was the foretaste of the tempest that would be unleashed on the country within twenty months. They died young, undaunted in the face of death, certain in the knowledge that by giving up their physical lives for their faith they would find eternal life.

They are:

Cirilo Bertrán (José Sanz Tejedor), director of the Community, 46 years old

Marciano José (Filomeno López y López), 34 years old



Victoriano Pio (Claudio Bernabé Cano), 29 years old

Julián Alfredo (Vilfrido Fernández Zapico), 33 years old

Benjamin Julián (Vicente Alonso Andrés), 26 years old

Augusto Andrés (Román Martínez Fernández), 24 years old

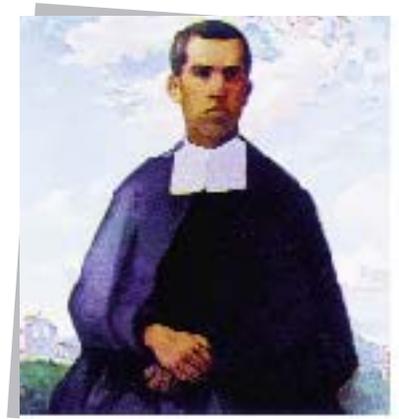
Aniceto Adolfo (Manuel Seco Gutiérrez), 22 years old

Benito de Jesús (Héctor Valdi-

viello), born at Buenos Aires), 24 years old. He is the first Argentinian saint.

These 8 Brothers were beatified on April 29th 1990, together with the Catalan Brother Jaime Hilario (Manuel Barbal Cosán), 36 years old.

We know the circumstances of the heroic death of this Brother, a death that caused amazement and fear among those



responsible for the execution. Because he remained standing after the first shots were fired and even after a second volley. Frightened, the platoon dropped their guns and fled, while the cursing captain fired his pistol into the temple of the victim, who thus entered into the Kingdom of his Lord Jesus.

The 8 Brothers of Turón, together with the Catalan Brother and the chaplain Rev. Fr. Inocencio de la Inmaculada, attained the great glory of canonization on November 21st 1999. The miracle that occurred through their intercession, and was studied and approved by the competent Vatican court, was the inexplicable cure of Auxiliadora Bravo Jirón, who was from León (Nicaragua), a miracle that occurred on the same day as their beatification.

Their liturgical feast is on October 9th.

7 Brothers of Almería

In 1936, in the town of Almería (south of Spain), there were 19 Brothers of the Christian Schools: 15 at Saint Joseph's College and 4 at Las Chocillas' School. 7 were chosen by God to be glorified with the palm of martyrdom.



Almería, Saint Joseph School (today La Salle School), turned into a prison from September 1936 to the end of 1939.

They died in on two separate occasions and on different dates, but in the same manner: they were taken by jeep to Tabernas, to a place called “Venta de Yesos”, where there were some dry and abandoned wells. There they were killed and thrown down into them. They were:

Aurelio María (Bienvenido Villalón María), director of the Community, 46 years old

José Cecilio (Bonifacio Rodríguez González), 51 years old

Edmigio (Isidoro Primo Rodríguez), 55 years old

Amalio (Justo Zariquiegui Mendoza), 50 years old

Valerio Bernardo (Marciano Herrero Martínez), 27 years old

Teodomiro Joaquín (Adrián Sáiz Saíz), 29 years old and

Evencio Ricardo (Eusebio Alonso Uyarra), 29 years old.

They were beatified by John Paul II on October 10th 1993.

Their feast, celebrated on November 16th, has been transferred now to November 6th, together with all the Blessed Martyrs of the Spanish religious persecution of the 20th century.

5 Brothers of Valencia



Honorato Andrés (Andrés Zorraquino Herrero), 28 years old

Florencio Martín (Alvaro Ibáñez Lázaro), 23 years old

Ambrosio León (Pedro Lorente Vicente), 22 years old

Bertrán Francisco (Francisco Lahoz Moliner), 24 years old and

Elias Julián (Julián Torrijo Sánchez), 36 years old.

The first 3 belonged to the community of La Salle-Bonanova College in Barcelona. As all the others, on July 1936 they had had to flee and seek refuge wherever they could, just as all the Brothers in Bonanova had. They spent some days wandering about the city and finally they agreed to go to their own re-

gion, Aragón, and so they had to pass through Valencia. They undertook the journey on foot and in Valencia they learned that, because of the war, it was impossible to reach Aragón.

Brother Honorato found lodging in the home of the Adelantado family, where he was later joined by Brother Florencio Martin; while Brother Ambrosio León stayed at another house and gave private lessons to young children. The three of them wanted to carry on their professional work, and looked for a school among the many that were around which needed a teacher. It was essential to show one's teaching credentials; they lacked this documentation and said that they would seek further information from the Barcelona Teacher Training College. The College confirmed they were teachers, but also Brothers of the Christian Schools; this was more than enough to seal their fate.

On October 22, 1936 at 11:30 in the morning, a group of militia came to the house where the Brothers were staying and arrested them. They took them to the "Cheka" Seminary. At around 6 o'clock in the afternoon of the same day, October 22, the three Brothers were executed in Benimaclet, a suburb of Valencia.

They were beatified by John Paul II on March 11th 2001.

Their feast, once celebrated on September 22nd, has now been transferred to November 6th, together with all the Blessed Martyrs of the Spanish religious persecution of the 20th century.

44 Brothers of Barcelona

In 1936, there were 32 Lasallian institutions in Catalonia. When the religious persecution became more violent they were all forced to be abandoned, and so many were pillaged and some burned. The fate of the Brothers was even sadder: Brothers from 26 communities were executed. In some cases, it was the whole community that suffered this fate.

In July, when the persecution became more violent, Brother Leonardo José, Visitor, and Brother Dionisio Luis, Director of the La Salle-Bononova College, were in a monastery in the Cerdaña area preparing the District's four retreats, which were to begin a few days later.

On July 17 they left the monastery and went to the school at La Seo de Urgel. There they learned the sad news from Barcelona and from other places. They wanted to leave immediately for Barcelona and then for Cambrils in order to be close to the Brothers and to those in formation,

but transport connections were impossible. They sought accommodation in the Cadi Hotel on July 22. The owner, Jamie Sarrià, was a fervent Catholic. Meanwhile, they kept on searching for other ways to reach Barcelona.

On August 7, Brother Dionisio went to the U.G.T. headquarters to ask for his passport. But his appearance raised suspicion and immediately the militia went to search his room at the Hotel. The outcome was that they arrested both Brothers and the next day took them to a place called "Baños de Sugrañes" near Traverseras, where they shot them.

The citizens of Traverseras buried the bodies which later were exhumed and identified. Today their remains are at San Martin de Sasgayolas.

The other 95 Brothers of the District suffered the same fate : the youngest among them was only 18, while the oldest was 60.

44 of these Brothers are included in the canonical process of Barcelona. Here are their names:

Adolfo Jaime (Antonio Serra Hortal), 56 years old, Manlleu School.

Adolfo Mariano (Mariano Anel Andreu), 26 years old, La Salle-Bonanova College.

Agapio (José Luis Carrera Comas), 55 years old, director of San Hipólito School.

Arnoldo Julián (Jesús Juan Otero), 34 years old. Moncada School.

Benedicto José (José Bardalet Compte), 33 years old, director of Moncada School.

Benito Clemente (Félix España Ortiz), 37 years old, La Salle-Bonanova College.

Cándido Alberto (José Ruiz De La Torre), 30 years old, Residencia Provincial.

Cayetano José (Ramón Palos Gascón), 51 years old, La Salle-Bonanova College

Celestino Antonio (Ismael Barrio Marquilla), 25 years old, La Salle-Bonanova College.

Cirilo Pedro (Cecilio Manrique Arnáiz), 27 years old, Residencia Provincial.

Crisostomo (José Llorach Breto), 55 years old, Residencia Provincial.

Dionisio Luis (Mateo Molinos Coloma), 46 years old, director of La Salle-Bonanova College.

Edmundo Angel (Pedro Massó Llagostera), 39 years old, Salt school.
Eliseo Vicente (Vicente Alberich Lluch), 30 years old, Carmen School.
Emerio José (José Plana Rebugent), 36 years old, Girona School.
Esiquio José (Baldomero Margenat Puigmitja), 39 years old, Fortianell School.

Eusebio Andrés (Eusebio Roldan Vielva), 41 years old, La Salle-Josepets School.

Félix José (José Trilla Lastra), 28 years old, Monistrol School.

Florencio Miguel (Ruperto García Arce), 28 years old, Berga School.

Francisco Alfredo (Francisco Sánchez), 20 years old. S. Juan de Palamós School.

Francisco Magín (Antonio Tost Llabería), 21 years old, Santpedor School.

Hilarion Eugenio (Eugenio Cuesta Padierna), 24 years old. San Juan de Palamós School.

Honesto María (Francisco Pujol Espinalt), 42 years old, Manresa School.

Honorato Alfredo (Agustín Pedro Calvo), 23 years old, San Hipálito School.

Hugo Julián (Julián Delgado Diez), 31 years old, Girona School.

Ildefonso Luis (José Casas Lluch), 50 years old, director of Horta School.

Indalecio de María (Marcos Morón Casas), 37 years old, Condal School.

Jacob Samuel (Joseph Henri Chamayou Aucles), 52 years old, La Seu de Urgel School.

Jaime Bertino (Antonio Jaume Secases), 31 years old, Manresa School.

José Benito (José Más Pujolrás), 23 years old, Montcada School.

Lamberto Carlos (Jaime Mases Boncompte), 42 years old, La Salle-Bonanova College.

Leonardo José (José María Aragonés Mateu), Provincial, 50 years old, Residencia Provincial.

Leónides (Francisco Colom González), 49 years old, S. Coloma School.

León Justino (Francisco del Valle Villar), 30 years old, Manresa School.

Lorenzo Gabriel (José Figuera Rey), 24 years old, Condal School.

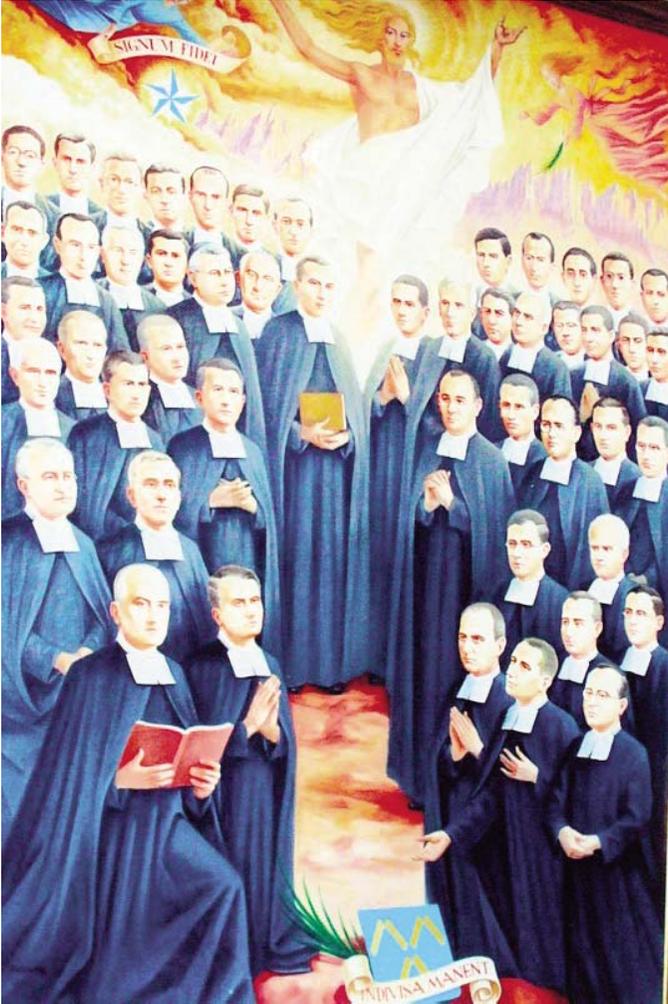
Luis de Jesús (Joseph-Louis Marcou Pecalvel), 55 years old, La Salle-Josepets School.

Mariano León (Santos López Martínez), 26 years old. Moncada School.

Miguel de Jesús (Jaime Puigferrer Mora), 38 years old, Condal School.

Olegario Angel (Eudaldo Rodas Saurina), 24 years old, San Hipólito School.

Onofre (Salvio Tolosa Alsina), 56 years old, La Salle-Bonanova College.



BB. Martyrs of Barcelona

Raimundo Eloy (Narciso Serra Rovira), 60 years old, director of Santpedor School.

Valeriano Luis (Nicolás Alberich Lluch), 38 years old, Condal School.

Vicente Justino (Vicente Fernández Castrillo), 24 years old. Moncada School.

Victorio (Martin Anglés Oliveras), 49 years old, director of Manlleu School.

On November 13th 1952, the Archbishop of Barcelona opened the diocesan process, which had 542 sessions and which ended on June 7th 1959. In Rome, the validity of the diocesan process was declared only on October 18th 1991. On June 22nd 2004, the process concluded with the proclamation of the Decree on the Martyrdom.

They were beatified on 28 October 2007.

Their liturgical feast is on November 6th.

The following Brothers of Catalonia, for various reasons, were not included in the diocesan Processes:

Alonso-Carlos (Félix Alonso Martínez), 23 years old, Condal School.

Augusto-Jaime (Jaime Ferrate Aragonés), 27 years old, Manlleu School.

Eduardo-Antonio (Juan Galindo Dauden), 27 years old, Condal School.

Emerio de Jesús (Alejandro Santo Delgado), 34 years old, Girona School.

Medardo-Lorenzo (Lorenzo Parache Collados), 37 years old, La Salle-Bonanova College.

Nicasio-Santiago (Santiago Collados Guillén), 22 years old, Mollerusa School.

Raimundo-Bernabé (Ramón Altadill Cid), 16 years old, Community of San José, Cambrils.

Ramón Nonato (Silvestre Costa Font), 58 years old, Carmen School.

5 Brothers of the Community of Santa Cruz de Mudela (Process of Ciudad Real)

In 1936 Santa Cruz de Mudela was a small town in the province of Ciudad Real and it had a school which was run by the Brothers. There were five Brothers.

On July 22, 1936 a group of militia tumultuously surrounded the school, completely overrunning it and they arrested the five Brothers.

They took them to the town "secret police headquarters" where they spent five days. Then, together with two other detainees, they took the Brothers to another prison where they held them until August 19.

They delighted in tormenting the Brothers, humiliating them and making them suffer. Several times they made them sweep the public square while insulting and verbally abusing them. They made them do military marches while singing Marxist slogans. On more than one occasion they slapped their faces.

On August 19, 1936, a group of militia showed up at the jail demanding to see the Brothers as well as 25 other prisoners, among them five priests.

They put them into a truck and at midnight they executed them in the cemetery at Valdepeñas (province of Ciudad Real).

They threw all the bodies into a common grave.



The five Brothers were:

Agapito León (Remigio Angel Olalla Aldea), director, 33 years old
Josafat Roque (Urbano Corral González), 37 years old
Julio Alfonso (Valeriano Ruiz Peral), 24 years old
Damaso Luis (Antolín Martínez Martínez), 21 years old and
Ladislao Luis (Isidro Muñoz Antolín), 20 years old

The diocesan enquiry was held in the diocese of Ciudad Real between 1956 and 1958. It had 102 sessions and 84 witnesses were called. The approval of Rome was obtained in November 1992 and the Decree on the martyrdom in April 28 2006.

They were beatified on October 28 2007.

Their liturgical feast is on November 6th.

5 Brother of the Community of Lorca (Process of Cartagena)

In Lorca, a town in Murcia, the Brothers of the Christian Schools were in charge of the San José elementary school in 1936.

There were five Brothers in the community. They were:

Ovidio Bertrán (Esteban Anuncibay Detona), director, 43 years old
Hermenegildo Lorenzo (Modesto Sáez Manzanares), 33 years old
Luciano Pablo (Germán García García), 33 years old
Estanislao Victor (Augusto Cordero Fernández), 28 years old
Lorenzo Santiago (Emilio Martínez de la Pera y Alava), 23 years old.

On July 30, 1936 a group of persons showed up at the San José School who said they were “Workers for Education” and they demanded that the property be turned over to them in the name of the “Popular Front”. Brother Director called the school’s lawyer, José Maria Campoy, who succeeded in putting off what those men demanded.

But when the Brother Director was waiting for them to return to demand the handover of the building, those who came were 20 militia from the C.N.T. (National Confederation of Labour). They invaded the house, made a search of all the rooms looking for weapons and money.

They found neither so they ended up placing the Brothers under arrest, tying them up and taking them away. On that day they were locked up in the basement of the building that housed the CNT headquarters.

On August 1 the Brothers were moved to a jail where other priests, religious and Catholics who were well-known for their beliefs were already incarcerated.

On September 30 a popular court was convened to judge the Brothers. The judge ordered that they be set free because the charges against them did not amount to any crime. But on October 2 a document from the Committee of the Popular Front of Lorca ordered the judgment to be set aside since those prisoners were considered dangerous. As a result, the Brothers continued to be detained.

Days passed with no clear future in sight except that of death. It was Wednesday, November 18, 1936. One of the militia who took part the execution, Juan Meras, later spoke of the event.

A militia chief by the name of Avelino ordered the two priests and five Brothers to be taken from their cells at 5 o'clock in the morning. They tied their arms, ordered them into a truck and told them that they were being taken to another place in order to testify.



But where they did take them was to the outskirts of the town, to a mountain where there were sulphur mines. One of the mine's pools was more than 100 metres (300 feet) deep.

They ordered them to sit down while still tied up and to pray. A squad of militia went behind them and the order was given to fire. Afterwards, they were finished off with a revolver one by one with a bullet to the head. The story goes that some of the militia began to dance and trample on the corpses. Then they untied them and, dragging them by the feet, they brought them to the pool where they threw them in. "It's deep enough so that no one will find out that they're here and even if they do, Catholics will not come to venerate their remains", said one of the militia.

The pool is currently known as the "Pool of martyrs".

The canonical process took place in the diocese of Cartagena in the years 1958-1959. The Decree of validity was granted in Rome on May 29th 1992, and that on the martyrdom on December 16th 2006.

These Brothers were beatified October 28th 2007.

Their liturgical feast is on November 6th.

39 Brothers of Tarragona

The Brothers in the canonical process held in Tarragona from April 1952 to July 1959 belonged to different communities, not only to that of Tarragona, but also to communities in other towns, and were executed at different times and in different places.

When the persecution became very fierce and it was not possible to live safely in their communities, the Brothers were obliged to find refuge where best they could. The danger of being discovered or denounced was always possible. This in fact happened to the six Brothers who had taken refuge at the National Hotel of Tarragona, pretending to be tourists: they were discovered and executed together with the owner of the hotel who had given them hospitality but not denounced them. A fate even more pitiful befell two other Brothers of Cambrils, one sick and the other his carer: they were pushed onto a jeep and driven out of the town. When they arrived at a solitary spot, a new member of the revolutionary committee was ordered to kill them. He had been an employee at the

house of the Brothers : he knew them well and so he refused. Threatened with death himself, he was forced to shoot them in the head, to the accompaniment of the sneers and blasphemies of those present.

Others were arrested and taken to a boat which would serve as the “Río Segre” prison, where hundreds of persons ended up. Each day, groups would be taken out and summarily shot.

Here are the names of the Brothers included in this process:

Agapito Modesto (Modesto Pamplona Falguera), 29 years old, Sagrado Corazón, Cambrils.

Alberto Joaquín (Alberto Linares de la Pinta), 23 years old, La Salle-Bonanova College.

Alejandro Antonio (Alejandro Arraya Caballero), 28 years old, Tarragona.

Alejandro Juan (Fermín Gellida Cornelles), 47 years old, escuela del Carmen.

Alfeo Bernabé (Bernabé Núñez Alonso), 34 years old, Tarragona.

Anastasio Lucas (Lucas Martín Puente), 28 years old, Tarragona.

Andrés Sergio (Andrés Pradas Lahoz), 28 years old, Tarragona.

Angel Amado (Maximiano Pérez Fierro), 31 years old, Tortosa

Anselmo Félix (Modesto Godo Buscató), director of the Community of “Sagrado Corazon” of Cambrils, 47 years old.

Antonio Gil (Alejandro Gil Monforte), 33 years old, Community of San José, Cambrils.

Arístides Marcos (Pedro Cano Cebrián), 30 years old, San Feliu.

Arnoldo Cirilo (Juan Font Taulat), 46 years old, Mollerusa.

Augusto María (Arsenio Merino Miguel), 42 years old, Tarragona.

Benidlo José (Francisco Casademunt Ribas), director of the Community of “San José” of Cambrils, 64 years old

Benito Juan (Juan Bautista Urgell Coma), 30 years old, Condal.

Buenaventura Pío (Pío Ruiz de La Torre), 36 years old, Tortosa.

Claudio José (Manuel Mateo Calvo), 34 years old, Tortosa.

Clemente Adolfo (Juan Clemente Veá Balaguer), 38 years old, Tortosa.

Clemente Faustino (José Fernández Sáenz), 21 years old, Cambrils.

Daniel Antonino (Nicolás Rueda Barriocanal), 42 years old, Cambrils.

Eladio Vicente (Cesáreo España Ortiz), Master of Novices, 50 years old.



Brothers Martyrs of Tarragona

Elías Paulino (Javier Pradas Vidal), 40 years old, San José, Cambrils.
Elmo Miguel (Pedro Sisterna Torrent), 58 years old, Cambrils.
Exuperio Alberto (Miguel Albert Flos), 55 years old, Condal.
Fausto Luis (José María Tolaguera Oliva), director of the free school of Bonanova, 32 years old.

Félix Adriano (Francisco Vicente Edo), 33 years old, Mosquerula.
Fulberto Jaime (Jaime Jardí Vernet), 35 years old, Manlleu.
Gilberto de Jesús (José Boschdemont Mitjavila), 56 years old, Residencia Provincial.

Honorio Sebastián (Sebastián Obeso Alario), 26 years old, Tarragona.
Hugo Bernabé (Francisco Trullén Gilisbarts), 41 years old, San José, Cambrils.

Jacinto Jorge (José Camprubí Corrubí), 48 years old, Cambrils.
Jenaro (Mariano Navarro Blasco), 33 years old, Tarragona.
Justino Gabriel (Gabriel Albiol Plou), 26 years old, Condal.
Leoncio Joaquin (Joaquin Palleroa Feu), 44 years old, San José, Cambrils.

Luis Alberto (Ildefonso Alberto Flos), 56 years old, director of the school of Alcora.

Magín Pedro (Francisco Salla Saltó), 18 years old, San José, Cambrils.
Marciano Pascual (Pascual Escuin Ferrer), 29 years old, Tarragona.
Rafael José (Patricio Gellida Llorach), 65 years old, San Feliu.

The diocesan process lasted very long, starting in 1952 and ending in 1959. It was so long because, besides these 39 Brothers, there was 1 bishop, 69 priests and seminarians, 20 Benedictines of Montserrat, 7 Claretians, 10 Carmelites and 1 Capucin. 984 witnesses were called to testify, and 354 sessions were needed to complete it. In Rome it obtained the Decree of validity only on December 4th 2002, while that on the martyrdom on June 28th 2012.

They were beatified on October 13 2013 in Tarragona and their liturgical feast is on November 6th.

21 Brothers of the Process of Madrid n. 1

At Griñón the Brothers of the Christian Schools had their formation centre, including a Juniorate, Novitiate and Scholasticate. There was a house also for retired or sick Brothers. On July 28 at around 1 o'clock in

the afternoon, several trucks filled with militia from the FAI (Iberian Anarchist Federation), the CGT (General Workers' Confederation) and the UGT (General Workers' Union) surrounded and invaded the property shouting at the Brothers.

When they were told that the previous day the Brothers had received orders to go to Madrid, they were furious. They saw that in the entire house there were only ten Brothers.

They ordered all the Brothers to line up in front of the

facade of the chapel and while they were doing this one group of militia entered the chapel and began to destroy sacred images, furniture and sacred objects. A house employee, José Gorastazu, a very pious and honest man, reproached them for what they were doing. Their response was to riddle him with bullets.



Brother Angel Gregorio, the infirmarian, was mistaken by those who went to search the infirmary for a hospital employee who was caring for the sick. But when he saw that they were going to kill the Brothers, he himself said: "I am a religious also". And they ordered him to go out with the group in front of the chapel.

With no further explanation, the group leader ordered a squad of militia to open fire. The Brothers fell in a heap, riddled with bullets.

After their massacre, they left by the same way they had come. The bodies remained where they had been killed.

The town of Griñón, upon hearing what had happened, was shocked. A group of townspeople, along with a judge, helped to identify the bodies and take them away. Then they dug a grave in the Brothers' property and respectfully deposited the bodies, with their heads pointing towards the chapel.

There were ten Brothers who were martyred in Griñón on that July 28, 1936:

Orencio Luis (Antonio Solá Garriga), 38 years old
Aquilino Javier (Celestino Ruíz Alegre), 34 years old
Angel Gregorio (Germán Arribas Arribas), 41 years old
Mario Félix (Manoel José Sousa de Sousa), 76 years old
Arturo (Joaquín Oliveras Pujalrás), 61 years old
Sixto Andrés (Andrés Merino Bascones), 62 years old
Benjamín León (Graciliano Ortega Marganes), 31 years old
Crisóstomo Albino (Lázaro Ruíz Peral), 17 years old
Mariano Pablo (Teodoro Pérez Gómez), 23 years old
Javier Eliseo (Evencio Castellanos López), 24 years old
Señor José Gorastazu, laico, 29 years old

The following group worked at the Asilo Sagrado Corazón:

Daciano (Juan Antonio de Bengoa y Larriniga), 54 years old, murdered at San Fernando de Jarama.

Sinfronio Miguel (Manuel Miguel Sánchez), 60 years old, murdered at Paracuellos de Jarama.

Basilio Julian (Lorenzo Ontanon Rey), 43 years old, murdered at Paracuellos de Jarama.

Adelberto Juan (Vicente Angulo García), 32 years old, murdered at Paracuellos de Jarama.

Pablo de la Cruz (Saturnino Sanz Sanz), 57 years old, murdered at Paracuellos de Jarama.

Floriano Félix (Emiliano Santamaría Angulo, 37 years old, murdered at Paracuellos de Jarama.

Juán Pablo (Gregorio Alvarez Fernández), 32 years old, murdered at San Ferdinando del Jarama.

Ismael Ricardo (Martin Arbé Barrón), 30 years old, murdered at Paracuellos de Jarama.

Included in this process there are another 3 Brothers:

Alejo Andrés (Patricio Beobide y Cendoya), director of the Community of Chamberi, 47 years old

José Alfonso (Maximino Serrano Saiz), 49 years old

Eufrasio María (Félix Redondo Olivares), 66 years old

They were beatified on October 13 in Tarragona and their liturgical feast is on November 6th.

Brothers Basilio Julián and Eufrasio María are still waiting for the Decree on Martyrdom.

16 Brothers of the Process of Madrid n. 2

8 Brothers of this group belonged to the community of the Editorial Bruño, the printing house that published text books composed by Brothers, but often used even in the state schools.

On July 30th a group of communist militians went to the house and pretended to inspect it because they said there were arms and money there. This was only an excuse. In fact, without any explanation they pushed the Brothers onto a jeep and drove them to a part of Madrid called Casa de Campo, where they killed them.

This is the list of these Brothers:

Agustín María (Eugenio García Tribaldos), 59 years old

Anselmo Pablo (Miguel Solas del Val), 46 years old

Braulio José (Alejandro González Blanco), 46 years old

Norberto José (Pablo Díaz de Zárata), 34 years old

Oseas (Guillermo Alvarez Quemada), 46 years old
Crisologo (Juan Sanz y Palanca), 56 years old
Esteban Vicente (Luis Herrero Arnillas), 53 years old
Junian Alberto (Alberto J. Larzábal Michelena), director of the “Vida y Luz”, 43 years old.

The following Brothers belonged to other communities:

Anastasio Pedro (Pedro Burch Cortecans), 67 years old. San Rafael School of Madrid.

Braulio Carlos (Juan Lucas Manzanares), 23 years old. Puente Vallecas School.

Eleuterio Roman (Eleuterio Mancho López), 38 years old. Puente Vallecas School.

Ireneo Jacinto (Joaquín Rodríguez Bueno), 26 years old. Santa Susana School.

Luis Victorio (Eusebio Angulo Ayala), 43 years old. S.Cruz de Mudela School.

Rogaciano (Ignacio González Calzada), 51 years old. Peñuelas of Vallecas School.

Vidal Ernesto (Ramiro Frías García), 30 years old. Colegio Maravillas of Madrid.

Virginio Pedro (Vicente López y López), 52 years old. Santa Susana School.

They were beatified on October 13 in Tarragona and their liturgical feast is on November 6th.

2 other Brothers were not included in the diocesan processes. They are:

Alfonso-Beltrán (Segundo Rodríguez), 41 years old.,

Florencio-Adolfo (Julio Sáiz), 29 years old.

A last word regarding another act of cruelty committed in Romania seems appropriate. Romania is a place where many Brothers were imprisoned and condemned to hard labour during the communist dictatorship. The most representative figure among these Brothers is

Brother Tiberiu Rata

May 2nd 1924 - January 3rd 1999.

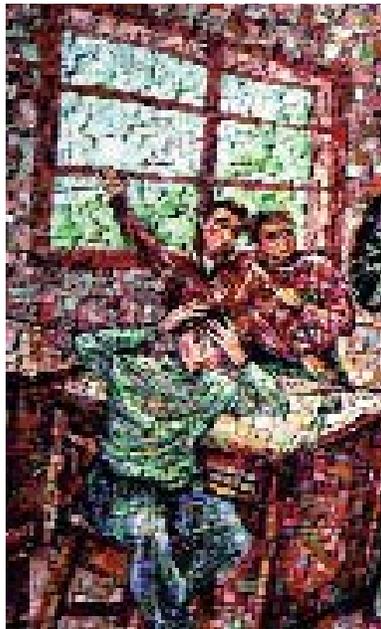


He was 24 years old in 1948 when Catholic priests and religious were dispersed and their properties nationalized. He was arrested in 1958, after 10 years in hiding. After a farce of a trial, and with ridiculous accusations, he was condemned to 15 years of hard labour, after which he was sent to the penal settlement of Stoinesti. Together with 800 other prisoners he was put to work building a dyke on the Danube River. The situation of these hard labour, camps are very well known, because there was no difference between these and the ones that we have seen many times used by the nazi or marxist regimes: no way to change clothes, very scarce nourishment, little and bad water, lack of hygiene, continuous beatings and abuses of all kinds, illnesses flourishing among the detainees, and so on. Brother Tiberiu was on the point of dying.

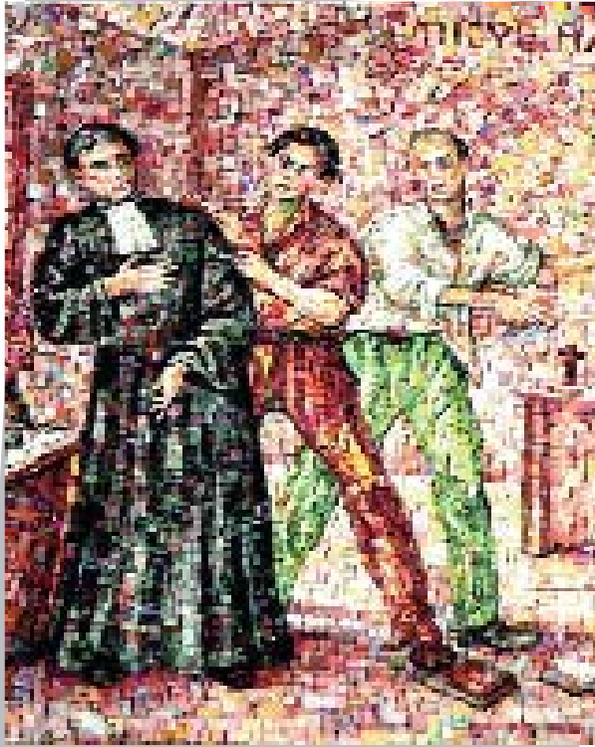
Fortunately, in 1964 there was an amnesty and many prisoners were freed. Among them was Brother Tiberiu. But the new conditions were

equally unpleasant because in practice, everyone was under police surveillance, with frequent and humiliating controls and restrictions of every kind. Neither an academic certificate nor any other titles were accepted when trying to find work. From Rome and Vienna, Brothers, with different strategies, tried to help him and the other Brothers, dispersed throughout various localities. Finally he found work at a forest enterprise in Bata Mare, and afterwards in a mine. In 1991, after the end of the tyrannic years of Ceausescu, when the Brothers could meet again, many Spanish Brothers arrived in Romania in order to help reconstitute some communities. Brother Tiberiu joined the community of Iasi. In the meantime, the Bishop had already offered him hospitality at the seminary, where the Spanish Brothers too went to Mass and other religious ceremonies.

After more than forty years on calvary, at least the last years of this authentic “martyr” were serene and he received the esteem and admiration of all those who were at his side.



*Rome, Generalate FSC
Martyrs' Chapel, Mosaic*



*Rome, Generalate FSC
Martyrs' Chapel, Mosaic*

CONCLUSION

Persecuted and murdered. Why? There were various motives, in particular political ones that often recur when the barbarity of religious persecutions bursts out, offering no explanation since these motives cannot take into account the true significance of martyrdom. It is the fruit of an evil that seeks to stifle what is good and of a hatred that tries to drive out love, as if it were possible to halt the progress of the redemptive process. The situation has been repeated since the time of Jesus, when he said to his disciples: "I am sending you out like lambs among wolves" (Lk 10, 3).

This booklet can be an incentive to encourage each one of the Brothers and Lasallians around the world to keep in mind what our Founder writes: "You must tear off your own skin, which Saint Paul calls 'the old man,' in order to be clothed with the spirit of Jesus Christ, which is, according to the same Apostle, the new man." (Meditation 159, 3)



Postulatore Generale F.S.C.

00165 Roma – Via Aurelia, 476

Tel. 06.66.52.31 – Fax 06.663.88.21

E-mail: meoli@lasalle.org

Colours of the day

Open your eyes,
look into the sky,
the darkness has come,
the sun came to die.
The evening has come,
the sun disappears,
but Jesus is living,
and his Spirit is near.
Colours of the day
dawn into the mind,
the sun has come up,
the night is behind.
Go down in the city,
Into the streets,
and let's give the message
to the people we meet.
So,
light up the fire
and let the flame burn,
open the door,
let Jesus return,
take seeds of his Spirit,
let the fruit grow,
tell the people of Jesus,
let his love show.

Sue Mc Clellan

INDEX

Saint John Baptist de La Salle	7
<i>Notable Brothers:</i>	
Saint Miguel Febres Cordero	15
B. Raphaël-Louis Rafiringa	17
Ven. Exupérien Mas	19
Ven. Bernard-Philippe Fromental Cayroche	23
Ven. Teodoreto Garberoglio	25
S.o.G. Victorin Arnaud	27
<i>“Everyday” Saints:</i>	
Saint Benilde Romançon	30
Saint Mutien-Marie Wiaux	33
B. Arnould Rèche	35
B. Scubilion Rousseau	36
Ven. Gregorio Bühl	37
Ven. Alpert Motch	38
Ven. Andrés Hibernón	39
Ven. Adolphe Chatillon	40
S.o.G. Adolfo Lanzuela	41
<i>Faithful... even to giving one’s life:</i>	
B. Salomón Leclercq	45
BB. Roger, Uldaric	48
B. Léon	49
Moniteur Martinet	50
Raphaël Pataillot	51
MM. in México	52
MM. in Viet-Nam	52
S.o.G. James Miller	53
Javier Gutiérrez Alvarez	53
M. in Polonia	54
<i>A blood-stained Spain:</i>	
SS. MM. of Turón	57

BB. MM. of Almería	58
BB. MM. of Valencia	59
BB. MM. of Barcelona	60
BB. MM. of Ciudad Real	65
BB. MM. of Cartagena	66
BB. MM. of Tarragona	68
BB. MM. of Madrid – Griñón	72
BB. MM. of Madrid – Sagrado Corazón	74
Tiberiu Rata	76
Conclusion	79
Colours of the Day	80



1st edition: may 15th, 2007

2nd edition: november 1st, 2013

Tipografia Quintily - Viale Enrico Ortolani, 149/151 - Acilia

Many thanks are due to Brother Allen Geppert for his revision of the text of this 2nd edition.