

Update on the Cause of Blessed William Joseph Chaminade
by Stephen Tutas, SM

[*Editor's note:* This reflection was given on February 13, 2015, in Cupertino, California.]

Ordinarily I would offer some reflections on the Scripture readings, but this morning I want to share with you a few thoughts about our hope for the canonization of Blessed William Joseph Chaminade.

God speaks to us in many ways, including surprising events. It was naturally disappointing to learn that the cure of Rachel Lozano was not accepted as a miracle attributed to the intercession of our Founder.

Now we begin a new phase—and perhaps a new approach—as we continue to pray and work for the glorification of Blessed William Joseph Chaminade.

Two incidents came to mind this week after I received the disappointing news from our General Administration.

The first incident being the funeral of Brother James Loughran many years ago. The Marianist Family in the USA had been in an intense campaign of prayer for his recovery. When I met with Jay's sister Joan, she told me “we didn't receive the miracle we prayed for, but we did receive other miracles.”

Her words have stayed with me ever since.

God always hears our prayer, but not always in the way we want! We might ask ourselves what miracles did we receive instead of the one for which we had prayed.

The second incident being a meeting of the Superiors General at Villa Cavaletti outside Rome. Padre Arrupe was president of the USG at the time, and we met at the Jesuit Retreat Center twice a year for what I treasure as remarkable life-giving meetings.

On one occasion, Padre Arrupe shared with us a conversation he had had with Pope Paul VI. Very simply he said that the pope was disappointed with the Jesuits at that time. Padre Arrupe's conclusion—typically simple and real:

“We just have to try to do better.”

And that's where we are today. The decision of the Vatican commission may be a blessing in disguise, calling us to do better.

I have two suggestions.

First, we deliberately invoke the intercession of our Founder for all our hopes and concerns, not simply to seek a miraculous cure.

Second, we focus our attention on making our Founder better known by the way we live—demonstrating simply but truly, the characteristic virtues of a Marianist.

The two goals are obviously linked.

We need to continue asking Blessed Chaminade's intercession for the sick recommended to our prayer, but we need to seek Blessed Chaminade's intercession first and foremost for the light and courage to be genuinely Marianist day by day, as we continue our journey through life.

Everything else follows from that, for example new vocations, perseverance for those already professed, ongoing development of the Marianist laity, promotion of justice and peace, etc.

I like Father Bill Meyer's succinct conclusion:

Brothers, although we are disappointed, this is not a time to be discouraged. It is important that we continue to pray and invoke the intercession of Blessed Father Chaminade in our life together, our mission, and in the lives and needs of all whom we accompany.

Very simply, let's respond to the Vatican's decision by trying to do better.