

# Marianist Servants of God

## Chapter 15

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# History of the Process for the Beatification of William Joseph Chaminade

Stages and Steps in the Cause of Our Venerable Founder

(Compiled by John Samaha, SM)

## Historical Progression of Our Founder's Cause

### Diocesan Level

- A. Diocesan Processes
  - 1. 1909-12 in Bordeaux, France
  - 2. 1909-12 in Vitoria, Spain
- B. Interrogation Commissions
  - 1. 1910 in Auch and Paris, France
  - 2. 1910 in Malines, Belgium
- C. Examination of His Writings 1911-14
- D. Process on the Absence of Public Veneration 1911-12

### Rome/Vatican City

December 13, 1916	Decree recognizing the orthodoxy of the writings of the Servant of God
May 18, 1918	Decree introducing the cause in Rome
June 7, 1919	Decree recognizing the absence of public veneration
June 22, 1926	Decree declaring the validity of the diocesan processes
July 21, 1931	Congregation examines the virtues of the Servant of God; decides to hold another session.
November 24, 1936	In this second session, the Congregation returns the case to the Historical Section for the study of some particular points.
1968	Father Vincent Vasey, SM, Postulator of the Cause, asks the Historical Section to complete the requested study.
July 14, 1970	Historical Section completes its report.
February 6, 1973	A special meeting of the consulting theologians of the Congregation express themselves favorable to declaring the heroicity of the virtues of the Servant of God.

June 5, 1973	The cardinals and bishops of the Congregation agree on the heroicity of the virtues.
October 18, 1973	Pope Paul VI ratifies the decision, and in an official decree, announces to the world that “on the strength of all the evidence, the Servant of God, William Joseph Chaminade, practiced to a heroic degree the theological virtues of faith, hope, and charity toward God and toward his neighbor, and also the cardinal virtues of prudence, justice, temperance, and fortitude. Declared “Venerable.”
1995-1996	Explanatory process in Buenos Aires on the reported miracle guided by Father Enrique Torres, SM, Postulator General
October 11, 1996	Decree validating the diocesan inquiry about the reported miracle
November 20, 1997	First medical consultation by the Congregation
November 19, 1998	Second medical consultation
January 14, 1999	Medical Council considers the healing of Elena Otero as “scientifically inexplicable.”
March, 1999	“Exposition of the Miracle” was presented to the Congregation.
May 11, 1999	Congress of Theologians and Promoter of the Faith considered the cure of Elena Otero as a miracle attributed to Father Chaminade.
October 5, 1999	Ordinary Congregation of Cardinals and Archbishops of the Congregation voted unanimously in favor of the miraculous healing of Elena Otero.
December 20, 1999	Promulgation of the Decree of Approbation of the miracle
February 5, 2000	Date for beatification set for September 3, 2000.
<b>September 3, 2000</b>	Beatification ceremonies: Mass in St. Peter’s Square
September 4, 2000	Papal Audience and Mass for Blessed William Joseph Chaminade: St. Paul’s outside the wall
January 15, 2015	The Medical Commission of the Congregation for the Causes of Saints concluded that the cure of Rachel Baumgartner Lozano’s medical condition could not “be definitively concluded” to be “without the aid of medical science.” Blessed Chaminade’s cause will not be moving to the next phase.

## Miracle Cure Could Lead to Blessed Chaminade's Canonization

(<http://acelebrationofwomen.org>)

[Editor's note: January 15, 2015, Rachel's cure was not deemed a miracle through Blessed Chaminade's intercession. See addendum below]

The Archdiocese of St. Louis has concluded its investigation into the cure of a 27-year-old woman who had suffered from sarcoma and bone marrow cancer. The cure is being attributed to the intercession of Blessed William Joseph Chaminade (1761-1850). The results of the archdiocesan investigation are being sent to the Congregation for the Causes of Saints, which will examine whether the cure is a miracle.

By Jennifer Brinker



Rachel Lozano and her husband, Gabe, displayed a large icon of Blessed William Joseph Chaminade after a July 16 prayer service marking the closing of the archdiocesan investigation into claims that Rachel's cancer was cured by a miracle attributed to Blessed Chaminade. The Lozanos held a smaller icon that is to be presented to Archbishop Robert J. Carlson as a gift to the archdiocese. The prayer service took place at Our Lady of the Pillar Church in Creve Coeur.

Rachel Lozano sometimes feels a sense of disbelief that her life is a miracle. After suffering three bouts of a rare form of sarcoma, a cancer that affects the connective tissue, the 27-year-old has been declared cancer-free for the past six years. Her survival is being attributed to the claim of a miracle through the intercession of Blessed William Joseph Chaminade.

Last week [July 2010], the archdiocese and the Marianists closed their canonical investigation into the alleged miracle. The findings from that investigation will be presented to the Vatican's Congregation for the Causes of Saints. If declared an authentic miracle, it would be the final step needed for Blessed Chaminade's canonization.

That leaves Lozano with "an amazing feeling." She said the experience has strengthened her faith as a Catholic.

## A Rare Diagnosis

Lozano's first diagnosis with cancer was in December 1998. She was 15 and a sophomore at St. Joseph's Academy in Frontenac. Doctors discovered it was an Askin's tumor, a rare, malignant cancer affecting the chest wall. She had emergency surgery, followed by chemotherapy and six weeks of daily radiation. Sometimes, she had both radiation and chemotherapies at the same time.

Lozano recalled the generous support she received from family and friends. Members of her parish family at Our Lady of the Pillar in Creve Coeur volunteered to bring meals to the house. She was grateful for the support of her doctor, Robert Bergamini, and the staff at the Cardinal's Kids Cancer Center in Creve Coeur, for their holistic approach to her illness, including the art therapy sessions that inspired Lozano to pursue the subject for a master's degree this fall.

In 2001, the cancer came back, this time in her bone marrow. Intense chemotherapy in the first half of 2001 forced her to miss the second half of her senior year. That June, doctors recommended an autologous stem-cell transplant, which meant stem cells from her own body would be used to treat her cancer.

The procedure almost killed her. She spent months afterward recovering. "I pretty much had to learn how to eat and walk again," she recalled. The following year would prove that the treatment was not successful. In November 2002, doctors discovered a tumor had reappeared, this time in the area of her heart, lungs and spine. It was about the size of a small Nerf football, Lozano said.

Doctors told her that nobody had survived a relapse of an Askin's tumor cancer after a stem-cell transplant. "They said it would be a few weeks, maybe a few months max," she said. Her body reached a threshold of the amount of radiation and chemotherapy her body could handle. "My body couldn't take it anymore," she said. Hospice was recommended by other experts in the oncology field.

Eventually the weeks turned into months, and Lozano's health wasn't going downhill, as doctors expected. Finally, after a year of living with the tumor, a PET scan was ordered, which showed the tumor had "little to no activity." A second scan was ordered a month later, which showed the same results.

"I kept living and I was active," Lozano recalled. "They thought it was strange the whole time. They really didn't expect me to make it."

In May 2004, Dr. Mark Blucher, a well-known surgeon who had just moved from the East Coast to St. John's Mercy Medical Center in Creve Coeur, removed the tumor.

## The Marianist Connection

During the course of her treatments, Lozano was one of two teens from her parish chosen to fly to Rome for the beatification of William Joseph Chaminade, founder of the Marianists. His intercession had been attributed to the cure of an Argentine woman's lung cancer. Our Lady of the Pillar's pastor, Marianist Father James Tobin, accompanied the group on the September 2000 trip.

Lozano, who was still in her senior year at St. Joseph's, said that the trip was "touch and go." A few months before they were to head to Rome, she started feeling symptoms of what would become a diagnosis of cancer in her bone marrow. She was experiencing hip pain, but eventually made the decision to go. It was her first time abroad.

Lozano, who said she knew of Blessed Chaminade from growing up in a Marianist parish, said she felt an instant connection to the French priest, who died in 1850. “I started praying more” after the experience, she added. “I left feeling very peaceful.” Family and friends stepped up their prayers for her health, specifically asking for Blessed Chaminade’s intercession.

It wasn’t until long after the group returned from Rome that Father Tobin had noticed Lozano’s improvement in health. Conversations led to questions about whether Blessed Chaminade truly could have interceded. The priest wrote his superior general at the time, Father David Fleming. They decided to formally look into whether a miracle could have happened.

### The Investigation

Because the alleged miracle took place within the boundaries of the archdiocese, the Marianist community contacted Archbishop Robert J. Carlson to open an investigation.

Msgr. John Shamleffer, judicial vicar for the archdiocese, explained that the process for investigating an alleged miracle has a prescribed course, as defined by the Vatican’s Congregation for the Causes of Saints.

In April, a six-member tribunal was formed, including canon lawyers and medical experts with no ties to Lozano’s treatment. Msgr. Shamleffer, who served as the episcopal delegate on the tribunal, said that numerous individuals had been interviewed over the course of several months, including family and friends who prayed for her and the physicians who treated Lozano. The meetings wrapped up earlier this month.

Last Friday, an evening Vespers service was held at Our Lady of the Pillar to mark the official closing of the investigation. Msgr. Shamleffer said the purpose is to “certify everything and attest to the truthfulness of the witnesses and the process. The information is then sent to the Congregation, and they make the determination of whether or not this is a miraculous cure.”

### The Wait

It is not clear when the Vatican will make a decision, said Msgr. Shamleffer. “The last time our archdiocese had this happen was in the 1880s, so we really don’t have experience in how long this process takes.”

The priest called the experience one of grace and prayer, “I think it’s a wonderful faith experience to believe that God works in these miraculous ways. It’s a source of joy and faith, both for this young woman, for the Marianist community, for the parish, the archdiocese and the whole Church.”

Father Tobin called last weekend’s prayer service, “an incredible moment in knowing we had come this far.” Ultimately, “you hope and pray for Rachel’s good health, whether or not (the miracle) is acknowledged by the Vatican. If the Church does, that’s great. But the fact that Rachel is living is a miracle in and of itself.”

Blessed Chaminade, through this experience, continues to serve as “an inspiration” to the Church, said Father Tobin. “Blessed Chaminade continues his legacy to keep us mission-driven and inspired by his commitment to serve the Church with a deep love for Mary, a strong spirit of faith, and reaching out to build communities of faith. There is a special moment in this.”

## Previous Miracle in St. Louis

This is not the first time a reported miracle has taken place in the Archdiocese of St. Louis. In 1861, a German immigrant and factory worker by the name of Ignatius Strecker injured his breastbone, and soon after a tumor-like inflammation began to grow. Signs also pointed to tuberculosis in his lungs. Treatments were unsuccessful, and he was given weeks to live.

Strecker came to the St. Joseph Parish Downtown (now Shrine of St. Joseph) in 1864, where he was blessed by a relic of then-Blessed Peter Claver. Within weeks, he was healed from his ailments. In 1886, the miracle was declared authentic and was chosen as one of two miracles required for the canonization process of St. Peter Claver.

## Addendum

“Notes from the Provincial Council,” February 12, 2015

*“The Medical Commission of the Congregation for the Causes of Saints met this past January 15 to evaluate the case of the cure of Rachel Baumgartner Lozano, through the intercession of Blessed Chaminade. This was a critical step in the process as the commission needed to rule that the cure occurred without medical explanation.*

*“The commission, composed of experts in these cases, studied the enormous volume of medical records and testimonies of Rachel’s medical team. After much discussion, they unanimously agreed that it cannot be definitively concluded that the cure occurred without the aid of medical science, and for this reason, they did not give their assent to this case moving forward to the next phase.*

*“We continue to rejoice that Rachel has been cured for her very serious recurring cancer. And we are edified by her faith of those who accompanied her in prayer to Father Chaminade. Yet, we are disappointed that there is not enough evidence to move this case forward on behalf of the Case of Blessed Chaminade.*

*“Let us continue to invoke our Founder’s intercession and pray for his eventual canonization.”*



## Servant of God, Faustino Perez Manglano Spain, 1946 – 1963

*A Boy Who Stormed the Goal*  
(Courtesy of Ann Ball)



If we were to think of life as a soccer game with Heaven as the goal, then a seventeen year old Spanish boy, Faustino Perez-Manglano, would be a World Cup forward. With his dream of a religious vocation, and the love of the Virgin Mary as his “assists,” Faustino stormed the goal with a “banana kick” around pain and illness, and with breakaway speed headed home, to win the match.

Faustino Perez-Manglano Magro was born Sunday August 4, 1946 in Valencia, Spain. He was the oldest of the four children of Faustino Perez-Manglano Vidal, a gynecologist, and Maria de la Encarnacion Magro Alonso. They chose a unique birth announcement: a calendar page for the day. It marked the joyous point in time of the birth of their first born; perhaps it also symbolized the transitory nature of life itself. Faustino was baptized that same August and confirmed at the age of eight. Only a few calendars marked the years of Faustino’s life on earth. Much like the sport he grew to love so well, he used these brief years in a rapid ascent to holiness.

Faustino began school at the age of four, a happy and curious child. The Loreto School was run by the Sisters of the Holy Family. One day, he took hold of one of the sister’s crucifix and asked her who it was. She explained that it was Our Lord and told how he was crucified. With all the simplicity of his young age, Faustino began to try and remove the nails, asking Sister, “But didn’t you cry a lot when they nailed him?”

At six, Faustino enrolled at Our Lady of the Pillar School, run by the Marianists. From the beginning, he liked school. He got good grades and enjoyed the games and excursions. He loved nature, hiking, swimming and camping.

During the school year, Faustino lived in Valencia, but he spent most summers, along with more than a dozen cousins, in Alicante at the home of his grandparents. He made his First Communion in Alicante on July 4, 1954, together with his sister Maria Encarna and three cousins. . . .

Throughout his school years, Faustino was known as a good boy. One of his teachers commented that he was enthusiastic, joyful, and pious. But God seemed to demand more. In October of 1959, at the age of thirteen, Faustino made his first retreat at Casa de la Purisima de Alacuas. He talked over a little problem with his spiritual director, Father Jose Maria Salaverri. He explained that he had made a promise to the Virgin when he was in fifth grade to pray the rosary every day until 1961. Sometimes in the summers he had been distracted and failed to keep his promise but had kept track and was trying to catch up. Then he mentioned a number of rosaries owed. The priest was shocked at the fidelity of the young boy. Wisely, the confessor told him to consider his debt cancelled and without any promises or keeping track to try and pray the rosary as often as possible. For the rest of his life, Faustino continued to pray the rosary often.

One classmate remembers seeing Faustino walking ahead of him on the way to school one day. He hurried to catch up, and then realized that Faustino was praying the rosary. He says, "Without saying anything, and with simplicity and naturalness, (Faustino) gathered it into his hand and put it into his rosary case. All of this with a smile. He wasn't the least disturbed."

In the summer of 1960, Faustino began to write a diary which he faithfully wrote in every day for a year and later continued in a sporadic manner. The first entry was written on September 14, 1960, and shows the beginning of the symptoms of the Hodgkins disease that would eventually claim his life. "July 14, 1960. I got up with the familiar pain. It left me. I finished *Mario Gaitan*. A beautiful book. I helped Fausto a little with watering. At quarter to nine I prayed the rosary."

The first year of Faustino's diary seems to be little more than a timetable in which he recorded a few facts of the day. The second part is shorter and contains more personal reflection, usually of a spiritual nature. He was neither a literary artist nor a sentimentalist. He considered himself a poor writer, and he jokingly referred to his style in a letter to his cousin Augusto: "I tell you a lot, but in telegram form. I would like to do it some other way, but it just doesn't come out. Just a dull boy." In spite of his difficulty in expressing himself, his diary and some of his letters present a clear picture of how God was slowly seeping into every part of the fabric of his life.

An avid fan of the Valencia soccer team, Faustino's diary records his love of the sport and the outcome of many of the team's games. And the missions, another of his loves, are often mentioned in his diary. In the entry for October 19, 1960, he mentions his praying of the rosary, the soccer score, and an auction held at school for the missions. . . .

Faustino became ill in November of 1960 and in January of the following year he wrote, "I am still ill and I don't know when I will be able to go to school. . . Even though it costs me a lot to pray, I pray the rosary every day, except a few days that I missed."

Faustino's illness kept him in bed for most of the year. There was a great deal of pain, along with strong medicine, injections and radiotherapy. In spite of this, he continued to study at home so as not to lose the year.

In October of 1960 Faustino had become an aspirant to the Marianist sodality. He wrote, "It is a difficult plan, but I know I can do it." During retreat, he expressed his resolve: "I am going to try an asceticism of 'yes' to everything good."

During the annual retreat that year, Faustino's entry for October 22 reads, "We talked about many things, but one made an impression on me. What vocation am I going to choose? Doctor? Chemist? Or will I perhaps be a priest? That is what has impressed me. Has the Lord chosen me? He will tell me. How good it is here in Alcuas! For the day and a little that is left of the retreat I'm going to remain completely silent. Maybe God will speak to me."

Apparently, in some way, God did speak to the soul of this young boy. The following day he wrote, "Father and I will keep the secret of my vocation until we see if I really have it. I'm about to burst with the immense happiness I have. How marvelous Christ is!"

Over the next two and a half years, Faustino mentions his vocation from time to time in his diary. Each time he seems more certain, more happy, with this direction for his life. For Faustino, this desire for a religious vocation became an instrument that helped him pass rapidly toward sanctify. Feeling the call to God's service, it spurred his generosity and helped him to detach himself more and more from the things of earth and to discover the redemptive value of suffering freely accepted in union with Christ.

Although humanly speaking, Faustino didn't fulfill the call to a religious vocation, in his innermost being he lived it to the full. In January of 1962, a diary entry notes, "Sanctity is very difficult. But I will try, and who knows if I might achieve it?"

From November of 1960 to May of 1961, Faustino carried the cross that the Lord had given him, the pain and debilitation of a fatal form of Hodgkins disease. During these months he records his pain and low spirits in his diary, but he accepted these without complaint and attempted to make certain that others did not suffer because of him. During this time, too, his infantile affection for the Virgin Mary began to change into a mature understanding of her role. "Every day I love Mary more. She is my Mother. Thanks to her, each day I love my own mother more." Where previously his diary had been sparse in sentiments, he now begins to express himself in a fuller way. "Jesus, let me love Mary, not only because she is pure, beautiful, good, compassionate, my Mother, but because she is your mother and you love her infinitely. . . If I want to imitate Christ, my Master, I must do it by infinitely loving what He infinitely loves, His Mother and mine."

Faustino's health seemed to improve. With his family, he made trips to Zaragoza to visit the Lady of the Pillar, and to Lourdes. After months of suffering, he felt very well although his physical appearance was not attractive. The chemotherapy had caused him to bloat and to lose his hair. When his mother asked if it didn't bother him for people to see him like that, he responded "Why? There's nothing bad about it. If your hair falls out, what are you going to do? It will grow back." Then he added, laughing, "What went away will come back again." . . .

The summer of 1961, Faustino was told to *take it easy*. With friends, he took walks through the country, fished, and practiced target shooting with a rifle. Swimming was forbidden, but he accepted both the good and the bad with tranquilly. . . . That winter, Faustino begged to be allowed to go camping with his friends. His parents refused to allow it, saying that he could go in the spring if his health was still improving. He wrote in his diary, "I had a great disappointment. Thanks be to God it has left me and I will offer it up for the missions. I will make the sacrifice and will suffer willingly for the missions."

On retreat in January, 1962, he reflected on his vocation and began to learn detachment. "I think my vocation is out of love for Christ, with infinite desire to serve him in the best way possible. That desire includes, if it might be necessary, dying for him." By nature a saver, Faustino did not like to spend his money on frivolous things. During this retreat, he surprised his spiritual director by saying he felt he was too attached to money. He took his savings and sent them, in the form of books, to the missions in Japan.

Faustino began to think about the problems of the world. He wrote, "For a great many Christians, God is a problem. They don't want God to bother or disturb them." The topic was discussed in greater depth in Sodality meetings, and Faustino began to take a great interest in sociology classes. "We have life too easy. We are in danger. We have only comforts and not one difficulty worth mentioning. Everything as we want it. We have to be simple." Not content with theories, Faustino concentrated on the concrete, and did small things that were within his grasp. He and his friend Ernesto took an interest in a young working boy of fourteen. They helped him with clothes, food, and medicine as well as visiting with him as a friend.

During the spring of 1962, Faustino's parents at last allowed him to go camping again. Wisely, they chose to let him enjoy a full life in the short time God had left to him. In spite of his physical limitations, he enjoyed it immensely. In June he made his first promises in the sodality. In the summer came a final glorious camping trip with school companions to France and Switzerland. In one of his notes we read, "I tried to be as serviceable as possible." Indeed, his companions underline the fact that this was a part of his nature and that he was always ready to do a favor.

His pre-university year was his final year of school. By the fall, his sickness had obviously returned in full force. The medicine was not helping and his mother had to help the determined student to dress and get him off to school. He could only remain a half day, and in the afternoons he studied in bed. By January of 1963, he was swollen, in pain, and albumin was forming. He made his final school act, the annual retreat, toward the end of the month. In his retreat notes there is a moving reflection on death: "We must accept death as of now. A death with the Virgin is marvelous. Christ, grant that every day I may be more devoted to Mary. I want to be always intimately united to her. She will help me to die, and I will have the death of a true saint. Let death come when God wants and where God wants. It will come at the time, the place and in the way that is best for me, sent by Our Father, God. Welcome to our sister, death."

Several times during this retreat he wrote, "Most Holy Virgin, teach me to see the value of suffering. Teach me, Lord, the value of suffering."

On February 4, the priest decided to speak frankly with Faustino, and told him the seriousness of his illness. Faustino commented wryly, "I thought the doctors were at their wits end."

"And are you ready to die if God wishes it?" his confessor asked.

"What do you think, Father: I'm prepared, right?" Fighting to hold back tears, Faustino confessed, "It's only that I feel sorry for papa and mama. How sad they are going to be!"

On February 9, he received the Sacrament of the Sick. In his final diary entry, he expressed his happiness to have received Extreme Unction, "It's marvelous to have received it knowing completely what was received." He renewed his sodality promises and wrote. "Help me to continue offering these little inconveniences for the needs of the world."

A normal boy, Faustino enjoyed the visits of his classmates and their chatter about the daily occurrences at school. He read a lot, prayed, and received daily communion. His spiritual director, Father Salaverri, visited and asked him if he kept in mind the goals he had made on retreat. "Yes Father, to become a saint."

"Good, but are you trying to do so?"

Smiling broadly, Faustino answered, "Here I am. I think this is a good method, right?"

Sunday, March 3, Father Salaverri visited and in spite of Faustino's failure to complain it was obvious that he was suffering. His hands were shaking and when the priest asked him if he was nervous, Faustino replied, "No Father, it's the body. I haven't been able to sleep for so long. But inside, I'm at peace."

The priest gave him several requests for heaven, the first being to console his parents, and Faustino promised to carry them out. Then he gave the boy wonderful news. He promised to return the following day to receive Faustino's vows as a Marianist. Special permission had just been received based on his wish and the extreme seriousness of his condition. Instead, Faustino became a Marianist only by desire.

The painful hours dragged by and the edema began to fill his lungs. At eleven he asked for a drink and noticing his mother there he told her to go to bed and rest. A few minutes later he called her back to help him and as she held him he gave a sudden jolt and lay lifeless in his mother's arms.

Faustino Perez-Manglano was a normal and happy boy who radiated joy and serenity. His reputation for sanctity led to the idea of the introduction of his cause for beatification. In 1986 his remains were transferred from the cemetery of Valencia to the chapel of Our Lady of the Pillar school. On this occasion, the Superior General of the Marianists said, “His silent presence will be an incentive for everyone: teachers, parents, students. He will remind us that in this life we must not be content with little, but that it is possible to, and we should do so, strive for a high human and Christian ideal to better the world.”



## Timeline for Jakob Gapp (1897-1943)

July 26, 1897	Jakob Gapp was born in Wattens in the Trol region of Austria as the last of seven children to Martin and Antonia Gapp. His father worked in a paper factory in Wattens.
June 3, 1908	Jakob was confirmed by Josef Altenwiesl, Bishop of Brixen.
September 1910	Jakob went to the Franciscan secondary school in Hall, Tyrol for five years. It would seem that one of the parish priests from Wattens had put in a good word for Jakob to get him into the Franciscan school. Before this he had attended the public elementary school in Wattens.
May 24, 1915	Jakob volunteered for the Austria-Hungary Army on May 24th. He fought for Austria-Hungary in World War I and received the Silver Medal for Bravery, Second Class for his service.
August 13, 1920	He entered the Marianist Postulate at Greisinghof near Pregarten, Upper Austria.
September 26, 1920	Began his novitiate.
September 27, 1921	Jakob professed his First Vows as a Marianist. After doing so he then went to Marianist Marian Institute in Graz for philosophical studies.
August 27, 1925	After professing his perpetual vows at Antony, France (near Paris) he studied at the Marianist International Seminary in Fribourg, Switzerland.
April 5, 1930	He was ordained a priest by Bishop Marius Besson, the Bishop of Lausanne, Geneva and Fribourg. He celebrated his first Mass in Wattens on July 20 and in fall went to work as a prefect and chaplain in the Marianum in Freistadt, Austria
October 15-17, 1931	He took the high school teacher's proficiency exams in Linz and in the fall he went to the Marianist school in Lanzenkirchen, Austria. There he worked as a catechist and priestly minister.
1934-38	Father Gapp began working in the Marian Institute in Graz as a chaplain, religion teacher and minister to youth. He continued there until 1938.
1938	After the entry of the German troops into Austria on March 12, Gapp had to give up his educational work and leave the Marian Institute. He began working as a parish curate and a catechist in the elementary and middle schools. However after two months Nazi authorities forbade him to teach in schools.
1939	In January he was finally able to leave Austria with a French visa and traveled to Bordeaux. He stayed with the Marianist community there until in May. He was met with much suspicion there as was anyone from Austria and Germany and soon left for Spain. In Spain he taught in San Sebastian, Cadiz, and Lequietio.
September 15, 1941	On September 15, Gapp began teaching German, French, Latin and religion in the Marianist school in Valencia, Spain
November 9, 1942	Met two supposed German Jews claiming they were interested in converting. They invited him on a drive through the Pyrenees Mountains. The drive ended up in Hendaye, France which was under Nazi control. He was taken from the car and arrested and transferred to Berlin.
March 11, 1943	After several interrogations, he was placed in custody and formally accused of High Treason.
July 2, 1943	On the Feast of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, he was tried before the People's court and condemned to death by Judge Roland Freisler.
August 13, 1943	Father Gapp was taken to the execution room wearing a paper shirt and clogs. His hands were tied behind his back and he was positioned under the guillotine at 7:08 pm. The execution of Father Gapp took nine seconds.
November 24, 1996	Pope John Paul II declared Father Gapp "Blessed."

Before his execution, Father Gapp wrote two letters:

*Berlin-Plötzensee, August 13, 1943*

*My dear cousins, dear Seepf and all those dear to me,*

*When this letter reaches you, I will already have passed on to a better life. Since I am not certain if Seepf and Anna are in Wattens, I am writing to you so that this letter does not get lost.*

*Last year I was arrested on French soil on November 9. I was brought to Berlin and was finally condemned to death on July 2, the Feast of the Sacred Heart of Jesus. The sentence will be carried out today. At seven o'clock this evening, I will go to our dear Savior, whom I have always ardently loved. Do not mourn for me. I am completely happy. Naturally, I have experienced many a difficult hour, but I have been able to prepare myself for death very well.*

*Live well and suffer everything out of love for God so that we may see each other in heaven again. I greet all our relatives and acquaintances. I will remember all of you in heaven. During this difficult time since my arrest I have prayed for you continually, and now I will intercede for you in heaven. I will also convey your greetings to all of our departed. After such a difficult struggle, I am now at the point in my life where I consider the present day to be the most beautiful of my life. May God reward all that you have done for me since my childhood.*

*Seepf, Dear Seepf! How often I have thought of you. Don't be sad. Everything passes, only heaven remains. We will someday be together again and then there will be no separation. Please inform all of our relatives of my death. I have been condemned for treason. And remember me to all our good friends. You know which ones.*

*Our mother is waiting for me. After a few hours, I will be with her. What a joy! So give my very sincerest regards to everyone. I will pray for all of you. I will also pray for our homeland. And so, until we meet again.*

*Intimately in J.M.J., your brother, Jakob*

The second letter was written to Father Jung, his mentor and friend. This letter was not sent. The Gestapo worried this would lead to Father Gapp being seen as a martyr. Until this letter was received, his peers were not sure if Father Gapp died as a Marianist.

*Berlin-Plötzensee, August 13, 1943*

*Very Reverend and dear Father Superior,*

*I am compelled to write to you now, just a few hours before my death, in order to say good-bye. On July 2, the Feast of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, I was condemned to death for treason. The execution will take place this evening at seven o'clock.*

*During the time of my imprisonment, that is, since November 9, last year, I have had ample opportunity to reflect on my life. I thank you from the bottom of my heart for all that you have done for me during the time that I have known you. I consider myself as still belonging to the Society of Mary; I renew*

*my vows and offer myself up through the hands of the Mother of heaven to our dear Lord. Please excuse any annoyances that I might have caused you. I have suffered difficulties, but now I am very happy. I think that I have become holier in this difficult time.*

*Give my best to all of our fellow Brothers; I will remember you to those who have already died. Everything passes, only heaven remains.*

*On August 13, 1920, I began my novitiate year, the best year of my life. And today I hope to begin the life of eternal happiness.*

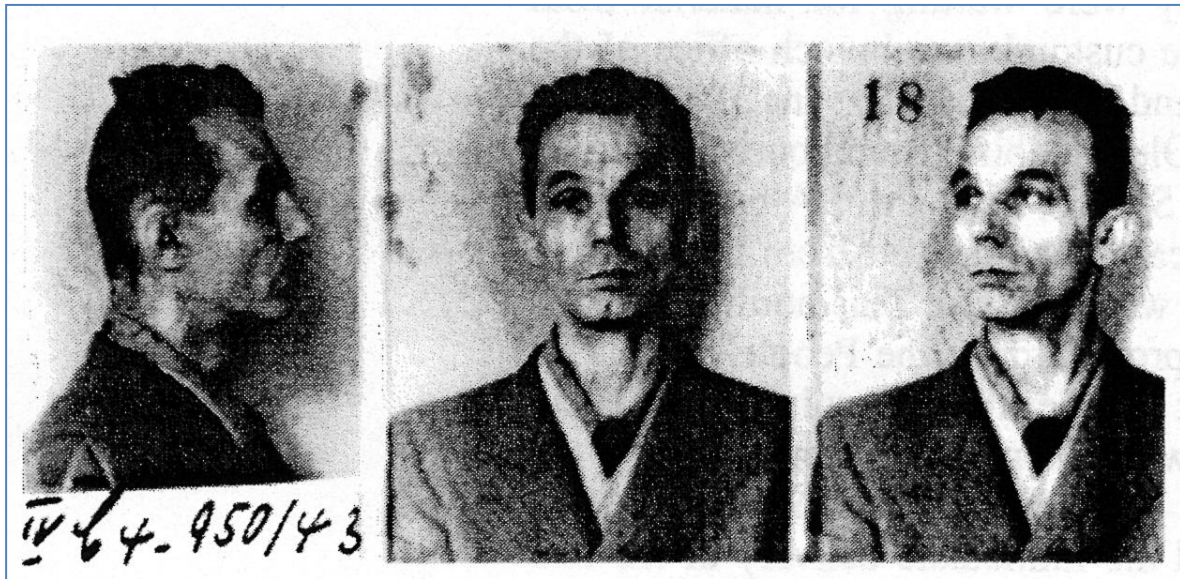
*Best wishes! Pray for me! I will pray for you. Goodbye.*

*In J.M.J., Your grateful and devoted, Jakob R.I.P.*

#### Resources

Levit, Joseph, SM. *Blessed Jakob Gapp, Marianist*. North American Center for Marianist Studies: Dayton, OH 1998.

McMurtry, Martin, SM, and Herbert Janson, SM. *Marianist Martyr—Blessed Jakob Gapp, SM*. A Marianist Publication: San Antonio, TX, 2002.



**Gestapo photo of Father Gapp, from the files of the People's Court**



## A Snapshot of Blesseds Jesús Hita, Carlos Eraña, Fidel Fuidio

(From *Things Marianist*, “Who Are the Marianist Saints?”  
by Daniel Jordan and Adolf Windisch, SM, July 2000)

In addition to Father Chaminade, the Marianist Family has . . . other servants whom the Church has declared “blessed.” These holy members of our Marianist Family are testament that the Church does not cease producing saints in our own time. “There exists in the spiritual world a kind of law of compensation: the more sin and estrangement from God, the more saints.” (José Maria Salverri, SM, *Circular 21*, March 19, 1990, p. 9) In fact, Pope Pius XI referred to the twentieth century as “a century of saints.” While their fidelity to the Gospel led to their martyrdom, it is not so much the way our Marianist martyrs died that we remember; it is the way these men lived.



**Brother Jesús Hita, SM (1900-1936)** believed, “The happiest moment of the day is when I open the door of the classroom to minister to my pupils.”



**Brother Carlos Eraña, SM (1884-1936)** said, “All my eagerness is to be useful. Being holy, being useful, and being self-giving, these three insights I hold so deeply in my soul that they come easily and quickly to my thoughts and lips.”



According to a superior, the pupils held **Brother Fidel Fuidio, SM (1880-1936)**, their teacher, “in much esteem for his unalterable kindness; he never saw malice in them, he supported their defects with complete affection and love.”

These three Christian educators were executed in 1936 during the height of the Spanish Civil War because they were vowed religious who remained faithful to the Gospel. On October 1, 1995, Pope John Paul II declared them “Blesseds.”

## **Marianist Martyrs of Madrid to be Beatified**

*(Via Latina 22, Issue # 159, July 2007)*

My Dear Brothers and Sisters,

It is with great joy, and profound gratitude, that I share with you today the news that our Holy Father, Pope Benedict XVI, has approved four Marianist Martyrs for beatification on October 28, 2007. These four, Miguel Léibar, Joaquín Ochoa Salazar, Sabino Ayastuy Errasti and Florencio Arnáiz Cejudo, will be beatified along with 494 other martyrs of the religious persecution in Spain during the years 1936-1939. This large group includes bishops, priests, consecrated religious and laypersons. A total of 462 of them were members of institutes of Consecrated Life!

While the pain and sorrow of the events that led to their martyrdom remain a difficult memory for the Spanish people, as well as many religious institutes, including the Society of Mary, we find joy, consolation, and inspiration in that during those days there were so many witnesses to the Faith. They gave of themselves, in steadfast courage and faith, never surrendering their principles or convictions. They were called to follow Christ to Calvary. They have received the martyr's crown, and now the Church will proclaim their virtue for all to see.

In this issue of *Via Latina 22* we share with you some of the story of these Marianist Martyrs of Madrid, as well as some background of their Cause as it progressed over the years. We are most grateful to those who have worked diligently on this Cause, especially Father Enrique Torres, SM, and Father José María Salaverri, SM.

The large number who will be beatified in October means that we will have to share the privileges of participation in the actual ceremonies with many other congregations, dioceses and faithful. Nevertheless, as Marianists around the world, we will remain united in joy, challenged in our own witnessing to the Gospel, and rededicated to our mission to do whatever he asks of us!

May the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit be glorified in all places, through the Immaculate Virgin Mary!

Fraternally,

Manuel J. Cortés, SM  
Superior General

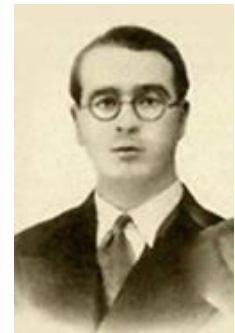
## **Marianist Martyrs of Madrid** (*Via Latina* 22, Issue # 159, July 2007)

During the first months of the religious persecution in Spain (1936-39), four Marianists were shot in Madrid by revolutionary militias. Father Miguel Léibar Garay was arrested and shot on July 28, 1936, and Brothers Joaquín Ochoa Salazar, Sabijno Ayastuy Errasti and Florencio Arnáiz Cejudo suffered martyrdom later, on September 14, along with two Dominican religious.



**Miguel Léibar Garay** was born in Sargary-Aozaraza, Spain, on February 17, 1885. He professed First Vows in the Society of Mary in 1903. He was ordained a priest in Fribourg (Switzerland) in 1915. He devoted himself to teaching at various Marianist schools in Spain, also serving as director of the schools in Jerez de la Frontera and San Sebastián, as well as chaplain of the schools in Cádiz and Madrid. When the religious persecution broke out at the time of the Civil War, Father Miguel continued to be the leader among those religious in hiding in Madrid. Then, on July 28, 1936, he was arrested and shot by one of the revolutionary militias.

**Joaquín Ochoa Salazar** was born in Valdegovia (Spain) on April 16, 1910. He professed his First Vows in the SM in 1928. Having completed his university degree, he served as a teacher at Marianist schools in Escoriaza and Madrid. Following the military uprising and subsequent revolution in 1936, he took refuge in the house of family friend. He was soon arrested and on the following day, September 14, he was shot in the company of his fellow Marianists, Sabino Ayastuy and Florencio Arnáiz, as well as with two Dominicans.



**Sabino Ayastuy Errasti** was born in Ojala-Selay, Aozaraza (Spain), on December 29, 1911. He made his First Profession as a Marianist in 1938. He taught in Marianist schools in San Sebastián, Escoriaza and Madrid. When the Civil War broke out and declared the religious persecution, he sought refuge in the home of a sympathetic family. He, too, was arrested and shot in the presence of his fellow Marianists and the two Dominicans.

**Florencio Arnáiz Cejudo** was born in Espinosa de Cerrato (Spain) on May 10, 1909, Florencio professed his First Vows in the Society of Mary in 1926. He obtained his university degree and was sent to teach at Marianist schools in Jerez de la Frontera and Madrid. Like his brothers, as the Civil War broke out, he was forced to seek refuge with a family. He too, was sacrificed by those who hated the Faith, alongside of Sabino Ayastuy, Joaquin Ochoa and the two Dominican religious.



## Marianist Logo for the Beautification

(*Via Latina* 22, Issue # 159, July 2007)

- ✦ Four blots of color revealing interconnected crosses and a central “M” which unites these crosses.
- ✦ Red, the color of fire, passion and of blood. Dark red, the color blood spilt on the ground.
- ✦ A flame of fire over a fragile clay lamp.
- ✦ An impetuous wind that stirs the flame and retells the story.
- ✦ A tree leaf that falls by this violent autumn wind in Madrid.
- ✦ The four crosses hold the delicate leaf together amidst the storm.
- ✦ A claw print that recalls the clawing of a wild animal. And over the print, the Cross, many crosses.
- ✦ Four names that explain it all, without any other references—without saying where, nor when, nor who.
- ✦ Four names written in capital letters, firm and stable, which invite us to remain at the foot of the Cross, of our crosses.



*José Eizaguirre, SM, Province of Madrid*

## History of the Cause

(*Via Latina* 22, Issue # 159, July 2007)

The Cause of Martyrdom for the four Spanish Marianist religious is united to that of a group of 38 Dominican religious. The idea to promote the cause for the beatification of these 42 religious began during the 1950s. Thus, in 1955 the Marianists named a Vice-Postulator in charge of the cause of their martyrs who were killed during the 1936 religious persecution in Spain. The following year, Brother Jose Antonio Romeo was named assistant to the Marianist Vice-Postulator for this work. In 1957 the three Spanish Dominican provinces, known as España, Rosario, and Bética, agreed to work together with the SM in promoting the causes of all these martyrs. The Vice-Postulators from both orders collected all of the archival data, legal documents, along with both eyewitnesses and third-party accounts. All of these showed the violent death suffered by these religious martyrs.

With all of this material, on April 30, 1961, the Ordinary Process was begun in the Diocese of Madrid, at the Madrid Basilica of Our Lady of Atocha. The diocesan process lasted five years and was closed on April 23, 1966.

On November 3, 1966, the minutes and report of the diocesan process were brought to Rome to what was called at that time, the Sacred Congregation for Rites. The following year, the Congregation gave the authorization to proceed toward opening the Roman process, according to the Canonical norms. Pope Paul VI, however, imposed a moratorium for all causes related to the 1936 religious persecution in Spain. This remained in effect until 1980, when John Paul II promoted these martyrs' causes as part of his pastoral program of bearing witness to the Church martyrs of the Twentieth Century. In addition, a new norm for the Causes of Saints, which made the canonical process much simpler, was promulgated in 1982. Thus, all of the postulators began to reactivate the causes for the martyrs of their dioceses and congregations.

During the 1990s, the Postulator for the Society of Mary, Father Enrique Torres, began to promote the causes of the four Marianist Martyrs of Madrid. His example was followed by the Dominican Congregation. The two Congregations then agreed to entrust the cause to the Postulator General of the Dominicans, Father Innocenzo Venchi and to the Postulator General of the Marianists, Father Enrique Torres. Toward the end of 1991 they began to compile the *Positio* detailing the story of their martyrdom, under the direction of the Relator of the Cause, Msgr. José Luis Guitiérrez. The *Positio* was completed and edited in 1995. Following the favorable study by the Congress of theologians and cardinals, Pope Benedict XVI, on June 26, 2006, issued the Decree of Martyrdom for 38 Dominicans and four Marianists: Father Miguel Léibar, Brother Joaquín Ochoa, Brother Sabino Ayastuy, and Brother Florentcino Arnáiz.

### *Prayer for Marianist Martyrs of Madrid*

Lord, Our God,  
who granted to the blessed martyrs Miguel, Joaquín, Sabino, and Florencio  
the grace of dedicating their lives to the education of youth  
under the protection of the Most Blessed Virgin Mary,  
and of courageously professing the Faith, even to the point of shedding blood,  
grant to us that, strengthened by their example and intercession,  
we might give witness to the same Faith in word and deed.  
Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the  
unity of  
the Holy Spirit, God forever and ever.  
Amen.

## Candidates for Sainthood

According to Marianist Father Antonio Soldà, the canonization of saints reminds the faithful that “God does marvelous things, above all through poor instruments like us when we put ourselves in his hands.” Beatification enables a candidate for sainthood to be honored as “Blessed.” Blessed William Joseph Chaminade was beatified on September 3, 2000, in Rome. Marianist candidates for sainthood are listed below:

### Blessed

- + Brother Carlos Erana, Civil War martyr in Ciudad Real, 1884-1936
- + Brother Jesus Hita, Civil War martyr in Ciudad Real, 1900-1936
- + Brother Fidel Fuidio, Civil War martyr in Ciudad Real, 1880-1936
- + Father Jakob Gapp, World War II martyr in Berlin, 1897-1943
- + Brother Joaquín Ochoa, Civil War martyr in Madrid, 1910-1936
- + Father Miguel Leibar, Civil War martyr in Madrid, 1885-1936
- + Brother Florencio Arnaiz, Civil War martyr in Madrid, 1910-1936
- + Brother Sabino Ayastuy, Civil War martyr in Madrid, 1911-1936

### Venerable

- + Mother Adèle de Batz de Trenquelléon, founder, 1789-1828
- + Mademoiselle Marie Thérèse de Lamourous, founder and layperson, 1754-1836

### Servants of God

- + Faustino Perez-Manglano (consecrated Marianist sodalist), 1946-1963
- + Father Domingo Lazaro, 1877-1935
- + Father Vincente López, Marianist Educator, 1894-1990

(Adapted from [Marianist.com/About/Saints](http://Marianist.com/About/Saints))



Father Jakob Gapp



Mother Adèle de Batz de Trenquelléon



Faustino Perez-Manglano