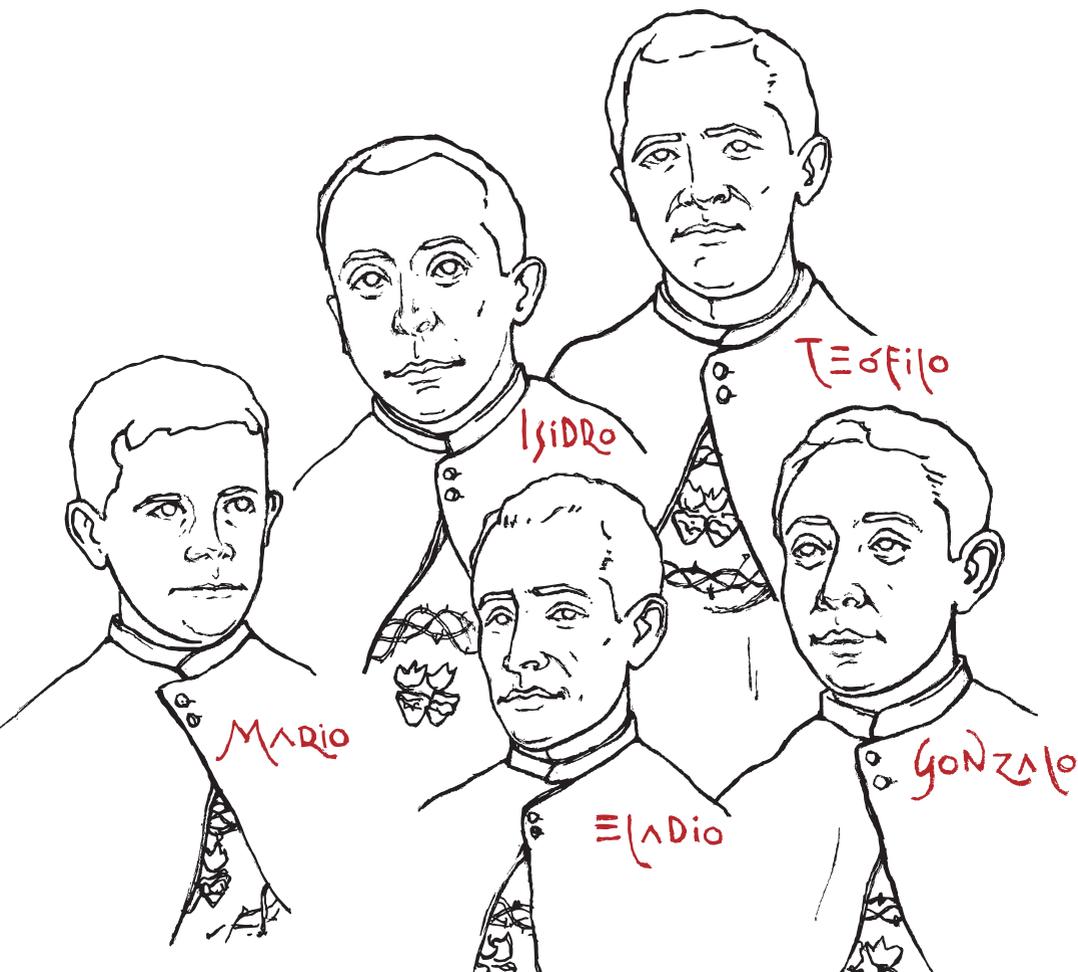


# THE RELIGIOUS OF THE SACRED HEARTS MARTYRS OF THE TWENTIETH CENTURY IN SPAIN

Fr. Osvaldo Aparicio, ss.cc.



Translated from the Spanish  
by Damien Migallo

◀ *Cover Design:*  
José Luis Alzu Goñi

*“After leaving the loft of the Motte d’Usseau  
I knelt at the foot of a holm oak tree  
and offered up my life,  
for I had become a priest  
to suffer everything,  
to sacrifice myself for God  
and, if necessary, to die in His service.”*

MARIE-JOSEPH COUDRIN,  
Founder of the Congregation  
of the Sacred Hearts

*In gratitude to the Congregation  
of the Sacred Hearts*

Chapel of Saint Damien of Molokai and ►  
the Religious of the Sacred Hearts,  
Martyrs of the Twentieth Century in Spain,  
in the Parish of the Sacred Hearts, Madrid



# THE RELIGIOUS OF THE SACRED HEARTS MARTYRS OF THE TWENTIETH CENTURY IN SPAIN

Fr. Osvaldo Aparicio, ss.cc.





# Presentation: Greater love has no man ...

**O**n November 27, 2010 the remains of five religious of the Congregation of the Sacred Hearts, martyred during the Spanish Civil War (1936 - 1939) and whose martyrdom decree was approved by Benedict XVI on July 3, 2009, were laid to rest in the Church of the Sacred Hearts in Madrid.

Their remains lie in the chapel of St.Damien of Molokai, who has been called a “Martyr of Charity” for sacrificing his life to serve the most marginalized in society: those suffering from leprosy.

Beside the niches of the five martyrs, there is a memorial plaque which simply says: RELIGIOUS OF THE SACRED HEARTS, MARTYRS OF THE FAITH, 1936. But in addition to Fathers **Teófilo, Isidro, Gonzalo, Eladio and Mario**, all martyred in Madrid, another nine religious of our Congregation were killed in Madrid, Barcelona and Bilbao in the first months of the civil war. However, their cause for canonization has not been introduced since neither the exact circumstances of their deaths are known nor where they are buried.

In the **Positio super Martyrio of Fr. Teófilo de Legaria Goñi and His Four Companions** it states that, for the Congregation of the Sacred Hearts, these nine religious are also martyrs. For this reason, in this biographical sketch we also include their stories in an annex, for they are all an important part of the life of the Spanish Church and, indeed, of our Congregation and its history.



As we remember these our martyrs, we do not intend to simply give an historical memory, but a Christian and congregational memory as continuation of the first martyr, Jesus Our Lord, who shed His blood in complete faithfulness to the Father and to his brothers and sisters.

Jesus himself warns his disciples, *“The hour is coming when everyone who kills you will think he is offering worship to God... I have told you this so that when their hour comes you may remember that I told you.”* (Jn. 16: 2-4).

Our martyrs were not victims of a civil war or of its consequences or of a political ideology. They were martyred as part of a religious persecution, one among many persecutions that took place in different parts of the world during the Twentieth Century. There were martyrs in Russia, Poland, Germany, Spain, Mexico, China and elsewhere.

These persecutions were rooted in atheistic and anti-religious ideologies, which were put into effect once they came to power.

The religious persecution in Spain was not limited to the period of the civil war (1936-1939). There already were martyrs in Spain in 1934, some of whom have already been canonized, such as the Christian Brothers of Turón.

From the foregoing we can see the reason why we speak of the “Martyrs of the Twentieth Century” adding, “in Spain” and not simply “Spanish Martyrs”. For among the martyrs there were also some of other nationalities, for example Mexicans and French.

Some one thousand of the large number of Christians, who were persecuted and martyred in the years 1934-1939, have already been beatified on different occasions. In the last celebration in 2007 they were described as “martyrs of the Sovereignty of Christ the King”. Many of them gave their lives shouting, “Long live Christ the King!

One of our martyrs, Fr. Gonzalo Barrón, stated emphatically during his trial, *“I declare that I am a priest, that I have gone in pilgrimage to Cerro de los Ángeles and I have preached many times because that was my mission.”*

Another group of “Martyrs of the Twentieth Century in Spain” (among them the five brothers of our Congregation) will be beatified on October 27, 2013 as the culmination of the Year of Faith. The Spanish Episcopal Conference in its Pastoral Plan 2011-2015 speaks of the witness of the martyrs, *“In calling the Year of Faith, the Pope reminds us that ‘through faith, the martyrs gave their lives as a witness to the truth of the Gospel, which had transformed them and made them capable of giving the greatest gift of love forgiving those who persecuted them.’ The Church on pilgrimage in Spain has been blessed with a large number of these outstanding witnesses of the Lord. They were so united to him that they shared his fate in a special way, giving their lives in union with his saving death. The martyrs of the twentieth century in Spain are a wonderful inspiration to profess the faith wholly and courageously. They are also great intercessors. Some one thousand of them have already been canonized or beatified. Another good number will be beatified in the near future.”*

\* \* \* \* \*

In order to provide some background, these biographical accounts are preceded by a brief treatment of the heroic spirit of our Founder, Fr. Coudrin, and an historical introduction by Enrique Losada, ss.cc.

*“Greater love has no man than to lay down his life for his friend”* (John 15:13). This is the testimony of our martyred brothers. May it help the Congregation of the Sacred Hearts live its vocation with great fidelity and continue to bear witness to the love of Christ’s pierced heart.

## The heroic spirit of the Good Father, our Founder

*“May we His sons inherit the heroic spirit  
of the Good Father, our Founder.  
And if difficult days come, may we be firm  
in our faith and determined to work for it.”*

**W**ith these words, Fr. Teófilo de Legaria, Superior and Rector of the Seminary of the Sacred Hearts in **El Escorial**, wanted to give his young religious courage and strength before the bad times to come. It was the prelude to the Spanish Civil War (1936-1939).

*The Good Father, our Founder*, is none other than Fr. **Marie-Joseph (Pierre) Coudrin** (1768-1837), who courageously risked his life for

Fr. Marie-Joseph (Pierre) Coudrin (1768-1837), Founder of the Congregation of the Sacred Hearts. In Poitiers during the French Revolution, he would write one of the most beautiful pages on the underground apostolate





Religious praying in the loft of the Motte d'Usseau where the Founder spent five months in hiding

A plaque commemorating the ordination of Fr. Marie-Joseph Coudrin in the library of the Irish College in Paris

the faith during the difficult times of the French Revolution. Despite the harsh persecution unleashed against priests who would not swear allegiance to the Civil Constitution of the Clergy, the young Coudrin did not hesitate to be ordained a priest, even though for that to happen he had to go looking for a bishop in communion with the Pope.

They told him of a bishop in hiding in **Paris** and so he set off for there from **Poitiers**. On March 4, 1792, in the privacy of the library of the Irish College right in the heart of the city, he was ordained a priest along with thirty other candidates.

He returned to **Coussay-les-Bois**, the town of his birth. After presiding at the Easter Sunday High Mass, he had to hastily flee because together with his family, he refused to participate in the election of a constitutional priest.

He found refuge in a loft at the castle of the **Motte d’Usseau**. His hiding place measured five meters by two and *he was unable to stand up*. His seclusion would last five months. One day, the account of the Martyrdom of St. **Caprais**, the fourth century bishop of **Agen**, greatly impressed him. This bishop, fleeing persecution, took refuge on the mountain overlooking the city. From there he watched as a young 20-year-old, St. **Faith**, bravely gave her life, burned at the stake on the town square rather than deny her faith. Given this example of bravery, Caprais, ashamed of his own cowardice, left his refuge and turned himself in to his persecutor **Dacian** saying, *“I am a Christian and consecrated by episcopal consecration. My name is Caprais.”* This confession of faith merited martyrdom.

Such an example moved Pierre Coudrin who, without any more thought and despite the words of warning given him, decided to leave his refuge. He would later relate, *“After leaving the loft of the Motte d’Usseau I knelt at the foot of a holm oak tree and offered up my life,*



Detail of a large ceramic mural of the French Revolution in the Bastille metro station, Paris





*for I had become a priest to suffer everything, to sacrifice myself for God and, if necessary, to die in His service."*

Young Father Coudrin, resolved to set off for Poitiers, where he would write one of the most beautiful, courageous and daring pages of the underground apostolate during the days of the Terror of the French Revolution.

Outmaneuvering the surveillance, he visited prisons and hospitals; he gave catechesis and celebrated the sacraments in hiding; he even adopted the most varied disguises: a gendarme, a beggar, a baker, a laborer ... He became part of "**God's underground.**" A price was put on his head. In the underground movement he was known by many names: Joseph, Pierrot, Jerome, Caprais and, above all, **Marche-à-Terre**, which means more or less the "Wanderer".

One day Coudrin was visiting the hospital for the termi-

nally ill. The police arrived. It was impossible to escape. He saw an empty bed. They had just taken away a dead man, who went by the name "Marche-à-Terre". So he got into the bed and played dead. From then on that would be his most famous alias and the apostolic adventures of Marche-à-Terre would last the duration of the French Revolution.

On Christmas Eve in 1800, along with **Henriette Aymer de la Chevalerie**, he founded the Congregation of Sacred Hearts *whose foundation is the Consecration to the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary*.

Fr. Teófilo was quite right, in view of the dark days that were approaching, to wish that his young brothers *might inherit the heroic spirit of our Founder, the Good Father*. There is not the least doubt that this heroic spirit shone through the religious of the Sacred Hearts, Martyrs of the Faith of the Twentieth Century in Spain.

# They inherited the heroic spirit of our Founder

**T**he Congregation of the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary was born in the midst of the upheaval of the French Revolution at the end of the eighteenth century. That environment was clearly a decisive influence on some of the traits that the Founders, Marie-Joseph Coudrin and Henriette Aymer de la Chevalerie, gave the religious institution that they had begun.

One of those characteristics was the desire to repair the disaster wrought by the fury of the revolution. Though couched in more noble terms, such as freedom, equality and fraternity, it had produced monstrous violence and destruction. The founders of the Congregation saw this healing as a religious mission inspired by God's love for humanity, expressed in the hearts of Jesus and Mary.

Another of the central features of the new community was apostolic zeal that sought to extend God's kingdom in the face of the reign of terror and death so present at the time.

Rereading the biographical notes of the Martyrs of the twentieth century in Spain who belonged to our Congregation, for which I have been asked to write this introduction, I cannot help but note the strong relationship between those characteristics of our institute and the martyrdom of our brothers.

As we all know, the word martyr means witness. It is true that very often the word is identified with the violent acts which evoke the witness. However, it is important to go to its fundamental mean-

ing as we try to appreciate the life and death of our brothers presented here.

So it would be helpful to relate the historical context in which our brothers were martyred and the vocation and mission of the Congregation to which they were called. In some ways we can see parallels between the time of the Congregation's founding, to which I have already referred, and the period in which our brothers gave their lives.

The Spanish Civil War of 1936 was the explosion of a number of political, social, economic and cultural conflicts, which had been going on since the Bourbon Restoration in the last quarter of the nineteenth century. Some of these even go back farther in time. Unfortunately, the over simplification of history that has so often happened,



Spanish Civil War (1936-1939). Any kind of war, but especially civil war, unleashes the most extreme passions lying hidden in the human being

generally known as the division between the “two Spains”, can be a useful cliché for describing the explosion. Every cliché contains some truth, though it may not be completely true. A civil war is always a disaster and the defeat of an entire people that cannot yet move into the future together in peace.

The influence of the Catholic Church in the history of Spain is an undeniable fact, not only from a religious point view but also from the cultural, social and political, and we can even see it in the economic sphere also. The obvious influence of the Church in all these areas played an important role in the whole set of opposing forces that exploded in the War of 1936.

A secular mindset, in many cases anticlerical, characterized a sizeable part of one of the two Spains against the other. There was also ecclesiastical resistance to cultural changes that were occurring in the different sectors of society. This meant that a large part of the Church inevitably took a certain position in the conflict.

In territory controlled by the Republican side there had been systematic persecution of members of the religious and diocesan clergy, as well as of well known Catholic laity from the beginning of the war. It was considered theoretically justified because the Catholic Church was seen as a “fifth column” of the rebel faction against the Republic.

It is also true that in whatever type of war, but especially in a civil war, the most extreme passions lying hidden in the human being are unleashed. Feelings of heroism, compassion, and extreme generosity can be aroused in a conflict, but also the vilest and most wretched side of the human soul, such as irrational hatred of virtue that seems beyond us, the basest forms of revenge disguised in the chaos, resentment... It is that evil, more present than any other kind of ideological justification, that we see in the accounts of our brothers’ martyrdom.



The Congregation of the Sacred Hearts had arrived in Spain from France in the 1880s. While its apostolic mission was far-reaching, it focused particularly on education, quickly establishing several schools. In line with its institutional aims, it dedicated itself especially to the Enthronement of the Heart of Jesus in families and so it played an important role in the Consecration of Spain which took place on the “Cerro de los Ángeles”. From an early date it also welcomed Spanish vocations which helped the religious institute take root in our country.

It would be those Spanish vocations who would draw from the spring of the Congregation’s charism a generous commitment to repair God’s vision for humanity that, as in the time of the Founders, was being so attacked. Reading the following pages you will dis-

King Alfonso XIII, reading the act of the consecration of Spain to the Sacred Heart



- ◀ “Cerro de los Ángeles” May 30, 1919, the day of the consecration of Spain to the Sacred Heart. The Congregation of the Sacred Hearts was especially dedicated to the Enthronement of the Sacred Heart of Jesus in the Home and also played an important role in the consecration of Spain to the Sacred Heart. In the lower part of the photograph Frs. José Palomero (1), Mateo Crawley (2) and Calasanz Baradat (3)

cover in each of our brothers a witness of the vocation to which they had been called by God. Their apostolic zeal did not allow them to hide the light that they had received and in the face of the clear dangers of the moment they unhesitatingly owned up to their vocation and their mission.

*“May we his sons inherit the heroic spirit of the Good Father, our Founder”,* said Fr. Teófilo Fernández de Legaria, as we read in the biographical account that follows. He spoke these words to encourage his brothers to face the dreadful circumstances in which they found themselves. He was appealing to the witness left them by the Good Father of how to live the vocation to which they had been called. Fr. Teofilo also left us other words that explain how he saw his vocation. They give meaning to his death and show it to be a true martyrdom, in other words, a true witness. *“I die for God and for the peace of my country.”*

ENRIQUE LOSADA, SS.CC.

# The Congregation had fourteen victims

**O**n July 18, 1936 there was a military uprising against the government of Spain's second republic. That led to the civil war of 1936-1939.

During this time, there were fourteen religious of the Congregation of the Sacred Hearts (the Picpus Fathers) who gave their life but the cause for canonization of only five of them has been introduced.

The reason is that the exact details of the other nine are not known nor the circumstances of their deaths. However, for the Congregation of the Sacred Hearts they are considered martyrs just like the first five, as we read in the "**Positio super Martyrio**"<sup>1</sup> of Fr. Teófilo Fernández de Legaria Goñi and four companions:

*"During this period of the (Spanish) civil war, the Congregation of the Sacred Hearts had 14 victims, five from the community of Madrid, three from Barcelona, five from El Escorial and one from the community in Torrelavega. Here we only present five of them, the manner of whose death we have been able to determine. It is not known with certainty where the rest died or very little is known. There is only some circumstantial evidence of what might have happened. Nor is it known where they were buried. However, for the Congregation they are just as much martyrs as the*

---

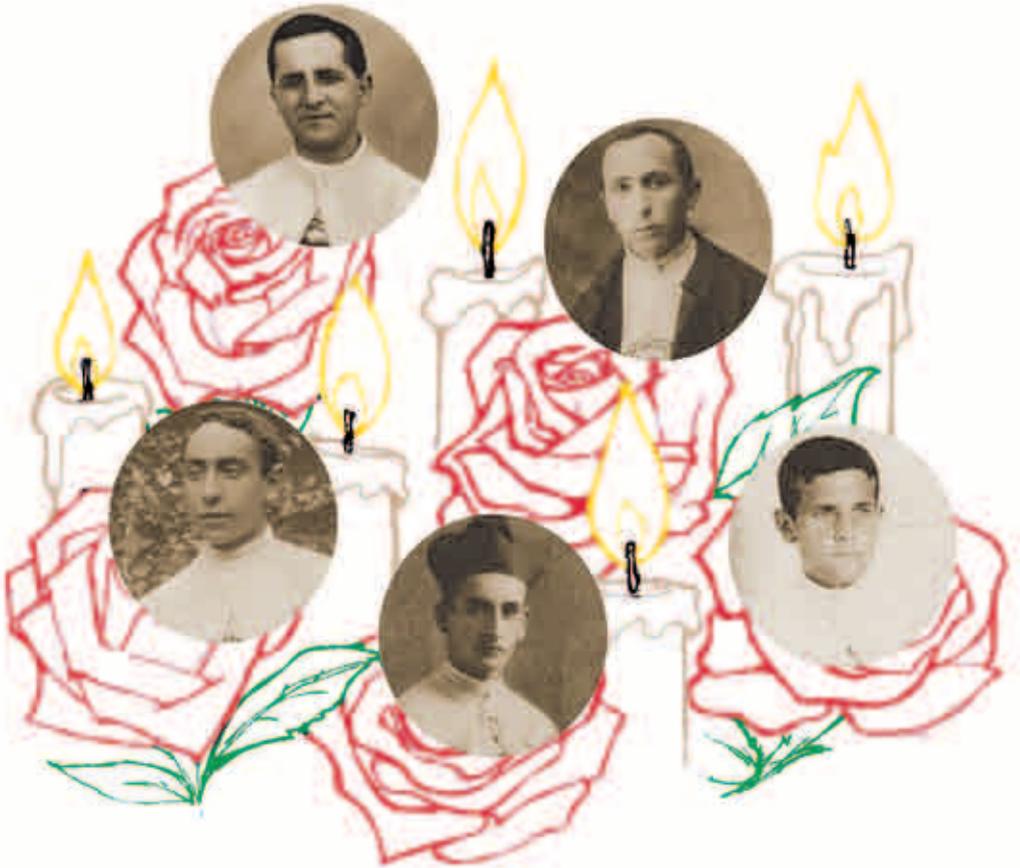
<sup>1</sup> The **Positio super Martyrio** is a compilation of facts and witnesses attesting that a servant to God died out of hatred for the faith. This document is sent to the Congregation for the Causes of Saints in Rome.

*other five who are now being presented to the ecclesiastical authorities so as to be recognized officially with the title and honors of martyrs of the faith. The names of these five are: Fr. Teófilo Fernández de Legaria Goñi, executed on August 11, 1936; Fr. Isidro Íñiguez de Ciriano, shot on the night of October 2 to 3, 1936; Fr. Gonzalo Barrón Nanclares, shot on the night of September 1 to 2, 1936; Fr. Eladio López Ramos, shot on the night of August 8 to 9 1936; and Fr. Mario Ros Ezcurra, shot on the night of August 14 to 15, 1936 in Madrid.”<sup>2</sup>*

---

<sup>2</sup> *Positio super Martyrio, page 8*

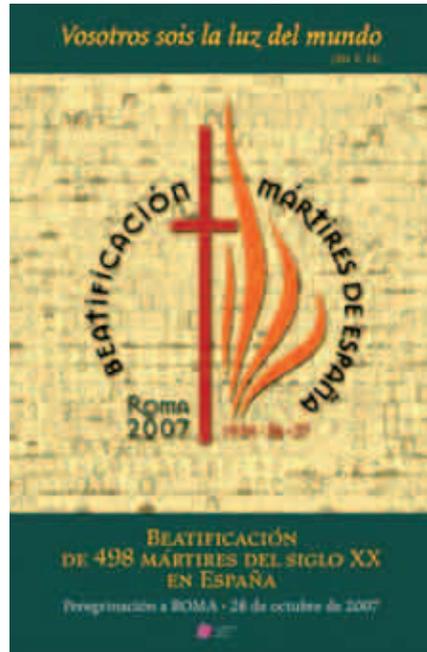
# What message do the Martyrs bring us?



**T**he Church has already canonised or beatified some 1,000 martyrs in Spain in the course of the twentieth century. The largest beatification took place in Rome on October 28, 2007. What follows are some excerpts from the homily at the beatification ceremony:

*“The Catechism of the Catholic Church affirms: “Martyrdom is the supreme witness to the truth of the faith”. In effect to follow Jesus means to also follow him in suffering and to accept persecutions because of love of the Gospel: “And you will be hated by all on account of my name” (Mark 13:13). Christ had anticipated that our lives would be linked to his destiny.*

*The logo set for the beatification – of significant importance because of the large number that were to be beatified – had at its core a red cross, symbol of the love of Christ poured out for us. Accompanying the cross was a palm designed in such a way as to represent tongues of fire, which represented the victory obtained by the martyrs whose faith overcomes the world (1 Jn. 1-4), as well as the fire of the Holy Spirit which came to rest on the apostles on the Day of Pentecost; likewise the logo evoked the image of the burning bush in the Exodus story in which God appeared to Moses, a bush that was not consumed by flame – which was an expression of God’s very being: a love that is given and which never goes out.*



*These symbols were encircled – evoking a sense of a global world – by the words “Beatification of the martyrs of Spain” and not “Beatification of the Spanish martyrs”. This is because although Spain was the place where they were martyred and also the birthplace for the majority of the martyrs, there were also some who came from other nations, in particular France, Mexico and Cuba. In any case, martyrs are not the exclusive heritage of one diocese or nation, but rather through their participation in the Cross of Christ, the Redeemer of the universe, they belong to the whole world and to the universal Church.*

*The central theme chosen for the beatification was taken from some words of the Gospel of Matthew: “You are the light of the world” (Mt. 5:14). As the Second Vatican Council states at the beginning of the Constitution on the Church, Jesus Christ is the light of the nations; a light that through the centuries is reflected in the face of the Church and which today, especially, shines in the martyrs whose memory we celebrate. Jesus Christ is the light of the world (Jn. 1:5-9), enlightening our minds, so that knowing the truth, we might live according to our dignity as human beings and children of God, and be a light of the world to all people; through the witness we give by living our lives in full coherence with the faith we profess ...*

*We cannot be content to celebrate the memory of the martyrs, admire their example and yet wearily press on with our lives. What message, then, do the martyrs have for each of us here?*

*We are living in an age when the true identity of Christians is under constant threat and for martyrs this means having to adhere to their baptismal faith in a coherent way, or adapting to their circumstances.*

*Given that the Christian life is a daily personal confession of faith in the Son of God made flesh, such coherence can lead in some cases to the shedding of blood.*

*But as the life of just one Christian given in defence of the faith has the effect of strengthening the entire life of the Church, so the fact of proposing the example of the martyrs is to remember that holiness consists not only in the reaffirmation of common values for all, but in the personal commitment to Christ as Lord of cosmos and history. Martyrdom is a paradigm of this truth ever since the Pentecost event .... martyrs behaved like good Christians and when the moment came, did not hesitate to lay down their life to the cry of "Long live Christ the King!" ...*



The transfer of the remains of Fr. Teófilo and his four Companions, Martyrs, in the parish of the Sacred Hearts, Madrid, November 27, 2010



**Fr. Teófilo Fernández de Legaria Goñi**  
(1898 -1936)



*“I die for God and for the peace of my country”*

*“May we his sons inherit the heroic spirit  
of the Good Father, our Founder”*

### **In Torralba del Río, Navarra**

Fr. Teófilo (baptized Benjamín) was born on July 5, 1898 in **Torralba del Río**, in the province of **Navarra**, the judicial district of **Estella** and the diocese of **Calahorra**. There were eighty houses in the village, with a population of some four hundred souls.

His father, **Señor Tomás**, a farmer, was a good and quiet man, who clung firmly to Christian traditions.



Doña Fermina Goñi, mother of Fr. Teófilo and schoolteacher in Torralba del Río, Navarra



An old photograph of the Sacred Hearts school in Miranda de Ebro, the first house of the Congregation in Spain. All of the brothers killed during the Spanish Civil War of 1936 had lived here, either for minor seminary, for the novitiate or for philosophy and theology

His mother, **Doña Fermina**, was something of a contrast: communicative and decisive, the village schoolteacher for fifty years.

Little Benjamín, the only boy of five children, turned out to be bright and intelligent. At the age of five he was asked, *“How many gods are there?”* He answered, *“Only one, if there were more they’d fight.”*

**In Miranda de Ebro, San Miguel del Monte, Santurce, Torrelavega, Rome ...**

When he was ten years old, the village priest intended him to go to the diocesan seminary, but his parents decided to send him to **Miranda de Ebro, Burgos**. His cousin, **Fr. Ignacio de la Cruz Baños** was a religious of the Sacred Hearts there.

During his five years of high school he was a brilliant student. In the school examinations records he was rated “outstanding.” At the age of seventeen, he began his novitiate in **San Miguel del Monte**, five kilometers from Miranda. Afterwards, he completed his philosophical studies in Miranda. The “Liber Professorum” indicates that once more he “passed with distinction.”

Then there was a brief break from studies. The Provincial thought he was tired and he sent him to the school recently founded in **San-turce**, Vizcaya. Even with a full load, he found time to obtain the National Degree for Teachers in **Vitoria**. He began theological studies in San Miguel del Monte and then completed them in **Torrelavega** and **Rome**, where he would receive his doctorate.

### **In Tetuán and Madrid at Martín de los Heros**

On September 22, 1925 he was ordained a priest. He spent a year doing military service in **Tetuán**, as chaplain to the Expeditionary Bat-



Fr. Teófilo with a group of students from Martín de los Heros School in Madrid



February 10, 1934. Fr. Teófilo assists at the funeral of Matías Montero, former student at Martín de los Heros, killed the day before

talion of León. He was transferred to **Madrid**, combining his work at the school in Martín de los Heros with his duties at the barracks.

In 1927 he was released from military service and became once more fully part of community life. He was appointed Prior and Headmaster of the School. In addition to his work directing and teaching he began preparing for a Licentiate in Philosophy and Literature. He did his exams in **Salamanca** where he met **Don Miguel de Unamuno**. From that time on they admired and appreciated one another.

In May 1931 they began burning parish churches and schools. Areneros of the Jesuits, Maravillas of the de La Salle Brothers and Argüelles of the Sacred Hearts were raided and looted. Fr. Teófilo, helped by Fr. Gonzalo Barrón managed to put out the fire.

To counter the sectarian politics of the second Republic in the field of education, in 1933 Fr. Teófilo, with several friends had founded the “Brotherhood of San Isidoro de Seville for Doctors and Graduates in Arts and Sciences”. Fr. Teófilo was appointed Chaplain, a task he accomplished with great fidelity, even after he was transferred to **El Escorial**.

### **In El Escorial**

In September 1933 he was named Superior of the Community of Martín de los Heros, but after two years, he had to take over as Superior of the Seminary of San José for Philosophy and Theology in El Escorial.



St. Joseph's Seminary in El Escorial, which Fr. Teófilo offered to the town council as a field hospital, when the military uprising was declared

They were difficult times and storm clouds were gathering. One of the maxims which he instilled in his young religious was, *“May we his sons inherit the heroic spirit of the Good Father, our Founder. And if difficult days come, may we be firm in our faith and determined to work for it.”*

The atmosphere in the two villages, El Escorial and **San Lorenzo del Escorial**, became more and more tense. In one of his talks to students, Fr. Teófilo confessed to them that he desired to die a martyr and that he asked the Lord for that.

On July 18, 1936 the military uprising was declared and hostilities began. Before long a large number of wounded were arriving from the front. Fr. Teófilo did not hesitate to present himself at the city hall of El Escorial to offer the Seminary as a field hospital. He told them,

*“You have at your disposal all the beds, dormitories, including all the supplies of the house. You can use the garden for food.”*

Fr. Teófilo was appointed Director of the Hospital. The students, trading their white habits for white nurse’s uniforms, gave their beds to the wounded.

Given the anti-religious sentiment, the Sisters of the Sacred Hearts also suffered harassment. They were confined and guarded in their convent in San Lorenzo del Escorial. Fr. Teófilo came to their aid. The union leader of the C.N.T. (National Confederation of Workers) decided to move them by truck to Madrid. Once again, Fr. Teófilo was present to help sort out the distressing situation. The sisters were distributed among the homes of friendly families.

*“Sons, prepare yourselves for the fight and for however God might use you!”*

The situation deteriorated entirely. From Madrid came the order to detain religious men and women. The Mayor contacted Fr. Teófilo on August 8, 1936. The religious of the Sacred Hearts had to be ready to depart under arrest and be taken to Madrid. The next day, after Holy Mass, Fr. Teófilo told his young students:

*“So far God has prevented us from having to leave our beloved seminary. Today, the moment of our sacrifice has arrived. You have to leave the house. Perhaps we will be separated. An order from the mayor decrees that, without any hesitation, we have to provide a list of all the professed religious. The only ones who are not on the list are the lay brothers. They will remain as servants. The mayor cannot keep us any longer at El Escorial. He is receiving threats and complaints from all sides. However, he guarantees that nothing will happen to us.*

*Sons, entrust yourselves to the Sacred Hearts. Prepare yourselves for the fight and for however God might dispose of you.”*

*“Have faith in God and, if you die, die as good Christians”*

This is how **Anselmo Zulaica**, portrays the farewell, in his biographical sketch of Fr. Teófilo:

*“That same morning he (the mayor) handed over the list. Fr. Teófilo would stay on at the hospital as Director and Fr. Cesáreo as his helper.*

Memorial to Fr. Teófilo.  
At the foot of this rock, called Piedra del Mochuelo ("the Stone of the Owl"), on the road from El Escorial to Valdemorillo, Fr. Teófilo was shot on the night of August 11, 1936





*The hour of departure arrived. It was about two thirty in the afternoon, when, after dinner – in many ways a reminder of the last supper – we heard the sound of trucks. There was a final farewell and once more the words of that morning came to us: ‘Have faith in God and, if you die, die as good Christians.’*

*The two trucks and the police car got ready to leave. The list was read out. One by one they embraced Father and in silence took their place. There were silence and tears all around. Even the wounded looking down from the balcony felt the pain of the community.*

*Just moments before the order was given to leave, one of the fathers rushed up to Fr. Teófilo and asked his blessing on everyone.*

*It was the final image engraved in the minds of those leaving. He traced a large cross in the midst of the silence; the words remained stifled in his heart.”*

They tell how during the journey to Madrid, a difficult discussion began among their captors, because some wanted to shoot the religious along the way at some ditch by the side of the road. However the order to bring them to the General Headquarters in Madrid prevailed. Once there, they were registered and then set free.

Now Fr. Teófilo, alone, in a conversation in the garden with one of the doctors, he confessed:

*“I have a premonition that I am going to die and I will be happy to die being shot. Worse was done to our Lord for us. It is the least we can do for him.”*

## It was eleven o'clock at night ...

Two days had passed since the departure of his dear students. It was four o'clock in the afternoon. An ambulance full of the wounded arrived from the front. There was not enough space in the hospital. The presence of the Director was required. The commander of the ambulance recognized him. He was called **Fernando** and was the son-in-law of the porter of the convent of Martín de los Heros. When his family had been going through hard times, they had received help from Fr. Teófilo.

Six hours went by. It was time for dinner. Fr. Teófilo was arrested by **Carlos**, “el Alemán”, and other comrades from El Escorial (“el



Picture of the Memorial to Fr. Teófilo at the Piedra del Mochuelo (Stone of the Owl), on the El Escorial - Valdemorillo road

Zapaterín" and "Salinero") sent by Fernando. When they took him to be shot along the road to **Valdemorillo**, he asked his executioners for three things: to pray, to write to his mother and to be buried in the cemetery.

Witnesses testify that in the missing letter, he said:

*"Goodbye. Do not grieve. I die for God and for the peace of my country. Goodbye."*

Three kilometers from El Escorial, at the "Piedra del Mochuelo" (Stone of the Owl), he was shot. It was eleven o'clock at night on August 11, 1936. The executioners commented the next day: *"He died like a brave man."*

A memorial has been erected at the site of the execution. There are always fresh flowers but nobody knows who leaves them.



**Fr. Isidro Íñiguez de Ciriano Abechuco**  
(1901 -1936)



## *“I was proud to be a religious”*

### **In Doña Avelina’s Rooming House**

In the **Positio super Martyrio** of Fr. Isidro, the eloquent testimony of Doña **Beatriz del Hierro López** stands out. She was a fifty-eight, single, Catholic business woman from Nofuentes, Burgos. That she was a business woman was for sure because she ran the Pension Nofuentes rooming house at 17 Calle de la Puebla, in Madrid. Her sister, Doña **Avelina** was the owner of the Loyola boarding house at 10 Calle Montera. This was where Fr. Isidro finally landed after he was denied refuge in three other rooming houses because his appearance clearly gave away that he was a priest.

*“Are you by any chance a priest?, Doña Avelina asked him. He answered, Yes. And inspired by my feelings of pity for him, I told him that space would be made for him and that he could stay. That occurred on August 13, 1936.”*

### **In the “chekas”<sup>1</sup> on de la Bola and de Fomento streets**

His peaceful stay in the boarding house lasted no more than a month and a half. Doña Beatriz was arrested and taken to the cheka on Calle de la Bola. There the militia noticed from documents seized

---

<sup>1</sup> The “chekas” or “checas” (from Russian cheká) were places that Republican militiamen used during the Spanish civil war to detain, interrogate and try in a summary way.



The cheka where Fr. Isidro was tried and condemned was located on this street in the center of Madrid

in the house of Doña Beatriz that in both her house and that of her sister Avelina there were religious hiding. On the night of October 2 they went there and arrested the owner, Fr. Isidro and two other religious.

They were also taken to the cheka on Calle de la Bola, where they met the group being held from the house of Doña Beatriz. Thus she was able to leave us the following testimony:

*“The Servant of God was seized at the Loyola rooming house on Calle Montera by members of the FAI, which was an anarchist association formed within the Popular Front. In the cheka they set up a sort of court that was sitting behind a table, on which you could see money, jewelry and other objects that the militia had stolen. There were about thirteen or fourteen of us before the tribunal and among us the Servant of God.*

*When the president questioned the religious and priests, I was irritated and surprised that they did not defend themselves. Finally he asked the Servant of God (S. of G.) how he*

From the cheka on Calle la Bola Fr. Isidro was transferred to the nearby cheka on Calle Fomento



*paid for his stay in the rooming house, to which the S. of G. answered with five pesetas.*

*He then asked him where he got the money to pay for his stay, to which the S. of G. replied that the money was from masses. The president of the tribunal replied that it was a nice way to steal, even though now it will be just a “pecadillo” (small sin).*

*After the tribunal finished interrogating all of us, and having asked the S. of G. expressly whether he was a priest and having answered that he was a religious, the president ordered us to stand up, and once standing, one of them read a few pages. What it was about I cannot remember, but I can say with certainty that it reflected neither the questions that we had been asked, nor the answers we had given.*

*They lined us up, militiamen grabbed our arms, we were surrounded by other militiamen, all with lanterns and loaded guns. They took us to Calle Fomento and they left us in the basement of the same building, but men and women in separate cells.*

*At Fomento there was another tribunal composed of a militiaman and a militia woman. I do not know what this tribunal*

*asked the others. What I can say is that when I appeared before it they treated me very badly.*

*I do remember that they were shouting, arguing among themselves whether they would have to kill everyone that very night. Some were saying that night there would be a bloodbath but there were too many to be able to kill everyone. Others were saying, 'we can kill the Sisters in a second round'.*

*I did not know anything more about them. Although I supposed that they had killed them. Some days would have passed when I found myself with the head of the cheka and on seeing me he congratulated me saying, 'Well done.' I asked him about the fate of the rest of my companions, and he told me, 'Don't ask about them, they had worse luck than you, they were priests.'*

*Later we learned that an edict appeared in the Official Bulletin of the Province concerning the discovery of the body of the S. of G. Yes, I want it made known that every one of us considered the S. of G. a saint, and we had no need to ask anything for him, but to entrust ourselves to him."*

## **Birth and education**

This "saint" was born in the little village of **Legarda** in Alava, on March 8, 1901, and given the name Juan. In the words of one neighbor *His family was of rather modest means, his parents were very good people, they were quite poor. They were farmers so typical of our land, people of great piety and morality.*

He entered the apostolic school of the Congregation of the Sacred Hearts in Miranda de Ebro. He then went on to the novitiate in **Fuenterrabía**, Guipuzcoa, where he professed his temporary vows on June 22, 1919.

He studied philosophy at Miranda de Ebro and San Miguel del Monte, completing the greater part of theology in Torrelavega.

There are pleasant memories from his years in the scholasticate. They reveal his simplicity, tranquil spirit, great tenacity in his studies, his ability to form friendships and his great patience. All of which led him to calmly accept the many jokes that his peers subjected him to for his small stature. *“He was not particularly talented”,* one friend testifies, *“but he was held in high esteem for his perseverance, work and virtue.”*

There was nothing extraordinary about his life and so Fr. **Bernabé Ibarreta**, his classmate also from Alava could attest, *“He excelled in modesty, in other words, he was outstanding precisely because he wasn’t outstanding in anything particular ... always calm ... very reserved ... persevering at work, he controlled his temper.”*



Ruins of the Church and cloister of the Monastery of the Monks of St. Jerome in San Miguel del Monte. It was acquired by the Congregation of the Sacred Hearts for the novitiate and philosophical studies. Among those who studied there was Fr. Isidro

## **Professor of Moral Theology and Canon Law: *Everyone loved him***

He was sent to Rome and received his doctorate in Canon Law at the Gregorian University. In 1925, while in Rome, he was ordained a priest. He returned to Spain two years later, to take up the post of professor of Canon Law and Moral Theology at the new theological college at El Escorial.

According to witnesses, he became an excellent professor, given his effort, seriousness and tenacity,

*“As he was not particularly talented he had to study hard. This was the cause of many a headache but that did not keep him from continuing to study and work. Everyone loved him and they were hoping that he would stay at the scholasticate, and that was quite something to be able to say: to be liked by every one of the young men, who were difficult to please.”*

## **Arrest and death**

When war broke out in Spain on July 18, 1936, Fr. Isidro, like Fr. Teófilo Fernández de Legaria Goñi, the young students and other religious, remained as a nurse at the seminary in El Escorial, now a field hospital.

This situation did not last long. The mayor of El Escorial, under strong pressure from Madrid, was forced to evict the religious, as had been done with the Augustinian Fathers and the Sisters of the Sacred Hearts in San Lorenzo del Escorial. On August 9, 1936, the religious were put in a truck and taken to the Central Security Headquarters in Madrid, where they were registered and then released.



1936. The community of El Escorial: teachers and students of the Sacred Hearts Seminary. This photograph was taken shortly before Fathers Isidro (seated, third from the left) and Teófilo (seated, third from the right) were martyred. Fr. Isidro and the entire group of students were arrested and taken in a truck to the Central Security H.Q. in Madrid

Among them was Fr. Isidro. They were left totally on their own in the capital where they knew no one.

Fr. **Eulogio Izurriaga**, whose brother, Fr. **Luis** was also killed in the war, described the suffering and distress of Fr. Isidro during those days:

*“Fr. Isidro was living in El Escorial when the national movement began, and was the prior of the house. He came to Madrid and found himself on the street not knowing where to go. I advised him to go to my boarding house and ask for lodging. They took him in.*

*Eight days later the landlady became suspicious, perhaps from observing his recollection, she realized he was a priest. Because of that she asked him to leave the boarding house, because if not they were going to kill him. Then he went to the 'San Ignacio de Loyola' rooming house or simply 'Loyola'. There he declared that he was a priest and they took him in and he stayed there until he was arrested."*

Sister **María Regina de los Ángeles**, a Salesian Sister of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, who ended up together with Fr. Isidro in the cheka on Calle de la Bola, said:

*"When asked about his marital status, he said that he was a religious and proud to be so. One could see in him a deep conformity with the will of God. He was not showy or boastful, but very honored and happy in his profession."*

Fr. Isidro died that same night, October 2 to 3, 1936, as the result of gunshot wounds. His body was picked up on the East Road of Madrid on October 3 and identified by Fr. **Recaredo Ventosa García**. There is a photo of his body and documentation in the General Security Headquarters.



**Fr. Gonzalo Barrón Nanclares**  
(1899-1936)



*“I want to be the poor troubadour  
of the mercies of the Heart of Jesus”*

**Collaborator and friend of Fr. Mateo Crawley**

Fr. Gonzalo used to say, *“I want to be the poor troubadour of the mercies of the Heart of Jesus.”* Spreading the Kingdom of the Heart of Jesus was his great passion, as it was of his teacher, the world apostle, Fr. **Mateo Crawley**, who called himself *“the Wandering Jew of the Sacred Heart.”*

Fr. Gonzalo’s first assignment was Miranda de Ebro but he was soon transferred to Madrid to make travel arrangements for his teacher and friend, Fr. Mateo and to work with the secretariats of



1919. Fr. Mateo Crawley, sitting in the middle. Fr. Gonzalo Barrón, second left in the third row



During the Spanish Civil War Republican militia shoot at and destroy the statue of the Sacred Heart at Cerro de los Ángeles, the geographical centre of the Iberian Peninsula

the Enthronement of the Sacred Heart of Jesus and Night Adoration in the Home. Later he would take on the direction of both of them.

The same Fr. Mateo would testify in *“some notes for a possible canonization of reverend Fr. Gonzalo”* (July 20, 1952), *“I had known him very well and had had very close dealings with Fr. Gonzalo over the course of more than two years. He was also my secretary and traveling companion on various apostolic journeys that I made in Spain preaching the crusade of the enthronement of the Heart of Jesus in Homes.”*

It is worth reading those notes in their entirety. As it is not possible to include the whole document given its length, we just give Fr. Mateo’s conclusion about Fr. Gonzalo travels:

*“Fr. Gonzalo was a happy exception to the axiom that says he who travels too much seldom becomes a holy man. Never was he a tourist disguised as a preacher, but a true apostle”.*

We have letters of Fr. Gonzalo to Fr. Mateo that reveal the trust that bound them,

*“Here we all are very well and thinking much of good Fr. Mateito (sic)”.*

A few lines before he wrote,

*“I have a fond memory of you, my dear Fr. Mateo, and feelings of deep gratitude for what I have received from you. I shall never forget that I owe your reverence the unmerited favor of working in the beautiful apostolate of the Enthronement as I so desired. I cannot forget you, so I spend my free time reading your writings so as to soak myself in the doctrine of love and trust that you so wonderfully preach. No wonder that hearing me preach makes people think back to the preaching of Fr. Mateo.”*

*“The apostle refuses no one, he is all for souls”*

Fr. Gonzalo had a way with words and he spoke passionately. He made many apostolic journeys, not only accompanying Fr. Mateo, but to the most diverse parts of Spain preaching the love of the Sacred Heart. He was in demand all over. One trip that stands out was when he accompanied **Cardinal Segura**, primate of Toledo, all over his archdiocese.

They say he preached 14,000 sermons in his relatively short life. It is difficult to confirm this figure, but in the archives of the Iberian Province of the Congregation of the Sacred Hearts one can see the huge number of his conferences, triduum, novenas, sermons, holy hours, talks and retreats.



Fr. Gonzalo preaching at Cerro de los Ángeles

Some are typewritten and others are handwritten manuscripts. Sometimes they are just outlines and others are complete texts on notepaper, in exercise books or small notebooks.

He was tireless and his workload heavy. He said,

*“The apostle refuses no one, he is all for souls, How great it would be if the bonus of this apostolate were martyrdom!”*

In time he had recruited 40,000 night adorers.

The photograph of him preaching at Cerro de los Ángeles is very well-known.

They loaded work on him. In the midst of so much apostolic activity he was appointed Provincial Treasurer of the Congregation of the Sacred Hearts.

## His concern for the sick and social issues

In the **Positio super Martyrio**, witnesses say that his tireless speaking was combined with a constant concern for the poor. In addition to raising funds to help them, he put great effort into the foundation of schools in Tetuán, at the time a suburb of Madrid, where he went every Sunday to give catechesis and assist in the teaching. He was also very committed to visiting the sick in their families and he never refused to act as night nurse when someone in the community needed him.

One of the most eloquent testimonies speaks clearly of his concern for social issues:

*“I must emphasize that one of the prevalent themes of his preaching was with regard to social justice and commutative justice. Many times in his sermons and his conversations we heard him exhort both groups, that workers not rob time from their bosses by slacking off at work and demanding that the bosses properly pay for services rendered, and moreover, that they know how to harmonize the duties of justice with the duties of piety toward God and toward their own family members, giving them time so that they can attend to these other duties.”*

Another witness, after stating that Fr. Gonzalo never backed any right-wing party, said, *the anarchists or communists in Andalusia, on seeing him so devoted to the service (of God), wanted to recruit him and talked of including him on their shortlist of deputies.*

## From Ollauri in La Rioja

Looking back over Fr. Gonzalo's life, we could say that he was a good Riojan, *"friendly, attentive, good to be with, not excessively hard working, but profoundly good."* This is how his colleague, Fr. Recaredo Ventosa, also a Riojan, spoke of him, adding *"that in his years in the scholasticate he was very enthusiastic about the missions, preaching and taking part in public religious acts, for which he prepared himself with great enthusiasm."*

Fr. Gonzalo was born on October 24, 1899 in **Ollauri**, La Rioja. At baptism he was given the name Fortunato. He studied at the apostolic school of the Sacred Hearts in Miranda de Ebro, where he was remembered as *very joyful, very good and very pious*.

He did his novitiate and also took his first vows in Miranda. He was 18 years old. He completed theological studies in Torrelavega, Cantabria, and was ordained a priest in Santander. He was then able to give free rein to his desire for ministry.



A photograph from the period of Ollauri, La Rioja, birthplace of Fr. Barrón

## In the National Office of the Enthronement

When the Spanish Civil War began, Father Gonzalo was a member of the religious community at the school of Martín de los Heros in Madrid. However, during the day he worked at 2 Calle Francisco de Rojas, the office of the magazine “Reinado Social del Sagrado Corazón” (Social Reign of the Sacred Heart) and the National Headquarters of the Enthronement.

On the day of the uprising, July 18, 1936, twelve sisters of the Sacred Hearts took refuge in there. They had come from their school on Calle Fuencarral. Among other things, Fr. Gonzalo took responsibility for organizing a schedule for Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament, which Fr. **Casimiro** had brought to the flat.

*“If the hour comes for me, God will give me the halo of martyrdom”*

Anxiety and distress followed. On July 19 the militia began a search of the apartment on Francisco de Rojas and it was thought better to separate the sisters in different houses. Fr. Gonzalo stayed in the apartment, but that same evening the police returned and he was arrested. Nobody can explain how he gave the police the slip and took refuge in the home of Doña **Carolina Aguinaga** at 31 Calle Sagasta.

A witness related,

*“It was very difficult for Fr. Gonzalo to be hidden indoors, not able to say Holy Mass and not free to exercise his ministry. I am a priest, he exclaimed. Better to die than be here like this, without working for souls.”*

# Conferencias para Señoras y Señoritas

La Junta de entronizaciones de San Sebastián ha organizado para este mes un ciclo de Conferencias interesantísimas y llenas de actualidad, a cargo del Apostol del Reinado Social de Jesucristo

## R. P. Gonzalo Barrón, de los Sagrados Corazones

que después de recorrer las más importantes capitales de España, va a dedicar una semana a nuestra Ciudad para explicar temas de tanta trascendencia como los expuestos en el siguiente sumario.

### LAS CONFERENCIAS TENDRAN LUGAR EN LA PARROQUIA DEL BUEN PASTOR

DÉSDE EL 17 AL 23 DE SEPTIEMBRE  
A LAS 7 <sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub> DE LA TARDE

#### PRIMERA CONFERENCIA

17 Septiembre

#### EL APOSTOLADO

La viejecita de San Buenaventura—O apóstol o apóstata... no hay más dilema—Los Bombones de Santa Teresita—Los grandes revolucionarios son los Santos—Pajitas de Belén.

#### SEGUNDA CONFERENCIA

18 Septiembre

#### ESPOsas, SED APOSTOLEs

La mujer de Poncio Pilatos—¡No condenes al justo!—Moscu y la esposa—Conoce a tu marido—¡no lo conoces!—¡Son los hombres tan distintos antes y después de casarse!—¡Si las campanas tocaran a descasar!...

#### TERCERA CONFERENCIA

19 Septiembre

#### MADRES, SED APOSTOLEs

¡Pobrecitos, no tienen madre!—Santa Mónica y San Agustín en Ostia—¡Benditas manías!—¿Dónde está la niña?... Ahí, pero... tiene automóvil!—Te llamas madre y no buscas por la oración a tu hijo... ¡No mientas, no mientas!...

#### CUARTA CONFERENCIA

20 Septiembre

#### JOVENES, SED APOSTOLEs

El pletismógrafo o aparato para medir el amor—¿En qué se ocupan las jóvenes de nuestros días?—Estrellas de oro... ¡en polvo!—Pagad una deuda de gratitud—¡Si yo pudiera!...—mejor, ¡si yo quisiera!

#### QUINTA CONFERENCIA

21 Septiembre

#### JOVENES, SED PURAS

La gran tirana moda—Mujer automática de Naves—¿Qué se ha hecho de las pulmonías?... ¡Cúbrase usted, señora!—Pisoteando la Medalla de la Virgen—Anarquismo Iemenino.

#### SEXTA CONFERENCIA

22 Septiembre

#### SEÑORAS, JOVENES, SED REPARADORAS

El abanico en la Pasión moderna—Crucifijo del diablo—Trigo de Hostias—Un nuevo ejército—Lámparas votivas—Joven portadora de perfumes.

#### EL DIA 23

Se celebrará una Solemne Hora Santa, a las 7 de la tarde, que dirigirá el mismo R. P. Conferenciante.

Tip. ETTA-BUEN PASTOR. 1

A pamphlet announcing conferences by Fr. Gonzalo Barrón



He went out to attend to a dying man and went again to the house of Doña Carolina Aguinaga.

*Comrade, stop!*

He was arrested on September 1. He used to go to chat with Don **Constancio Pérez Pedrero** in his shop at 27 Calle Barquillo. That day Don Constancio saw some suspicious people loitering about. When he said goodbye to Fr. Gonzalo, he asked his assistant to follow him just in case. Not long after he returned with the news that a group of militiamen had arrested Fr. Gonzalo in the Plaza del Rey saying to him, "*Comrade, stop!*"



Fr. Gonzalo traveled tirelessly for the apostolate. However Fr. Mateo Crawley said of him, "He was never a tourist disguised as a preacher but a true apostle"

To ascertain his identity, for in the documentation he was carrying there was the name of Fr. **Félix Beaumont**, the militia took him to the Delegation of Honduras and then to home of Doña Carolina. Later they moved him to a hotel on the Paseo del Cisne (others say to the Police Station on Calle la Bolsa), which was occupied by the Republican militia.

According to the testimony of Don Constancio Pérez, who was also arrested but escaped,

*“Fr. Gonzalo in a determined voice and with all his soul stated, ‘I declare that I am a priest, I have been on pilgrimage to Cerro de los Ángeles and preached there many times, because this was my mission.’”*

He was also asked about his companions and replied,

*“They are so persecuted, that every day they are in a different place.”*

That same night, September 1-2, he was shot in one of the infamous “paseos”.<sup>1</sup>

These are the facts recorded in the Judicial Archives:

*“Corpse identified in the Judicial Archives with the numbers (37-31), which was found in the Municipal District of Madrid in a place known as los Altos del Hipódromo, Calle Carbonero y Sol in Madrid on September 2, 1936.”*

---

<sup>1</sup> “Paseo” or “motorized killing”: The victim was taken “for a ride (paseo)” in a car that had been confiscated and killed on the outskirts of the city, the body then thrown in a ditch. Fathers Teófilo, Isidro, Gonzalo, Eladio and Mario were all killed in that way.





**Fr. Eladio López Ramos**  
(1904 - 1936)



## *A man of the interior life and of intense piety*

### *An Eminent Confessor*

It was said that Fr. Eladio *was a man of the interior life and of intense piety*. In fact when he lived at the school of Martín de los Heros in Madrid, where he was sent after ordination to exercise pastoral ministry in the school chapel, he left a deep impression.

His great apostolate was the confessional. Fr. **José Palomero**, his Provincial, described him as an “eminent confessor.” It was an apostolate that he exercised with enthusiasm and commitment:



A photo of the period of the school of Martín de los Heros, Madrid. In addition to Fr. Eladio, the martyrs Fathers Teófilo, Gonzalo and Mario were assigned there and had to leave when the civil war broke out. In the background you can see the Model Prison

*“The confessional has put me in an intimate relationship with many souls (no tribute to me, but I’m really not exaggerating when I say that two thirds of the people who come to the church, and there are many who come, come to me for confession.). I also feel bad leaving many of these souls which are very good and who hold me in high esteem, which I do not deserve. I remember the other day telling a young girl, whom I hold in high regard, that I would be leaving and she began to cry. But those natural feelings do not deviate me from my path” (Letter to his family, 03/01/1936).*

## **The Carthusians or Molokai?**

For some time he had been thinking of taking a new path. His desire for a greater interior life and for more complete surrender to God, led him to try out a new life with the Carthusians in the monastery of Aula Dei in **Zaragoza**.

On July 10, 1935 he wrote to the Superior General of the Sacred Hearts,

*“Moved by a desire for holy solitude and for different reasons, which I have weighed at length and with prudence, I ask permission to enter the contemplative life in the Carthusian Order.”*

It pained him to leave *“our beloved Congregation which will always be very close to my heart”*. He expressed those feelings in his farewell letter to the Superior General,

*“I cannot but feel deep sadness in tearing myself away from the bosom of what has really been my mother and where I leave the dearest memories of my childhood and my youth” (January 25, 1936).*

At the end of the same letter he gave a glimpse of the deep interior struggle that he had to go through in making this decision. It was such that he didn't know whether the scale would tip toward the contemplative life of the Carthusians or a life of complete surrender on **Molokai**. His only desire was to discover God's will,

*"I think that I am being honest with myself when I say that I have no other desire than to surrender everything to God. So much so that for some time I have been undecided about whether to enter the Carthusians or go to the leper colony of Molokai."*

In addition to his twenty-three letters, a certain number of literary and poetic works also survive. In them we see his sensitivity and his desire to fly higher:

*Early-morning lark,  
what joy you sing flying to heaven.  
O, how I wish  
to follow you in flight, to follow you in flight!  
Yet I do not know what I have inside my soul.  
As I do not know what I have in my heart,  
how I would like to weep, but I cannot weep any more  
and only moaning I sing of my pain.*

His stay with the Carthusians was very short, not even a month, February 3 to 23. His inability to adapt and poor health made him return to his community at Martín de los Heros. A few months later, on August 8, 1936, he would die a martyr. He was 32 years old.



The Carthusian Aula Dei in Zaragoza where Fr. Eladio went for a very brief stay

### **A family very much of the Sacred Hearts**

Fr. Eladio (baptized José Leoncio) was born on November 16, 1904 in **Laroco**, Orense. Already in childhood he got to know the Congregation of the Sacred Hearts, as a young woman his mother had tried her vocation in the congregation but had to leave for health reasons. To compensate four of her children made profession in the Congregation. **Anselma** and **María del Carmen**, Fr. Eladio and also the “distinguished” professor of philosophy of so many generations of Sacred Hearts seminarians, **Fr. Victorino**.

José Leoncio entered the minor seminary in Miranda de Ebro and from there went to the novitiate in San Miguel del Monte. He did his ecclesiastical studies in Torrelavega and was ordained in El Escorial.

It is worth noting that he stuttered somewhat. One of his classmates said that this could have influenced his character. He was *rather reserved, but that did not prevent him from begin funny at times*. His family referred to this “difficulty he had expressing himself” in a letter in which they insinuate that it may have been this problem

that caused his decision to leave the Carthusians. We do not have that letter but we do have Fr. Eladio's response,

*“As for the speech impediment, it is the least problem, in as much as I hear confessions a lot and without difficulty, and the people have shown me that they hold me in high regard. If I had no more reasons than that, I assure you that I would never enter the Carthusians. And if not, what will you say to me if I naively confess to you that I was hesitating in choosing between the Carthusians and the missions of Oceania? Believe me when I say that I had almost decided to go to the lepers of Molokai where our Father Damien was.”*



Laroco, Orense, the birthplace of Fr. Eladio. He had another brother (Fr. Victorino) and two sisters (Anselma and María del Carmen) in the Congregation of the Sacred Hearts

*“But where do I go ?”*

After his priestly ordination in 1929, he was sent to the school of Martín de los Heros in Madrid. There he would live with his fellow martyrs Fathers Teófilo, Gonzalo and Mario.

At the outbreak of the Civil War he and the other religious were forced to leave the community house to seek shelter in the city. Like the most of his companions, he was fleeing from one place to another, from one boarding house to another.

Fr. **Carlos Gallo** reflects on the anguish of those days,

*“Fr. Eladio was with me and other fathers in the Atlantico boarding house. But I was the one who told him that if we are all together and they come for one, we would all be finished and that it would be better to disperse.*



“I don’t have documents. You already know that I am a priest. Do with me what you want”

*I remember that Fr. Eladio replied, 'But where do I go?' As we were thinking the same thing, what we did was look in the phone directory and check into the nearest available rooming house. It fell to him to try to one called Duplá, where he took refuge."*

***"I am a priest and I must not deny that I am"***

How was his stay in the rooming house? What was his attitude and what were the circumstances of his arrest? His landlady Doña **Concepción Peris** tells us,

*"During the last days of the month of July 1936, without remembering exactly which day, Don José López Ramos arrived at my Duplá boarding house, at 2 Calle Farmacia. Just at that moment there was a group of militiamen, who did nothing to Fr. José. When he arrived, I asked him his true identity and he told me straightforwardly that he was a priest. I cannot be sure whether our conversation had been overheard. But what is clear is that he checked into the house as a priest. In the few days he was in the pension before his final arrest, he told me more than once, 'I am a priest and I must not deny that I am. Let God's will be done."*

The same Doña Concepción Peris tells us of his arrest,

*"I must note before relating the circumstances of Fr. José's arrest, that my house was somewhat known as a refuge for Catholics, and certainly with my Christian upbringing I wished to help as many of those who came to my house as I*

could. But it is also true that in my house there was a young woman working who turned out to be very bad.

This young woman had a boyfriend very active in the Libertarian Committee of Puente Vallecas. By the way in which events unfolded and by the level of security when they came to make the arrest, I could see clearly that she had informed her boyfriend of the presence of several priests in my house, for we all knew that they were. Also on one occasion I heard him say to this young woman, now the war has begun, all the priests had to be killed."

### *"Do with me what you will"*

Doña Concepción continues,

*"I think it was on August 7, towards midday, when several militiamen showed up specifically looking for priests (there were three: Fr. José, Fr. Clemente and Fr. Pedro). They took them to a police station on Calle Barco. I went there too and spoke with the chief, asking him for an explanation and assuring him that all three were upstanding people.*

*The chief made me see that it was better not to take part in the affair, since apparently it was looking grim. I went home. That same night the three fathers were freed and returned to the house.*

*But the next day, toward eleven o'clock in the morning about seven militiamen showed up asking for the three aforementioned fathers (among the militiamen I recognized one whom I had seen the day before at the police station, not too nice a man). Then I went to call Fr. José, with the militiamen following. He opened*

*the door of his room, where he had been reading. I then asked him in the presence of the militiamen who had followed me, 'Don't you have documentation?' And he answered with everyone listening to all of his words, "I don't have documents. You already know that I am a priest. Do with me what you will."*

The next day, August 9, their bodies were found. Fr. Recaredo Ventosa, ss.cc., identified the body of Fr. Eladio, *"While researching the archives of the General Security Headquarters I found his file and photograph, recognizing him myself."*



Sr. María del Carmen, Fr. Eladio's sister, and his niece and nephew, praying before his remains just before being interred in the church of the Sacred Hearts, Madrid





**Fr. Mario Ros Ezcurra**  
(1910-1936)



*“It was characteristic  
of him to help others”*

### Seeking refuge

Fr. Mario was only 26 when he suffered martyrdom and he had only made his debut as a priest. A friend who had studied with him would rightly say that he had not had time to hold any position in the Congregation.

He had been one year as teacher of the little ones in the school of Martín de los Heros in Madrid, when at the start of the military uprising 1936, he had to leave with the other religious of the community and was forced to wander the streets of Madrid looking for shelter. He found it in the “Maria Isabel” boarding house at 19 Calle Gran Vía. It was owned by some of his uncles.



Overview of the school of the Sacred Hearts (for many years also the minor seminary) in the city of Miranda on the shores of the River Ebro. The five martyrs studied here

## Two uncles in the Congregation

Fr. Mario, baptized Luis, was born in the village of **Lezaun**, Navarra on April 30, 1910. His uncle Fr. **Esteban Ros** also a religious of the Congregation of the Sacred Hearts, said, *“His parents were farmers who were comfortable. The atmosphere at home was very religious and they were of noble descent. I know all this because I am the brother of the father of the Servant of God and I have also studied the documentation on the family’s genealogy.”* Another of his uncles, Br. **José Ros**, was also a religious the Sacred Hearts.

## A very good classmate

After several years in the minor seminary in Miranda de Ebro, he entered the novitiate at San Miguel del Monte when he was eighteen. Afterwards he continued his ecclesiastical studies at El Escorial, where he was ordained a priest on July 21, 1935.



Photograph from the period of Sacred Hearts seminary in El Escorial where Fr. Mario was ordained priest

On his years of formation it is worth noting what his classmates said of him,

*“He was kindhearted and had a pious personality. He was docile, perhaps a little shy and, above all, a very good friend, always ready to do a favor and to please others. These qualities of kindness and love of neighbor became more obvious as our time in the scholasticate went by. It was if he had some kind of commitment to make others happy. You could say that it was characteristic of him to help others.”*

There are some who said that this desire of his to please and serve others led him to do certain tasks that could have been a factor in his contracting a chest infection.

### **At the Pension “María Isabel”**

Fr. Mario sought refuge at the María Isabel rooming house on July 20 or 21, 1936. Although he believed he was safe at his uncle and aunt’s house, he was not and his stay there did not last even a month.

One of the maids at the pension reported him and he was arrested early in the morning of August 14.

Sister **Crescencia Gorospe Goñi**, a Sister of Charity who was also in hiding at the rooming house, leaves us her memories,

*“As Fr. Mario had been quite ill (from tuberculosis), his aunt took pains to look after him more than others. But I*



Fr. Mario (1) with fellow martyr  
Fr. Teófilo (2)

*never saw him make any kind of demands nor did he look for favors. He always behaved as one of the rest ...*

*Our life moved along with a certain rhythm. We got up around eight in the morning and immediately the priests, brothers and sisters, and some other people would gather in the room where the Fr. Mario celebrated Holy Mass every day and gave us communion ...”*

His aunt, **Paulina Larumbe**, the landlady of the rooming house, tells us,

*“My nephew would pray the holy rosary, he would visit the Blessed Sacrament that we kept in the house, and he would distribute Holy Communion in the house and also to people living outside. I often heard him say that he would never deny that he was a priest and a religious even if they killed him and that it was whatever God wants.”*

### ***Friars and nuns hiding even in the pipes***

And what was to happen, happened. In the words of the militiamen, the “María Isabel” had become a nest or refuge for friars and nuns and so they came to arrest them.

On August 14, in the early hours of the morning, they showed up saying *that since the house was full of friars and nuns, it had to be searched from top to bottom, because the friars and nuns were even hidden in the pipes.*

In fact they arrested some seventeen priests, brothers and sisters and brought them to the cheka of Bellas Artes. They had been denounced by a maid who told her boyfriend, a militiaman, that there were many friars at the Pension.

After being arrested, Fr. Mario consoled his aunt giving her a hug and saying: *“Goodbye, aunt, don’t worry, I’ll be back later on.”* But he did not return.

### ***At the “cheka” of Bellas Artes***

At the “cheka” of Bellas Artes he appeared serene and calm. Sr. Cresentencia tells us,

*“When we arrived at the cheka they made us all sit down in a semicircle. I was fortunate to end up next to Fr. Mario. However, we could not say anything because we had the thugs in front of us who were constantly pointing their guns at us threateningly, and watching us in such a way that we were not allowed to speak even a word.*

*However, even as things seemed so bad and we were all staring death in the face, at a certain moment Fr. Mario, trying not to move his lips to better hide what he was doing, told me that we should prepare ourselves because he was going to give us absolution. And so I did, taking care not to let anyone see me moving my lips as I spread the word to the other sisters. When Fr. Mario realized that we were all ready with the act of contrition, I remember that with the greatest discretion possible, he put one leg over the other and, hidden behind his legs, he managed to give us absolution and giving us with it the greatest encouragement.”*

### **At his trial he declared that he was a religious of the Sacred Hearts**

Fr. **Andrés Pérez**, ss.cc., recounts that while in custody in the Model Prison, he met two Carmelite friars who had been in solitary confinement with Fr. Mario at the cheka when he was sentenced to

Círculo de Bellas Artes in Madrid, 40 Calle Alcalá. ►

In its basement the cheka of the Bellas Artes was located, where Fr. Mario was brought. It was the toughest cheka in Madrid.

To be brought here meant certain death



death. He had told them that *he had stated during the trial that he was a religious of the Sacred Hearts.*

On August 15, the day after his arrest, the body of Fr. Mario was found at the Deposito Judicial and was identified by his uncle and aunt. There were two gunshot wounds to his face.

Fr. Mario's aunt, Pauline Larumbe, testified,

*"We learned of my nephew's death from a telephone call that one of the maids, called Margarita Fernández, who I believe lives in Valencia, but I do not know the street, had with a militiaman, because in the course of the conversation she almost fainted and dropped the receiver while crying out, referring to Fr. Mario, 'they have killed him.'*

*We suspected that this maid was the one who reported the house for having refugee priests and religious. I say this because, at the suggestion of the portress, I asked a guard from the Comandancia, who was stationed on the first floor of the house. I learned from him that the one who reported us was 'of the two sisters, the older, dark haired one', precisely the one who had made the phone call."*

**They also gave their lives ...**



As well as the five religious awaiting their upcoming beatification, after being recognized as martyrs by the decree approved by Benedict XVI on July 3, 2009, the Congregation of the Sacred Hearts has nine other religious who gave their lives during the Spanish Civil War.

Although the process of canonization has not been introduced because we do not know with certainty the exact circumstanc-



◀ Cemetery of the Martyrs in Paracuellos del Jarama where the remains of Fr. Luis Izurriaga, Fr. Rodolfo Arteagabeitia and student Br. Jacinto Mendoza are buried in common grave No. 7



More than eight thousand victims are buried in the cemetery of Paracuellos del Jarama. The large majority, even those who were not priests or members of religious congregations, were sacrificed "out of hatred for the faith"



es of their death or where they are buried, the Congregation also holds them in high esteem. Therefore, we also want to remember them in this account, telling what we do know about them.

Their names, in the same order as the pictures on the page 89 are:

*Fr. Luis (Félix) Izurriaga Esparza, Fr. Rodolfo (Luciano) Arteagabeitia Chavarría, Fr. Paulino Rodríguez-Candela Manzanegue, Fr. Pascual (Antonio) Olarte Espeso, lay Br. Louis (Agustín) Díez Güemes, lay Br. Cándido (Gabino) Iturrate Larrea, scholastic Br. Jacinto (Luis) Mendoza Sádaba, scholastic Br. Inocencio (Augusto) Bruyel Gutiérrez and lay Br. Eulogio (Alejo) Hernández Lorente.*

## Fr. Luis Izurriaga Esparza

(1903-1936)

*“May the Lord dispose of me whenever He wants”*



**He continued to exercise his ministry**

According to his baptismal certificate Fr. Luis was born in **Olite**, Navarra, on March 29, 1903. He studied in Miranda de Ebro, where he made his religious vows. He studied philosophy and theology in Torrelavega. Once he was ordained a priest he was sent to the school of Martín de los Heros (Madrid) where he was in charge of the section for the smallest children. He also worked for the Enthronement of the Sacred Heart, Night Adoration and for the magazine *Reinado Social*. He loved the work of the missions.

When the civil war began, like the other brothers of the community, he had to leave the school. He was welcomed into the home of some friends where his brother Fr. Eulogio Izurriaga had also sought refuge. However, after being betrayed by the maid, the two brothers had to flee. They found shelter at the María Luisa rooming house, run by the aunt and uncle of the martyr Fr. Mario Ros.

Fr. Luis valiantly continued exercising his ministry. The Paseo de Recoletos was the meeting place for those who wanted to talk with him or receive the holy sacraments.

His brother Fr. Eulogio tells us,

*“Already from the early days of the movement, Fr. Luis did an extraordinary amount, finding ways to celebrate and distribute communion. Later, it was up to us and we reached countless souls. How many times have I slept having in the drawer of the bedside table a small corporal containing 12 or 14 consecrated hosts that my brother Fr. Luis gave me in the evening to distribute to the families whom he had assigned me very early the next day, after having received Communion myself...”*

*“May the Lord dispose of me!”*

Because of the constant police searches the two brothers were forced to separate and to look for a new refuge. Fr. Luis left the María Luisa and went to the Delegation of Honduras, where there were other friends, among them his fellow martyr Fr. Gonzalo Barrón. From there he went to a private home and after to the María Isabel rooming house on Calle Gran Vía and finally to the San Antón at 58 Calle San Bernardo.



“Santa María la Real” (c. 1300),  
much venerated in Olite, Navarra,  
birthplace of Fr. Luis Izurriaga



The Izurriaga Esparza brothers.  
Fr. Luis is standing; Fr. Eulogio is seated

Mass grave No. 7 in the Cemetery of the Martyrs, Paracuellos del Jarama, where the remains of Fr. Rodolfo Arteagabeitia and also those of Fr. Luis Izurriaga and Brother student Jacinto Mendoza are buried

It was at this last rooming house that he was arrested on September 29, 1936 by militia of the CNT (National Confederation of Workers) because he did not have the proper documentation. He was taken to the General Security Headquarters. He was then moved to the Model Prison on October 9.

Even there Fr. Luis risked exercising his ministry, as recorded for us by Fr. **Ibarrola**, a Redemptorist, to whom he confided the following,

*"I am convinced that they will shoot me, but I don't care.  
For a long time I already made the sacrifice some time ago.  
May the Lord dispose of me whenever He wants!"*



On a cold November evening, hands tied behind their back with heavy wire, he was led along with other detainees to the San Anton prison. Shortly afterwards he and other prisoners were condemned to be put to death immediately. They were taken in several cars to an unknown place. **Paracuellos del Jarama? Torrejón de Ardoz?**

They were forced to dig their own grave and, once completed, they were lined up beside it and shot. The precise location is not known; but there are good grounds to believe that they are buried in the Cemetery of the Martyrs at Paracuellos del Jarama, probably in mass grave No. 7: **8-11-1936 Martyrs moved from Soto Aldovea and from various places**, along with Fr. Rodolfo Arteagabeitia and student Brother Jacinto Mendoza.

He was 33 years old.

# Fr. Rodolfo Arteagabeitia Chavarría

(1912 -1936)

*“For not having sufficient documentation”*



**In one of the infamous “sacas”<sup>1</sup>**

**F**r. Rodolfo Arteagabeitia was born on June 30, 1912 in **Baracaldo**, Vizcaya, and professed his vows in the Congregation of the Sacred Hearts on August 15, 1929, being ordained to the priesthood on December 21, 1935.

According to the records of the Security Headquarters he was captured during the Civil War in Madrid on September 29, 1936 *for not having sufficient documentation*. In one of the infamous “sacas” he was taken with many other fellow prisoners, among them student Brother Jacinto Mendoza, to a place called **Las Heras de Torrejón de Ardoz**.

A witness tells that, tied side by side they were put in front of a ditch a hundred meters long by three wide and two deep. They were

---

<sup>1</sup> “Sacras” or “sacas de la muerte”. With false orders to free them given by the D.G.S., the prisoners were placed in the hands of the Provincial Committee of Public Investigation. With their hands tied, they were put in busses and massacred en masse. There were 10,000 victims in the area around Madrid. The largest “sacas” took place November 7 and 8, Paracuellos del Jarama being the most striking instance of such shootings.



Stone marking mass grave no. 7 in the Martyrs Cemetery in Paracuellos de Jarama. On it are the date and place of the shooting. "Different places" mainly refers to Torrejón de Ardoz

shot, some falling into the ditch still alive. It was November 7 or 8, 1936.

In the Causa General<sup>2</sup> of Spain in Madrid, a report issued on December 15 1952, states,

*"In the same Plot (No. 2 "religious") and on pages 209 and 240, is found the murdered Don Rodolfo Arteagabeitia, Religious of the Sacred Hearts".*

His remains are buried in the Cemetery of the Martyrs at **Paracuellos del Jarama** in the common grave No. 7, with those of Fr. Luis Izurriaga and Brother student Jacinto Mendoza.

Some years later, a brother of his also joined the Congregation taking the same name.

---

<sup>2</sup> After the civil war the Causa General was instructed by the "Ministerio Fiscal" to determine the criminal acts committed during the red terror over the whole national territory.

## Fr. Paulino Rodríguez-Candela Manzaneque (1910 -1936)

*“I want to go by the “little way” that my little Mother has taught me”*



*“Madly in love with Mary”*

**F**r. Paulino was a great lover of the Virgin. He consecrated himself to her, *“I wish to give my heart entirely to my ‘Madrecita’ ... I want to follow my ‘little way’ in her arms, loving her madly.”*

Already during his novitiate in the Congregation of the Sacred Hearts he discovered this personal way of perfection,

*“To follow like very small children in the arms of the sweet and loving Mother the ‘little way’ which, just like that of little Teresa (of the Child Jesus), leads us to Jesus, source of all holiness.”*

He believed himself chosen to spread this “little way” and already, as a novice, he obtained permission from his superiors to win over his fellow novices so that they consecrate themselves to the Virgin:

*“I want it not just to be I who is madly in love with Mary and I who am growing in perfection through the “little way” that my Madrecita has taught me, but I want to share with as*



Front cover of the booklet of the Consecration to the Most Pure Heart of Mary, written and distributed by Fr. Paulino

*many as I can this love for Mary so that they then follow my 'little way'. I don't walk it alone, some already accompany me."*

A witness tells us,

*"Every day – at the elevation of the Sacred Host during the Holy Mass, he would turn to the Blessed Virgin and he said, You had your son Jesus in your hands, the same Jesus as I have now in mine. Look on me as your son."*

A copy still exists of an act of consecration to the Most Pure Heart of Mary, written and distributed by Fr. Paulino. It appears that he also wrote a little book about the Virgin, but it has been lost.

### Gifted with intelligence

Fr. Paulino was a native of Madrid, born on November 21, 1910. He was a student of the Augustinian Fathers at the Royal School of Alfonso XII in San Lorenzo del Escorial. He took his vows in the Congregation of the Sacred Hearts on August 22, 1930, the feast of the Immaculate Heart of Mary.

According to Fr. José Palomero, provincial at the time, *“in Rome he was known for his abilities. Fr. Miquel, ss.cc., stated that he was gifted with a privileged intelligence. On one occasion I told him: if you become humble, you will bring great glory to the Congregation of the Sacred Hearts and you will become a very great saint.”*

### Executed in la Rabassada?

Once ordained as a priest he was sent to **Barcelona**. As he said himself, in order to better understand his penitents in the confessional, he dedicated two hours every day to studying Catalan.

He was in the same community as Fr. Pascual Olarte. When the civil war broke out, the two of them shared adventures and the same fate. Both priests sought refuge with a family that the community knew. However they were betrayed by the jealous ex-boyfriend of one of the daughters of the family. They would go out for a walk with her, her sister and the sister’s boyfriend to throw people off and to conceal their being priests. They pre-



Fr. Paulino, top left. Fr. Pascual, middle

tended to be students from Madrid who had come to Barcelona for the Olympics.

When the Committee of El Clot summoned them, they presented themselves thinking, naively, that they could use their alibi that they were students. But what happened after their statement was taken? Fr. **José Íñigo Sola** researched what happened and *was able to learn that they had shot them in la Rabassada, which is to say, below Mt. Tibidabo*. According to another witness, they were shot right on the feast of the Assumption of the Virgin.

## Fr. Pascual Olarte Espeso

(1906-1936)

*Reported for being religious*



At the start of the civil war Fr. Pascual Olarte found himself in Barcelona in same community as Fr. Paulino Rodríguez-Candela. Both sought refuge with the **Íñigo de Salas** family, who came from **Azagra**, Navarra, where they were acquainted with the Sacred Hearts Fathers, known in Barcelona as the Navarran Fathers.

One of the daughters, Pilar tells us that her brother, a security guard at the Generalitat, thought it would be a good idea to say that Fathers Pascual and Paulino were his classmates at the college of the Piarist Fathers in **Tudela** and had come to Barcelona for the Olympic Games.

To better hide their appearance as religious, they used to go for a walk with two daughters of the Íñigo de Salas family. It is highly likely, although witnesses do not agree, that they were betrayed by the ex-boyfriend of one of the girls, **Luis González Molina**, an Andalusian security guard.

One day when they were at the movies with the two girls, about thirty militiamen showed up at the home of the Íñigo family. They searched everything. They were going to tear the place apart, ignoring the explanations of the lady of the house, who



La Rabassada, at the foot of Tibidabo in Barcelona, where Fathers Pascual and Paulino were most likely shot



Miranda de Ebro. Carlos III Bridge over the River Ebro where Fr. Pascual Olarte was born

tried to tell them that those they were looking for were her son's former classmates.

The girls' father, upon learning that they were searching the house, devised a plan to warn them in the movies, of the search and that they were not to return to the house because it was being closely watched. The only thing they could do was find somewhere else to stay, going to spend the night at the home of some caretakers on Calle Aragón, a family that was friends of the Sacred Hearts Fathers.

Actually the militia threatened to accuse the Inigo de Salas family of being fascist if the tenants they had taken in did not present themselves at police headquarters within 24 hours. Fathers Paulino and Pascual, in order not to compromise the family, did what was asked, trusting that their documents were in order and their alibi that they were students who had come to the Olympic Games. It did not turn out like that. They were unaware they had been **denounced as religious**.

It seems that Fr. Pascual, along with Fr. Paulino, was executed on August 15, 1936, the feast of the Assumption Our Lady, in the Rabasada at the foot of Tibidabo.

Fr. Pascual had been born in Miranda de Ebro on December 21, 1906. He took his vows in the Congregation of the Sacred Hearts on August 22, 1925 and was ordained a priest on March 21, 1931.

## Brother Cándido Iturrate Larrea (1880-1936)

*“His demeanor breathed an indescribable air of holiness...”*



**B**rother Cándido was born on February 18, 1880 in **Jugo**, (Álava). When he was eighteen he made his profession in the Congregation of the Sacred Hearts as a lay brother. He was a humble person, obedient and devout.

He was cook at the school in Martín de los Heros (Madrid) when, like the other religious, he had to leave the community at the beginning of the civil war.

We know from the testimony of a sister of the Sacred Hearts, **Sr. Teresa Pilar Rondán**, that he was unable to find refuge in the apartment owned by the Sacred Hearts Congregation at 21 Calle Francisco de Rojas because it was very closely watched and it had been searched several times. Neither could he find a place in a rooming house owned by a sister of Sr. Teresa, which was also very closely watched.

The school of the Piarists de San Antón, located in the center of Madrid, which was turned into a Prison during the civil war. It is possible that Br. Cándido was brought there on the day he was arrested

The same Sr. Teresa continues saying that Br. Cándido, whose modest and recollected demeanor breathed an indescribable air of holiness, was easily recognizable as a religious. That is why, on leaving her sister's rooming house, the militiamen bombarded him with questions and then detained him, while a sister who was with him was able to escape.

Perhaps he was taken to the San Antón prison. There are some who are certain that they killed him the same night. He was fifty-six years old.



## Brother Luis Díez Güemes

(1889-1936)

*An excellent worker*



**B**r. Luis was from **Castrillo de Rucios** in Burgos. He was born October 7, 1889. When he was twenty, he professed his vows as a lay brother in Miranda de Ebro. He had another brother in the Congregation of the Sacred Hearts.

He was an excellent worker. In Miranda de Ebro he was kept busy with the tasks in the kitchen and also in the school wardrobe. In 1920 he was sent to Madrid. Later, at the outbreak of the civil war he was sent to the Sacred Hearts residence on Calle República Argentina in Barcelona.

When he had to move out of the community, he found refuge at the home of some caretakers on Calle Aragón. The son of this family, **Ángel Guardia Villamur**, tells that he would go walking with Br. Luis and recalls that when he heard crude or disrespectful language, he would say, "*Holy God, Holy God!*" Once he took him to the Tivoli Theater to see the opera 'La Gioconda' and as "*they weren't wearing all that much clothing,*" the brother just kept saying, "*Holy God, Holy God!*"

Br. Luis was denounced by a painter nicknamed "el Sorolla" and, according to Mrs. **Mercedes Recolons**, arrested with him, was killed toward the end of September 1936. It is not known where he was buried.



Lay Brothers Cándido Iturrate and Luis Díez Güemes, both killed in civil war, and Fr. Florencio Rodríguez

# Brother Jacinto Mendoza Sádaba

(1916-1936)

*Long live Christ the King!*



**B**r. Jacinto Mendoza was pursuing his studies in philosophy in the scholasticate in El Escorial when the Spanish civil war broke out. Along with the other student religious he was transferred to the General Security Headquarters in Madrid. Once freed, he had to seek shelter somewhere. However he was arrested and detained in the Model Prison, probably on the same day as Fr. Rodolfo Arteagabeitia.

According to records dated December 15, 1952, made by the General Security Headquarters of Madrid, it says, *In Part No. 3 "Prisons and detentions" and in the section dealing with the Model Prison, there appears Don Luis Mendoza Sádaba, taken out of the Model Prison between November 6 and 8, 1936 to be killed.*

It is worth reading the testimony of Don **José Rodríguez Llanos**, a bus driver and brother of two religious of the Sacred Hearts, Fr. **Tarcisio** and Fr. **Jesús María**. Don José Rodríguez writes this to his brother, Fr. Tarcisio,

*"Every day I went to the bus depot that was next to the Model Prison, where we went daily to ask for instructions. I do not remember if it was in November when they began to take prisoners out.*

*They told family members that it was to transfer them to another place, but as these transfers were made in the buses where I was, I learned that the first ones were taken to Paracuellos. And as this service was taken in turns, it was my turn the day they took your friend. I was inside and I could see the ones they were taking from the lock up to a hangar, where their hands were bound behind with strong, thin ropes that left their hands bruised. It was then I saw your friend. I could also see a list where a militiaman was listing their affiliation and I think that he put "student" (i.e. member of the 5<sup>th</sup> column).*

*I went to see if I could get someone who would do the job for me, but I could not find anyone to swap with. By chance he got on my bus and we went to Torrejón de Ardoz. There the shooting began. From the first bus (we were five, mine was the last) they pulled out half of the passengers: 25. From the others they took everyone.*



“Sacas de la muerte”: The prisoners were taken out (sacar) of the prisons and taken in buses like this one to places around Madrid to be massacred. More than 10,000 people were killed in such “sacas”. (Photo from journal “El Mundo”)

*I saw from a distance of 20 meters, how they shot them and how they shouted "Long live Christ the King!" Some demanded that they stop killing them. Meanwhile others were digging a trench where they would bury them. This is what I remember of that horrible event."*

Surely it was the same day that Fr. Rodolfo Arteagabeitia was killed.

His remains, unidentified, are buried in the Cemetery of the Martyrs at Paracuellos del Jarama in mass grave No. 7, along with those of Fr. Rodolfo Arteagabeitia and Fr. Luis Izurriaga.

Br. Jacinto was twenty. He was born in **Cárcar**, Navarra, on September 14, 1916 and made profession in the Congregation of the Sacred Hearts on February 4, 1934. He also had an uncle in the Congregation, lay Brother **Andrés Sádaba**.



The Model Prison in Madrid where Fr. Rodolfo, Br. Jacinto and other religious of the Sacred Hearts were held prisoners

## Brother Inocencio Bruyel Gutiérrez (1917 -1936?)

*He was only nineteen years old*



**B**r. Inocencio Bruyel was born in **San Sebastián** on October 7, 1917.

A classmate of Br. Jacinto Mendoza, he was studying philosophy in the scholasticate in El Escorial, and like his classmates, he was taken to the General Security Headquarters in Madrid at the start of the Spanish civil war and released after making a statement. He had to seek refuge where he could.

We do not know the dates and circumstance of his arrest and murder. It could have been in one of the many “sacas” that were made from the prisons. He was only nineteen.

## Brother Eulogio Hernández Lorente (1888-1937)

*In his refuge he was always praying the rosary*



**B**r. Eulogio was from Cárcar, Navarra, where he was born on July 17, 1888. He professed his vows in 1917 as a lay brother. He was very simple, hardworking, faithful, dutiful and he wanted to please everyone.

If his life was spent in the obscurity of simplicity and humility, so also the circumstances of his death are obscure.

From a statement made in 1953 by Mrs. **Inocencia Gainza**, resident of **Bilbao**, we know that Br. Eulogio took refuge in the home of a nationalist.

After escaping from **Guernica**, he went to **Rigoitia**, home of Inocencia. It would have been April 1937. Then he spent some days in the home of the **Monasterio** family. Finally he took shelter in an abandoned mine that was used as a refuge. It was there that he was arrested as a spy and a fascist.

The large cross on the hill, overlooking the Cemetery of the Martyrs of Paracuellos de Jarama. It marks the spot where they made the prisoners stand. When they were shot they fell into open trenches

They killed him and buried him in **Barrengoneta**.

In her statement Inocencia Gainza added that in the refuge he was always praying the rosary and that he did not speak with anyone. He was forty-eight years old.



## *Prayer to the Martyrs*

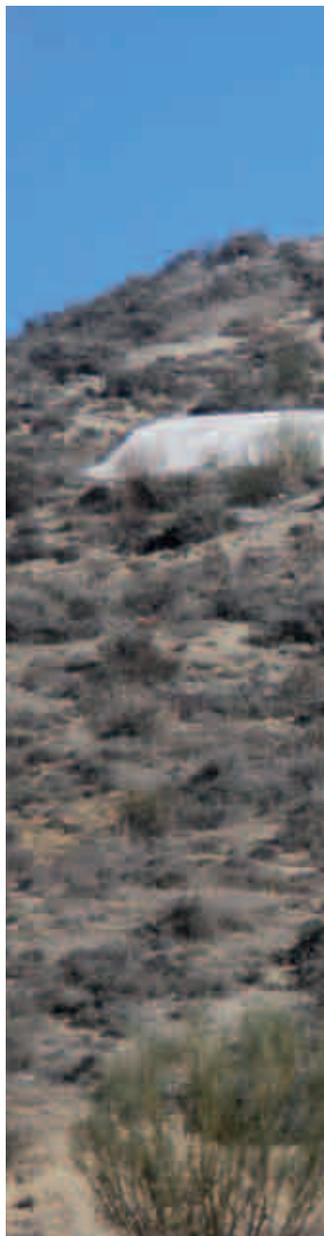
*Oh God, you who are love,  
we give you thanks for the martyrs Teófilo, Isidro,  
Gonzalo, Eladio and Mario, religious priests of  
the Congregation of the Sacred Hearts of Jesus  
and Mary and martyrs of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century in Spain.*

*You filled them  
with burning zeal to proclaim your love,  
manifested in the heart of your son Jesus  
and in the heart of Mary,  
his mother and our mother.*

*Thank you for giving them such great strength  
that they were able to shed their blood  
as witnesses of your love.*

*We ask, through their intercession,  
that you grant us the grace  
to contemplate, live, proclaim  
and be witnesses of your love.*

*We ask this through our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.*



Paracuellos Cemetery. Our SS.CC. Brothers are buried  
in mass grave number 7: Fr. Luis Izurriaga Esparza,  
Fr. Rodolfo Arteagabeitia Chavarría and  
the student Br. Jacinto Mendoza Sádaba





# Contents

Presentation: <i>Greater love has no man ...</i> .....	7
The heroic spirit of the Good Father, our Founder.....	11
They inherited the heroic spirit of our Founder.....	17
The Congregation had fourteen victims.....	23
What message do the Martyrs bring us?.....	25
Fr. Teófilo Fernández de Legaria Goñi .....	29
Fr. Isidro Íñiguez de Ciriano Abechuco .....	43
Fr. Gonzalo Barrón Nanclares.....	53
Fr. Eladio López Ramos .....	67
Fr. Mario Ros Ezcurra .....	79
Those who also gave their lives ... ..	89
Fr. Luis Izurriaga Esparza .....	92
Fr. Rodolfo Arteagabeitia Chavarría .....	97
Fr. Paulino Rodríguez-Candela Manzaneque .....	99
Fr. Pascual Olarte Espeso.....	103
Br. Cándido Iturrate Larrea.....	106
Br. Luis Díez Güemes.....	108
Br. Jacinto Mendoza Sádaba .....	110
Br. Inocencio Bruyel Gutiérrez.....	113
Br. Eulogio Hernández Lorente.....	114
Prayer to the Martyrs .....	116

TIPOGRAFIA VATICANA

Rome, August 11, 2012  
Anniversary of the death of Fr. Teófilo Fernández de Legaria



Teófilo Fernández de Legaria Goñi,  
Isidro Íñiguez de Ciriano Abechuco,  
Gonzalo Barrón Nanclares,  
Eladio López Ramos y  
Mario Ros Ezcurra,  
religiosos de la Congregación  
de los Sagrados Corazones,  
mártires del siglo XX en España,  
dieron la vida por su fe.

Su espíritu queda reflejado  
en las palabras de ánimo  
que uno de ellos, el P. Teófilo,  
dirigía a sus jóvenes estudiantes religiosos  
días antes de estallar la guerra del 36:  
“Encomendaos, ¡hijos!, a los Sagrados  
Corazones. Preparaos para la lucha  
y para cuanto Dios disponga de vosotros”.



BEATIFICACIÓN

27 de octubre de 2013