



Dear Brothers,

In a little over a month, Pope Benedict XVI will beatify the four **Marianist Martyrs of Madrid**: Father Miguel Léibar Garay, Brother Joaquín Ochoa Salazar, Brother Sabino Ayastuy Errasti and Brother Florencio Arnáiz Cejudo. These men were shot in Madrid during the first months of the religious persecution in Spain in 1936.

As Father Manuel Cortés, our Superior General, said in his letter announcing the approval of their beatification, “They gave of themselves, in steadfast courage and faith, never surrendering their principles or convictions. They were called to follow Christ to Calvary. They have received the martyr’s crown, and now the Church will proclaim their virtue for all to see.” Their witness challenges each of us to the bold proclamation of the gospel message in our own time even in the face of opposition or rejection.

Last month, Brother Stephen Glodek sent each member of the Province a brief biography of the Blesseds written by Father José María Salaverri. Communities have been encouraged to celebrate this event in some significant way, with the participation of the other branches of the Marianist Family.

Liturgical resources are limited at this time. The Vatican has delayed approval of official texts for the Liturgy of the Hours and the Eucharist. We will probably not have them before the beatification. At the moment, we have the following unofficial text of the Collect Prayer:

Lord, Our God,

*who granted to the blessed martyrs Miguel, Joaquín, Sabino and Florencio
the grace of dedicating their lives to the education of youth
under the protection of the Most Blessed Virgin Mary,
and of courageously professing the Faith, even to the point of shedding blood,
grant to us that, strengthened by their example and intercession,
we might give witness to the same Faith in word and deed.*

*Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of
the Holy Spirit, God forever and ever. Amen.*

All other texts can be taken from the Common of Several Martyrs in the lectionary and the sacramentary. Brother Bob Jones is in the process of putting together two prayer services that can be used to celebrate the occasion. One will be for a small group, e.g., a community, a prayer group, a religion class. The other will be for a large group, e.g., a gathering of the Marianist Family, a school assembly, a parish group. Both these services will be sent out in early October in time for a local celebration at the time of the beatification.

We do not have high resolution photographs of the martyrs, but are working to secure them. What can be used as a graphic is the **Marianist logo** for the beatification shown below with an explanation of the symbols.



- Four blots of color revealing interconnected crosses and a central “M” which unites these crosses
- Red, the color of fire, passion and of blood. Dark red, the color of blood spilt on the ground
- A flame of fire over a fragile clay lamp
- An impetuous wind that stirs the flame and retells the story
- A tree leaf that falls by this violent autumn wind in Madrid
- The four crosses hold the delicate leaf together amidst the storm
- A claw print that recalls the clawing of a wild animal, and over the print, the Cross, many crosses

- Four names that explain it all, without any other references — without saying where, nor when, nor who
- Four names written in capital letters, firm and stable, which invite us to remain strong in faith at the foot of the Cross, of our crosses

José Eizaguirre, SM, Province of Madrid

If the Province Office of Religious Life can be of further assistance, please do not hesitate to contact me. May this special event in the life of our Family be an occasion for us to celebrate with joy, express our gratitude for their example, and recommit ourselves to our Marianist mission!

Affectionately yours,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "George".

George J. Cerniglia, S.M.
Assistant for Religious Life