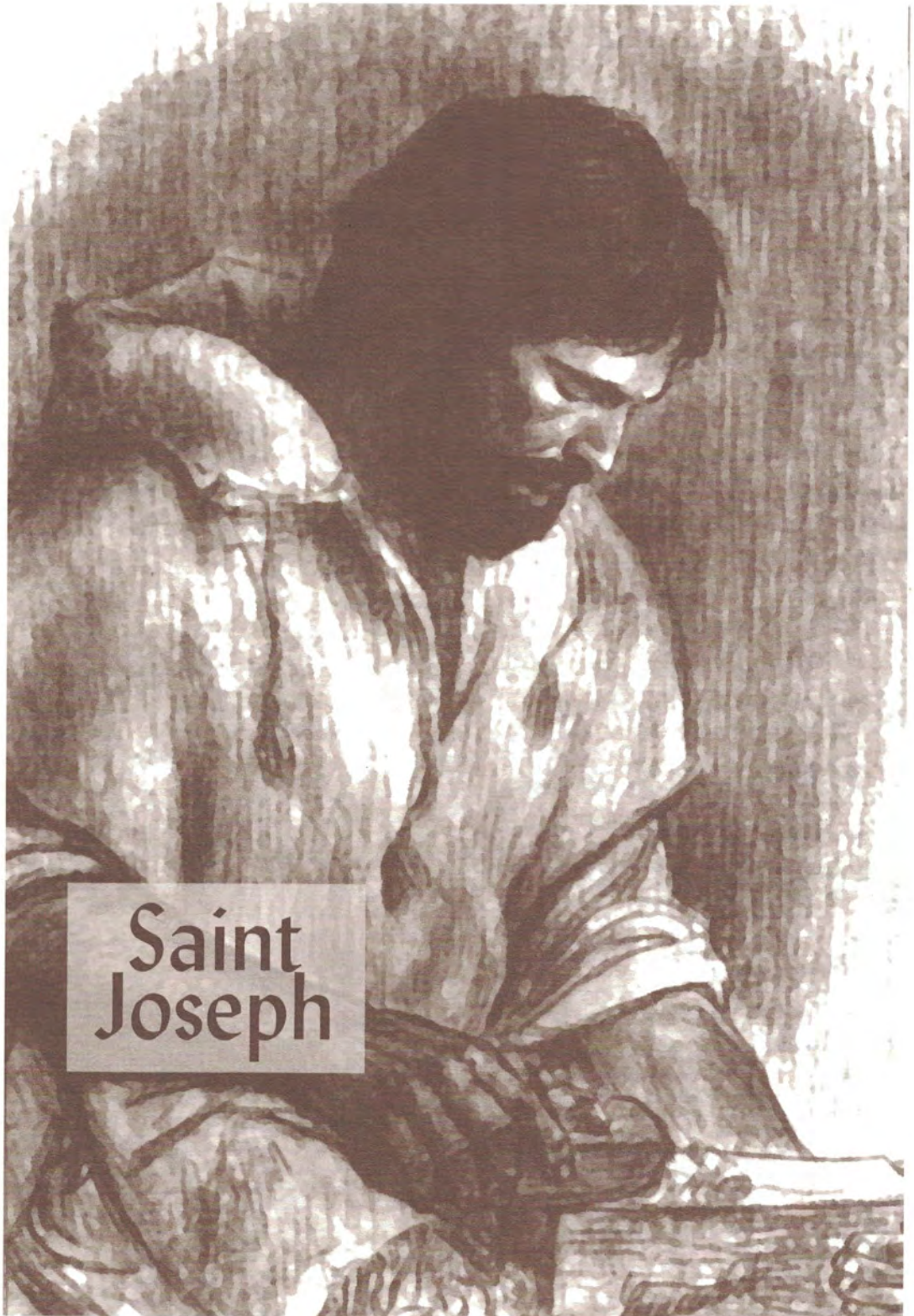




CARMEL CLARION

Discalced Carmelite Secular Order

Washington, D.C.



**Saint
Joseph**

March –
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Discalced Carmelite Friars
2131 Lincoln Road, NE
Washington, D.C. 20002-1151
Phone: 202-269-3792
Fax: 202-832-5711
E-mail: OCDSwash@juno.com

Editor
Fr. Regis Jordan O.C.D.

Staff
Brother Tony Holmes SSCC
Rosemary Moak O.C.D.S.
Suzanne Treis O.C.D.S.

Provincial Delegates
Fr. Regis Jordan O.C.D.
Fr. Fred Alexander O.C.D.

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CARMEL CLARION

Discalced Carmelite Secular Order, Washington, D.C.

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Editorial

In this issue of the Clarion we feature St. Joseph, spouse of the Blessed Virgin and foster father of Jesus. As we know from reading St. Teresa's works St. Joseph, after our Lord and His Blessed Mother, was the most influential saint in her spiritual life. Her devotion to him was so strong that she would say, "I don't recall up to this day ever having petitioned him for anything that he failed to grant (L6,6). Because of her devotion and love of Joseph, Teresa was instrumental in bringing devotion to him to prominence in the Church in her time and beyond.

What is it that commends St. Joseph, not only to every Christian, but especially to those pursuing the contemplative life? I think there are four things, among many others, that contemplatives can emulate: his silence; his sacrifice; his fidelity and his love.

Joseph is the "man of silence." We do not have one word he spoke recorded in the Gospel accounts, despite the central role he plays in the Infancy narratives. His strong, silent presence pervades each episode. While his words go unrecorded, his actions speak for him. His kindness and love of the Virgin are shown in his unwillingness to publicly put her away for apparent infidelity. He zealously finds a place for them to stay in the crowded town of Bethlehem. He protects the mother and child by fleeing to Egypt to escape the hatred of Herod. And later he establishes a home for them in Nazareth upon their return from Egypt. A man of silence, but a man of action.

Joseph's entire portrayal in the Gospels is a man of sacrifice. He listens, discerns,



and then submits to what appears to be God's will. He is totally submissive as God's plan begins to unfold, despite the fact that he doesn't know or even understand what the future will bring.

Joseph is God's loyal servant. No matter what situation presents itself, Joseph is steadfast in fulfilling his role, the role that God has shown him in his dreams. In the face of difficulty or danger he silently pursues the path laid out for him with fidelity.

It is love above all that Joseph manifests toward Mary and Jesus. His actions, his sacrifice, his fidelity to God's word are rooted in a deep love. The role he was asked to play in the unfolding of the mystery of the Incarnation could only be accomplished by one who loved very deeply the others involved in this mystery, namely Mary and Jesus.

When we meditate on Joseph, foster father of Jesus, spouse of our Blessed Mother, we see the very elements of our own contemplative journey. We too are asked to be silent in the face of mystery where words are inadequate. It is our actions that have meaning. Our willingness to sacrifice ourselves to the plan of God as it unfolds in our life. Our fidelity to the vocation God has called us to despite the difficulties we face as we make our journey. And finally, we, like Joseph, know that it is only a deep love that is going to enable us to fulfill the plan that God has for each of us.

As true sons and daughters of St. Teresa we will also look to Joseph as our patron and protector knowing deeply that there is nothing we ask of him that he will not grant us. ■

Fr. Regis Jordan, O.C.D.

Devotion to Saint Joseph

Fr. Regis Jordan, OCD



Historically speaking there is very little material on St. Joseph. What facts we do have come from the Gospels of Matthew and Luke. Both tell us about Joseph's role in the infancy of Jesus, but almost nothing of Joseph's personal history. Although he plays a prominent role in the infancy narratives he very quickly disappears from the subsequent narratives of the Christ event.

What exactly do we know about Joseph? We know that he was of the house of David, that he was a carpenter, that he was engaged to a woman named Mary, that he was a just man who did not want to put her aside publicly when he discovered she was pregnant, that after a dream he took Mary as his wife, that he took her to Bethlehem to register for the census and after the child's birth, warned in another dream he took his family to Egypt and again, warned in a dream, he brought his family back to Israel and settled in Nazareth. Joseph's final appearances in the Gospel take place in the temple, first at Mary's purification and later, when the family is on pilgrimage in Jerusalem and Jesus remains behind when the pilgrimage is over and Joseph and Mary return to Jerusalem to search for the child.

We have no information concerning Joseph's death, when and where it took place. Nor do we have a single word that he spoke.

Much of what we have concerning the more intimate details of Joseph's life come from what is call "apocryphal literature." This is an entire body of literature of the early Church not accepted into the canon of the Bible. Much of this body of literature is suspect. It is very difficult, if not impossible, to sift what is true from what is fantasy.

Joseph was "a just man." This praise bestowed by the Holy Spirit, and the privilege of having been chosen by God to be the foster-father of Jesus and the Spouse of the Virgin Mother, are the foundations of the honor paid to St. Joseph by the Church. It is surprising that the devotion to St. Joseph was so slow in winning recognition. This is true perhaps due to the fact that the infant Church placed so much emphasis on martyrdom. Far from being ignored or passed over in silence during the early Christian ages, St. Joseph's prerogatives were occasionally mentioned by the Fathers. The earliest traces of public recognition of St. Joseph's sanctity are to be found



in the Eastern Church. His feast was kept by the Copts as early as the beginning of the fourth century. It is said that in the great basilica erected at Bethlehem by St. Helena, there was an oratory dedicated to his honor. The feast of "Joseph the Carpenter" is found, on July 20, in one of the old Coptic Calendars and in a Synazarium of the eighth and ninth century. Greek lectionaries of a later date at least mention St. Joseph on December 25th or 26th, and he is commemorated along with other saints on the two Sundays before and after Christmas.

In the West the name of the foster-father of Our Lord (*Nutritor Domini*) appears in local martyrologies of the ninth and tenth centuries. In 1129, we find, for the first time, a church dedicated to his honor at Bologna. The devotion, then merely private, gained a great impetus owing to the influence and zeal of such persons as St. Bernard, St. Thomas Aquinas, St. Gertrude (d. 1310), and St. Bridget of Sweden (d. 1373). According to Benedict XIV (*De Serv. Dei beatif.*, I, iv, n. 11; xx, n. 17), "the general opinion of the learned is that the Fathers of Carmel were the first to im-

port from the East into the West the laudable practice of giving the fullest devotion to St. Joseph." His feast, introduced into the Dominican Calendar, gradually gained a foothold in various dioceses of Western Europe. Among the most zealous promoters of the devotion were, St. Vincent Ferrer (d. 1419), Peter d'Ailly (d. 1420), St. Bernardine of Siena (d. 1444), and Jehan Charlier Gerson (d. 1429) who deserves special mention. Gerson composed an *Office of*

the Espousals of Joseph in 1400 that was instrumental in promoting the public recognition of devotion to St. Joseph. Only under the pontificate of Sixtus IV (1471-84), were the efforts of these holy men rewarded by the inclusion of his feast in the Roman Calendar (March 19). From that time the devotion acquired greater and greater popularity, the dignity of the feast keeping pace with this steady growth.

One festival in the year, however, was not deemed enough to satisfy the piety of the people. The feast of the Espousals of the Blessed Virgin and St. Joseph, so strenuously advocated by Gerson, and permitted first by Paul III to the Franciscans, then to other religious orders and individual dioceses, was, in 1725, granted to all countries that solicited it, a proper Office, compiled by the Dominican Pietro Aurato, assigned January 23, 1725.

Then came St. Teresa. She began to dedicate monasteries and churches to him. Teresa's zeal for St. Joseph spread to her nuns. And where the devotion could not spread because her nuns were not present, it spread by means of her most widely read work, her *Life*.

The sixth chapter of her *Life* is an emotional manifesto to the Saint. She writes: "I took for my advocate and lord the glorious St. Joseph and earnestly recommended myself to him. I saw clearly that as in this need so in other greater ones concerning honor and loss of soul this father and lord of mine came to my rescue in better ways than I knew how to ask for. I don't recall up to this day ever having petitioned him for anything that he failed to grant. It is an amazing thing the great many favors God has granted me



through the mediation of this blessed saint, the dangers I was freed from both of body and soul. For with other saints it seems the Lord has given them grace to be of help in one need, whereas with this glorious saint I have experienced that he helps in all our needs and that the Lord wants to us understand that just as He was subject to St. Joseph on earth—for since bearing the title of father, being the Lord's tutor, Joseph could give the Child commands—so in heaven God does whatever he commands" (L6.6).

The Carmelite Order, into which St. Teresa had infused her great devotion to the foster-father of Jesus, chose him, in 1621, for their patron, and in 1689, was allowed to celebrate the feast of his Patronage on the third Sunday after Easter. This feast, soon, adopted throughout the Spanish Kingdom, was later extended to all states and dioceses that asked for the privilege. No devotion, perhaps, has grown so universal; none seems to have appealed so forcibly to the

heart of the Christian people, and particularly of the laboring classes, during the nineteenth century, as that of St. Joseph.

This wonderful and unprecedented increase of popularity called for a new luster to be added to the cult of the saint. Accordingly, one of the first acts of the pontificate of Pius IX, himself singularly devoted to St. Joseph, was to extend to the whole Church the feast of the Patronage in 1847, and in December, 1870, according to the wishes of the bishops and of all the faithful, he solemnly declared the Holy Patriarch Joseph, patron of the Catholic Church, and enjoined that his feast be celebrated on March 19th. Following the footsteps of their predecessor, Leo XIII and Pius X have showed an equal desire to add their own jewel to the crown of St. Joseph: the former, by permitting on certain days the reading of the votive Office of the saint; and the latter by approving, on March 18, 1909, a litany in honor of him whose name he had received in baptism. ■

St. Joseph as the Holy Patron of St. Teresa of Avila



The learned doctor Francisco de Ribera of the Society of Jesus in his biography of Teresa of Jesus, and Teresa herself in the *Life* recount the graces and favors that she received from the glorious St. Joseph. I think that it is preferable to quote Teresa's own words when she speaks in chapter 6 of her *Life* about her very serious illness, during which she had lost all hope of life and hope of recovery. "Since I saw myself so crippled and still so young and how helpless the doctors of earth were, I resolved to go for aid to the doctors of heaven that they might cure me.... I took for my advocate and lord the glorious St. Joseph and earnestly recommended myself to him. I saw clearly that as in this need so in other greater ones concerning honor and loss of soul this father and lord of mine came to my rescue in better ways than I knew how to ask for. I don't recall up to this day ever having petitioned him

for anything that he failed to grant. It is an amazing thing the great many favors God has granted me through the mediation of this blessed saint, the dangers I was freed from both of body and soul. For with other saints it seems the Lord has given them grace to be of help in one need, whereas with this glorious saint I have experience that he helps in all our needs and that the Lord wants us to understand that just as He was subject to St. Joseph on earth—for since bearing the title of father, being the Lord's tutor, Joseph could give the Child commands—so in heaven God does whatever he commands.

This has been observed by other persons, also through experience, whom I have told to recommend themselves to him. And so there are many who in experiencing this truth renew their devotion to him. I endeavored to celebrate his feast with all the solemnity possible. . . . Because of my experience of the goods this glorious saint obtains from God, I had the desire to persuade all to be devoted to him. I have not known anyone truly devoted to him and rendering him special services who has not advanced more in virtue. For in a powerful way he benefits souls who recommend themselves

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to him. It seems to me that for some years now I have asked him for something on his feast day, and my petition is always granted. If the request is somewhat out of line, he rectifies it for my greater good. If I were a person who had authority for writing I would willingly and in a very detailed way enlarge upon what I am saying about the favors this glorious saint did for me and for others.... I only ask for the love of God anyone who does not believe me to try, and he will see through experience the great good that comes from recommending oneself to this glorious patriarch and being devoted to him. Especially persons of prayer should always be attached to him. For I don't know how one can think about the Queen of Angels and about when she went through so much with the Infant Jesus without giving thanks to St. Joseph for the good assistance he then provided them both with. Anyone who cannot find a master to teach him prayer should take this glorious saint for his master, and he will not go astray."

In chapter 32 of the same book, recounting the beginning of the foundations of convents of the Discalced Carmelite friars and nuns, Teresa writes: "One day after Communion, His Majesty earnestly commanded me to strive for this new monastery [i.e., Teresa's first reformed monastery of St. Joseph in Avila] with all my powers, and He made great promises that it would be founded and that He would be highly served in it. He said it should be called St. Joseph and that this saint would keep watch over us at one door, and our Lady at the other, that Christ would remain with us, and that it would be a star shining with great splendor." For this reason, Ribera explains, Teresa put our Lady and the glorious St. Joseph above the principal door of all the monasteries she founded, and she

carried with her to all her foundations a statue of this glorious saint that is now in Avila, calling him the founder of this Order.

Experience has proven the truth of this revelation by the many monasteries that within such a short period of time have been founded, by the great number of souls that are saved in them, by the obstacles that have been overcome in making these foundations, by the great benefit that has come from the example and wisdom of the religious of this Order and from the virtue of those who profess its rule. This Order recognizes as the founder of its reform the glorious St. Joseph because it was with his assistance that Mother Teresa carried out this reform, just as the Order of Carmel acknowledges as its founder the most holy Virgin Mary, with whose assistance the Prophet Elijah initiated the religious life of the prophets on Mount Carmel, according to St. Dorotheus and many other learned authors. And not only is the reform of this Order in the present age due to this glorious saint but also the reform of other Orders that has begun in imitation of the reform of the Carmel.

The saints usually help with a particular favor when there are needs related to their office and ministry. Therefore, since the glorious St. Joseph was a builder and labored with Jesus Christ and His mother in the foundation of the Catholic Church, he has miraculously favored the foundations of all monasteries, both in their spiritual construction and in the actual physical construction of the buildings. I will speak about the monastery of Avila, quoting the very words of Mother Teresa. "Once when in need, for I didn't know what to do or how to pay some workmen, St. Joseph, my true father and lord, appeared to me and revealed to me that I



would not be lacking, that I should hire them. And so I did, without so much as a penny, and the Lord in ways that amazed those who heard about it provided for me.” In addition to the manner in which the glorious St. Joseph miraculously intervened in the building of this monastery, he intervened in the construction of many others, both of the friars and of the nuns, so much so that it seems that it would have been impossible for these monasteries to have been built if this glorious saint had not taken them under his protection. But because two long books about these foundations have been written—one by Mother Teresa of Jesus and the other that I finished a few days ago and that

will eventually be published, it suffices to say that whoever has buildings to construct should be devoted to this carpenter saint.

In chapter 33 of her *Life*, Teresa says the following: “On one of these same days, the feast of the Assumption of our Lady while at a monastery of the Order of the glorious St. Dominic, I was reflecting upon the many sins I had in the past confessed in that house and many things about my wretched life. A rapture came upon me so great that it almost took me out of myself. I sat down.. It seemed to me while in this state that I saw myself vested in a white robe of shining brightness, but at first I didn’t see who was clothing me in it. Afterward I saw our Lady at my right side and my

father St. Joseph at the left, for they were putting that robe on me. I was given to understand that I was now cleansed of my sins. After being clothed and while experiencing the most marvelous delight and glory, it seemed to me then that our Lady took me by the hands. She told me I made her very happy in serving the glorious St. Joseph, that I should believe that what I was striving for in regard to the monastery would be accomplished, that the Lord and those two would be greatly served in it, that I shouldn’t fear there would ever be any failure in this matter even though the obedience which was to be given was not to my liking, because they would watch over us, and that her Son had

already promised us He would be with us, that as a sign that this was true she was giving me a jewel. It seemed to me she placed around my neck a very beautiful golden necklace to which was attached a highly valuable cross. This gold and these stones are incomparably different from earthly ones. Their beauty is very different from what is imaginable

here below. And the intellect cannot attain to an understanding of the nature of the robe that the Lord desires to have represented, nor can one imagine its whiteness; everything here on earth in comparison is like a sketch made from soot, so to speak."

In the year 1574 Mother Teresa of Jesus was traveling with some sisters to make the foundation of the monastery of Beas. Traveling through the Sierra Morena, they lost their way among some dangerous high cliffs. Since it was impossible for them to go either forward or backward, Teresa ordered the nuns to pray to God and to her father St. Joseph that they would show them the way out. They saw in a ravine an old man who shouted to them, saying: "You will fall and perish if you go any further." The men who accompanied the nuns shouted, saying: "Well, father, which way should we go?" He responded that it would be impossible for the wagons to pass the path in front of them, and then miraculously they found themselves on a smooth road, free of all previous danger. When some of those accompanying the nuns went to look for the man, Mother Teresa said: "I don't know why you let them go, that was



my father St. Joseph that freed us from that danger, and they are not going to find him." And thus it was that they returned without finding a trace of him; all were filled with great devotion and tears because of the favor the glorious St. Joseph bestowed on them. Mother Teresa records this in the Book of Her Foundations, and Mother Anne of Jesus testified to it under oath in her statement for the canonization of holy Mother Teresa. Many other things could be told about Mother Teresa's relationship with the glorious St. Joseph, and I know them because I was her confessor and superior for a long time. And I know that not only Teresa but many others of this Order also received similar favors. As for myself, I can testify that when as a child I was given for the first time cards of the saints of the months, the glorious St. Joseph fell to me. Since childhood I have been greatly devoted to St. Joseph and to our Lady, and I have received many favors through their intercession.

Jerome Gracian was St. Teresa's confessor, superior and intimate friend. The above is from his work entitled "Summary of the Excellencies of St. Joseph" (1547). ■

Apostolic Exhortation *Redemptoris Custos*

by Pope John Paul II



On the Person and Mission of Saint Joseph in the Life of Christ and in the Church

IV. Work as an Expression of Love

22. Work was the daily expression of love in the life of the Family of Nazareth. The Gospel specifies the kind of work Joseph did in order to support his family: he was a carpenter. This simple word sums up Joseph's entire life. For Jesus, these were hidden years, the years to which Luke refers after recounting the episode that occurred in the Temple: "And he went down with them and came to Nazareth, and was obedient to them" (Lk 2:51). This "submission" or obedience of

Jesus in the house of Nazareth should be understood as a sharing in the work of Joseph. Having learned the work of his presumed father, he was known as "the carpenter's son." If the Family of Nazareth is an example and model for human families, in the order of salvation and holiness, so too, by analogy, is Jesus' work at the side of Joseph the carpenter. In our own day, the Church has emphasized this by instituting the liturgical memorial of St. Joseph the Worker on May 1. Human work, and especially manual labor, receives special prominence in the Gospel. Along with the humanity of the Son of God, work too has been taken up in the mystery of the Incarnation, and has also been redeemed in a special way. At the workbench where he plied his trade together with Jesus, Joseph brought human work closer to the mystery of the Redemption.

23. In the human growth of Jesus "in wisdom, age and grace," the virtue of industriousness played a notable role, since "work is a human good" which "transforms nature" and makes man "in a sense, more human."⁽³⁴⁾

The importance of work in human life demands that its meaning be known and assimilated in order to "help all people to come closer to God, the Creator and Redeemer, to participate in his salvific

plan for man and the world, and to deepen...friendship with Christ in their lives, by accepting, through faith, a living participation in his threefold mission as Priest, Prophet and King.”(35)

24. What is crucially important here is the sanctification of daily life, a sanctification which each person must acquire according to his or her own state, and one which can be promoted according to a model accessible to all people: “St. Joseph is the model of those humble ones that Christianity raises up to great destinies; ...he is the proof that in order to be a good and genuine follower of Christ, there is no need of great things—it is enough to have the common, simple and human virtues, but they need to be true and authentic.”(36)

V. The Primacy of the Interior Life

25. The same aura of silence that envelops everything else about Joseph also shrouds his work as a carpenter in the House of Nazareth. It is, however, a silence that reveals in a special way the inner portrait of the man. The Gospels speak exclusively of what Joseph “did”. Still, they allow us to discover in his “actions”—shrouded in silence as they are—an aura of deep contemplation. Joseph was in daily contact with the mystery “hidden from ages past,” and which dwelt under his roof. This explains, for example, why St. Teresa of Jesus, the great reformer of the Carmelites, promoted the renewal of veneration to St. Joseph in Western Christianity.

26. The total sacrifice, whereby Joseph surrendered his whole existence to the de-

mands of the Messiah coming into his home, becomes understandable only in the light of his profound interior life. It was from this interior life that “very singular commands and consolations came, bringing him also the logic and strength that belong to simple and clear souls, and giving him the power for making great decisions—such as the decision to put his liberty immediately at the disposition of the divine designs, to make over to them also his legitimate human calling, his

conjugal happiness, to accept the conditions, the responsibilities and the burden of family, but, through an incomparable virginal love, to renounce that natural conjugal love that is the foundation and nourishment of the family.”

This submission to God, this readiness of will to dedicate oneself to all that serves him, is really nothing less than that exercise of devotion which constitutes one expression of the

virtue of religion.

27. The communion of life between Joseph and Jesus leads us to consider once again the mystery of the Incarnation, precisely in reference to the humanity of Jesus as the efficacious instrument of his divinity for the purpose of sanctifying man: “By virtue of this divinity, Christ’s human actions were salvific for us, causing grace within us, either by merit or by a certain efficacy.”

Among those actions, the Gospel writers highlight those which have to do with the Paschal Mystery, but they also underscore the importance of physical contact with Jesus for healing (cf. for example, Mk 1:41), and the influence Jesus exercised upon John



the Baptist when they were both in their mother's wombs (cf Lk 1:41-44).

As we have seen, the apostolic witness did not neglect the story of Jesus' birth, his circumcision, his presentation in the Temple, his flight into Egypt and his hidden life in Nazareth. It recognized the "mystery" of the grace present in each of these saving "acts," inasmuch as they all share the same source of love: the divinity of Christ. If through Christ's humanity this love shone on all mankind, the first beneficiaries, were undoubtedly those whom the divine will had most intimately associated with itself: Mary, the Mother of Jesus, and Joseph, his presumed father.

Why should the "fatherly" love of Joseph not have had an influence upon the "filial" love of Jesus? And vice versa, why should the "filial" love of Jesus not have had an influence upon the "fatherly" love of Joseph, thus leading to a further deepening of their unique relationship? Those souls most sensitive to the impulses of divine love have rightly seen in Joseph a brilliant example of the interior life.

Furthermore, in Joseph, the apparent tension between the active and contemplative life find an ideal harmony that is only possible for those who possess the perfection of charity. Following St. Augustine's well known distinction between the love of the truth (*caritas veritatis*) and the practical demands of love, (*necessitas caritatis*), we can say that Joseph experienced both love of the truth —



that pure contemplative love of the divine Truth which radiated from the humanity of Christ—and the demands of love—that equally pure and selfless love required for his vocation to safeguard and develop the humanity of Jesus, which is inseparably linked to his divinity.

VI. Patron Of The Church In Our Day

28. At a difficult time in the Church's history, Pope Pius IX, wishing to place under

the powerful patronage of the holy patriarch Joseph, declared him "Patron of the Catholic Church." For Pius IX this was no idle gesture, since by virtue of the sublime dignity which God has granted to this most faithful servant Joseph, "the Church, after the Blessed Virgin, his spouse, has always held him in great honor and showered him with praise, having recourse to him amid tribulations."

What are the reasons for such great confidence? Leo XIII explained it in this way: "The reasons why Saint Joseph must be considered the special patron of the Church, and the Church in turn draws exceeding hope from his care and patronage, chiefly arises from his having been the husband of Mary and the presumed father of Jesus ... Joseph was in his day the lawful and natural guardian, head and defender of the Holy Family ... It is thus fitting and most worthy of Joseph's dignity that in the same way that he once kept unceasing holy watch over the family of Nazareth, so now does he protect and defend with his heavenly patronage the Church of Christ."



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Sunday: Breakfast, Morning Prayer, Major Address, Mass, Lunch and departure

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Additional questions may be placed by phoning Cindy Neisen between 9AM and 7PM Central Time at (217) 885-3555.

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29. This patronage must be invoked as ever necessary for the Church, not only as a defense against all dangers, but also, and indeed primarily, as an impetus for her renewed commitment to evangelization in the world and to re-evangelization in those lands and nations where—as I wrote in the Apostolic Exhortation *Christifideles Laici*—“religion and the Christian life were formerly flourishing and . . . are now put to a hard test.” In order to bring the first proclamation of Christ, or to bring it anew wherever it has been neglected or forgotten, the Church has need of special “power on high” (cf Luke 24:49; Acts 1:8): a gift of the Spirit of the Lord, a gift which is not unrelated to the intercession and example of his saints.

30. Besides trusting in Joseph’s sure protection, the Church also trusts in his noble example, which transcends all individual states of life, and serves as a model for the entire Christian community, whatever the condition and duties of each of its members may be.

As the *Constitution on Divine Revelation* of the Second Vatican Council has said, the basic attitude of the entire Church must be that of “hearing the word of God with reverence,” an absolute readiness to serve faithfully God’s salvific will revealed in Jesus. Already at the beginning of human redemption, after Mary, we find the model of obedience made incarnate in Saint Joseph, the man known for having faithfully carried out God’s commands.

Pope Paul VI invited us to invoke Joseph’s patronage “as the Church has been wont to do in these recent times, for herself in the first place with a spontaneous theological reflection on the marriage of divine and human action in the great economy of



the Redemption, in which economy the first—the divine one—is wholly sufficient to itself, while the second — the human action which is ours—though capable of nothing (cf Jn 15:5), is never dispensed from a humble but consideration and ennobling collaboration. The Church also calls upon Joseph as her protector because of a profound and ever present desire to reinvigorate her ancient life with true evangelical virtues, such as shine forth in Saint Joseph.”

31. The Church transforms these needs into prayer. Recalling that God wished to entrust the beginnings of our redemption to the faithful care of Saint Joseph, she asks God to, grant that she may faithfully cooperate in the work of salvation; that she may receive the same faithfulness and purity of heart that inspired Joseph in serving the Incarnate Word; and that she may walk before God in the ways of holiness and justice, following Joseph’s example and through his intercession.

One hundred years ago, Pope Leo XIII had already exhorted the Catholic world to pray for the protection of Saint Joseph, Patron of the whole Church. The Encyclical Epistle *Quamquam Pluries* appealed to Joseph's "fatherly love ... for the Child Jesus;" and commended to him as the "provident guardian of the divine Family," the beloved inheritance which Jesus Christ purchased by his blood. "Since that time—as I recalled at the beginning of this Exhortation—the Church has implored the protection of St. Joseph on the basis of "that sacred bond of charity which united him to the Immaculate Virgin Mother of God," and the Church has commended to Joseph all of her cares, including those dangers which threaten the human family.

Even today we have many reasons to pray in a similar way: "Most beloved father, dispel the evil of falsehood and sin ... graciously assist us from heaven in our struggle with the power of darkness ... and just as once you saved the Child Jesus from mortal danger, so now defend God's Holy Church from the snares of her enemies and from all adversity." Today we still have good reasons to commend every one to Saint Joseph.

32. It is my heartfelt wish that these reflections on the person of Saint Joseph will renew in us the prayerful devotion which my Predecessor called for a century ago. Our prayers and the very person of Joseph have renewed significance for the Church in our day in the light of the Third Christian Millennium.

The Second Vatican Council made all of us sensitive once again to the "great things which God has done," and to that "economy of salvation," of which Saint Joseph was a special minister. Commending ourselves, then, to the protection of him to whose cus-

tody God "entrusted his greatest and most precious treasures" let us at the same time learn from him how to be servants of the "economy of salvation." May Saint Joseph become for all of us an exceptional teacher in the service of Christ's saving mission, a mission which is the responsibility of each and every member of the Church: husbands and wives, parents, those who live by the work of their hands or by any other kind of work, those called to the contemplative life and those called to the apostolate.

This just man, who bore within himself the entire heritage of the Old Covenant, was also brought into the "beginning" of the New and Eternal Covenant in Jesus Christ. May he show us the paths of this saving Covenant as we stand at the threshold of the next Millennium, in which there must be a continuation and further development of the "fullness of time" that belong to the ineffable mystery of the Incarnation of the Word.

May Saint Joseph obtain for the Church and for the world as well as for each of us, the blessing of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. ■

Given in Rome, in St. Peter's, on August 15 — the Solemnity of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary — in the year 1989, the eleventh of my Pontificate.

✉ Letter to the Editor

To Whom It May Concern,

Thank you for the wonderful thoughts, articles, and pictures in the Clarion. It is a joy in my day when I find the time to sit read and reread it.

Thanks again for the time, thought and prayer put into publishing it. God Bless.

C.K., OCDS, Bucksport ME.

FRIENDS OF TERESA Jerome of the Mother of God (Gracián) (1545–1614)

An excerpt from the first volume of St. Teresa's Letters translated by Fr. Kieran Kavanaugh, OCD

Although Gracián was not the first dis-calced Carmelite friar, Teresa saw him as ideal, one sent by God just at the right moment for the renewal of the observance of the primitive rule (F. 23). He represented for her both its salvation and the future of the dis-calced friars. Born in Valladolid on June 6, 1545, he was one of the twenty children of Diego Gracián Alderete and Juana Dantisco. His father was secretary for both the emperor Charles V and the King Philip II. His grandfather on his mother's side, Juan Dantisco, was ambassador to the Spanish court for Sigismund I of Poland.

Jerónimo Gracián began his studies at age six with private tutors. When he was fourteen the family had to move to Toledo. His father wanted him to prepare for a career as secretary to the court and carry on in the family tradition. But Gracián desired to go on for university studies. The family had to raise the money from benefactors for this venture, among whom was Philip II himself. Beginning his studies at the University of Alcalá in 1560 at age fifteen, Gracián received his bachelor of arts degree in 1563 and a year later his masters degree. After finishing his studies in the arts, he registered in the school



of theology finishing in 1568. He then went on for a four-year doctorate course in theology. In 1572, with only one remaining test to undergo for the doctorate, when at the very point of receiving what many ambicioned but only a few achieved, he oddly abandoned everything. During his studies for the doctorate, in 1571, he was ordained to the priesthood.

At this time he became friendly with the Jesuits and was thinking seriously of joining them. One day, on the feast of St. Francis in 1571, he went to celebrate Mass for the Franciscan nuns, but by mistake went to the dis-calced Carmelite nuns in Alcalá, a community founded not by Teresa but by María de Jesús (cf. L. 35.1-2). Presuming they were Franciscans, he preached on St. Francis. After Mass the foundress spoke to him, explained the difference, and gave him a copy of Teresa's constitutions. He grew enthused about them and actually wrote to Teresa without ever having met her. These incidents led to his study of the Carmelite order. Subsequently, at the age of twenty-seven, he entered the novitiate of the dis-calced Carmelites in Pastrana.

A few months after his profession on April 25, 1573, he was named by Fancisco Vargas as visitator of the Carmelites of the observance in Andalusia. Vargas delegated his own powers to Gracián. Before a year was up,

Vargas named him vicar provincial of all the Carmelites in Andalusia. In view of the difficulties that arose regarding the legality of this appointment, the pope's nuncio to Spain, Nicols Ormaneto, on September 22, 1574, named Vargas and Gracián visitators *in solidum*, thus responding to the revocation obtained by the general of the order on August 13, 1574. But the chapter of Piacenza in May-June of 1575 was to cause further difficulties for the discalced friars and nuns.

At this same time, in the spring of 1575, Gracián, in Beas, finally met Teresa. At this first meeting the affinity between them became clear almost instantaneously. They concurred in all their points of view. Gracián says: "We commented on all matters of the order, both past and present and on what was necessary to foresee for the future." Both were euphoric after the meeting. The two were adaptable, had a gift for getting on well with people, and were open to broad horizons. Shortly after meeting him, wanting to do something more in the service of the Lord, Teresa made a vow of obedience to Gracián in honor of the Holy Spirit for a wonderful favor received on the vigil of the feast of Pentecost (ST. 35 & 36). After this, Gracián, in turn, made a decision to consult Teresa in all matters. This wise practice resulted in his being criticized and even calumniated for taking up business matters with a woman and letting himself be ruled by one.

Countering the chapter of Piacenza, Ormaneto enlarged the faculties of Gracián on

August 3, 1575, naming him commissary and reformer of the Andalusian Carmel and of the discalced friars and nuns of Castile. Gracián's work turned out to be decisive for the advance of the Teresian Carmel. Nonetheless, the persecutions, calumnies, and Carmelite family struggles ended in his being deposed by the new nuncio, Felipe Segá, and his being confined in a monastery in Alcalá. In October 1578, the discalced friars and nuns were put under the jurisdiction of the provincials of the Carmelites of the observance. Since this move created further conflicts and even public scandals, the king intervened and appointed a commission to deal with the whole matter.



Jeronimo Gracian

This commission placed Angel de Salazar, a former provincial of the observant Carmelites in Castile, in charge of the discalced friars and nuns on April 1, 1579. He was in Gracián's view, a gentle and discreet man whose concern was to console the afflicted and promote peace. Salazar then named Gracián commissary and visitator of the disclaced friars and nuns in Andalusia. Finally, through the intervention of Philip II,

Gregory XIII, in the brief *Pia consideratione* (June 22, 1580), allowed the discalced Carmelites to form a separate province, which in Teresa's words "was all that we were desiring for the sake of our peace and tranquility."

On March 4, 1581, in the chapter of Alcalá, Gracián was elected the first provincial of the Teresian Carmel. But not all were in favor of Gracián, and the vote was anything but unanimous. At the end of her life Teresa

herself warned Gracián against being arbitrary and authoritarian. He governed until 1585, attending to the organizational and juridical needs of the new province, extending the discalced friars' presence outside of Spain and opening the first mission in Africa. He was forty years old at the time, and had been superior for as many years as he was a professed religious. Not all the friars shared Teresa's judgment of Gracián as "the one who was best able to bring about a union between religious perfection and gentleness."

On finishing his provincialate, Gracián presented to the chapter of Lisbon (May 1585) a detailed defense of his government. According to the opposition, he had been too soft, should have given fewer dispensations, and done more to correct abuses in the strict observance. It seems there were always those who wanted him to do more punishing and threatening. Gracián proposed Nicolas Doria as his successor. Doria had been in Genoa during the previous three years. He was accepted and Gracián was elected as his first councillor. When the chapter continued in Pastana, Gracián was elected vicar provincial of Portugal.

At the end of 1586, Gracián published a work zealously promoting the missions, which marked the beginning of trouble with the new provincial, Doria. He was ordered to withdraw the book from publication. Furthermore, Gracián had begun to oppose the new form of government devised by Doria at the end of 1585, called the *consulta*. This was to be a government consisting of a body of

five members who would decide matters by vote. He also supported those nuns who opposed changes in Teresa's constitutions. The result was a plan to send Gracián to Mexico to serve there as vicar. While Gracián was in Seville preparing to go to Mexico, orders came from the religious authorities in Portugal, commissioning him to make some visitations in Portugal. There was fear that the English would invade, and it was rumored among Castilians that the Carmelite prior in Lisbon, Padre Antonio Calderón, was an An-



Jeronimo Gracian

tonista hiding arquebuses and making plans for betrayal. Gracián's task was to find the friars favoring the revolution, calm them down, and urge them to stay out of politics. This new commission, of course, prevented his going to Mexico. In 1588, Doria obtained the authority to be a vicar general of the discalced friars and nuns. In the meantime Gracián was carrying out his assignment as visitator of the Carmelites of the observance in Portugal.

When the nuns obtained a brief from Sixtus V confirming their desire that the constitutions of St. Teresa not be changed, it was seen as opposition to Doria's government. Gracián was reputed to have given his strong support to the nuns. After he finished his two-year visitation in Portugal, the time seemed ripe for Gracián's brethren to begin a process against him. He was imprisoned in the monastery of San Hermengildo in Madrid and forbidden to write any letters without permission from Doria. The investigations and interrogations went on for six months. On February 17, 1592, the sentence was pronounced

against Gracián. He was declared incorrigible, ordered to remove the habit of the discalced Carmelite friars, and expelled for sowing discord and opposition to the superiors.

After much reflection and counsel from others, Gracián decided to defend himself and take his case to the supreme authorities in Rome. Traveling in the habit of a hermit and as a pilgrim, he did so with the determination to defend the good name of the nuns as well. He was forty-seven at the time. By June 1592, he was in Rome only to find that the ambassador of the king had taken Doria's side, favoring the more austere elements of religious life. Gracián could do no more than give Pope Clement VIII his side of the story and leave the matter in the hands of God. After doing so, he went on to Naples, but the viceroy there rejected him, so he was forced to go to Sicily where the Countess of Olivares received him warmly. Gracián carried on an intense apostolic activity throughout Sicily, even giving courses in Scripture in Palermo. While he was immersed in these activities, the decision of Rome reached him. It could hardly have been more discouraging. He was forbidden to enter any monastery of the order again and advised to take the habit of the discalced Augustinians. Hoping to get a reversal of the decision, he took a boat for Rome. But it was captured by Turks. Gracián was stripped and chained and his feet branded. As he himself wrote, his habit was now his birthday suit (*aquel habito en que nací*), and he had to work at the oars in the galleys. The ship went about its pillaging throughout the month of October and then landed in Tunis in November.

Gracián was held captive for two interminable years in the midst of indescribable

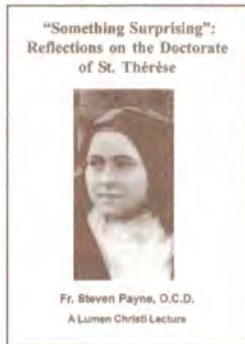
suffering and hardship. While held bound by four twenty-five-pound iron weights in a dark and fetid dungeon, he began a correspondence with his friends trying to raise money for his ransom. After a first amount of money arrived, he was allowed more freedom of movement so that he could preach and hear confessions among the hundreds of Christian prisoners. In 1594-1595, he worked intensely in this ministry, also saying Mass daily. By the beginning of August 1595, he was able to leave Africa and captivity behind him.

From Genoa he wrote to the general in Spain, Elías de San Martín, asking once more to be readmitted into the order, but he received no answer. While waiting for a response, he spent his time working for captives in Africa, trying to raise money for them and to interest the authorities in helping them. In mid-October, he went to Rome to plead his case. While in Rome he also devoted his time to preaching, spiritual direction, working on behalf of the poor captives in Africa, and, what comes as no surprise, promoting the cause for beatification of St. Teresa. In this latter regard, he found more enthusiasm for Teresa's cause in Italy than he did in Spain.

On March 16, 1596, he received a pontifical brief absolving him from any penalties and censures he may have incurred and authorizing him to return to the discalced Carmelites. The superiors were told to receive him and treat him kindly and give him all the privileges. Because of the hard opposition to him in Spain, it was recommended that he remain in Italy. There he was warmly received by the vicar general of the Carmelites of the observance who granted him permission to live among them and wear the discalced habit.

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Margaret Rowe

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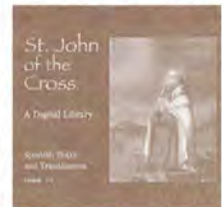


"Who is God"? Already she was dissatisfied with answers given her. Only the contemplative life of a Carmelite nun could begin to quench her thirst to know and give herself completely to God. Her entire life was driven by the desire to "return love for love." She entered the Carmelite convent in Florence at the age of seventeen, advanced rapidly in holiness, and died an extraordinary death at twenty-two. Her spiritual director reflecting on her death remarked, "She could not have lived very much longer, so great was the strength of the love of God in her."

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Not long after this, he was named by Cardinal Daza as official theologian of the Holy Office. Gracián then took up lodging in the cardinal's house. He also continued his work on the cause of St. Teresa and initiated procedures for a foundation of her nuns in Rome. Continuing his efforts to raise money to help ransom other captives, he even promoted this cause for the ransom of captives in front of Clement VIII.



Geronimo Gracia

In 1600 the disalced Carmelites divided into two congregations, one Spanish (St. Joseph) and the other Italian (St. Elías). Known in Rome for his experience in Moslem lands, Gracián was commissioned to preach to captive Christians in Morocco during the jubilee year. In order to do this, he had to go to the royal court in Madrid for his official papers. What was to be a short journey to Spain turned into a six-year stay. He carried out his preaching in Morocco for about seven months and then returned to Madrid in 1602, where in writing to Rome that his mission was over, he offered to go to Ethiopia. In the meantime, he undertook an apostolate in Spain, preaching at times as many as four sermons a day. He also continued to promote and raise funds for the cause of Teresa and the printing of her writings.

The ambassador of Philip III in Flanders began pressing to have Gracián come there, and finally he won his way. On May 29, 1607, Gracián left Spain for the last time. Soon after he arrived in Brussels, where he lived with the Carmelites of the observance,

he became happily aware of the devotion to Teresa in that region and the opportunities to promote her writings. He began once more his apostolate of preaching, now against heresies. In the year of his arrival, he described in a letter his way of life in Flanders: "My health is very good in this land and since my desire is for nothing other than the service of God and here there are many opportunities for this,

I am happy. Here we are always in the midst of battles — struggles against the heretics — and in this way and by writing against bad doctrine and arranging for the publication of what has been written, we pass our time. I sometimes preach to the disalced nuns ... And I am happy when alone in my cell with its garden, where I spend my eremitical life — even eating there — occupying as much time as possible in prayer as I approach the end of my life which I hope in God will be this year." But he lived six more years of intense apostolic and contemplative life.

He promoted Teresa's writings, attended to the publication of those that remained unpublished, and arranged for translations into other languages. Continuing to work unsparingly for her beatification, he was again consoled to find so much more enthusiasm for her cause, this time in France and Flanders, than he had at the higher levels in Carmel in Spain.

Anne of Jesus, who was also in Flanders at this time, longed to bring the disalced Carmelites from the Spanish congregation to

that region. In opposition to her on this point, Gracián worked to bring the dis-calced Carmelites from Italy. He had never favored the division of the Teresian Carmel into two congregations, but those in the Italian congregation agreed with Gracián and blamed the friars in Spain for the separation. Gracián preferred the Italian congregation because of their openness to the missions and other apostolic works. It was his opinion that if the dis-calced Carmelites did not go to foreign lands to shed their blood for the honor and glory of God and bring increase to the Catholic Church, they would not preserve their spirit at home or grow spiritually in numbers. Oddly enough, however, Gracián himself decided against joining either congregation, although he continued to work hard for the expansion of the dis-calced Carmelite nuns throughout central Europe. In 1608, he had been named bishop of Armenia. But that whole plan of the congregation for the propagation of the faith fell through. In 1614 Gracián's health began to weaken. On April 24, 1614, five months before his death, he was able to share in the joy of Teresa's beatification. In September, he was struck down by a strange illness outside the city of Brussels, while on a journey of priestly ministry, and

had to be lodged in a nearby house. He died the next day on September 21, 1614 at the age of 69.

Gracián always bore more of the dove in him than the serpent, but he was tenacious in his ideals. With an enormous capacity for work and an extraordinary physical resistance, he would give all his powers to a task if he judged it was good and noble. A few hours of sleep were enough and he was ready to go again. Everywhere, he made friends, but his friendship with Teresa is what history remembers most for. His esteem for her is clear through his many letters from her that we now possess. For himself and for posterity, he took the pains to save them. Not for a moment did he ever doubt that she was worthy of being canonized or that she was the foundress from whom the dis-calced Carmelites, both friars and nuns, received their spirit.

On December 15, 1999, the Dis-calced Carmelite Order, after thorough study, officially revoked the sentence of expulsion from the order issued against Padre Jerónimo. It did this as an authoritative gesture to restore his good name and set right the injustice of which he was victim. The following year the order took the first steps to introduce his cause for canonization. ■

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