



**Celebration of the bicentennial
of the birth of Fr. Jaime Clotet
Fabrés, CMF (1822-2022)**

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P. JAUME CLOTET

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Cofundador *Catequista dels sordmuts* *Secretari General*
Subdirector General *Encarregat dels Germans*
Fr. Jaime Clotet
Catequista dels sordmuts *Cofundador*
1822-2022 *Subdirector General*
Encarregat dels Germans



Hymn (from the common of holy men)

Rise up, O men of God!
Have done with lesser things.
Give heart and mind and soul and strength
To serve the King of kings.

Rise up, O men of God!
The kingdom tarries long.
Bring in the day of brotherhood
And end the night of wrong.

Rise up, O men of God!
The church for you doth wait,
Her strength unequal to her task;
Rise up and make her great!

Lift high the cross of Christ!
Tread where His feet have trod.
As brothers of the Son of Man,
Rise up, O men of God!

Introduction

Today we are called to pray in community on the bicentenary of the birth of Father Jaime Clotet Fabrés, the youngest of the co-founders of our Congregation. In his scrupulous and methodical industriousness, in his impeccable loyalty and in his profound mystical and missionary spirituality, we recognize a shining example of virtue and holiness. His cause for beatification has been introduced in Rome. About Father Clotet, Fr. Vicente Sanz writes in *Huellas de Claret* (Claret's footprints) that *"he was loved and venerated by all, tireless forger of his own Christian and religious perfection; solicitous of the welfare of each one; he passed through the earth leaving behind him a soft perfume of holiness. He had no enemy"*. In remembering him, we entrust to his intercession that the Congregation may never lack in rooted and audacious missionaries who serve God by proclaiming the Gospel to all.

Prayer

Lord and our Father, in this celebration of the bicentenary of the birth of our brother, Venerable Father Jaime Clotet, we ask you to grant us that love

for Christ and Fr. Claret that he lived so deeply throughout his life, and thus to be apostles totally dedicated to your Holy People, as he taught us by his example and testimony. We ask this through Jesus Christ Our Lord. Amen.

From the writings of Fr. Clotet

"Whenever I have seen for the first time a deaf-mute, a feeling of compassion has excited in me, I have experienced an almost irresistible impulse to occupy myself with making him know the principal truths of the faith, something difficult to be sure, but necessary and of the greatest consolation in his misfortune. This was the reason why, from the first years of my promotion to the priesthood, I tried to instruct myself in the art of mimicry, dedicating myself later, as far as my indispensable duties permitted, to teach the Catechism to those unfortunates, at least once a week. Their docility, their attention and utmost gratitude captivated the heart, made the work sweeter, and then I was able to know that my simple lessons, although so infrequent, would eventually give very good results.

Impelled by the same desires, and in order that other priests or laymen might devote themselves fruitfully to the instruction of such needy subjects who move to compassion all those who are interested in their temporal and eternal good, I wrote the present Catechism which, in spite of my distrust, I now resolve to give birth to, obeying the indication of respectable persons whom I must obey." (*Catechism of the Mutes*, Vich, 1870; p. 5).

Responsorial Psalm (Ps 26)

R. The Lord is my light and my help.

The Lord is my light and my help;
whom shall I fear?

The Lord is the stronghold of my life;
before whom shall I shrink?

R. The Lord is my light and my help.

When evildoers draw near
to devour my flesh,
it is they, my enemies and foes,
who stumble and fall.

R. The Lord is my light and my help.

Though an army encamp against me
my heart would not fear.

Though war break out against me
even then would I trust.

R. The Lord is my light and my help.

There is one thing I ask of the Lord, for this I long,
to live in the house of the Lord, all the days of my life,
to savor the sweetness of the Lord,
to behold his temple.

R. The Lord is my light and my help.

For there he keeps me safe in his tent
in the day of evil.

He hides me in the shelter of his tent,
on a rock he sets me safe.

R. The Lord is my light and my help.

And now my head shall be raised
above my foes who surround me,
and I shall offer within his tent a sacrifice of joy.

I will sing and make music for the Lord.

Hope in him, hold firm and take heart.

R. The Lord is my light and my help.

Bible reading (1 Cor, 13:1-13)

Brothers: Though I command languages both human and angelic, if I speak without love, I am no more than a gong booming or a cymbal clashing. And though I have the power of prophecy, to penetrate all mysteries and knowledge, and though I have all the faith necessary to move mountains -- if I am without love, I am nothing. Though I should give away to the poor all that I possess, and even give up my body to be burned -- if I am without love, it will do me no good whatever. Love is always patient and kind; love is never jealous; love is not boastful or conceited, it is never rude and never seeks its own advantage, it does not take offence or store up grievances. Love does not rejoice at wrongdoing but finds its joy in the truth.

It is always ready to make allowances, to trust, to hope and to endure whatever comes. Love never comes to an end. But if there are prophecies, they will be done away with; if tongues, they will fall silent; and if knowledge, it will be done away with. For we know only imperfectly, and we prophesy imperfectly; but once perfection comes, all imperfect things will be done away with. When I was a child, I used to talk like a child, and see things as a child does, and think like a child; but now that I have become an adult, I have finished with all childish

ways. Now we see only reflections in a mirror, mere riddles, but then we shall be seeing face to face. Now I can know only imperfectly; but then I shall know just as fully as I am myself known. As it is, these remain: faith, hope and love, the three of them; and the greatest of them is love.

Reflection: Fr. Clotet, "an angel in human flesh"

On July 24, 2022, our Congregation will celebrate the bicentenary of the birth of Fr. Jaime Clotet, the youngest of our co-founders. The occasion, besides inviting us to give thanks to God, allows us to evoke the figure of such an outstanding missionary. His Claretian vocation was manifested in the same year of the foundation, when he barely knew Fr. Claret by hearsay.

In 1849, Fr. Clotet was a bursar priest in a small town in the diocese of Vic called Civit. Ordained in 1845, he was then 27 years old. But the parish was unsuitable for his character and inclinations. He was looking for an institution where he could establish himself in accordance with his concerns. He consulted his situation with the canons Jaime Passarell and Jaime Soler. Both proposed him to meet with Mosén Claret, without announcing the purpose of such a meeting. This conversation with Fr.

Claret took place, according to Fr. Clotet himself, in the following way:

- *Some of our priest friends, Fr. Claret told him, have resolved to live together with a plan of life and to dedicate ourselves to prayer and study, and to go and preach wherever the prelate sends us; and in those months of the year when we do not usually preach, to be retired to our house and spend our time resting, praying, and reviewing the sciences. Would you like this method of life?*
- *What will you do, Fr. Clotet replied, with a man of weak complexion, short stature, dull voice, no oratorical gifts, and short reach?*
- *Leave aside your qualities, replied Fr. Claret, answer only my question.*
- *Well, I say that I like the plan, he concluded.*
- *Being so, continued Fr. Claret, arrange things in such a way that on the fifteenth of July (1849) you can be in Vic: they will soon send you a substitute.*

There are times, just a few, when a decisive deliberation follows such a short itinerary without giving rise to doubts or hesitation. Fr. Clotet did not need more time to join the great work that was already beginning under the leadership of Father Claret.

Our Fr. Clotet has left a deep and lasting influence in the Congregation. He carried out high responsibilities as co-founder, formator of the first generations of Brothers, connoisseur like no one else of the life and work of Father Claret, chronicler of his last days in Fontfroide. He acted as a man of prudent government being superior of various houses, sub-director and secretary of the Congregation. He collaborated in the writing of the second Constitutions. He was a popular missionary, catechist, preacher of spiritual exercises and pioneer in catechetical pedagogy for the deaf and mute. He faced with courage difficulties and contradictions, he knew how to console and to denounce what he thought inadmissible.

His most penetrating influence was as a man of fidelity. To him was due the spiritual impulse of the Congregation after the absence of the Founder. He injected into his veins a deep love for the consecrated life, intrinsically united to what is most genuine in our missionary Institute. He was the first Claretian to issue the three evangelical counsels, a perennial aspiration of the Institute since its foundation. It happened on Holy Thursday, March 18, 1861, in the house of Gracia (Barcelona). With the language of example, he offers us a very high "*model of piety, zeal and exercise of all the virtues*" (Fr. José Xifré). His total

dedication to God, his care in the practice of the Constitutions and his charism as a man in the presence of God, continue to be a motivating call for those of us who are committed to apostolic action. He reminds us that we will be daring missionaries if we live rooted.

Pope Saint John Paul II declared him venerable, as it appears in the Decree issued on May 13, 1989. In his accurate synthesis of Clotet's life, he writes: "*Among his brothers in the Congregation he has always been considered as a perfect example of the ideal of the Missionary established by St. Anthony Mary Claret*". And with these words we can add much more.

Silence

Prayers

"Without me you can do nothing," the Lord tells us. Let us ask him with confidence that the good work begun in us may be carried out to the full:

- That many new apostles, following the example of Fr. Clotet, may respond to the call that God makes to them in favor of his people, let us pray to the Lord.

- That those who feel spiritually and physically handicapped, sick and poor, may find someone to help them in their vulnerability and accompany them on their journey towards Christ, let us pray to the Lord.
- That there may never be a lack of Missionary Brothers in our Congregation, to whom Fr. Clotet dedicated himself with such zeal and love, let us pray to the Lord.
- That the example and intercession of Venerable Fr. Clotet may help the Claretians to live their missionary life with holiness, integrating prayer with apostolic action, we pray to the Lord.
- That those in the Church who dedicate themselves to catechesis may know how to transmit the faith and not be discouraged in the difficulties of their apostolate, we pray to the Lord.
- *Other spontaneous prayers can be added...*

Our Father...

Final Prayer

Give us, Lord, the faith and love that inflamed the Venerable Fr. Jaime Clotet, so that like him we may be able to embrace with humble and joyful spirit, poverty, self-denial, and creativity to expand the Kingdom of Christ, who lives and reigns forever and ever. Amen.

Blessing and final hymn

