



Society of Mary - Compañía de María - Soci t  de Marie
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June 30, 2026

Biography of Death Notice N. 6

The Province of Spain recommends to our fraternal prayers our dear brother **Ignacio Mar a ZABALA CAMARERO-NU EZ**, priest, of the Marianist Community of Siquem, Madrid, Spain, who died in the service of the Blessed Virgin Mary on June 24, 2026 in Madrid, at the age of 84 with 66 years of religious profession.

Ignacio was born on October 26, 1941 in Donostia-San Sebasti n, where he liked to go in the summer, to recover his roots.

In September 2025, when Ignacio was assigned to the community of Siquem, due to the fact that he had a severe cognitive impairment that needed particular care, he arrived light: a suitcase with clothes, the Marianist Rule of Life, the Bible, the book "Jesus, historical approximation", by Pagola, the volume published for the centenary of the Nuestra Se ora del Pilar school in Madrid, and a few framed photographs: most of the religious of the Province at the last provincial meeting, three years ago, parents, a photo of the four older brothers when they were

children, another of their parents, a collage with weddings, baptisms and first family communions, another of the Sodality of La Burbuja, which he accompanied for more than twenty-five years, a ceramic chalice and a Marianist cross. The silent testimony of the centers of his life. In addition, a photo, from his time as a handball player, in which he became champion of Spain, making the best *adjustments during the game* that has been seen in a long time, according to another Marianist religious player of the same sport.

Ignacio made his first profession in 1959. In September of this year he would have celebrated 67 years as a Marianist religious. He made his perpetual profession in 1964. He was ordained a priest in 1974. All his religious life at the service of God and Mary, in the Province of Madrid and later in that of Spain. He served with dedication, with availability, with seriousness, with coherence, with his personal limitations, with simplicity, being at times a sign of contradiction for some decisions he made during his years of government, which were not to everyone's liking. His desire, always, was to seek the will of God, and to respond to what he considered the mission of religious life today. He sought to be fair when making a decision, without hurting anyone. He was an upright, affable and, delicate person.

Ignacio dedicated a large part of his Marianist life to education as a teacher, chaplain, director – he was in three stages of the Pilar school in Madrid, where he had studied – and also in Cádiz; he was formator of scholastics in Salamanca, later assistant of apostolic action, and eventually as provincial. He was also parish priest in La Línea de la Concepción, in La Atunara, a neighborhoods of simple people, fishermen and also smuggling and drug trafficking. The last years he spent as provincial secretary and archivist, parochial vicar in the popular neighborhood of Orcasitas, Madrid, and chaplain of the San Ana y San Rafael school. Stationed for two years in his hometown, already diminished in strength, he returned to Madrid, to the community of Annunciation and there he maintained his pastoral ministry with so many well-known people, in addition to collaborating with the parish of Santa María del Pilar. For a few years he was president of the confederation of Spanish religious (CONFER).

Doctor of Industrial Engineering in Electromechanics (Ph.D. in Engineering) from the Jesuit University in Madrid, he was also a professor of electrical engineering

at the University of Salamanca. A very intelligent and rational man, always analytical, indefatigable to discouragement, full of nuances, he was very close to people. He had a large group of friends, and many more acquaintances, in many areas, who benefited from his friendship, advice, ministry and company, especially many young people, from catechetical groups, mountain groups, sodalities, to whom Ignacio always said: "Cheer up, then, young values", a phrase that everyone remembers.

In these months of his life, with a very severe deterioration, he has given a great testimony of profound spirituality, of cordiality, of simplicity, of having the house built on rock. He lived in large communities – he died in the largest of the Society of Mary – and in small communities, where he enjoyed a way of life in which he could better develop fraternal life in community, being visible and accessible to the laity who participated in the life of faith and the mission of the community. with whom he wanted to share a mission, because he knew that they shared charism and spirituality with the religious, on an equal footing, beyond functional collaboration. Despite his tough and apparently distant character, there are many people who felt co-responsible for the mission at his side: "each one to his own and all to everything," he used to say when he was entrusted with a task

Ignacio was always very close to his family. Two of his brothers, Javier and José Manuel, a priest, who was a Marianist religious, and his nephew Javier have accompanied him during these months, visiting him and taking him to family gatherings, which Ignacio enjoyed, as they allowed him to leave this community focused on the care of sick brothers, in which he did not quite find himself: "this place is not for me, I don't know what to do, I don't have any orders," he used to say to anyone who would listen.

He began as an advisor to the youth sodality La Burbuja, and with them he has celebrated its silver anniversary. This year, once a month, they came to look for him to participate in the meetings, which excited him and filled him with life. In his last stage, he was also an advisor to the Fraticelli sodality, one of the historic ones. The sodalities of Madrid communicated his death in this way: "We also remember him for being one of the promoters of the Marianist Sodalities at the beginning of the 80s. Although we called him a "caterpillar", because of his ability

to push many and varied topics at the same time, Ignacio was very, very close to the sodalities in which he carried out the advisory service, and to the people he met". Ignacio was able to participate in the last assembly of the sodalities in Madrid, during the long weekend of the Immaculate Conception last year, and was happy to meet so many acquaintances.

In the first weeks of his life in the community of Siquem, he needed to understand why he had been assigned here. When the provincial, with great delicacy, explained to him what his disease consisted of, and he was able to ask about its possible evolution, and understand it, he wrote on the back of his mobile "I have Alzheimer's", and showed it to the others, so that they would also understand his reality.

This spring, with the disease already very advanced, he cleaned the table in his room and left only the book "Jesus, historical approach", the chalice and the Marianist cross. When asked about the fact, he said: "It's so that I don't forget."

Nothing indicated that the disease was going to develop so quickly, with such serious consequences for him. After the day of the Virgin of the Pillar he began with a notable difficulty in expressing himself, knowing what he wanted to say, but without finding the words. Later he began with motor difficulties and before Easter he already needed a wheelchair, which he moved with his feet, without knowing where he was going, wandering continuously through the corridors of the house. He lost his expressiveness, his attention span... he forgot to eat, swallow and breathe... he had bronchopneumonia, and the general state due to her cognitive impairment meant that after a day of agony he gave his life definitively to the Lord, to whom she had been consecrated.

At all times, in the last week, he has been accompanied by Marianist religious, his family and friends from closest sodalities.

Ignacio always said that we should live on hope. Because hope in God does not disappoint. He already knows this well. Ignacio, throughout his life, responded to God's grace to be strong in faith, secure in hope, and constant in love. Rest in the Peace of Your Lord.