

25th Anniversary of the Death of Michel Quiroga

Our young brother Miguel Angel Quiroga (Michel) was assassinated on September 18, 1998 in Lloró (Colombia) by paramilitaries for defending a group of catechists. Michel was 26 years old at the time of his death. In March 2019, the Marianist Postulator presented to the then Diocesan Bishop, Msgr. Juan Carlos Barreto, the request for the opening of Michel's Cause by way of offering his life in an act of heroic charity. However, the transfer of Msgr. Barreto to the Diocese of Soacha, in June 2022, has left the Diocese of Quibdó without a bishop. That is why it has not been possible to begin the Cause of Michel.

Nevertheless, Michel's memory remains very much alive among the people of Lloró and grows stronger as the years go by. For this reason, the 25th anniversary of his death was celebrated in Lloró in 2023. On Saturday, September 16, a car with loudspeakers drove through the streets of the town inviting the neighbors to attend the Mass for the repose of his soul. At the same time, they distributed prayer cards with the prayer for the success of Michel's cause. The Eucharist was celebrated the following day, Sunday the 17th, in the Parish of the Immaculate Conception in Quibdó, presided over by the Bishop of the Diocese of Istmina-Tadó and Apostolic Administrator of the Diocese of Quibdó, Msgr. Mario de Jesús Álvarez. The concelebrants were the pastor, the Vicar of the Diocese, the diocesan delegate for youth ministry and, on the Marianist side, Father Carlos Julio Barragán, S.M. A large crowd of faithful and members of the youth groups that Michel created in the Parish also attended the Mass. The following Monday, the 18th, a pilgrimage was made in boats on the Atrato River, to the place where the cross that marks Michel's murder is erected.



**Holy Mass in memory of the 25th anniversary of the murder of Michel Quiroga, S. M.,
celebrated Sunday, September 17, 2023
in the Parish of the Purísima Concepción de Lloró.**

There, Msgr. Mario Alvarez led the prayer and highlighted Michel's life and dedication. Father Carlos Julio Barragan took advantage of the occasion to meet with young aspirants to the Society of Mary and members of the "Michel Vive Youth Group" of the Immaculate Conception Parish. The events were made possible thanks to the collaboration of the superior of the Colombia-Ecuador Sector, Bro. Pedro Castañeda, SM, Fathers Jesús Obando, SM and Rodrigo Betancur, SM, and Bro. José Reinel Quintero, SM.

Michel's example of vocational enthusiasm, apostolic zeal and dedication of his life to youth continues to be very much alive among the faithful. We hope that soon a new diocesan bishop will be appointed and be able to open the Cause of the heroic act of charity of our young brother.