

Marianist Rule of Life for a People of Saints

Father José María Salaverri (1926-2018) was elected XI^o Superior General in the Chapter of Linz (Austria), in 1981. It was at this chapter that the Marianist Rule of Life was drafted. He was given the task of making the new rule known, loved, and practiced. In Appendix XXXV of the Chapter document, the Chapter exhorted all Marianists to receive the Rule with both mind and heart. Intellectual knowledge was not enough. The new rule had to be received with faith and prayer, with an open disposition and not criticism. The Rule called for a conversion to the spirit of the Society of Mary. In short, it was a call from God to personal and community sanctification.

In fact, it was Father Salaverri's conviction that there could be no conciliar renewal without Marianist identity, nor without personal and collective holiness. He taught his religious that in order to live this new expression of the Marianist charism, which is the Rule of Life of 1983, holy religious are needed. This is what he stated in his first circular, significantly dated November 1, the Solemnity of All Saints: "The new Rule of Life needs saints"; and he will insistently exhort his religious to desire holiness. To this end, within the objectives of his office, he promoted the opening of new Causes of virtues and martyrdom of Marianist religious. To aid in this program, in 1982 he appointed Father Enrique Torres (b. 1934) as postulator. He opened the Causes of the Spanish Martyrs, Father Gapp, Faustino and Father Domingo Lázaro; in addition, he supported Father Joseph Verrier (1904-1993) in the task of drafting the Positios of Adele de Batz and Mademoiselle de Lamourous.

The 1983 Rule of Life teaches that the sanctity of consecrated life belongs equally to each religious as to the social and institutional body of the Institute. This is what we read in Article 33, where it is stated that "the consecrated life belongs inseparably to the holiness of the Church"; that "God loves us and calls us to holiness" to make "our lives, personally and communally, bear witness to a holy people"; and the following article, 34, explains that



"we live in community to bear witness to God's love, to reach holiness and to carry out our apostolic mission".

Canonized holiness is an expression of the holiness of the People of God; of those thousands and thousands of unknown saints next door, as Pope Francis said. For this reason, the Causes of Sainthood of the Marianist Postulator are only the tip of the iceberg of a people of saints. Let us dare to be holy; only in this way will the Causes of our venerables and blessed prosper.