

### **3. Martyrs of the Association of the Children of Mary Immaculate**

**1.- Fr. Pédro GAMBÍN PÉREZ**, *chaplain, born on 17 July 1886 in Cartagena (Spain) and died on 15 August 1936 in Murcia.*

He was a priest, Director of the Children of Mary. On 20 July 1936, he was arrested and sent to Ayuntamiento. He was the object of insults, mockery and abuse all the way to the jail at San Anton.

In the jail, he was an edifying example to the rest with his Christian patience and resignation. He exhorted the prisoners to pardon the injuries that they were receiving. He prayed during many hours every day, and at nightfall he gathered the most humble ones around him to pray the rosary, praying for the Church and Spain. They offered him some special considerations which he did not accept. The meal that they brought to him from the house he shared with the most needy.

At daybreak on 15 August, when all were sleeping, the loud noise of a latch being opened woke him up and he was startled. Fr. Pedro looked at his watch and exclaimed, "My God, it is 2:30 a.m., what do they want of me?" Obeying their orders, he dressed quickly, knelt before a prison mate and received absolution from his hands. Tied with cloth from the sheets, they physically abused him and beat him with their guns. He encouraged the other six martyrs that accompanied him and on the highway between Cartagena and Murcia, five shots put an end to his life, one of them in his side, but he did not die at that moment.

At dawn, a person heard his cries and drew close to him to help. Seeing the blood flowing from the five wounds he received, he wanted to help, but Fr. Pedro said "I do not need anything. My soul will soon be with God." And so it was. Before dying, he had given a crucifix to one of his assassins and said, "Take it, soon you will need it."

**2. Fr. Antonio GUTIÉRREZ CRIADO**, *chaplain, born in Toledo (Spain) and died on 7 August 1936 in Cerro de los Angeles, Madrid.*

He was ordained a priest in Toledo and assigned to Cartagena from 1925-1931 as a military chaplain. This work he shared with the Association of Sons of the Miraculous Medal, a group of young people of which he was an active member.

Due to the lay character of the Government of the Republic, he had to give up his work as military chaplain and he returned to Toledo where he was named Diocesan Director of Catholic Youth, to which he dedicated as much time and energy as he did when in Cartagena. In 1933, he organized a National Congress which, despite the organization of a strike to stop it, it was a great success and had many participants, some coming from afar by foot.

In the time of the persecutions, he was able to seek refuge in Alcázar as did some of the youth of the Catholic Action, among them Antonio Rivera, called the "Angel of Alcázar," but he said that he decided not to hide out. If God wants me to die, then his will be done.

On 7 March 1936, militants of the CNT went to look for him. They accused him of being the president of the fascists of Toledo. He denied this charge saying, I

am the counselor of the Catholic Action Youth. They took him to the Hill of the Angels and the body of that Son of Mary, riddled with bullets fell in front of the ruins of the giant monument to the Sacred Heart of Jesus.

**3.- Fr. José SÁNCHEZ MEDINA**, *chaplain, born on 3 August 1900 in Archena, Murcia (Spain) and died on 17 October 1936 in Archena, Murcia.*

An ordained priest, he was named official of the Bishop's Conference and exercised his ministry in Cartagena. He was a member of the Sons of Mary and organist in the Church of Charity, patroness of the city. He is the author of the popular "Salve Cartagenera."

He inspired much fervor in the souls of those who came to him for direction. He knew how to give orientation to youth and encourage them with his kindness, optimism and joy. He died for God, to whom he offered all his existence.

D. Antonio Riquelme, says of this priest, "During his stay in Cartagena, he was a real apostle who gave much glory to our Lord. His death leaves a void that will not be easy to fill" and "he had a very delicate and well formed conscience that was proper to a chosen one of God."

His father, who accompanied him at the moment of his death begged his assassins to kill him first, because he did not want to see his son die. They did not accede to his wish, relegating him to the last place.

**4.- Fr. Cayetano GARCÍA MARTÍNEZ**, *chaplain, born on 6 January 1995 in Jumilla (Spain) and died on 15 August 1936 near Jumilla.*

He was a very dedicated priest and filled with great charity that conquered the hearts of all the humble people.

At the start of the civil war, he was with his family in Lorquí. The mayor gave him lodging, but on 15 August some individuals of the Committee of Jumilla said that they had orders from the government to take him prisoner to his birthplace and make a declaration.

He was taken to Ayuntamiento where there were other prisoners. After various hours of deliberation, they were led out to the hermitage of Saint Augustine and there they were killed.

On the day of his death, he was able to receive communion in secret and he said to his family, "You only get one chance to live your life. What a great pleasure to give it up for Christ."

Fr. Cayetano gave absolution to all and blessed his executioners. He initiated a "Long Live Christ the King" that would never end.

When the mayor of Jumilla heard the news, he exclaimed, "I was not able to intervene to avoid this, they left me alone."

**5.- Francisco ROSELLÓ HERNÁNDEZ**, *born in 1907, in Cartagena (Spain) and died on 18 October 1936 in Cartagena.*

He was a man of great piety, and of the merchant class. A member of the Sons of Mary of the Miraculous Medal, he had a profound piety which was evidenced in his fervent reception of communion which served as a good example for

his companions. Because of his correct way of living and his seriousness, he was respected and honored by his companions.

In July 1936, on the eve of his wedding, he was arrested. He remained in the jail of San Anton of Cartagena together with sailors, militiamen and civilians imprisoned for their ideas on politics and religion.

On 18 October, the city was bombed and, as an act of reprisal, without any trial, 49 prisoners were taken out of jail and assassinated.

His remains were identified in the common grave because he wore the Miraculous Medal, to which he had great devotion and which was given to him as a gift from his girlfriend.

**6. Modesto ALLEPUZ VERA**, *born in 1906 in Cartagena (Spain) and died on 22 September 1936 in Cartagena.*

He was an employee of the Trade and Commerce Industries S.A. During his life he showed many gifts of piety and virtue. He was secretary of the Sons of Mary, elected by his companions who respected him very much. When Spain entered into all of its political troubles, he preached in the press the doctrine of the love of Jesus.

During the revolution, he took his wife and children to a nearby town with the intention of running away from the enemies of God.

He was finally arrested in August 1936 and condemned to death. On 22 September, he was assassinated in the Cemetery of Cartagena along with Enrique Pedro Gonzalez and José Ardil.

His Christian dedication was evident in a declaration that he made together with some ten other condemned prisoners. One of them in the name of the group directed his words of pardon to the executioners. Before his martyrdom, he bid farewell to each of them giving them a hug.

**7. Henrique Pedro GONZÁLVEZ ANDREU**, *born on 15 July 1910 in Cartagena (Spain) and died on 22 September 1936 in Cartagena.*

He was a notary public. He was also the Secretary and Vice-president of the Sons of Mary. He was very affable and ready to serve with great morality and discretion.

His love and fidelity to the Church led him to protest strongly the destruction of religious monuments and the law of the government against confession and Religious Congregations. He defended the rights of the workers in the light of the social doctrine of the Church. He fought against the violence of the upper class.

At the start of the problems, he hid himself in the house of family members. The threats against his mother caused him to give himself up voluntarily.

He was detained with 24 other persons and judged by a Popular Court. The result was the death penalty. Before he received his sentence, he accepted what God willed for him. In jail, he edified all by his apostolic example and when the last hour arrived, his only words for his executioners were words of pardon.

He was invited to turn around to be shot in the back. He said that it was not necessary and raising his Miraculous Medal, he received the bullet that ended his life. The medal he wore is still conserved.

He died, as only martyrs know how, with a smile on his lips, sure that his sacrifice in this life would take him to his eternal mansion in heaven.

**8. José ARDIL LÁZARO**, *born in 1913 in Cartagena (Spain) and died on 22 September 1936 in Cartagena.*

A Catholic Youth, member of the Sons of Mary, he was of good conduct. At the start of the war, he went to Murcia to avoid the inevitable.

His sister was taken prisoner, so he went to the heads of the revolution to save his family. It was a noble, magnificent sacrifice he made. He knew what was going to happen, but that did not stop him. He had a noble heart and deep Christian faith.

In the middle of August, he entered prison, serenely, just as he would leave the prison weeks later seeking death.

His Christian commitment was manifest in a declaration that he made together with some ten other condemned prisoners. As it was written in the reports, one of them, in the name of the group directed words of pardon to the executioners. They bid farewell to their jailers embracing each one before leaving for their martyrdom.

**9. Isidoro JUAN MARTÍNEZ**, *born on 10 May 1899 in Cartagena (Spain) and died on 18 October 1936 in Cartagena.*

A lawyer by profession, member of the Sons of Mary, he had been Vice-president. Once married, he had to leave the organization since that was a rule. However, once the rule changed to allow married people, he was one of the first to enter again.

He was imprisoned shortly after the civil war was declared in July 1936. He was sent to the jail of San Anton of Cartagena, together with military people and civilians who presented their political and religious ideas.

He was assassinated together with 48 men, giving their lives for their convictions, proud to die for the cause of God.

**10. Francisco GARCÍA BALANZA**, *died on 25 September 1936 in Cartagena.*

He was president of the Sons of Mary in Cartagena for many years. His life was one of austerity and sacrifice that won over the sympathy of many people. He showed himself as a dear father to the incapacitated and humble. The needs of others concerned him as if they were his own. He fought for the betterment of the poorer class by just means and inspired by Christian Doctrine.

He was designated to go to the ship James I where he was obliged to leave on 25 August for the red guard. He was assassinated in the back and his body was left on the road, a typical tragic way of assassination of those sad days.

**11.- Antonio GIL MUÑOZ**, *born in 1916 in Daimiel, Ciudad Real (Spain) and died on 5 March 1939 in Cartagena.*

He was a member of the Sons of Mary, where he developed his Christian spirit. His deep faith and sincerity was the motive for his suffering the honors of persecution and the hidden practice of his faith.

His native goodness and humble character, free from all hate and united with the firmness of his convictions made him the ideal friend and the one looked for in time of difficulty. His joy was great when he was able to hear Mass and receive communion in the presence of his betrothed and his elderly mother. With great interest and devotion, he offered to bring communion to those who were in need of the sacrament.

He fell into the hands of his enemies. Witnesses tell of how he was taken prisoner and given tremendous hits on the head which began his torments. His mutilated body was identified by his mother when she saw Mary's Scapular which he wore sewn into the interior of his cape.