

Claretian Missionaries



TRIDUUM

of Prayer

in preparation for the solemnity of

Saint Anthony Mary Claret

On the 150th anniversary of his death

1870 - 2020

[PROGRAM]

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[PRESENTATION]

As is traditional in the Congregation, we prepare for the solemnity of St. Anthony Mary Claret with a triduum of prayer (cf. *Dir* 89). This year 2020 has a special character because we celebrate the 150th anniversary of his death.

In order to help the communities in the celebration of the triduum, the General Prefecture of Spirituality offers this booklet, prepared together with the *CESC* of Vic and the *Forge Centre* of Los Negrales. Each community can accommodate it according to its characteristics.

The three days of the triduum follow a common outline and share the same concluding prayer. Each one of them is inspired by a phrase of Claret related to his death. Read in the present situation of pandemic, they help us to live this time with lucidity, serenity and hope.

All the suggested songs are taken from the *Spiritual Directory*. In each place you can choose the most appropriate ones, according to your own customs.

Little is enough for me

1

Introduction

We know in detail, through the letters that Fr. Clotet wrote from the monastery of Fontfroide and later from Prades¹, how Claret lived his last days on earth. In this year in which we celebrate the 150th anniversary of his death, the calm reading of these letters will help us to be more in tune with the spirit of the Founder. The way he died is in perfect continuity with the style of life he led. He did not die a martyr – as he would have wished – but he was persecuted and exiled. On this first day of the triduum with which we prepare to celebrate his feast, we remember the poverty of the one who knew how to live soberly because for him God was “all he needed”.

In this time of pandemic, in which millions of people have lost their jobs and are going through situations of great precariousness, we ask God, through the intercession of our Founder, to help us also to live a poor

¹ 28 of these letters (from October 13 to December 16) are published in Appendix IV of the Bicentenary Autobiography edition: S. ANTHONY MARY CLARET, *Autobiography and Complementary Writings*, Claretian Publications, Bangalore 2011, 997-1086.

life, based on the experience of God as our treasure and in solidarity with the neediest.

Song (*Spiritual Directory*, Song 283, p. 328-329)

*Claret,
Teacher and father,
In your school the bread of the Word is our gift.
Make us voice of those who are voiceless,
Make us bread of those who hunger and long for God.*

From you we'll learn to live in love and freedom
And give our minds and hearts without reserve.
We want to feel in us your strength and power
And liberate your people with your love.

We want to free and liberate your people
from bondage of evil, sin and guilt.
We understand the eloquence of silence,
The secret and real strength of love.

Opening Prayer

Merciful God,
You were all he needed to St. Anthony Mary Claret,
the treasure that filled his life with love and joy.
He put his trust in You,
was able to live a poor life by imitating your Son Jesus,
who, being rich, became poor for us.
Help us to live like him,

so that our proclamation of the Gospel
is credible and reaches the poorest,
whom You have chosen
as the Kingdom's favourites.
We ask this through Jesus Christ,
our Lord. Amen.

Bible reading

Lk 9:1-6

“He summoned the Twelve and gave them power and authority over all demons and to cure diseases, and he sent them to proclaim the kingdom of God and to heal (the sick). He said to them, “Take nothing for the journey, neither walking stick, nor sack, nor food, nor money, and let no one take a second tunic. Whatever house you enter, stay there and leave from there. And as for those who do not welcome you, when you leave that town, shake the dust from your feet in testimony against them.” Then they set out and went from village to village proclaiming the good news and curing diseases everywhere.”

Psalm 15 (16)

Preserve me, God, I take refuge in you.
I say to the Lord: “You are my God.
My happiness lies in you alone.”

R/. Preserve me, God, I take refuge in you.

He has put into my heart a marvelous love
for the faithful ones who dwell in his land.
Those who choose other gods increase their sorrows.
Never will I offer their offerings of blood.
Never will I take their name upon my lips.

R/. Preserve me, God, I take refuge in you.

O Lord, it is you who are my portion and cup;
it is you yourself who are my prize.
The lot marked out for me is my delight:
welcome indeed the heritage that falls to me!

R/. Preserve me, God, I take refuge in you.

I will bless the Lord who gives me counsel,
who even at night directs my heart.
I keep the Lord ever in my sight:
since he is at my right hand, I shall stand firm.

Claretian Reading

Autobiography

358. I see that we live in a century that not only adores the golden calf as did the Hebrews but also worships gold so avidly that it has pulled down the most generous of all virtues from their sacred pedestals. I have seen this era as one in which selfishness has made men forget their most sacred duties to their neighbours and brothers – for all of us are images of God, children of God, redeemed by the Precious Blood of Jesus Christ, and destined for heaven.

359. I believed that this dreadful giant, which worldlings call all-powerful, had to be confronted with the holy virtue of poverty. So, wherever I encountered greed, I countered it with poverty. I had nothing, wanted nothing, and refused everything. I was content with the clothes I had on and the food that was set before me. I carried all I had in a bandanna. The contents of my luggage were a full-year breviary, a sheaf of sermons, a pair of socks, and an extra shirt – nothing more.

Commentary

It is striking that, at the end of his life, after having lived an intense missionary life in the Canary Islands, Cuba, Madrid, Paris and Rome, Claret remembered the poverty of his itinerant life when he was walking through Catalonia as an apostolic missionary. Fr. Clotet tells about it in his biography of the Saint:

“The Spanish consul in Perpignan was not a friend of cassocks, and the Spanish ambassador in Paris, who was Mr. Olózaga, had become known for his ideas and was also a personal enemy of the virtuous archbishop. This was at the end of July 1870. What distressed us most was having to communicate the news to him, as we were afraid to give him bad news, but in order to spare him further trouble, it was necessary to warn him.

We told him, in fact, that we had not entirely lost hope of obtaining permission for him to stay with us: a hope that was later frustrated, because some good friends, aware of the

government's dispositions, warned our Father Superior General that it was convenient for Monsignor Claret to leave Prades soon and secretly, because they were going to put him in prison.

The superior of the minor seminary, with the approval and agreement of the bishop of Perpignan, had already sent a professor to the Reverend Father Prior of the monastery of Fontfroide to announce that the man of God was going there, also informing our most reverend Father General. This happened on the 5th of August. When the Archbishop received the sad news, he said with great resignation: *Blessed be God; praise be to God.* Then he made his confession and prepared to leave. As everything should be done in secret, nothing was said to the novitiate. *What a sad news - said a Father to his Excellency - the young people would have if they knew what was going on! Blessed be God! - he replied; I thought so; at least I had the pleasure of seeing you.*

The Servant of God did not make the slightest comment, since he had been asked to leave dressed as a simple priest. When Father Econome prepared the night bag for his trip, his Excellency said to him: *Put only two pairs of socks, a shirt and some handkerchiefs, which was enough for me in Catalonia when I went to the missions.*

These words seem to echo the recommendations that Jesus gives his disciples when he sends them to announce the Kingdom of God and to heal the sick. Claret is aware that they have always accompanied him. In the letter he wrote from Rome to his collaborator Paladio Currius on October 2, 1869, he said: *It seems to*

me that I have already fulfilled my mission: in Paris and in Rome I have preached the law of God. In Paris, as in the capital of the world, and in Rome, the capital of Catholicism. I have done so in word and in writing. I have observed holy poverty (EC, II, p. 1423). Observing holy poverty for Claret is much more than living an austere life. It means putting all his trust in God and letting himself be guided by Him.

The pandemic that we are suffering obliges us to rethink our style of life. Do we need so many things to live and to announce? Are we not contributing more than we should to the deterioration of our planet? How do the voices of those who have lost everything or are dragging a miserable life resound in us? What are we doing to put into practice the orientations that Pope Francis has just offered us in the encyclical *Fratelli tutti*?

Forgiveness prayers

Trusting in the mercy of our heavenly Father, who wants us to be poor missionaries, we say

R/. Lord, forgive us.

For not living with joy that You are our treasure.

For surrounding us with idols that steal our hearts.

For living as if the poor did not exist.

For passing by the people in need.

For not daring to denounce injustice.

For having become accustomed to an affluent life.

For worrying too much about our safety.

For trusting the media more than your Word.

For not living poverty with gratitude and joy.

Closing Prayer

We thank You, Father,
for the life of Saint Anthony Mary Claret,
worn out like a candle burning to the end
so that all your sons and daughters
may know, love, serve and praise You.

We ask that the memory
of the 150th anniversary of his death
may rekindle in all of us
the desire to continue to seek your greatest glory
and the good of our brothers and sisters
from all over the world.

May the Immaculate Heart of our Mother Mary
put in our lives tenderness and compassion
to always be credible witnesses and messengers
of the joy of the Gospel.

Amen.

Ending Song (*Spiritual Directory, Song 284, p. 331-333*)

Jesus passed along your path one morning
And seeing you, He called you by your name
He would make you a witness of His Kingdom
You would bring the Good News throughout His reign
And you set out traversing seas and mountains
To all you preached the message of the Lord
You reached the farthest islands and their peoples
Showing them God's forgiveness and His love.

*Claret, you are a pilgrim
You are a sower
The seed you scatter is the Good News
You reached all colors and races
There's only one Father, only one Lord
Claret, through your example
We see our mission
We must be witnesses, we must bring hope
We want to follow your footsteps
And tell the people that God is love.*

*A candle that burns
until it dies*

2

Introduction

We never stop celebrating. Each day, from the first moment of awakening, brings with it a reason for celebration and gratitude to our Creator and Father. Today we celebrate together with joy because, as the proverb says, "a shared joy is a double joy, a shared sorrow is a half sorrow". The celebration of the 150th anniversary of Fr. Claret's death is a soothing breeze that, in the strength of shared prayer, gives us encouragement to continue our mission.

In the midst of the persistent circumstances of the pandemic, it keeps our hope renewed as we feel anointed and urged by the spirit that animated St. Anthony Mary Claret. Today our prayer highlights a particular aspect of gratitude to the Lord for the living missionary flame that burned in the soul of our Founder until he was consumed. In these difficult moments of insecurity and bewilderment, because of the pandemic that does not cease, we ask the intercession of Fr. Claret to continue to be lights that illuminate the problems,

give warmth of comfort and wear out until they are extinguished by love.

Song (*Spiritual Directory*, Song 286, p. 334-335)

The love of Christ impels us as it did you
Lead us on, Father Claret.
Here we are!
Send us, Father, to our mission,
Faithful to Jesus,
Faithful to his call.

Opening Prayer

God and Father,
we humbly beg You,
let us be a burning flame until the end
as was Saint Anthony Mary Claret.

May we shine like a fire in the night,
that we flash like a beacon in the storm,
as light born at the stake of God,
and illuminates, radiates and warms to the end.
That like a burning bush
let's not become extinct or shut down,
because there are those who wait,
longing, the light of life
in which Another has ignited us.

May we all love with ardor
with unique and different love;

that we put our voice and our strength
in proclaiming the Good News;
that we wear ourselves out
like the light of the apostles
who give themselves and resist the storm.

Until the last day,
Until the last flash,
until the last breath.

In the name of Him
who passed through the world
lighting and loving first.

Bible reading

Mt 5:13-16

“You are the salt of the earth. But if salt loses its taste, with what can it be seasoned? It is no longer good for anything but to be thrown out and trampled underfoot. You are the light of the world. A city set on a mountain cannot be hidden. Nor do they light a lamp and then put it under a bushel basket; it is set on a lampstand, where it gives light to all in the house. Just so, your light must shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your heavenly Father.”

Psalm 36

If you trust in the Lord and do good,
then you will live in the land and be secure.
If you find your delight in the Lord,
he will grant your heart's desire.

R/. The righteous will see the salvation of God.

Commit your life to the Lord,
trust in him and he will act,
so that your justice breaks forth like the light,
your cause like the noon-day sun.

R/. The righteous will see the salvation of God.

Be still before the Lord and wait in patience;
do not fret at the man who prospers;
a man who makes evil plots
to bring down the needy and the poor.

R/. The righteous will see the salvation of God.

Claretian reading

There is a surprising phrase of Fr. Claret written in his own handwriting precisely on May 26th of the same year of his death (1870). It reflects in a metaphorical and synthetic way his inner disposition, already destined to the final outcome: *I must be like a candle that burns, wastes the wax and shines until it dies*. This last

Claretian expression gathers the essences of his spiritual experience at the end of his life and today it gives us the opportunity to pray. Our Founder always kept alive his consciousness of irradiation while his breath lasted.

Commentary

No one eats salt alone. Salt is an indispensable culinary ingredient that needs to be diluted with other foods to preserve them and enrich their taste. Light does not illuminate itself, but illuminates the surrounding reality. A lamp is not placed on the candlestick to be exhibited, but above all to give light to others.

Jesus does not tell us to strive to become light, but to know that we are already light. The candle, while lit, should not strive for light, because it already has it. Light is its natural gift. With this simile, the Master indicates that we do not have to conquer the presence of God in us. We already have it. We are inhabited by His light. It is up to us to become aware of it and to radiate it without darkening or extinguishing it. St. Anthony Mary Claret is our model to follow.

Let us learn the humility of salt and light. To be useful, they must undergo a process of deterioration and wear. Salt, in order to give flavour, dissolves; light, in keeping alive, consumes its energy. As followers of Jesus, as sons of Fr. Claret, let us not seek to attract attention to

ourselves. Let us be mirrors that reflect the true Source of the Light that never goes out, which is God, and of the Life that overcomes death, which is Christ.

Salt and light are not meant to perpetuate themselves, but to blend and melt. Like Claret, we are not to live for ourselves, but for Him who died and rose for us. And, united to Him, we must attract many to Him who is the Way, the Truth and the Life. We do not attract towards ourselves. At any price, which will never be less than the offering of our own life. So, it was with Fr. Claret, who went through the cross, through the logic of the Paschal Mystery, which is a clear sign of our missionary life.

Let us keep alive the memory of our Founder. Not to remain anchored in the past, for which we must always be grateful; but to keep the candle burning towards the future that announces relentlessly the arrival of the Kingdom. May our personal and community life be "luminous and tasty," especially in this pandemic scenario that fills us with uncertainty, but also opens up a unique opportunity to live our vocation with creative dedication and unwavering hope.

Prayers of petition

Animated by the Spirit of Jesus, we present to God the Father our prayers for the Church and the world.

R/. Lord, give us a new heart.

For the Church, especially for the persecuted Church, that it may always be attentive and solicitous in the evangelization of peoples. Let us pray to the Lord.

R/. Lord, give us a new heart.

For our Congregation, so that it may be very close to those who suffer, cry, are alone, are afflicted, are living the effects of the pandemic and need a word of encouragement and consolation. Let us pray to the Lord.

R/. Lord, give us a new heart.

For the Church and our Congregation, that they may be blessed with new missionary vocations that show your light, and be witnesses, by their words and their lives, of your love and your goodness to all people. Let us pray to the Lord.

R/. Lord, give us a new heart.

For this difficult hour of pandemic that our world is going through, that we may know how to face the challenges of reality with solidarity and courage, and work together, driven by your love. Let us pray to the Lord.

R/. Lord, give us a new heart.

For all of us, so that we may be kindled like Fr. Claret in the fire of your Spirit and become suitable missionaries to make your Kingdom present. Let us pray to the Lord.

R/. Lord, give us a new heart.

Closing Prayer

As on the first day (pages10-11).

Ending song

Your love aimed to spread the gospel of the Kingdom
Your life was filled with Jesus and His word
And you brought him to villages and peoples
Just like Mary, her son gave to the world
We, too, will follow closely your example
The new Claretian family in Christ
We wish to be a beacon in the darkness
And to all bring the hope of a new life.

Claret, you are a pilgrim

You are a sower

The seed you scatter is the Good News

You reached all colors and races

There's only one Father, only one Lord

Claret, through your example

We see our mission

We must be witnesses, we must bring hope

We want to follow your footsteps

And tell the people that God is love.

*I have fulfilled
my mission*

3

Introduction

Today we finish the triduum of preparation for the celebration of the 150th anniversary of the death of our Holy Father Founder. In this prayer we want to remember once again and give thanks for this gift that God has given us with the life and mission of Claret. He was and continues to be the voice of the Word that invites us, in our turn, to be the continuators of that voice. Our world needs a word of hope in the midst of difficulties, to which the pandemic of the COVID-19 has been added in these last months. Seduced by the Word, like Claret, we feel sent to continue the cry of the Apostle.

Song

(Spiritual Directory, Song 287, p. 335)

We are, Father Claret,
Echo of your inspired word, born of your vision.
Increase the number of our ranks,
Increase our faith and love,
Inspire us and make us throw the nets
In the name of Jesus, the Fisherman.

Opening Prayer

Lord, our God, in a world saturated with noises and words, may we know, like Claret, how to distinguish Yours and to announce it in time and out of time; and that at the end of our life we may be able to say with the words of Your Son and of Claret, that we have fulfilled the mission You entrusted to us. Through the same Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Bible Reading

2 Tim 4:1-8

"I charge you in the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, who will judge the living and the dead, and by his appearing and his kingly power: proclaim the word; be persistent whether it is convenient or inconvenient; convince, reprimand, encourage through all patience and teaching. For the time will come when people will not tolerate sound doctrine but, following their own desires and insatiable curiosity, will accumulate teachers and will stop listening to the truth and will be diverted to myths. But you, be self-possessed in all circumstances; put up with hardship; perform the work of an evangelist; fulfill your ministry. For I am already being poured out like a libation, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have competed well; I have finished the race; I have kept the faith. From now on the crown of righteousness awaits me, which the Lord, the just judge, will award to me on that day, and not only to me, but to all who have longed for his appearance."

Psalm 23

R/. The Lord is my shepherd; lack nothing.

He guides me along the right paths for his name's sake.
He makes me lie down in green pastures,
he leads me beside quiet waters,
he refreshes my soul.

R/. The Lord is my shepherd; lack nothing.

Even though I walk through the darkest valley,
I will fear no evil, for you are with me;
your rod and your staff, they comfort me.

R/. The Lord is my shepherd; lack nothing.

You prepare a table before me
in the presence of my enemies.
You anoint my head with oil;
my cup overflows.

R/. The Lord is my shepherd; lack nothing.

Surely your goodness and love will follow me
all the days of my life,
and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever.

Claretian reading

*Claret's letter to his friend D. Paladio Currius, from
Rome, on October 2, 1869:*

"I have suffered more than I usually do. I feel like dying...
I think I've accomplished my mission. In Paris, in Rome I
have preached the law of God: in Paris as the capital of

the world and in Rome as the capital of Catholicism; I have done so in word and in writing. I have observed holy poverty..." (EC II, 1423).

Commentary

The parallelism between this text of Claret and the words of Paul to Timothy is striking. Ultimately, both are an echo of the exclamation of Christ on the Cross: *All is accomplished* (Jn 19:30). Just a year before he died, Claret was able to say: *I have fulfilled my mission*.

Claret himself acknowledges that *from a very young age* he had heard the Word of God and it had remained deep within him. It was a seed in fertile soil, but asleep as in winter; it emerged in spring when nobody expected. That's why, when he went into crisis in Barcelona, the memory of a phrase came to his mind that he had neither read nor heard: *What does it profit a man if he gains the whole world and loses his life?* (Mt 16:26). We hear the words of Isaiah: *As the rain and the snow fall from the sky, and return there only after they have soaked the earth, fertilized it and made it germinate... so shall be the word that goes out from my mouth: it shall not return to me empty, but it shall accomplish my will, and it shall carry out my charge* (Is 55:10-11).

Claret's life was a complex land. For a time, it seemed that the seed had fallen by the wayside, or on stony ground, or among thistles, but it was not true. At the bottom, there was good soil that eventually prevailed (cf. Mt 13:3-8). The word recalled in Barcelona ended up transforming his horizon and his dreams. Not to invest one's life in seeking to gain a successful future in the textile world, but to lose it by offering it. A new path was opened to him, that of Jesus, evangelizer of the Word of the Father.

The biblical formation that Bishop Corcuera gave to his seminarians marked Claret's life forever: to know the Word, to live it and to announce it. It was the Word that made him leave Sallent to go to Rome, to travel around Catalonia and the Canary Islands. This is how he wrote to Bishop Casadevall from Las Palmas de Gran Canaria: *I go alone like a desperate person, preaching and confessing day and night* (EC I, 280). Once again, we find the Pauline echo here: *To proclaim the Gospel is not for me a reason for glory; it is an obligation that I have, and woe to me if I do not announce it!* (1 Cor 9:16).

In Cuba, for announcing the Gospel in the midst of circumstances of injustice and oppression, he almost lost his physical life; it is enough to remember the attack in Holguin. And in the Madrid period, he was even losing his fame and honour because of the continuous defamations that were levied against him. Embraced by

the Word, he never defended himself, following the example of the Master: *Jesus was silent* (Mt 26:63). And he even discovered that by keeping silent he won: *If my enemies knew what good they were doing me by their slander, they would certainly not do it* (PIV, s.55). At the climax of his death, Claret realized that having given everything, the time was coming to win everything definitively.

Let us thank God for the double inheritance received: the Word of God and the example of Claret. The celebration of the 150 years of his full encounter with Christ, the Word, is the opportunity to ask ourselves: What place does the Word occupy in our life? Is it indeed the light that illuminates our existence and the spur of our missionary dedication? May the testimony of Claret's life, centered on the Word, be our continuous companion on the journey.

Prayers of Thanksgiving

Thank You, Father, because in one word, your Son, You have told us everything. With it you have planted the seeds of joy and hope for the world from the beginning of time until the end of time.

R/. We thank You, Lord.

Thank you, Lord, for Mary, our Mother, who kept your Word in her heart, gave it to us in Bethlehem and

entrusted us to her motherly care at the Hour of the Cross. And because she continues to form new evangelizers in the Forge of her Heart.

R/. We thank You, Lord.

Thank you, Lord, for Claret, who announced your Word in time and out of time, and to all kinds of people: from kings to slaves, from children to the elderly, and in diverse cultures and worlds. And who continues to announce it to us with his memory, his writings and his intercession.

R/. We thank You, Lord.

Thank you, Lord, for so many Claretian missionaries who, throughout these 171 years of history, have been the light of your Word with their martyrdom, with their preaching in the various ministries, and with so much effective and silent presence in our communities.

R/. We thank You, Lord.

Thank you, Lord, for so many sisters and brothers in our world, the saints next door, who do not preach with words, but with the giving of their lives, in the midst of the joys and sufferings of every day.

R/. We thank You, Lord.

Closing Prayer

As on the first day (pages10-11).

Song *(Spiritual Directory, Song 281, p. 326-327)*

O Virgin and Mother of God,
I surrender my soul to you as your son.
For the honour and glory of your purity
I offer you my soul and body,
My mind and senses
And entreat you to obtain
The grace to take me from sin. Amen.
Mother, behold your son.
Mother, behold your son.
Mother, behold your son.
I have placed my confidence in you
And shall never be confounded. Amen.
Never confounded.
Never. Amen. Never. Amen.



CLARETIAN MISSIONARIES
SONS OF THE IMMACULATE HEART OF MARY