

Venerable JOSÉ MARÍA GARCÍA LAHIGUERA

Archbishop Emeritus of Valencia
Founder of the
HH Oblate Sisters of Christ Priest

SACERDOS ET HOSTIA

«These words have been my life on earth
and I hope they will be my glory in heaven»

To report received graces or to deliver donations:

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Prayer

For private devotion

Holy Father, source of all holiness, who hast deigned to confer your faithful son José Maria the fullness of priesthood, thus identifying him with Jesus Christ, Eternal High Priest: We humbly pray now you grant us the grace we plead, trusting in his intercession, so that one day the Church, which he loved and served with the total offering of his life, will raise him to the honors of the altars, to the glory of your name. Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

(Our Father, Hail Mary, Glory)

In accordance with the decree of Pope Urban VIII, in no way it is intended to prevent the judgment of the Church. This prayer does not have any purpose of public worship.

Biographical notice

José María García Lahiguera was born in Fitero (Navarra-Spain) March 9, 1903, and was baptized three days later. During his lifetime, he always wanted to follow the action of the Holy Spirit in him. When he was still young, he expressed his desire to be a priest, and at Madrid Seminar he left a durable memory of his great virtue. Ordained on May 29, 1926, he was soon called to be spiritual director of the seminarians. Full of zeal for priestly holiness, he founded in 1938 with Mother M^a del Carmen Hidalgo de Caviedes the Oblate Sisters of Christ Priest, a Congregation of contemplative life, which attained Pontifical approval in 1967. D. Jose Maria was appointed Auxiliary Bishop of Madrid in 1950; Bishop of Huelva in 1964; and Archbishop of Valencia in 1969. Promoter of the Feast of Christ the Eternal High Priest, he was happy to see this celebration introduced in the liturgical calendar of Spain in 1973. He died in Madrid, on July 14, 1989, with fame of holiness. His body rests in the Motherhouse chapel of the Oblate Sisters of Christ Priest. Pope Benedict XVI declared him «Venerable» on June 27, 2011.

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Testimonies



Faro de Cullera,
Valencia, 1971

Don José Maria was a mystic. He always looked attentive to God; God's presence was palpable in him. And as he was a real mystic, he loved God and loved people. This was noticeable a mile away. The first impression you had when you approached him was you were loved. Don José Maria was not a man of rivalries for leadership or tensions or clashes or disputes. His great leader was love. Did not the Lord examine Peter on this subject of love before entrusting him the government of his Church? We all know from experience that it is easier to govern by loving rather than by imposing one's will. This is what really convinces. The government within the Church is similar to the government of a father within his own family. Jose Maria governed this way. With love —something that we have almost forgotten—, many more problems may be solved rather than with discussions, confrontations and desires of leadership. These words of mine are enough to show my admiration toward the one who has been —in my view— a great saint and who, from now, will intercede effectively for us before the Lord.

Mmgr. José Gea Escolano.

Newsletter
On the life and holiness fame of
Venerable José María García Lahiguera, Archbishop

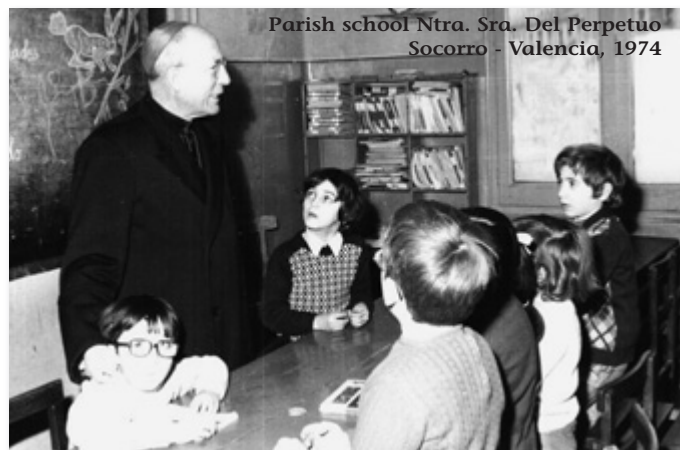
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Venerable José María García Lahiguera

LET'S BELIEVE IN LOVE

• I make my own the words of the first letter of St. John: *My little children, I am writing this to you that you may not sin. But if anyone does sin –we are like that–, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous one (1Jn 2,1). And because he is righteous, he must be merciful. He –that Advocate with the Father– is the expiation for our sins, and not for ours only, but for those of the whole world (1Jn 2,2) The problem of our sins, our infidelities, of all this vain life, of all that wasted time... everything, everything is a question of love: love that compensates, love that repairs; merciful, infinite, boundless love. But always on the condition that we believe in love (Cf. 1Jn 4,16).*



Parish school Ntra. Sra. Del Perpetuo Socorro - Valencia, 1974

• Sin, my children, does not make God unhappy: it makes the man who commits it miserable. And when God sees this misery, his heart is touched. It seems as if the Lord had lost his own common sense. He, who has infinite knowledge, who is Wisdom, he the Omniscient... however, he would fail in a science: mathematics. He does not calculate. He does not analyze either love or sin. There is something about him that makes him lose –we would say– the notion of things. He only knows about love and lack of love. –«This person has sworn, has killed, has stolen...» The key point for him is: –«He does not love me.» –«He is not humble ...» –«He does not love me». God asks from me only love, because it is the single currency proportionate to his gift (José María García Lahiguera, *Retreats*).



El Terrón, Huelva. 1967

We not only must believe that God is Father —we do believe this— but feel it, live it inwardly. From eternity, he loves me; during my life here on earth, he loves me; and in the Hereafter (we hope that we will be saved), he will love us forever. And he will love us not as God-Immense-Majesty, not as an infinite being, not as... Plus as all that, he will love us as a Father. Because certainly God is that majesty, that infinity, that fullness... Yes, all that. But first and above all, he is my Father. I have by grace a «*sharing in the divine nature*» (cf. 2P 1,4). Then, I am really a son of God. I am, therefore, a brother of Christ. He is the Elder Brother of the great family of the redeemed. Every-one then, with him and through him and in him, can and must call God «Our Father» just as Christ himself taught us many a time. (José María García Lahiguera, *Homilies*).



Valencia, 1969

Reported graces

• I want to thank D. José Maria for hearing my prayers. The girlfriend of my son entered for some Lifeguard tests, and while training, she had a hamstring injury in one leg. The day came for examination and her leg had not healed up. I did the novena with faith and asked D. José Maria to help her; and so it happened: she passed the tests and has been working during the summer at the pool. Don Jose Maria, I hope you will go on protecting this family always.

M^{ra} Concepción Bozal Fitero



Fitero, Navarra. 1970

• I was looking for a job, whatever it was. I had been working for eight years as administrative assistant, but once you have reached the age of 35 or older, it becomes increasingly difficult to find another similar job. However, I will not complain: thanks to the intervention of Monsignor José Maria, I have been working for five years on a cleaning company, full-time. When I was 12, I had the great honor to meet D. José Maria, then Archbishop of Valencia, in his visit to the school where I was studying. I remember Monsignor going up the stairs and waving to us and smiling as he passed, with a soft and affectionate look in his eyes. I'll never forget it. So it was my great surprise –a day at home, while doing the cleaning– when I found on my bedside table the newsletter of his life and his fame of holiness. I did not remember –nor do I remember now– how this Newsletter came to my hands. I turn to him for protection when I do not know what to do and where to go. I asked for work, and he helped me to find it; I asked for my son Hector to prepare to get the driver's license, and in the end he got it: I needed to tell this and, insofar as I can, I want to aid in the Cause of Canonization. Yours sincerely.

M^{ra} Isabel Castelló Valencia.