



## Venerable JOSÉ MARÍA GARCÍA LAHIGUERA

Archbishop Emeritus of Valencia  
Founder of the  
Oblate Sisters of Christ the 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:

HH. Oblatas de Cristo Sacerdote  
General Aranaz, 22—28027 MADRID  
www.oblatasdecristosacerdote.com

## 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 for you to 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<sup>a</sup> 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.

## Acknowledgements

**Barcelona:** Carmen Sagarra - M<sup>a</sup> Lourdes Tristany. **Burgos:** Eloisa Balbas. **Cáceres:** M<sup>a</sup> Pilar Gómez Moreno (Plasencia). **Ciudad Real:** M<sup>a</sup> Jesús Palomo. **Huelva:** Natalia. **Madrid:** Araceli Martín - Juan Calvo Izquierdo - Purificación Fernández Rojo - M<sup>a</sup> Socorro Calvo Serraller - África Álvarez - Juan Carlos García - Familia Martínez de la Riva - Purificación Montero Conde - Concepción Calvo Martínez - Marta - Pilar (Alcalá de Henares) - Antonio Iniesto (Majadahonda) - Aurelia Álvarez Espinosa - Marcelo Gómez - Carmen Bougil - M<sup>a</sup> Dolores Agreda Prieto - Familia Vicente-Tutor García - Carlos Hurtado de Mendoza - Sacerdotes de la Congregación de San Pedro. **Málaga:** Josefa Ruiz. **Navarra:** Manuel Martín (Corella). **Sevilla:** Dominga Martín Gómez. **Valencia:** Margarita Vergara Monasor. **Vizcaya:** MM. Dominicas (Lekeitio) - MM. Clarisas (Guernica).

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

## Testimonies

Don José Maria was an exemplary priest, a blessed man, an educator of many generations of priests, regarded as a saint by everyone during his lifetime and after his departure to the Father's house. He lived 86 years deeply marked by divine grace. So he is remembered in Madrid, Huelva and Valencia for his passion for the priesthood and the consecrated life, as a great master of the spiritual life, which has marked several generations among us, and to whom the spiritual renewal of the Spanish diocesan clergy owes so much.



Christ the Priest Mass.  
Motherhouse of the Congregation.  
Madrid- 1989

Don José Maria aimed for holiness in all things, but he also lived with frequent struggles, feeling the need for conversion, surmounted by the immense graces received in baptism, in his priestly and episcopal consecration, in daily prayer or Eucharist; and –of course!– in the difficulties in his role of guidance pastor, who is a father, but who must also encourage, correct, direct, cheer and also be rejected. During his long illness he was filled with love for the Virgin and Our Lord in the Holy Sacrament of the altar. "Jesus –he said–, my brother, my friend, my alter ego." "I want to die of God". What did he mean? Something to the affect of not being able to love more, desiring to break our human limits to fully enjoy communion with Him, belonging entirely to Him.

We pray God for his cause may advance with alacrity, so that the whole Church may venerate him as a saint and benefit from his intercession and example; and so that we may further perceive the gaze of the Good Shepherd that reveals the tenderness and compassion of God.

Mons. Rafael Zornoza

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# Venerable José María García Lahiguera

EL ARZOBISPO DE VALENCIA

Valencia, 26 IX-74

## I have much faith in the prayers of children

Ala miña Gema Silla Hernández

Letter to a little girl,  
Gema Silla Hernández  
Valencia, September 26, 1974

Most beloved child, I received your letter and as you asked me to answer, so I do.

Thank you for all you told me and I beg you to help me with your prayers. Bishops have many problems and we need others to pray for us. I have much faith in the prayers of children. Therefore I trust in your prayers, my good Gema.

Please excuse my bad writing I have been sick for over seven months now and this is the first time that I am hand writing a letter since February when I became ill. The other letters were typewritten.

Dear child, always be good and have a great love for the Blessed Virgin Mary. For you, your parents and siblings, if you have any, a great blessing from the bishop, friend of the children.

Jose M<sup>a</sup>

José M<sup>a</sup>

Valencia, 1974



If the greatest gift God gave to the world was his Son, who is God, and who is essentially holiness, I wonder: after this one, would not be saints the best gift the Lord grants to the world? The saint is the most exquisite work of that divine love, the jewel of humanity. And so, after the precious and unique gift of his Son, the saints go threading the rosary of God's gifts to the world, led by the Blessed Virgin Mary.



Gypsy quarter  
Valencia, 1970



## Saints are the best gift

We must recognize that we are sinners, and must never forget it. Saints are not those who never fell, but those who always rose. The disappointment in the falls, among many other things, deep down is self-love. And who knows if precisely those falls will be the best medicine against the disease of self-love? From this reality, the Lord determined to make the Redemption. He did not determine the annihilation as punishment for the sins of humanity. No! Just the opposite. There is always the love of the Lord.

What does the prodigal son mean? What does the lost sheep mean? What does the Good Shepherd mean? It is a true faith: God wants us all to be saved. We are all sinners, we have all been redeemed. Our conversion must be a return to love. Do not forget the greatest commandment: "Thou shalt love the Lord your God" because you pay love with love. We must foment those feelings of conversion, of sorrow for sins; we must always ask for forgiveness... but always, always love. Love that weeps at sin; love that trusts in forgiveness; love that, at the end of the day, sanctifies.

(Retiros, 1970)



## Reported graces

I am writing these letters to tell how my friend Laura has obtained a teaching position in a public school. Laura was born on July 14, the date of the decease of D. José María. Noticing the coincidence of dates and having a great devotion to him since I've known about him, I entrusted my friend to his intercession for which she passed the exam for the position. From here I thank God and José María for his intercession in the matter.

Pilar, Alcalá de Henares



Huelva, 1967

A long time ago I wrote asking if you would send me a picture and a relic of Venerable Jose Maria Garcia Lahiguera requesting prayers for his intercession in support of my mother. There had been detected some cancerous polyps in her intestines. A few days later, I received your letter with the stamp and the relic. That same day we began a novena praying for the health of my mother. After praying she would put the venerable relic over the place of her wound. By the end of the novena, we returned to the doctor and thanks be to God the polyps did not reappear. Recently we went to see the doctor again, and everything is still all right! I want to thank him very much for it.

A. Matos, La Pampa, R. Argentina

I thank Father José M<sup>a</sup>, because due to his intercession I did not have to be operated on to remove a lump from behind my ear. When I was being prepared for the surgery, they saw that it was gone. Only fifteen days had gone by from when they had seen it. Thank you, Father!!

M<sup>a</sup> A. G<sup>a</sup> Tenorio, La Puebla de Montalbán, Toledo