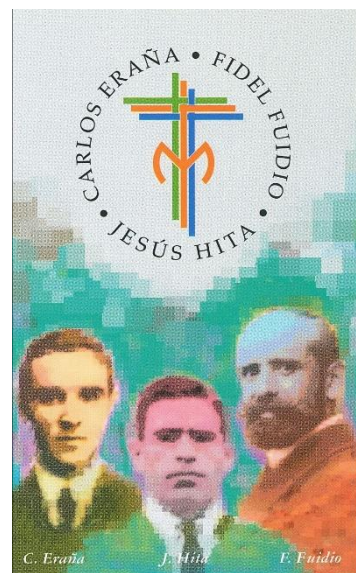


Martyrs of Ciudad Real, educators of youth

The former Marianist students of Ciudad Real have a very positive memory of the Marianist martyrs Bro. Carlos Eraña, Bro. Fidel Fuidio and Bro. Jesús Hita. All three have left the memory of excellent religious, good men and great educators of young people.

The Marianist Province of Spain had assumed the direction of the Instituto Popular de la Inmaculada Concepción, located in Ciudad Real. Monsignor Irastorza, bishop of the city, called the Marianists to direct this diocesan school in 1916. La Popular was a free charitable school of primary education and vocational training for the children of workers. The Provincial Superiors sent Bro. Carlos as principal because of his great qualities as an educator. Bro. Carlos was patient, kind, respectful and gentle in his human treatment.



He soon won the affection and sympathy of the students, their families and even the civil and academic authorities of the city. Every morning he would meet the students at the school gate to greet them personally. In addition to the administrative and teaching duties, because they did not have a Marianist priest in the community, Bro. Carlos directed the religious activities with the students: praying the rosary, the Angelus, first communion catechesis... He said: "My jacket is too short to be a cassock."

When the Republican rulers began to harass Catholic schools, with the Law of Religious Faiths and Congregations of Religious, enacted in June 1933, the Provincial Superiors, in September of that year, sent Bro. Fidel Fuidio to the Colegio Nuestra Señora del Prado, which had been inaugurated in Ciudad Real in the 1928-1929 academic year. Bro. Fidel was not recognized as a Marianist religious in the city. He came from the Colegio del Pilar in Madrid, where he had taught the older students for twenty years. Bro. Fidel had a PhD in Historical Sciences from the University of Madrid, with a thesis in archeology. He was a pioneer in archeology and paleontology, two nascent sciences in Spain. With an extroverted, friendly and cheerful character, he was very innovative in his classes. He knew how to transmit to his students his enthusiasm for archeology and with them, he excavated in the surroundings of Madrid and Ciudad Real. Bro. Fidel understood school education as an evangelizing mission among young

people. He used to repeat: "The happiest moment of the day is when I open the classroom door and greet my students."



Bro. Jesús Hita had a very contrary character: introverted, reflective, not at ease in human relationships; but he was deeply religious, serious and with an enormous willpower. An historian like Bro. Fidel, Bro. Jesús was studious, intelligent and meticulously prepared his classes.

In September 1932 he was sent to the Colegio de Nuestra Señora del Prado, Ciudad Real, to avoid being recognized as a Marianist by the political and academic authorities. Once again, he was totally dedicated to his teaching work, very happy with his school activity and with the students. A superior reported, prophetically; "Bro. Jesus will give life beyond what is expected of him, and he will give it generously." The superior referred to the total dedication of the young Marianist in the teaching task; but God not only asks us to consecrate our work to him, but also our whole life and person. The former students of Bro. Jesus remember him for his kindness, deep religious spirit and for being a methodical and rigorous teacher in his explanations during history classes.