

Chapter 12: Quest to San Agustin Church, Intramuros, Manila

The researchers visited San Agustin Church, in Intramuros, Manila on July 7, 2023 through the help of our research team Mr. Xavier Apostol. Fr. Franz Joseph Aquino, Dr. Sasithara Moreno, Mr. Regil Dela Cruz, Prof. Danilo Reyes, Mr. Judel Sam Agustin, and Mr. Winnard Joson had a special meeting with Fr. Ricky Villar OSA (Director of the Museo de San Agustin). Fr. Ricky gave the history of Christianization of the Philippines with records of Nuestra Senora De Las Saleras and the past parish priests.

The first parish priest of Nuestra Senora De Las Saleras was not listed in the book of the Augustinians. According to the Augustinian records, Fr. Jose Tombo (born 1827 in Spain – died May 12, 1865 in Manila, Philippines) was a native of Sta. Maria de Touron, Pontevedra, Galicia, Spain was recognized by the church that he was the first parish priest of Paroquia de Aliaga. He served as parish priest in Aliaga, Nueva Ecija from year 1852 – 1859. Fr. Tombo also served the parish in Cabanatuan City, Nueva Ecija from year 1860 – 1864.

Later the team discovered that Don Valentin Garcino Puyat (known as Fr. Valentin Garcino Puyat) who was a Secular Priest (Filipino Priest during the Spanish time), his name was listed in the Secular Priest List in the book by Jose, *Curas de Almas: A Preliminary Listing of Parishes and Parish Priests in the 19th Century Philippines*.

Garcino Puyat, Father Don Valentin (Jose, Curas de Almas, v. 4, 142)  
Aliaga, Nueva Ecija, 1850-1851    died, 20 December 1851

We have little knowledge about Fr. Valentin Garcino Puyat. However, his name was listed with slightly different spelling such as Graciano, Payod, or Payat. As seen here in the box, he is listed as Garcino Puyat, Father Don Valentin. The research team believe that this must be his correct spelling.

*Photos: San Agustin Church (Intramuros, Manila)*



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The image of Nuestra Señora De Las Saleras in comparison from before 1968, 1968-1990s, and present image in 2024. One can't help but notice the difference in facial expression, shapes, and her features.



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Why Nuestra Senora De Las Saleras' feast day is on April 26? It is because of the influence of the Augustinian Friars' most special feast day called the Feast of Our Lady of the Good Counsel is celebrated every April 26.





## April 26 Feast Day

Augustinian Friars consider April 26 the Feast of Our Lady of Good Counsel to be a very special day. The tender image of mother and child is at one and the same time so very human and so illustrative of a deep spiritual truth. Mary, mother of her infant son, is also his first and most faithful disciple. He who is her Lord embraces her affectionately as she, his mother, receives from him words of wisdom and counsel. Its origin in the hill-town church of Genazzano, Italy, where the Augustinians have been located since the 13th Century.

Ever since her miraculous arrival in Italy, the Madonna of Genazzano has not ceased to work spiritual and physical miracles on behalf of those who devoutly commend themselves to her protection. Proof of this are the reports in the Codex of Miracles, a compendium of miraculous episodes occasioned by the intercession of Our Lady of Genazzano.



## April 26 Feast Day

There are countless instances of lame, paralytic and the blind persons who were entirely cured of their infirmities upon stepping into the chapel of Our Lady of Good Counsel. In the 110 days following the arrival of Our Lady, 161 miracles were recorded!

In addition to the impressive cures, there are reports of exorcisms, and apparitions of Our Lady to those who pray confidently to the Mother of Good Counsel, even at great distances from Genazzano.

We note the 'good counsel' of Mary in several scenes of the Gospel, especially that of Cana, when the mother of Jesus says, "Do whatever he tells you" (Jn. 2, 5). Saint Augustine reminds us that while Mary is blessed for being the mother of Jesus, she is even more blessed for being his disciple. In fact, as the first disciple of her son she presents him to us as our teacher, our way, our truth and our life - even as he was for her.



## April 26 Feast Day

Therefore, April 26 of each year  
is Aliaga Town Fiesta.