

The 19th Century Pasuquin [Ilocos Norte] and Its Pastors

ERICSON M. JOSUE¹

*“Remember your Leaders who Spoke the
Word of God to You...”* (Heb. 13:7)

Christianity is the golden diadem of all the legacies of the Spanish Friars in the Philippines, among whom are the Augustinians. Concomitant with it is the organization of towns and introduction of modest living to the locals. As part of the passing on of Faith, the *frailles* taught the natives the way to live corresponding to their identity as human individuals. Though limited by human frailty, the heritage that the Augustinians left to Filipino culture and psyche is priceless.

Historians undeniably mention that most relics of the incalculable patrimony of the Augustinians are found in the northern Philippines, in the Ilocos Region in particular. A glimpse of this heritage can be seen in the humble town of Pasuquin.

When Ilocos Norte was established by Royal Decree in 1818, Pasuquin was enlisted as one of the original towns of the province. It was formerly a *visita* (peripheral mission) of the Ministry of Bacarra (1591). The town was located about 18 kilometers north

¹ The writer is from Pasuquin, Ilocos Norte and a diocesan priest of the Diocese of Laoag. For this article, the writer is indebted to Fr. Policarpo Hernandez, OSA, Fr. Danilo Laeda and Fr. Jojo Saturnino.

of the *Cabessera* of Laoag. It had a total land area of 18,940 hectares and a terrain of mountains, hills with plain and sandy lands. Rivers and creeks also abound in the place. Pasuquin was established as a parish in 1784 and was placed under the advocacy of *Santiago el Mayor* (St. James the Greater). The parish became a part of the herd being taken care of by the bishop of the old Nueva Segovia Diocese. A solid church used to stand in the place with a measure of more than 90 meters long and 30 meters wide; almost plainly made of lime stones and bricks bound by the mixture of lime, molasses, egg yolks and juice extracted from *sablot* leaves. An old chronicle was found at the Municipal Library which says that the church was far from being tagged as a handiwork of art but it possessed a certain unique architectural beauty.² The source would further describe that the old church would remind a beholder of the Grecian Architecture. Before the earthquake of 1931 shook off its pediment, one could vividly see embossed columns of varying width and height. The chronicle said, "*The massive stones... were shaped very much like the dome of a great cathedral.*" Other edifices were also erected like the *casa parroquial*, *casa municipal* and *escuelas*. The cemetery, bridges and the grid-like streets were also among their works. All of these are the invaluable debt of the natives to the forbearers.

To have a closer view of their contributions – sacramental and structural – this study presents short biographies and works of the 19th Century Parish Priests of Pasuquin, which includes those who came from the *clerigo secular* (most probably these were natives), who had also served the parish community as *interinos* (interim parish priest) and some as *curas párrocos* (parish priests). These were the men who sacrificed in "*planting and watering*" the seed of Faith in the place. The article shows a magnified look on the accounts that led to the building and edification of Pasuquin's civilization and faith through the line of its pastors. The main sources of these data were the canonical books of the parish, which lists the curates of Pasuquin. The presentation starts from 1797 – the year when the earliest extant document in the parish was written.

² This said church is different from the small ruined church that we see today.

1. R.P. Fray Santiago Bendito, OSA (1797-1801)

Fray Santiago Bendito of the Order of St. Augustine (OSA) is believed to be the first Parish Priest of Pasuquin. He was born in 1761 in Valladolid, Spain and pronounced his vows to the Augustinian Order in the same city in 1778. He was sent to the Philippines and served in the Ilocos, particularly in the parishes of Bangui, in 1787, Sarrat and Vintar, in 1789 and Bacarra, in 1796.³

While pastor in Bacarra, Fray Bendito also took care of the believers in Pasuquin. On the first page of the oldest volume of Baptismal Books, he is mentioned as the *Prior y Ministro de Doctrina del Pueblo de Bacarra y su visita Pasuquin*⁴ (Prior and Minister of the Doctrine of the town of Bacarra and its visita Pasuquin). In a chart bearing the number of believers in 1800, he is also listed as minister of Bacarra and Pasuquin. According to the same chart, there were 3,567 inhabitants of Pasuquin in that year. Here, Fray Bendito was 37 years old.⁵ The baptismal registers from September 10, 1797 to November of 1800, were signed by him using the title *Ministro de Doctrina de este Partido de Pasuquin*. Names of other priests also found in the book of baptisms, are those of Fray Jose Nieto,⁶ with the title *Vicario de*

³ Fr. Elviro Perez Jorde, OSA, *Catálogo Bio-Bibliográfico de los Religiosos de la Provincia del Santísimo Nombre de Jesús de las Islas Filipinas desde su Fundación hasta nuestros días* (Manila: 1901), 345. Hereafter, Jorde.

⁴ Archives of the Parish of St. James the Greater (APSJG), *Libro de Bautismos* (LB), Tomo I, Folio 1.

⁵ *Número de Almas el Obispado de Nueva Segovia, Boletín Eclesiástico de Filipinas XXXIX* (January-February 1965): 178a.

⁶ In 1831, this friar submitted a report to the Governor General Pascual Enrile about the textile industry in Ilocos. He made mention of Pasuquin and said that native women were quite industrious in spinning a fine, strong and durable thread which was fitted for high quality fabrics and somehow fashionable. This industry had given benefit to the weavers of other towns. Also, the natives made a kind of grass mat from a bulrush called *Buda*. This mat was described to be soft and very good for the use of the people of the province. In the eastern mountains, there were factories of gypsum which was beneficial to people. Fine and excellent woods especially the Palo Maria were also abundant in the Pasuquin Mountains. Lime and stones were easily obtained in building houses and other buildings. Fray Nieto further said that there was no road going to Nagpartian (now Burgos) but there was a port called Dirique

este Partido de Pasuquin (parochial vicar), Fray Jose Arredondo, OSA, the secular Padre Don Juan Garcia, who was the Coadjutor since 1799, Fray Vicente Febres, OSA, another *vicario*, and Padre Don Gregorio Corpus. During his stay in Pasuquin, Fray Bendito became an *Examinor Synodal*. He died in 1801⁷ after having worked for four years as Minister of Pasuquin.

2. R.P. Fray Josef Latassa, OSA (1801-1802) Interino

Fray Josef Latassa continued the ministry began by Fray Bendito. He was born in 1767 in Mendiggoria in the Province of Navarra. He pronounced his vows to the Augustinian Order in 1789 in Valladolid.⁸

Even during the last year of his predecessor's stay, Fray Latassa had been signing the baptismal records. He assumed the job as the *Presidente Ministro de Doctrina de este Pueblo de Pasuquin* on September of 1801. Baptismal records show that there were 22 baptisms conducted during his five-month stay as *Ministro Interino*.⁹

3. R.P. Fray Alexandro Peynona, OSA (1802-1805)

Fray Alexandro Peynona became the *Ministro de Doctrina de este Pueblo de Pasuquin* on February 1802.¹⁰ In 1803, Padre Don Ygnacio Catli, who would later become parish priest, arrived and became a *Vicario de Pasuquin*. Names of other priests were

where could be found a resting warehouse for travelers. With regard to agriculture, the harvest of rice was regular, though not abundant. This was so because of the lack of proper lands for production and poor irrigation. The irrigation system was coming from the mountains which form Cape Bojeador and by way of a ditch; a torrent of water was led to their cultivated lands. This report clearly manifests the concern of the missionaries for the natives to meet the basic needs of food, shelter and clothing. (Data taken from the archives of *Museo Naval* in Madrid, Spain and provided to the writer by Fr. Policarpo Hernandez, OSA).

⁷ Jorde, 345.

⁸ Jorde, 374.

⁹ APSJG, LB, Tomo I, Folios 34-51.

¹⁰ APSJG, LB, Tomo I, Folio 51.

also found in the baptismal registers: Fray Santiago Gallo, P.D. Gregorio Corpus and P.D. Lazaro Theaño. There were 405 baptisms conducted in this period.¹¹ Fray Alexandro Peynona stayed as Minister of Pasuquin for three years.

4. R.P. Don Balthasar Duguenay, Secular (1805-1809)

Due to the scarcity of Augustinians during this period, the Captain General of the Philippines ordered that Pasuquin be temporarily turned over to the secular clergy. This would be returned when it became vacant.¹² In this situation, R.P. Don Balthasar Duguenay became the first secular parish priest administering his first baptism on September 29, 1805.¹³ He signed in the registers as *Cura propio de este pueblo de Pasuquin*. Names of other priests are found in the registers: P.D. Julian Duguenay, the coadjutor, Fray Francisco Untuñes, Fray Manuel Anse, the Minister of Lapo, Fray Andres Castaño, the Prior of Vintar and P.D. Florentino de Jesus, another *coadjutor*, the name El Bachiller D. Agustin Alvano is also found to have administered baptism.

There were 501 baptisms¹⁴ and 36 funerals since 1806.¹⁵ Nothing can be said about marriages, confirmations and funds for there are no *Libros de Casamientos*, *Confirmaciones* and *Quentas* being kept since 1797. P.D. Balthasar Duguenay had a break in his ministry, that is, the period from February to May, 1809. P.D. Manuel Ordoña, using the title *Cura Interino*, temporarily ministered the parish. Padre Balthasar resumed his ministry on June 1809 but P.D. Florentino de Jesus was signing the registers. On November 12, 1809, Padre Balthasar died at the *casa parroquial* receiving the last sacraments. Padre Florentino de Jesus buried him inside the church.¹⁶

¹¹ APSJG, LB, Tomo I, Folios 51-94.

¹² Fr. Isacio Rodriguez, OSA, *Historia de la Provincia Augustiniana del Smo. Nombre de Jesus de Filipinas*, Vol. III (Manila: 1967), 378.

¹³ APSJG, LB, Tomo I, Folio 94.

¹⁴ APSJG, LB, Tomo I, Folios 94-174.

¹⁵ APSJG, *Libro de Entierros* (LE), Tomo II, Folios 1-6 vuelto (v).

¹⁶ APSJG, LE, Tomo II, Folio 6v.

5. R.P. Don Manuel Ordoña, Secular (1809) Interino

Padre Don Manuel Ordoña temporarily managed the parish due to the absence of the parish priest. There were 32 individuals who were baptized.¹⁷

6. R.P. Don Florentino de Jesus, Secular (1809-1810) Interino

Padre Don Florentino de Jesus, the assistant priest of Padre Balthasar assumed the work as *Cura Interino*. There were about 90 baptisms conducted.¹⁸ It was during his ministry that the Most Illustrious and Most Reverend Cayetano Pallas, O.P., Bishop of Nueva Segovia inspected the Books of Baptisms and Deaths in Laoag on February 28, 1810.¹⁹ This is the first recorded episcopal inspection in the history of the parish. Padre de Jesus manned the parish for two years.

7. R.P. Don Ygnacio Catli, Secular (1810-1833)

Since 1803, Padre Ygnacio Catli had already been in Pasuquin; first as Assistant Parish Priest to Padre Balthasar Duguenay. He began his term as parish priest in 1810. During his long term, there were about 1,976 baptisms²⁰ excluding the ones conducted during the period 1821 to 1827, due to the loss of pages of the baptismal book covering this period. There were approximately 1,104 funerals from March 1819.²¹ The following priests also served as *coadjutores*; P.D. Matheo Gallardo, P.D. Domingo Austria, P.D. Juan Castillo, P.D. Cipriano Laguindanum and P.D. Gregorio Pecsun. The following priests came to administer baptisms: P.D. Juan Buenaventura and P.D. Fausto Vicente who were *coadjutores* in Bacarra. During the period from December 1830 to 1831, P.D. Santiago Puruganan served as *Cura Interino*. As to population,

¹⁷ APSJG, LB, Tomo II, Folios 153v – 160.

¹⁸ APSJG, LB, Tomo I, Folios 174 – 195v.

¹⁹ APSJG, LB, Tomo I, Folio 184.

²⁰ APSJG, LB, Tomo I, Folios 196 – 340v.

²¹ APSJG, LE, Tomo II, Folios 7-103.

it increased to 4,347 in 1831. All were natives plus four Chinese *mestizos*.²²

It was reported that on July 18, 1830 the *casa parroquial* was burned down due to a lightning spark.²³

The Parish had deposited P598.00 at the "Cathedral Bank of Vigan" from the period of 1832 to 1833.²⁴ The Bishop of Nueva Segovia, Most Rev. Francisco Alban visited and inspected the canonical books on the following dates: March 20, 1819,²⁵ December 30, 1822,²⁶ February 12, 1828,²⁷ January 18, 1831 in Vintar,²⁸ and December 31, 1832.²⁹ Padre Ygnacio Catli ended his term as Parish Priest on June 1833.³⁰ He had served for 23 years, the longest ever in the history of the parish.

8. R.P. Don Eusebio de los Reyes, Secular (1833-1835) Interino

The next *interino* is P.D. Eusebio de los Reyes. There were about 470 baptisms and 193 funerals³¹ during his stay. The Most Illustrious and Most Reverend Bishop of Nueva Segovia, Francisco Alban, O.P. visited the parish and inspected the canonical books on January 17, 1835.³² The Prelate ordered another priest, P.D. Alejandro Torres, to sign the books beginning that time. Padre Eusebio took care of the parish for two years.

²² IR, XIV: 103.

²³ Fray Jose Nieto, OSA, Description of the Towns of Ilocos Norte in 1831, *Archivo de Museo Naval*, Madrid, Spain, 717.

²⁴ IR XIV: 103.

²⁵ APSJG, LB, Tomo I, Folio 319.

²⁶ APSJG, LE, Tomo II, Folios 2, 7.

²⁷ APSJG, LE, Tomo II, Folio 44v.

²⁸ APSJG, LE, Tomo II, Folio 76.

²⁹ APSJG, LE, Tomo II, Folio 100.

³⁰ APSJG, LE, Tomo II, Folio 103.

³¹ APSJG, LE, Tomo II, Folios 103 – 126.

³² APSJG, LE, Tomo II, Folios 113 – 113v.

9. R.P. Don Alejandro Torres, Secular (1835-1839) Interino

Padre Don Alejandro Torres took on the job of ministering the parish. He had been signing the canonical books since January of 1835,³³ although Padre Eusebio de los Reyes was still in charge of the parish. He became the *cura interino* on November that same year. On December 19, 1836, Bishop Francisco Alban returned to Pasuquin for episcopal inspection.³⁴ On March 1838, the *Juez Provisor* and Vicar General ordered P.D. Marino del Castillo to sign the canonical books.³⁵ During Padre Torres' stay there were approximately 220 baptisms and 288 funerals.³⁶ Padre Alejandro Torres died on August 23, 1839. He received the last sacraments and was buried by Fray Pedro Bergier, the *Cura* of Bacarra.³⁷

10. R.P. Don Domingo de los Reyes, Secular (1839-1855) Interino

After Padre Alejandro Torres' death, Padre Domingo de los Reyes assumed the ministry. Several visitations were conducted during his term, the Most Rev. Rafael Masoliver on November 27, 1843,³⁸ Most Rev. Vicente Barreyro as Visitor and Vicar Provincial on February 17, 1845³⁹ and as Bishop of Nueva Segovia on August 28, 1849⁴⁰ and January 4, 1855.⁴¹ Also, the *Ministro Provincial* and Visitor, Fray Julian Martin on December 15, 1845.⁴² Within Padre Domingo's term, there were 499 baptisms

³³ APSJG, LE, Tomo II, Folio 113v.

³⁴ APSJG, LE, Tomo II, Folio 132.

³⁵ APSJG, LE, Tomo II, Folio 148.

³⁶ APSJG, LE, Tomo II, Folios 113v – 148.

³⁷ APSJG, LE, Tomo II, Folio 149.

³⁸ APSJG, LE, Tomo II, Folio 190.

³⁹ APSJG, LE, Tomo II, Folio 204.

⁴⁰ APSJG, LE, Tomo II, Folio 250.

⁴¹ APSJG, *Libro de Casamientos (LC)*, 1854-1870, Folio 54.

⁴² APSJG, LE, Tomo II, Folio 211v.

since January 20, 1840⁴³ and 1,626 funerals.⁴⁴ The population of Pasuquin in 1848 was 4,884 believers.⁴⁵

Padre Don Domingo de los Reyes was the last diocesan priest to serve Pasuquin before the Augustinians again took charge.

11. R.P. Fray Santiago Muñiz, OSA (1855-1856)

In 1855, the Augustinians resumed jurisdiction of Pasuquin. Fray Santiago Muñiz was appointed on March 24 of the same year to continue nurturing the Christian community of Pasuquin.⁴⁶

Fray Santiago Muñiz was born in the City of Valladolid. He was born in 1831, received the Augustinian Habit in 1846 and pronounced his vows the following year of 1847. He was a very distinguished Augustinian. Out of obedience to his superiors, he embarked for the Philippines in 1849. Fray Muñiz was ordained priest in 1853 and sent to the missions of Northern Luzon. He started his work with the Tiguians and was assigned to Pasuquin in 1855.⁴⁷

He administered his first baptism in Pasuquin on April 28, 1855.⁴⁸ There were about 317 baptisms,⁴⁹ 285 funerals⁵⁰ and 204 marriages done during his term.⁵¹ In the archives are the names of other priests: Fray Ruperto Rodriguez, the *Cura* of

⁴³ APSJG, LB, Tomo IV, Folio 2 – LB, Tomo V, Folio 16.

⁴⁴ APSJG, LE, Tomo II, Folio 150 – LE, Tomo III, Folio 31.

⁴⁵ IR XIV: 103.

⁴⁶ *Archivo de la Provincia Augustiniana de Filipinas*, Valladolid, Spain, 215/2. Hereafter, APAF.

⁴⁷ Jorde, 474 – 475.

⁴⁸ APSJG, LB, Tomo V, Folio 18.

⁴⁹ APSJG, LB, Tomo V, Folios 18 – 98v.

⁵⁰ APSJG, LE, Tomo III, Folios 31 – 61v.

⁵¹ APSJG, LC, 1854-1870, Folios 58v – 85.

Bangui and P.D. Domingo Agbayani.⁵² Fray Santiago Muñiz left Pasuquin on March, 1858 and was transferred to Sarrat. In some sources, he is identified as Ecclesiastical Governor of Nueva Segovia in 1874 and as Vicar Provincial of Ilocos Norte in 1877. Fray Muñiz died on May 11, 1900.⁵³

12. R.P. Fray Juan Martin Rojo, OSA (1858-1860)

Fray Juan Martin Rojo arrived in the Philippines in 1853.⁵⁴ He was born in 1833 in Abia de la Torre, Province of Palencia. He professed his vows in Valladolid in 1850 and after having been ordained as priest, he was sent to the Ilocos.⁵⁵

He began his pastoral work in Pasuquin on April 19, 1858.⁵⁶ There were approximately 444 baptisms,⁵⁷ 166 marriages⁵⁸ and 244 funerals⁵⁹ done during his incumbency. Other priests also conducted the sacraments for the people: Fray Santiago Muñiz, then *cura* of Sarrat, Fray Evaristo Guadalupe, Fray Jose Vasquez and Fray Rosendo Garcia Rojas, the curate of Bangui. On January 6, 1859, the Bishop-elect of Nueva Segovia, Most Rev. Francisco Miro visited the parish.⁶⁰ Fray Juan Martin Rojo served as parish priest of Pasuquin until May 1860.⁶¹ He died in 1878 in the *Pueblo* of Dingras.⁶²

⁵² He was the very priest who baptized Gregorio Aglipay y Labayan in Batac on May 9, 1860. Aglipay's baptism is registered in the *Libro de Bautismos* of Batac, Volume XII, folio 536. The transcript is in the hand of the *Archivo Diocesano de Laoag*.

⁵³ Jorde, 475.

⁵⁴ IR XVIII: 98.

⁵⁵ Jorde, 502.

⁵⁶ APAF 215/2.

⁵⁷ APSJG, LB, Tomo V, Folios 98v – 154.

⁵⁸ APSJG, LC, 1854-1870, Folios 85 – 104v.

⁵⁹ APSJG, LE, Tomo III, Folios 61v – 86v.

⁶⁰ APSJG, LB, Tomo V, Folios 118v – 119.

⁶¹ APSJG, LB, Tomo V, Folio 154.

⁶² Jorde, 502.

13. R.P. Fray Rosendo Garcia Rojas, OSA (1860-1863)

On March 31, 1860, Fray Rosendo Garcia Rojas became the next *Cura Parroco de Pasuquin*.⁶³ He was born in Soto de Aller in the Province of Oviedo in 1831. This Augustinian professed his vows on January 2, 1851. He started his work in the missions of Abra in 1857.⁶⁴

Before coming to Pasuquin as Parish Priest, Fray Rojas first served in the Parish of Bangui. He was canonically installed as Parish Priest on April 12 of the same year.⁶⁵ During his incumbency, there were 768 baptisms,⁶⁶ 96 marriages⁶⁷ and 486 funerals.⁶⁸ Other priests also administered the sacrament of baptism: Fray Juan Martin Rojo, the *Cura* of Sarrat, P.D. Mariano Nieves, *Coadjutor* of Piddig, Padre Lazaro, assistant priest in Bacarra, and P.D. Domingo Agbayani, the assistant in Laoag who signed the canonical records since March 12, 1862.⁶⁹ Fray Rosendo Garcia Rojas died on September 25, 1863, receiving the sacraments of Penance and Extremunction; no viaticum, for his infirmity did not allow him to receive it. P.D. Domingo Agbayani buried him at the *Cementerio de esta Iglesia* (Church cemetery) upon the orders of the Vicar Provincial.⁷⁰

14. P.D. Gelacio Sales, Secular (1863-1865) Interino

Padre Gelacio Sales acted as *Cura Interino* starting October 1863. There were 330 baptisms,⁷¹ 97 marriages⁷² and 298 fune-

⁶³ APAF 215/2.

⁶⁴ Jorde, 503.

⁶⁵ APAF, 258/1.

⁶⁶ APSJG, LB, Tomo V, Folios 154-149.

⁶⁷ APSJG, LC, 1854-1870, Folios 105 - 129.

⁶⁸ APSJG, LE, Tomo III, Folios 86v - 136.

⁶⁹ APSJG, LB, Tomo V, Folio 205v.

⁷⁰ APSJG, LE, Tomo III, Folio 136.

⁷¹ APSJG, LB, Tomo V, Folios 250 - 291.

⁷² APSJG, LC, 1854-1870, Folios 129v - 141v.

rals.⁷³ The following priests also came to help in the celebration of the sacraments: Fray Jose Quiles, Curate of Bacarra and P.D. Pantaleon Evangelista, the assistant of Bacarra. Padre Gelacio Sales administered the baptism of Zacarias de Luna on November 5, 1864;⁷⁴ who would later become a secular priest.⁷⁵ Padre Gelacio served the Parish of Pasuquin until March 18, 1865.⁷⁶

15. R.P. Fray Valentin Aparicio, OSA (1865-1866)

Fray Valentin Aparicio had already been in the Philippines since 1855. Before assuming the post of minister of Pasuquin, he had founded the missionary outpost of Villavieja in Abra in the year 1864.⁷⁷ Fray Aparicio was born in Carrion de los Condes in Palencia in 1836. He professed his vows to the Augustinian Order in 1853 in Valladolid.⁷⁸

Fray Valentin began his work in Pasuquin on January 30, 1865.⁷⁹ There were 279 baptisms,⁸⁰ 129 funerals⁸¹ and 42 marriages.⁸² He baptized Trinidad Ranjo Crisostomo on May 27,

⁷³ APSJG, LE, Tomo III, Folios 136 – 167.

⁷⁴ APSJG, LB, Tomo V, Folio 278.

⁷⁵ Muy Reverendo Padre Zacarias de Luna y Clariño was the son of Don Ruverto de Luna and Doña Silvina Clariño de Leon. He was originally ordained for the Diocese of Nueva Segovia and served in 1890 as a professor at the Vigan Seminary. He served as *Coadjutor* in Aparri, Cagayan in 1893 and also became *Cura Parroco* of Solana and Tuao. When the Diocese (now Archdiocese) of Tuguegarao was separated from Nueva Segovia in 1910, he became one of its pioneers. He also served as *Vicario Foraneo de Tuao*. The priest is a great granduncle of the writer.

⁷⁶ APSJG, LB, Tomo V, Folio 291.

⁷⁷ IR XVIII: 102.

⁷⁸ Jorde, 506.

⁷⁹ APAF, 215/2.

⁸⁰ APSJG, LB, Tomo V, Folios 291v – LB, Tomo VI, Folio 34v.

⁸¹ APSJG, LE, Tomo III, Folios 167 – 181.

⁸² APSJG, LC, 1854-1870, Folios 141 – 152v.

1866,⁸³ who would later become a diocesan priest.⁸⁴ The Most Rev. Juan Jose Aragones visited the parish and administered the first recorded confirmations to 1,563 individuals. P.D. Pantaleon Evangelista and P.D. Celedonio Evangelista, both assistants in Bacarra, came to administer the sacrament of baptism during this period. Fray Valentin Aparicio administered his last baptism in the parish on June 9, 1866.⁸⁵ He had served for one year and three months in Pasuquin. He died in Bantay on July 14, 1884.⁸⁶

16. R.P. Fray Casimiro Melgosa, OSA (1866-1869)

Fray Casimiro Melgosa continued the job left by Fray Valentin Aparicio. On the baptismal registers, he indicated the occupations of the parents and grandparents of the catechumen. These are the occupations of some: *hilandera* (spinner), *labrador* (farmer), *costurera* (dressmaker) etc. There were 497 baptisms⁸⁷ and 162 marriages,⁸⁸ no details about funerals can be mentioned due to the loss of the volume of funerals covering this period.

The Most Rev. Juan Jose Aragones visited the parish on March 4, 1869; he signed on the canonical books and administered the Sacrament of Confirmation.⁸⁹

⁸³ APSJG, LB, Tomo IV, Folio 39.

⁸⁴ Padre Trinidad Ranjo (Crisostomo) y Aglugub was the son of Don Severo Ranjo, once an *escribiente* of the parish and Doña Gervasia Aglugub. P. Ranjo is very well remembered as the restorer of the Catholic Faith in Pasuquin from the Aglipayan Schism. He was sent by Bishop Dennis Dougherty in 1908 to work for the revival of the faith in his hometown. He served as Parish Priest in Camalaniugan, Cagayan, Pasuquin, Ilocos Norte, Narvacan, Ilocos Sur, Tayug, Bani, and Agno, Pangasinan. He is one of the pioneer priests of the Diocese of Lingayen (now Archdiocese of Lingayen-Dagupan). He died in Agno on December 14, 1942.

⁸⁵ APSJG, LB, Tomo VI, Folio 34v.

⁸⁶ Jorde, 506.

⁸⁷ APSJG, LB, Tomo VI, Folios 34v – 137v.

⁸⁸ APSJG, LC, 1854-1870, Folios 152v – 183v.

⁸⁹ APSJG, LCon, Tomo I, Folios 21v – 31v.

Pasuquin population grew to 5,403 in 1866⁹⁰ and rose even higher to 5,416 in the following year.⁹¹ In the baptismal register dated May 15, 1868, there is mentioned the name of a Chinese, Guillermo Pascua Sui-Chanco of Chanchui, China,⁹² who was converted to Catholicism. This is a concrete and credible proof that as early as the latter half of the 19th century, there were already Chinese settlers in Pasuquin. Fray Melgosa administered his last baptism in the parish on March 13, 1869.⁹³

17. R.P. Don Ciriaco Arranz, Secular (1869-1871) Interino

The next to become a *cura interino* is Padre Ciriaco Arranz. He administered his first baptism on March 20, 1869.⁹⁴ There were 884 baptisms⁹⁵ done and 96 marriages.⁹⁶ He stayed for only two years in Pasuquin administering his last baptism on February 1, 1871.⁹⁷

18. R.P. Fray Ricardo Alonzo, OSA (1871-1873)

Fray Ricardo Alonzo arrived in Pasuquin in the year 1871.⁹⁸ He was born in 1845 at Esguellas, Valladolid. He had his profession of vows on September 6, 1863 in Valladolid.⁹⁹

Throughout his incumbency as curate of Pasuquin, there were 349 baptisms conducted.¹⁰⁰ On April 27, 1872, the Most Rev. Juan

⁹⁰ IR, XIV: 103.

⁹¹ IR, XVIII, 146.

⁹² APSJG, LB, Tomo VI, Folio 83. This Chinese convert was the stepfather of Padre Zacarias de Luna.

⁹³ APSJG, LB, Tomo VI, Folio 137v.

⁹⁴ APSJG, LB, Tomo VI, Folio 138.

⁹⁵ APSJG, LB, Tomo VI, Folio 138 – 254.

⁹⁶ APSJG, LC, 1854-1870, Folio 206.

⁹⁷ APSJG, LB, Tomo VI, Folio 254.

⁹⁸ APSJG, LB, Tomo VI, Folio 254v.

⁹⁹ Jorde, 539.

¹⁰⁰ APSJG, LB, Tomo VI, Folios 254v – LB. Tomo VII, Folio 147v.

Aragones again visited the parish and conferred the Sacrament of Confirmation to a number of individuals. Below are the names of *Cabezas de Barangay* with the corresponding number of *confirmandores* in each barangay:¹⁰¹

Cavesseria

			<i>Confirmandores</i>
1.	D. Arcadio Calina Remigio	38	<i>Confirmandores</i>
2.	D. Venancio Aguinaldo	18	"
3.	D. Paterno Ravelo	38	"
4.	D. Cesario Dacuycuy	28	"
5.	D. Modesto de Luna	32	"
6.	D. Maximo Dumlao	22	"
7.	D. Mariano de Luna	21	"
8.	D. Adriano Garduque	16	"
9.	D. Antero de Ocampo	24	"
10.	D. Valeriano Crisologo	14	"
11.	D. Silverio Ibalio	32	"
12.	D. Apolonio Aguirre	21	"
13.	D. Seginando Manrique	29	"
14.	D. Mariano Banguica	23	"
15.	D. Severo de Luna	14	"
16.	D. Agustin Aguinaldo	21	"
17.	D. Mariano Aguinaldo	36	"
18.	D. Josef Cariaga	21	"
19.	D. Tiburcio Guerrero	28	"
20.	D. Sivestre Aglugub	29	"
21.	D. Alejo Garduque	31	"
22.	D. Cirilu Dacuycuy	15	"
23.	D. Anastacio Garduque	22	"
24.	D. Guillermo Pascua	28	"
25.	D. Tomas Ibalio	44	"
26.	D. Tito Ibalio	30	"

Names of other priests are also mentioned: P. Celedonio Evangelista, P. Matias Gregorio Castro, P. Fernando Ramirez, the

¹⁰¹ APSJG, LCon, Tomo I, Folio 32 – 41v.

assistant in Bacarra, P. Mariano Madarang, P. Pantaleon Evangelista, Fray Rufino Redondo and Fray Manuel Maria del Camino, Fray Ricardo Alonzo stayed in Pasuquin for two years. He was transferred to Vintar and later, became the Rector of the Vigan Seminary in 1876. He was taken captive by the rebels in 1898.¹⁰²

19. R.P. Don Mathias Gregorio Castro, Secular (1873) Interino

Padre Mathias Gregorio Castro became the *interino* from March to June 1873. Like the earlier ministers, he also wrote the occupations of parents and grandparents in the baptismal registry. He took charge of the parish in the absence of the parish priest, Fray Ricardo Alonzo. During his stay, there were 67 baptisms.¹⁰³ He served for three months in Pasuquin.

20. R.P. Fray Mariano Ortiz, OSA (1873-1874) Interino

Fray Mariano Ortiz was born in Rodilana in the Province of Valladolid in the year 1847. He professed his vows to the Order of St. Augustine on September 23, 1866 and was sent to Manila where he was ordained priest in 1871. After being assigned in La Paz, Abra he moved to Pasuquin as *Interino*.¹⁰⁴

Fray Ortiz administered his first baptism in the parish on November 15, 1873.¹⁰⁵ During his stay, he restored the old solid church and built a *convento* in 1873.¹⁰⁶ He also introduced weaving of cotton and taught the natives how to make bricks.¹⁰⁷ There were about 252 baptisms done during his stay.¹⁰⁸ His stay

¹⁰² Jorde, 538.

¹⁰³ APSJG, LB, Tomo VII, Folio 118v.

¹⁰⁴ Jorde, 557.

¹⁰⁵ APSJG, LB, Tomo VII, Folio 147v.

¹⁰⁶ Fr. Pedro Galende, OSA, *Angels in Stone* (Manila: G.A. Formoso Publishing, 1987), 339. Hereafter, Galende.

¹⁰⁷ Galende, 886.

¹⁰⁸ APSJG, LB, Tomo VII, Folios 147v – 204v.

ended in September 1874.¹⁰⁹ Fray Ortiz became a captive by the Filipino insurgents in Aparri, Cagayan on August, 1898 until December, 1899.¹¹⁰

21. R.P. Don Antonio de Padua Eugenio, Secular (1874-1875) Interino

Padre Antonio de Padua Eugenio became the *Cura Interino* in December, 1874.

Approximately, there were 75 baptisms¹¹¹ administered. He stayed for only four months and left in April, 1875.¹¹²

22. R.P. Fray Ricardo Deza, OSA (1875) Interino

Fray Ricardo Deza used the title *Cura Parroco Interino*. A native of Valladolid, he professed his vows on September 23, 1866, when he was 15 years old. He began his pastoral work in Pasuquin on April 14, 1875.¹¹³

There were about 108 baptisms¹¹⁴ conducted during Fray Deza's incumbency. He left the parish of Pasuquin in September, 1875;¹¹⁵ after serving for only five months. In 1888, he became the *pro-secretario* to M.R.P. Fray Santiago Muñiz, the *Ministro Provincial* and *Visitador General*, in his visits. He became a captive of the revolutionists in 1898 until 1899.¹¹⁶

¹⁰⁹ APSJG, LB, Tomo VII, Folio 204v.

¹¹⁰ Jorde, 557.

¹¹¹ APSJG, LB, Tomo VII, Folios 227 – 237v.

¹¹² APSJG, LB, Tomo VII, Folio 237v.

¹¹³ Jorde, 561.

¹¹⁴ APSJG, LB, Tomo VII, Folio 237v – 265.

¹¹⁵ APSJG, LB, Tomo VII, Folio 265.

¹¹⁶ Jorde, 561.

23. R.P. Fray Francisco Alvarez, OSA (Sept.-Nov. 1875, April-May 1876, Oct. 1876-Feb. 1877)

R.P. Fray Francisco Alvarez administered his first baptism as *Cura Interino* of Pasuquin on September 11, 1875.¹¹⁷ He was the *Cura Interino* of the parish until Fray Rufino Redondo assumed the ministry as parish priest in November, 1875. In April, 1876, Fray Alvarez came back to Pasuquin as the parish priest.¹¹⁸ The parish archives record his absence during the period May to October, 1876¹¹⁹ during which, P.D. Estanislao de los Reyes assumed his post. Fray Alvarez resumed his post in October, 1876¹²⁰ and stayed on until February, 1877.¹²¹ There were approximately 186 baptisms¹²² done during his stay. There was also a visiting priest recorded by the name of Fray Clemente Hidalgo. Among the curates of Pasuquin, Fray Francisco Alvarez had the most interrupted term.

24. R.P. Fray Rufino Redondo, OSA (1875-1876)

According to sources, Fray Rufino Redondo had been in the Philippines since 1871.¹²³ Fray Rufino was born in 1848 in Vadillo de Guarena, Zamora. He embraced the religious life in Valladolid in the year 1866 and went to Manila where he finished his studies in 1871.¹²⁴

Before taking on the job of minister of Pasuquin, he first served in the mission areas of Abra particularly in Bucay.¹²⁵ Fray

¹¹⁷ APSJG, LB, Tomo VII, Folio 265.

¹¹⁸ APSJG, LB, Tomo VII, Folio 306.

¹¹⁹ APSJG, LB, Tomo VII, Folios 312 – 342v.

¹²⁰ APSJG, LB, Tomo VII, 342v.

¹²¹ APSJG, LB, Tomo VII, Folio 365.

¹²² APSJG, LB, Tomo VII, Folios 265 – 365.

¹²³ IR XVIII: 104.

¹²⁴ Jorde 558.

¹²⁵ Jorde, 558.

Redondo began his term on July 19, 1875.¹²⁶ Approximately, there were 92 baptisms¹²⁷ conducted during his period. He did not stay long in Pasuquin; his last baptism was in May, 1876.¹²⁸ According to the Augustinian files, his resignation as curate of Pasuquin was accepted on July 3, 1876.¹²⁹ Fray Rufino Redondo died in Manila on April 11, 1893.¹³⁰

**25. R.P. Don Estanislao de los Reyes,
Secular (1876) Interino**

Padre Estanislao de los Reyes, a secular priest, took charge of the parish during the absence of Fray Francisco Alvarez from May 11, 1876 to September 16, 1876. There were approximately 117 baptisms done during his period.¹³¹ Padre Estanislao de los Reyes served as the assistant priest when Fray Alvarez resumed his work in October, 1876.

26. R.P. Fray Jose Ventura Guillen, OSA (1877-1881)

Through the authorization of the bishop, Fray Jose Ventura Guillen signed the baptismal registers starting May 26, 1877.¹³² Fray Jose was a native of Totana in the Province of Murcia. He was born in 1825 and received the Augustinian Habit in 1846. He first served in the mission for the Tiguians in Abra, moved to Lapo in 1854 and to San Juan in 1856. He went to Manila in 1872 where he took charge of the *Bibliotecario de Convento* of the Augustinians. He was transferred to Bauang in 1874 and Pasuquin in 1877.¹³³

¹²⁶ APAF, 215/2.

¹²⁷ APSJG, LB, Tomo VII, Folios 287 – 305v.

¹²⁸ APSJG, LB, Tomo VII, Folio 305v.

¹²⁹ APAF, 270/7d.

¹³⁰ Jorde, 558.

¹³¹ APSJG, LB, Tomo VII, Folios 287 – 305v.

¹³² APSJG, LB, Tomo VII, Folio 381.

¹³³ Jorde, 476.

During his incumbency in Pasuquin, there were approximately 400 baptisms done.¹³⁴ Names of other priests are also found in the parish archives: Padres Estanislao de los Reyes and Tomas Arizabal, both Assistants of Pasuquin. Due to the lost pages of the book of Baptisms and other canonical books covering the latter part of 1881 to 1882, the end of Fray Guillen's term cannot be ascertained. This Augustinian died on May 1, 1882.¹³⁵

27. R.P. Tomas Arizabal, Secular (1882)

R.P. Don Tomas Arizabal was Fray Jose Ventura Guillen's *coadjutor*. He became the *Cura Interino* starting May, 1882.¹³⁶ During this interim period, there were 33 baptisms conducted.¹³⁷ Padre Arizabal was the *interino* until the arrival of the new parish priest.

28. R.P. Fray Juan Callejo, OSA (1882-1885)

Fray Juan Callejo became Pasuquin's *Cura Parroco* starting July 4, 1882.¹³⁸ Fray Callejo was born in Cubillas de Santa Marta in Valladolid in 1848. He professed his religious vows in 1867 and arrived in the Philippines in 1872. He worked in the missions of Villavieja and Pidigan in 1874, Santiago in 1875, Sta. Cruz in 1880 and Pasuquin in 1882.¹³⁹

During Fray Callejo's term, there were approximately 835 baptisms¹⁴⁰ and 398 funerals since March 23, 1883.¹⁴¹ No confirmation and no pastoral visit were recorded except for the visitation of the *Visitador General*, Fray Santiago Muñiz and his

¹³⁴ APSJG, LB, Tomo VII, Folios 381 – LB, Tomo VIII, Folio 300v.

¹³⁵ Jorde, 476.

¹³⁶ APSJG, LB, Tomo VIII, Folio 300.

¹³⁷ APSJG, LB, Tomo VIII, Folios 301 – 321.

¹³⁸ APAF, 215/2.

¹³⁹ Jorde, 563.

¹⁴⁰ APSJG, LB, Tomo VIII, Folios 321 – 512.

¹⁴¹ APSJG, LE, Tomo IV, Folio 2 – 51v.

secretary, Fray Ricardo Deza on March 11, 1883.¹⁴² Other priests also administered the sacraments, P. Pedro Brillantes, the Assistant Priest in Bacarra, Padre Mariano Espiritu, Padre Mariano Madarang, Padre Marcelo Jimeno, Fray Pedro Bañez and Fray Victoriano Garcia. The population of the parish in 1883 was 5,613.¹⁴³

Fray Callejo administered his last baptism on June 13, 1885.¹⁴⁴ He renounced his position as curate of Pasuquin and went back to Spain.¹⁴⁵ His resignation was accepted on July 7, 1887.¹⁴⁶ He returned to the Philippines in 1888 and took charge of the Parish of Piddig. He was taken captive by the insurgents in 1898 and was held prisoner until March, 1900.¹⁴⁷

29. R.P. Fray Antonio Garcia, OSA (1885) Interino

Fray Antonio Garcia took charge of the parish only for a short span of time. He was *interino* after Fray Callejo left Pasuquin for Spain. He administered his first baptism on June 20, 1885.¹⁴⁸ During his term, there were approximately 45 baptisms¹⁴⁹ and 94 funerals.¹⁵⁰ He worked in Pasuquin together with his assistant, Padre Marcelo Jimeno. Fray Antonio Garcia administered his last baptism on November 31, 1885.¹⁵¹

30. R.P.D. Marcelo Jimeno, Secular (1885-1888) Interino

Padre Marcelo Jimeno, a secular priest from Candon, had been serving the parish since the term of Fray Juan Callejo.

¹⁴² APSJG, LB, Tomo VIII, Folio 361 – 361v.

¹⁴³ IR, XVIII, 152.

¹⁴⁴ APSJG, LB, Tomo VIII, Folio 512.

¹⁴⁵ Jorde, 563.

¹⁴⁶ APAF, 270/8d.

¹⁴⁷ Jorde, 563.

¹⁴⁸ APSJG, LB, Tomo VIII, Folio 512v.

¹⁴⁹ APSJG, LB, Tomo VIII, Folios 512v – 539.

¹⁵⁰ APSJG, LE, Tomo IV, Folios 52 – 63v.

¹⁵¹ APSJG, LB, Tomo VIII, Folio 539.

There were approximately 532 baptisms¹⁵² and 322 funerals¹⁵³ done under his charge. He translated the "*Novena al Glorioso Apostol SANTIAGO EL MAYOR – Padre Patron y Tutelar de España*" into the Ilocano dialect. This novena was authorized for publication by the Vicar General of Nueva Segovia, Jose Gogeoascoechea, in 1888.¹⁵⁴ This novena was a translation from a Spanish novena published earlier. In the introduction, P. Jimeno mentioned the three feast days dedicated in honor of St. James the Greater: July 25th – the day of his martyrdom; December 30 – the day of the transfer of the saint's relics and remains in the Spanish city of Compostela; and May 23 – the day when the saint appeared and aided the Christians in their war against the invading Muslims led by Clavijo.¹⁵⁵ During the interim period of P. Jimeno, other priests came to administer the sacraments: P. Mauricio Bello, the *Coadjutor de Bacarra* and P. Alejandro Josue, native of Pasuquin and Assistant Priest of Bacarra.

P. Jimeno remained as *Cura Interino* until the arrival of Fray Aquilino Garcia, the new Parish Priest.¹⁵⁶

31. R.P. Fray Aquilino Garcia, OSA (1888-1891)

Fray Aquilino Garcia, OSA became the *Cura Parroco* on May 12, 1888. This Friar was born in Pola de Laviana in Oviedo, Spain in the year 1850. He received his Augustinian Habit in 1869 in Valladolid and was sent as a missionary to Villavieja in 1879 and La Paz in 1880. He also served as Parish Priest of Bangui in 1882, Piddig in 1885, Bacarra in 1886, Badoc in 1888 and later, Pasuquin.¹⁵⁷

¹⁵² APSJG, LB, Tomo VIII, Folio 539 – LB, Tomo IX, Folio 12.

¹⁵³ APSJG, LE, Tomo VIII, Folios 63v – 103v.

¹⁵⁴ P. Marcelo Jimeno, *Novena al Glorioso Apostol Santiago el Mayor – Padre Patron y Tutelar de España* (Manila: Imprenta del Colegio de Sto. Tomas, 1903), 3. Hereafter, Jimeno.

¹⁵⁵ Jimeno, 8.

¹⁵⁶ APSJG, LB, Tomo IX, 12v.

¹⁵⁷ APAF, 215/2.

There were approximately 683 baptisms and about 973 funerals done. Other priests also came to help in the administration of the sacraments: P. Marcelo Jimeno, native of Candon and Assistant Priest in Bacarra, P. Agustin Alvano, Assistant Priest in Bacarra, P. Alejandro Josue, native priest from Pasuquin and at that time an Assistant of Bacarra, P. Vicente Figuracion, another native of Pasuquin and also an Assistant of Bacarra and P. Francisco Racca, an Assistant Priest of Laoag. On November 6, 1890, the Most Illustrious and Most Reverend Jose Hevia Campomanes, OP, visited Pasuquin. The bishop administered 2,476 confirmations on the aforementioned date.¹⁵⁸

Fray Aquilino Garcia stayed in Pasuquin until December of 1891.¹⁵⁹ He was made prisoner by the Filipino revolutionists in 1898. Fray Garcia returned to Spain in 1900.¹⁶⁰

32. R.P. Fray Gerardo Blanco, OSA (1892-1897)

Fray Gerardo Blanco is the last Spanish Minister of Pasuquin. Fray Blanco was born in Rioseco in Valladolid on September 20, 1862. He professed his vows on January 27, 1880. He became pastor of Victoria in Tarlac in 1887, Bangar in 1888, Sta. Cruz in 1890 and Pasuquin in 1892.¹⁶¹ It was during his incumbency that the Philippine Revolution broke out.

During the tenure of Fray Blanco, there were about 770 baptisms within the period March 23, 1895 to October 31, 1897.¹⁶² On December 3, 1895, the Most Reverend Jose Hevia Campomanes, OP came for a visit and conferred the Sacrament of Confirmation to 938 individuals.¹⁶³ This day marked the last official visit of a

¹⁵⁸ APSJG, LCon, Tomo I, Folios 42v – 82.

¹⁵⁹ APSJG, LE, 1890-1895, Folio 227v.

¹⁶⁰ Jorde 593.

¹⁶¹ Jorde, 619.

¹⁶² APSJG, LB, Tomo X, Folios 13 – 256.

¹⁶³ APSJG, LCon, Tomo I, Folios 82v – 98v.

Spanish Colonial Prelate to Pasuquin. Source mentioned that in the year 1893, Pasuquin's population grew up to 6,252 individuals.¹⁶⁴

As *Coadjutores*, P. Agustin Rosario and P. Pedro Brillantes helped Fray Blanco in ministering to the parish.

Fray Blanco was a notable writer. He had a number of writings including the *Vocabulario Hispano-Ilocano, con un horario, catálogo de las partes del cuerpo humano, enfermedades y grados de parentesco por El P. Fr. Gerardo Blanco Agustino, Cura Parroco De Pasuquin (Ilocos Norte) aumentado y corregido por el P. José Foj*.¹⁶⁵

Fray Gerardo Blanco died in Bacarra on January 12, 1898.¹⁶⁶

33. R.P.D. Antonino de la Cuesta, Secular (1893-1894) Interino

P. Antonino de la Cuesta became the *Cura Interino* in the absence of the Parish Priest, Fray Gerardo Blanco. This priest was a native of Sarrat, Ilocos Norte.¹⁶⁷ During his short stint in Pasuquin, there were about 51 funerals and 21 marriages. Nothing can be mentioned about baptisms because the baptismal registers from 1891 to March 1895 are missing.

In 1896, P. Antonino de la Cuesta was accused of anti-Spanish conspiracy and active involvement to freemasonry. Together with other eight clerics, he was tortured in the Vigan Seminary and in the Public Plaza. They were later sent to Bilibid but eventually were found innocent. They were released in April 1897 and reinstated in the ministry. The event became the famous "Torture of the Nine Clerics of Nueva Segovia" which created a strong impact for an anti-friar sentiment.¹⁶⁸

¹⁶⁴ IR, XVIII: 159.

¹⁶⁵ APAF, 1052/1.

¹⁶⁶ Jorde, 619.

¹⁶⁷ Fr. Danny Laeda, "The 'Vigan Seminary' Footprints", *Tugot – The Northern Luzon Church and ICST Through the Years* (Vigan, Ilocos Sur: Immaculate Conception School of Theology, 1995), 55.

¹⁶⁸ IR XXV: 93-94.

34. R.P. Don Pedro Brillantes, Secular (1897-1900)

Padre Pedro Brillantes was from Santa in Ilocos Sur. He served as Assistant Priest to Fray Gerardo Blanco. Padre Blanco became *Cura Interino* in January, 1898¹⁶⁹ but had been signing the files since November, 1897. It could have been during his incumbency that the old church was destroyed. The Philippine Revolution at this time was at its height and the bishop was impeded of his duties due to his imprisonment in Cagayan.

Bishop Campomanes tried to solve the problem of governance as best as he could. For this, he appointed three priests to act as Vicars Forane for the Provinces of Ilocos Sur, Ilocos Norte and Cagayan. For Ilocos Norte, P. Pedro Brillantes was appointed as Vicar Forane on August 20, 1898.¹⁷⁰ Padre Brillantes used the title: *Cura Interino de este Pueblo de Pasuquin, Teniente Capellan Castrense y Vicario Foraneo de Ilocos Norte* (Interim Parish Priest of Pasuquin, Lieutenant Military Chaplain and Vicar Forane of Ilocos Norte). P. Brillantes, together with the other Vicars Forane, recommended to Bishop Campomanes that P. Gregorio Aglipay, the Military Vicar General of the Aguinaldo Revolutionary Government be appointed as the Ecclesiastical Governor of the Diocese of Nueva Segovia. P. Aglipay had gone to Pasuquin to solicit the endorsement of P. Brillantes.¹⁷¹ Bearing the endorsement, P. Aglipay went to Cagayan to present himself to the bishop. The prelate appointed P. Aglipay as Ecclesiastical Governor of the diocese. This act would later start a major chaos in the local Church of Nueva Segovia, particularly in Ilocos Norte, the epicenter of the Aglipayan Schism.

When the *Iglesia Filipina Independiente* (IFI) was established on August 3, 1902 by Don Isabelo de los Reyes, Sr., P. Pedro Brillantes was appointed as the first bishop of the schismatic church. He established his diocese in Bacarra and took possession of it on October 1, 1902. He was the provisional bishop while

¹⁶⁹ APSJG, LC, 1891-1910, Folio 55.

¹⁷⁰ APSJG, *Libro de Ordenes Episcopales, Tomo I*, Folio 47v-48.

¹⁷¹ John Schumacher, SJ, *The Revolutionary Clergy* (Manila: Ateneo de Manila University Press, 1981), 95.

waiting for the final decision of P. Aglipay to take the post as *Obispo Maximo* of the new church. Padre Brillantes was one of the main pillars of the *Iglesia Filipina Independiente*.

Conclusion

The town of Pasuquin is old. Documents attest that the establishment of Pasuquin civilization started as early as 1593,¹⁷² though only erected as a parish in 1784. Many friars sacrificed themselves just to bring the News of Salvation to this frontier. They left their native land in order to respond to the call of making disciples despite their human imperfections. But looking at the other side, there are countless things to be grateful for in the forbearers of the faith. The greatest is of course, the legacy of the Christian Faith which opened the eyes of the natives to the One and True God. Certainly before the coming of the missionaries, our ancestors had been experiencing this Mystifying One but fully learned about Him and that was unveiled to them through the evangelization by the friars.

Another legacy is the urbanization of local society. The Spanish Friars taught the early Pasuquiños how to live modestly – in a way of life more proper to their dignity as persons. They taught them to dress properly, to produce crafts and industries that would help them produce and sustain their needs for good living. Early Pasuquiños were trained how to weave fashionable clothes according to the Fray Jose Nieto Report of 1831, from fine fiber. The industry spoke of the diligence and ingenuity of the early Pasuquin women. The *frailes* also showed the local people how to make bricks for the basic and dignified need for shelter.

The fruits of all these things are the ones that the present generation enjoys today and for which they should be grateful for.

The great Roman thinker Cicero said: “*To be ignorant of what happened before you were born is to be ever a child.*” The

¹⁷² Some old documents written in this year mentioned of the peripheral mission of Pasuquin.

past is a reservoir of wisdom and can serve as guide to the present-day citizen. In addition, past mistakes run the danger of being repeated again if people do not know and understand their history. Hence, time and people gone by are purveyors for better living and for growth as an authentic person – they help us transcend and prevent us from being “*ever a child.*”

This documentation of the events and people who had helped shape the Pasuquin community is a humble offering to the present day sons and daughters of the town and to history as well. It is not a scholarly work; actually, it is written by an amateur. Nonetheless, it seeks to remind each one of Pasuquin’s glorious past... a past now seldom remembered but a rich source of wisdom for those who will take the time and effort to do so.

Lastly, may this humble work serve as a salute of reverence, gratefulness and admiration to all men who did “*the planting... the watering*” and to the Divine Who “*made things grow*” (1 Cor. 3:6). □