

PHILIPPINIANA RECORDS

An Account of the Life of Fr. Francisco de la Maza, O.P.

INTRODUCTION

Very often the Dominican historians in the Philippines deplore the lack of diligence of the early chroniclers in jotting down for the benefit of posterity the details of the interior life of their saintly Fathers of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. One of these saintly Fathers — by no means the least conspicuous — was Father Francisco de la Maza, the indefatigable evangelizer of Ituy (south of Nueva Vizcaya).

The little that we know about him is almost exclusively from the pen of Father Fernando de Santa Maria, better known in the Philippines for his book on *Medicinas Caseras*. At any rate, the information found in the biographical sketch written by Father Santa Maria is enough to give us an idea of his saintly life and dynamic apostolic personality.

We have already introduced Father Francisco de la Maza to our readers as "the Apostle of Ituy"; let us now present him as an austere ascetic and tireless educator of his beloved neophytes in the schools of *Arts and Trades*.

To round off his biography we must add here the indispensable data of date and place of his birth, year of arrival in the Philippines, pastoral work in Pangasinan and missionary labors and death in Ituy, as they are found in an early chronicle and in the Acts of the Provincial Chapters of those times.

Born in the mountains of Burgos¹ in the year 1646, Father Francisco de la Maza donned the Dominican habit in the historical Convent of Our Lady of Atocha, in Madrid, where he left — even long after his departure for the Philippines — an enduring name, due to his penetrating philosophical mind and rare austerity of life.²

Having arrived in the Philippines in the year 1671, he was promptly assigned to the Convent of Santo Domingo in Manila, where he stayed for about four years. From there, the Provincial Chapter of 1675 transferred him to the theater of his future apostolate, the province of Pangasinan, specifically the town of Calasiao. Two years later, that is, in 1677, he moved to Binmaley as *compañero* (assistant) of its vicar. In 1678 we find him already as vicar in the small town of Balunguey,³ which he would exchange in 1682, also as vicar, for the more important ministry of San Jacinto. Back in Balunguey in 1684, he left it the next year to take charge of the key town of Binalatongan (now San Carlos), where he was to stay for eight long years. From here he went to Telbang (1692), and from Telbang to Lingayen, the *cabecera* or capital of Pangasinan.

¹ By "the mountains of Burgos" our historians generally understand not only the mountainous region of the actual province of Burgos but also the whole Cantabria province (formerly known as "Santander"). This premise leads us to conclude, with a fair degree of probability, that Father de la Maza was a native of Cantabria. His surname seems to point also in the same direction.

² OCIO, Hilario Ma., O.P., *Compendio de la Reseña Biográfica de los religiosos de la provincia del Santísimo Rosario de Filipinas*, Manila, Establecimiento tipográfico del Real Colegio de Sto. Tomás, 1895, pp. 230-231.

³ "Under this advocacy (i.e. San Vicente Ferrer de Bayambang) the Chapter of 1619 accepted this house (ministry), known as Malunguey (or Balunguey) until the year 1741, in which, such a denomination having been dropped, it was named Bayambang, the name of the site to which the former (Malunguey) had been transferred. Malunguey already existed in 1614, but it was not accepted as a vicariate until 1619, adding to it as a *visita* the ministry of San Juan Bautista de Telbang, which dated also from 1614" (Cfr. OCIO, Hilario Ma., O.P., *Monumento Dominicano*, MS in the Dominican archives of the province of Our Lady of the Rosary, Section "Ministerios", Vol. I, fol. 89). Telbang roughly corresponds to the present day Bautista, as San Bartolomé de Agno is the actual San Manuel, although not exactly located in the same place.

After two years he was entrusted with the recently founded ministries of Asingan and San Bartolome de Agno.⁴ These were "frontier" towns and the key, from the side of Pangasinan, to the Ituy missions. No wonder, therefore, that the Chapter of 1702 released him from the pastoral care of the two frontier towns so that he might concentrate his energies in the conversion of the benighted pagans of the valley of Ituy itself, who, in spite of so many attempts made in times past by other missionaries, were still walking in spiritual darkness.

The Acts of the Chapter of 1704 eulogized the memory of Father De la Maza — who had died in February 10th of the preceding year — with the following words as translated from Latin: "It was in the mission of the province of Ituy that Father Francisco de la Maza joyfully reached the last day of his life. He was a priest and a Father venerable for his age and merits who, having been motivated by the command of his superior, undertook with great spiritual zeal [the restoration of] this mission, having knocked at its door for one year; and, having entered the said Mission, with great constancy and labours, fought the opposition of the neighboring pagans and many false Christians; and in the end, with the help of God, he was the first to establish a foothold there, thus restoring this our ancient mission.

Having been most willingly welcomed by its natives through whose many villages he travelled on foot, in the midst of labours, scanty food, cold and heat, baptizing not a few of them in a short time, he bequeathed to us many catechumens and the hope of the conversion of all the natives of that region.

Having fallen sick due to his journeys and many other labours, he was taken away from us in less than a year, with the neophytes, catechumens and infidels deeply mourning his passing. In his body an iron chain girt around the loins, was found; and the body of the deceased having been exhumed after a year, was found almost incorrupt, although it had been buried in a more than humid place."⁵

⁴ *Acta Capitulorum Provincialium Provinciae Sanctissimi Rosarii Philippinarum*, Tomus Primus, Manilae, Typis Collegii Sancti Thomae, pp. 322, 329, 338, 345, 355, 362, 373, 383, 429, 430, 440, 448; Tomus Secundus, p. 20.

⁵ *Acta Capitulorum Provincialium Provinciae Sanctissimi Rosarii Philippinarum*, Tomus Secundus, Manilae Typis Collegii Sancti Thomae, 1877, pp. 34-35.

RELACION DE LA PRODIGIOSA VIDA Y VIRTUDES
DEL VENERABLE PADRE FR. FRANCISCO DE LA
MAZA, O.P.

Entre los muchos y esclarecidos varones que han ilustrado esta Provincia del Santísimo Rosario de Filipinas desde su fundación hasta ahora, es merecedor de nuestra atención el V.P. Fr. Francisco de la Maza, de quien trataremos en esta breve relación, y diremos fielmente, como lo pide el asunto, lo que hemos podido averiguar de varios sujetos que lo trataron y comunicaron.

Nació este siervo de Dios en las montañas de Burgos, de padres pobres pero de buena sangre y sanas costumbres. Criaron a su hijo en el temor de Dios, castigando (todo esto solía referir el mismo siervo de Dios por más abatirse) sus vivezas e inquietudes de muchacho con demasiado rigor, sólo a fin de dirigir y llevar a su hijo por el camino que nos guía para el cielo. Amaba el padre de Francisco a su hijo según las leyes de la naturaleza pero, como prudente que era, no le explicaba mucho su afecto, porque sabía que el demasiado amor de los padres a los hijos, cuando niños, suele ser principio de no poderlos corregir ni sujetar cuando grandes; que el árbol, cuando es pequeño y tierno, con facilidad se tuerce y con poco trabajo se endereza; lo que no sucede cuando es ya grande.

AN ACCOUNT OF THE PRODIGIOUS LIFE AND VIRTUES OF THE VENERABLE FR. FRANCISCO DE LA MAZA, O.P.

Among the many and illustrious men who have honored this province of the Most Holy Rosary of the Philippines, the Reverend Fr. Francisco de la Maza draws our attention in a very special manner. We shall, therefore, give a brief account of his life and, as the subject requires, faithfully report what we have been able to gather from various witnesses who knew him or often communicated with him.

The Servant of God saw the first light of day in the mountains of Burgos. Although his parents were poor, they were not in any way tainted with Judaism or infected with Mohammedanism or heresy; on the contrary, they were commendable for their good moral behaviour. They raised their child in the fear of the Lord, punishing (and this the Servant of God used to relate in order to abase himself the more) his boyish vivacity and restlessness with a seeming excessive severity so as to keep him within the path that leads us to heaven. The father of Francisco naturally loved his son, but, being a prudent man, he did not show him any special sign of affection, realizing that an excessive parental love for one's children, when they are young, could prove an obstacle to their correction and discipline when they get older; because a tree, when young and tender, can easily be bent and with little effort straightened; something that cannot be done so easily when it has reached its full growth.

Criaron sus padres a Francisco sin dejarle de la mano, corriéndole continuamente de cualquiera acción menos ajustada que veían en él. De esta suerte le mantuvieron hasta que llegó el tiempo y ocasión de enviarle a Madrid, donde le entraron deseos de tomar el estado seguro de la Religión, medio casi necesario para proseguir el camino en que sus padres le habían puesto.

Tomó el hábito de nuestra sagrada Orden en el Real convento de Nuestra Señora de Atocha, extramuros de la Real y Coronada villa de Madrid, donde hasta hoy se conserva fresca la memoria de su inculpable vida; y se tiene muy presente, como prenda hereditaria de padres a hijos, la gran fragancia de muchas y varias flores de virtudes que aun en los primeros años de religioso despedía ya este árbol recién plantado en aquel regio jardín de mi gran patriarca Domingo, de donde fue transplantado a otro jardín no menos ameno, que es esta provincia del Santísimo Rosario, donde se colmó a su tiempo de muchos frutos de admirables virtudes, correspondientes a las muchas flores que, aun estando en su convento de Atocha, comenzó ya a dar este místico árbol.

Llegó a esta Provincia del Santísimo Rosario este siervo de Dios el año de 1671, en una barcada de treinta y tres religiosos, que condujo hasta Méjico el V.P. Procurador General, Fr. Juan Polanco, y remitió hasta Manila a cargo del R.P. Fr. Alonso Sandín. Destinó la obediencia al Padre Fr. Francisco para ministro de la provincia de Pangasinán, y en breve tiempo aprendió con perfección la lengua de aquella nación. Antes que pasemos adelante será bien que digamos algo de las prendas naturales de este siervo de Dios, a quien escogió Dios de la cantera del mundo para la hermosa fábrica de su Iglesia.

Fue el Padre Fr. Francisco de un entendimiento muy claro y fácil; su estatura más que mediana; su cuerpo gallardo y fuerte; su rostro blanco y claro; la nariz pequeña; el cabello castaño, con entradas grandes de calvo; la boca muy proporcionada y agraciada; la barba castaña; los ojos muy alegres, que tiraban a color azul;

His parents reared Francisco under their ever-watchful eyes, calling his attention continuously to whatever less rightful action they might have observed in him. They brought him up in this manner until the time came, and an opportunity presented itself, to send him to Madrid where he felt the call to the safety of the religious state; a way of life that was necessary, as he saw it, to continue treading on the path in which his parents had initiated him.

He received the habit of our sacred Order in the "Real Convento de Nuestra Señora de Atocha," that was located outside the walls of the "Royal and Crowned" (*Real y Coronada*) city of Madrid. It is there where the memory of his blameless life still remains fresh, and where they still remember, as a legacy bequeathed from father to son, the great fragrance of the many and varied flowers of virtues which even from the initial years of his religious life had been emitted by this tree planted in that royal garden of my great patriarch Dominic; and from where it was transplanted to another no less delightful garden that is this province of the Most Holy Rosary where, with the passing of time, he loaded it with the many fruits of his wonderful virtues corresponding to the many flowers that this mystical tree had begun to yield when still in his Convent of Atocha.

The servant of God arrived in this province of the Most Holy Rosary in the year 1671, as one of a missionary band (*barcada*) of thirty-three priests which the Very Reverend Procurator, Fr. Juan Polanco headed until Mexico, and then entrusted to Fr. Alonso Sandin with the charge of conducting them up to Manila. Assigned by his Superiors to the province of Pangasinan, he mastered the language of that region in a short time. But before we proceed any further, it will be fitting to dwell on some of the natural endowments of this servant of God, hewn by Him from the quarry of the world in order to beautify the fabric of His Church.

Father Francisco was endowed with a lucid and quick mind; his height above average; his body, graceful and strongly built; his complexion, white and fair; the nose somewhat flattened; the hair chestnut-colored and visibly receding at the temples, showing signs of an incipient baldness; his mouth well-shaped and in harmony with his other features; his temperament joyful and as if ever

su complexión muy robusta; su genio alegre y jocoso; jamás le veían mustio ni melancólico; siempre estaba con una boca de risa.

Cuando asistía a alguna función con sus hermanos los religiosos, le buscaban la boca, como dicen, porque tenían especial gusto en oír sus chistes, pues, al mismo paso que manifestaba en ellos la alegría y candidez de su corazón, daba también a entender su mucha religiosidad y su mayor sagacidad en disimular su mucha virtud y humildad. Y, aunque parece difícil componer lo uno con lo otro, en el V.P. era muy fácil cuadunar extremos al parecer opuestos.

En las funciones de concurso se sentaba a la mesa y comía con los demás religiosos. Poníanle lo que permitía el día, como a todos; pero, si era carne, jamás la probaba. Para disimular que comía, recibía la ración que le daban como a cada cual, y con una chanza los entretenía a todos, de suerte que no advertían en él cosa alguna, sino aquellos que estaban sobreaviso.

En una enfermedad que padeció de rigurosas cuartanas, no quiso comer carne hasta que se lo mandaron por obediencia. Su comida ordinaria era un pedazo de pescado seco, asado en las ascuas, o algunas hierbas, o cosa semejante. Avunaba todos los días, sin tomar por la mañana sustento alguno. Sólo los domingos cenaba, pero era cosa muy leve lo que tomaba. Su colación era un pedazo de plátano asado, un poco de bizcocho, y un jarro de agua. Si no había plátanos, se contentaba con un poco de *chancaca*, un poco de bizcocho, y su agua.

Era muy caritativo para con todos y muy amante de los religiosos especialmente de los "vagos".¹ A él ocurrían en sus necesidades, y para todos era consuelo. Era, como dicen, el paño de lágrimas de sus hermanos. Ninguno se llegaba a él que no se apartara consolado.

Cuando le visitaban los religiosos, los regalaba cuanto podía en los límites de su estado, porque era naturalmente generoso y de corazón magnánimo, y así no sabía negar cosa que le pedían. Ni menos se detenía en pedir a sus hermanos lo que había menester; pero esto lo hacía con tal donaire que le concedían gustosos cuanto pedía.

¹ "Bago" es una palabra tagala que significa "joven", y en este caso "religiosos recién llegados a Filipinas."

ready to crack a joke. He was never seen in low spirits but was always in a joyful mood.

Whenever he attended any get-together with his fellow religious, they pulled out his tongue, as the saying goes, because they greatly relished hearing his jokes through which he manifested the joy and sincerity of his heart and showed, besides, his remarkable piety and the sagacity in concealing the overflowing of his virtue and humility. And even though it seems difficult to reconcile both extremes, it was easy to bring together in the Father two things that appear to be opposite to one another.

During fraternal gatherings, he sat at table and dined with the other priests, and being served what was allowed for the day, he never tasted it if it happened to be meat.

During a severe illness of intermittent fevers (*cuartanas*), he did not consent to eat meat until he was ordered to do so under obedience. His ordinary meals consisted of a piece of dried fish broiled over coals, and even then, he observed extreme moderation in the amount of food he ate. On fasting days, his *colación* (a very light supper) merely consisted of a roasted banana, a bit of biscuit with its accompanying pitcherful of water. When bananas were not available, he contented himself with some *chancaca*,¹ a little biscuit, and a jug of water.

He was very charitable to all, showing special signs of affection towards his fellow priests, especially to those who were new and inexperienced in the ministerial tasks. All flocked to him in their needs and he consoled them all. He was, as the saying goes, the "shoulder to cry on" (*el paño de lágrimas*) of all, and nobody ever approached him who was not comforted and consoled.

Whenever other priests visited him, he regaled them according to his limited means, for he was naturally endowed with a generous and magnanimous heart, and thus, he could not refuse them whatever they asked of him. Neither did he hesitate to ask of his brethren whatever he needed, yet he did this in such a graceful manner that they readily granted him what he was asking for.

¹ *Chancaca* is defined as "sugar of the second crop," as it is known in Mexico and in Cuba, or "a paste made of toasted maize ground with honey," as it is known in Ecuador. It might even be what we know as "*panucha*" locally.

En una ocasión se hallaba falto de reales para pagar los gastos de una obra de iglesia que traía entre manos. Llegóse a un religioso y le dijo: "Padre viejo, V.R. me debe veinte pesos, y los he de menester ahora." "¿De qué, hermano", respondió el Padre viejo, "lo debo veinte pesos?". Replicó el siervo de Dios, "Me debe V.R. de limosna". "Tiene razón, Padre Maza", dijo el Padre viejo, "tómelos enhorabuena", y así le dio los veinte pesos, añadiendo: "Yo no sé que tiene este Padre Maza, que le saca a un hombre de sus casillas".

En otra ocasión debía el siervo de Dios cinco pesos a otro Padre. Fue a visitarle el siervo de Dios, y le dijo así: "Padre Solís (que este era el nombre del religioso), ya sé que debo cinco pesos a V.R." "Así es", dijo el Padre. "Pues aplique V.R. cinco misas por mi intención", dijo el siervo de Dios, "y estamos en paz". "De muy buena gana las aplicaré", dijo el Padre Solís, "que no quiero tener deudas con nadie".²

En treinta y dos años que vivió en estas Islas, el V. Padre jamás usó vino, como tampoco usó *buyo* ni tabaco, con ser tan comunes en Filipinas. Cuando vivía el siervo de Dios, era raro en estas Islas el chocolate; por esto valía caro, y era pecado grande beberle los religiosos, y si alguna vez lo bebían era a escondidas, y cuando algún amigo secular solía regalar a alguno con algunas tablillas.

El siervo de Dios jamás quiso beberle; si alguna vez los otros religiosos se juntaban y querían hacer alguna trampilla legal a la Orden, bebiendo una jicarilla, convidaban al siervo de Dios, quien, después de muchas instancias, decía con mucho donaire: "Si yo cometo el pecado de beber chocolate, ha de ser un pecado gordo, porque me han de dar una taza grande; y, si no, no quiero beberle." Con esto le daban la mayor taza; recibíala y hacía que lo bebía, pero jamás le pasaba de dientes adentro, porque luego largaba la taza a un muchacho, su criado, el que vive hasta hoy. El dice que esto lo hizo su amo muchas veces.

² Este párrafo no parece hacer sentido, pero hemos preferido dejarlo tal como está.

On one occasion, he found himself short of money to pay for an improvement that he was attending to in Church. He approached an old priest and said to him: "Old priest, Your Reverence owes me twenty pesos and I need them now." — "For what reason," retorted the old priest, "do I owe you twenty pesos?" — "You owe it as alms," replied the Servant of God, "for ten masses that I have to offer for your intentions, and the other ten Your Reverence shall give me as alms. "You are right, Father Maza, and most willingly I give it to you." Then the old priest handed the twenty pesos over to him, adding: "I do not know what sort of a man this Father Maza is that he can even drive a person crazy."

On another occasion, the Servant of God owed another Father five pesos. He paid the latter a visit and said to him: "Father Solís (for such was the name of the Religious), I know that I owe you five pesos." "It is true," the Father answered. — "Well, then, say five masses for my intentions," the Servant of God replied, "and that will make us even." — "I will offer them willingly," Father Solís replied, "because I don't want to be indebted to anybody."²

During the thirty two years that he lived in these islands, the Venerable Father never tasted wine, or tried betel-nut or tobacco, so much in use nowadays in the Philippines. While the Servant of God was living here, chocolate was a rarity in these Islands and, therefore, expensive, and it was a serious fault for the religious to drink it; and if ever they did, it was by stealth and only when a layman presented one of them with a few bars.

The Servant of God never allowed himself to drink it, and, if sometimes other religious gathered together to partake of it at their Superior's back, they invited the Servant of God, who, seemingly agreeing to their insistent requests, wittingly remarked: "If I commit the sin of drinking chocolate, it has to be a big sin and so you have to offer me a large cup; if not, I do not want to drink it." On hearing this, they offered him the biggest cup, which he accepted, and, pretending to drink, he did not gulp it beyond the teeth; on the contrary, he handed over the cup to a boy-servant who is still alive and says that his master did this many times.

² This paragraph does not seem to make sense, but it is so in the original, and as such we have translated it.

Lo más del día gastaba el siervo de Dios en oración y santos ejercicios. Cuando se sentía cansado, por huir de la ociosidad a la que aborrecía como madre de muchos vicios, se entretenía en enseñar a sus criados cuanto bueno y útil alcanzaba su ingenio, que hallaba facilidad para todo. A unos enseñó a pintores; a otros, escultores; a otros enseñó música y tocar instrumentos, y todo lo dirigía al culto de Dios y adorno de los templos, y en esto gastaba cuanta plata le venía a las manos.

El mejor arpista que hubo en Pangasinán en vida del siervo de Dios, fue un indígena del pueblo de San Jacinto, a quien llamaban Dalaza, quien por su habilidad rara en tocar el arpa fue llevado a Manila. Este no tuvo más maestro que al siervo de Dios. El primor está en que el venerable Padre enseñaba todos los oficios sin saber alguno.

El modo que tenía de enseñar a tocar instrumentos era tomar una varita en la mano y hacer son en una silla; el mozo seguía el son que hacía el Padre, y, cuando no acertaba con él, le decía: "ahí falta una cuerda, o ahí sobra una," y así maceaba hasta que les hacía salir con el son que quería que aprendiesen.

A diligencias del siervo de Dios se hizo la iglesia de San Luis de Asingán, y compuso y adornó con retablos y pinturas todas las de Pangasinán. El Padre era el maestro de estas obras, y sus criados eran los carpinteros, aserradores y escultores, de los cuales viven hoy algunos.

La campana grande de la iglesia del pueblo de Binalatongan es hechura del V. Padre, y es la mayor y más sonora que hay en esta Provincia. Con un viento grande se cayó la torre de la dicha iglesia. Cayeron todas las campanas, y se hicieron pedazos; sólo quedó intacta, y persevera hasta hoy, la que hizo el V. Padre.

Como era el siervo de Dios de tan robusta complexión y de genio tan alegre, era obligado, como dicen, y a quien siempre enviaban a recibir a los Padres Provinciales en sus visitas, y cualquiera persona de suposición que se ofrecía.

Iba gustoso a todo, sin hallarse en él repugnancia en cuanto a la obediencia. Pero no por esto omitía sus ejercicios ordinarios de oración y disciplina. Todas las horas del día tenía repartidas de suerte que le quedaba lugar para todo. Por la mañana decía

The Servant of God spent most of the day in prayer and devotional exercises. Whenever he felt tired and in order to avoid idleness, which he hated for its being the "mother of all vices," he made use of his time by teaching his servants whatever good and useful skills were within the range of his knowledge, since he seemed to make good in every trade. To some, he taught painting, to others, sculpture, and to still others, music, doing everything for the service of God and the enhancement of churches, and in this he spent whatever money he had on hand.

The best harpist who lived in Pangasinan during the lifetime of the Servant of God was a native of the town of San Jacinto, whose name was Dalaza, and who, on account of his ability in playing the harp, was sent to Manila. This man had no other teacher than the Servant of God. To explain this wonder, we must bear in mind that the Venerable Father taught all these crafts without having had any formal training in any.

His method of teaching consisted in holding a stick (in the manner of a baton) in his hand so as to produce sounds by beating a chair with it. The young man imitated the pattern that the Father had set before him.

The church of Asingan was built and other churches of Pangasinan were decorated and adorned with reredos and paintings through the diligence of the Servant of God. Father Maza was the *maestro de obras* and his servants were the carpenters, sawyers, and sculptors, some of whom are still alive.

The big churchbell of the tower of Binalatongan was cast under the direction of the Venerable Father. It is the biggest and most sonorous in the whole province. Due to a strong wind, the tower of the church collapsed; all the bells fell and were broken to pieces. Only the one that was cast by the Father remained intact, and it has remained so until the present.

The Servant of God, having such a strong constitution and a pleasant disposition, was invariably charged with the task of welcoming the Fathers Provincial or any other prominent personage who might happen to come for a visit.

He went through it all, never feeling any repugnance, especially as he saw it as a matter of obedience. On the other hand, he never used this as an excuse to neglect his ordinary exercises

Misa con mucha devoción; después rezaba el rosario en la iglesia con los niños de la escuela; salíanse todos, y el V. Padre se quedaba por mucho rato hincado de rodillas en oración.

Las horas canónicas las rezaba a su hora en el coro como se hace en cualquier convento muy religioso. A la Nona, hacía vestir cuatro niños de acólitos, los que encendían las candelas del altar y asistían en pie hasta que se acababa la Nona, y el V. Padre daba la palmada.

Por la noche, después de la colación, se recogía un poco a dormir, y era tan poco que muchas veces aun no dormían los criados cuando se levantaba, y con gran silencio y disimulo, sin inquietar a persona alguna, se iba para el coro, donde se estaba en oración hasta la media noche, que tocaba la compana y echaba los maitines.

Acabados estos, se azotaba con gran rigor, de suerte que se oían los azotes a mucha distancia. El coro hallaban los criados por la mañana lleno de sangre.

Después de la disciplina se ponía de rodillas en oración hasta que era hora de tocar a Prima. El lugar en que se hincaba de rodillas tenía muchos altos y bajos a manera de escaleritas, que el mismo V. Padre hizo por su mano con un escoplo para más mortificarse.

Rezada la Prima, bajaba a decir su Misa; así no le quedaba lugar ocioso.

Siempre fue muy riguroso en el tratamiento de su persona; pues cuanto era rígido para sí, era pío y compasivo para con los prójimos.

Si sus criados hacían algún pecado que necesitase de castigo, era la pena ordinaria mandarles dar tres azotes.

Desde que llegó a la provincia de Pangasinán observó este método que dejamos dicho, pero fue con más rigor en los trece años últimos de su dichosa vida. En estos trece años, jamás omitió el decir Misa, y, por no dejarla cuando caminaba, solía decir la a las doce del día. Las tres de la noche de la Navidad de Cristo las solía decir en tres pueblos muy distantes unos de otros.

of prayer and of taking the discipline. And as he had scheduled all the hours of the day wisely, he found time for everything. In the morning, he said Mass with deep devotion; next to this, he prayed the Rosary with the school children; and after everyone had left, the Reverend Father remained on his knees in prayer for a considerable length of time.

He recited the Canonical hours at the appointed time in the choirloft as is done in any well-regulated convent. Then, at the hour of None, he would get four boys to be dressed as acolytes who would light the candles on the altar and stand in attendance until the Hour was finished when, by clapping his hands, he would make the signal for the boys' departure.

In the evening, after having taken a light supper, he retired for a brief rest, which in fact was so short that he was already up before the servants started sleeping. Then, very quietly and unobtrusively, he proceeded to the choirloft, where he prayed until midnight, when he rang the bell for Matins.

After having finished them, he scourged himself so rigorously that the crack of the whip could be heard at a fair distance. In the morning, the boys found the choirloft sprinkled with blood all over.

Next to this act of penance, he prayed on his knees until the bell rang for Prime. Chiseled by his own hands on the floor where he used to pray were various stair-like carvings intended to mortify himself.

After Prime, he said Mass in order not to allow himself a moment of idleness.

And yet, while he was harsh with himself, he was mild and compassionate with others. If his servants were found guilty of any sin deserving punishment, the ordinary penalty was three lashes. At first (i.e., when he first arrived in Pangasinan), he followed the above-mentioned method, but he made it harsher during the last thirteen years of his life. During those thirteen years, he never omitted his daily Mass. In order not to miss it whenever he had to travel, he would celebrate it at 12:00 of the same day. He used to say the three Christmas Day Masses in three towns that were quite apart from one another.

Trece años antes de su dichosa muerte se ciñó a las carnes una fuerte cadena de hierro, pero el demonio que no gustaba ver el rigor con que el siervo de Dios castigaba su cuerpo, le tentó muchas veces para que se la quitara (así lo hemos oído a un criado confidente del V. Padre), quien, en lugar de quitarse la cadena, la echó un candado, cerróle muy bien, y luego echó la llave en el río para no tener lugar de dar consentimiento a la tentación. Después de muerto, le hallaron esta cadena pegada a las carnes, y además de esto un cilicio que ya estaba metido y como identificado con la carne, sin que, por eso, descaeciese de su natural alegría ni se echase de ver en su porte ni exterior su grande mortificación y recogimiento interior.

La bondad de los árboles se conoce por sus frutos, y la de los hombres por lo mismo que obran. No puede el árbol bueno dar mala fruta, ni el malo darla buena. ¿Qué importa que el soberbio ejecute una y otra acción que parezca nacida de humildad, si al cabo en las más, si se miran con atención, se trasluce su altivez? ¿Qué importa que el humilde una y otra vez, llevado de la ira, se exceda algún tanto si, cuando vuelve sobre sí, se admira de sí mismo, manifestando en su conocimiento y sumisión la profunda humildad que se oculta en su pecho, mereciendo tal vez más en abatirse, que desmereció en ensoberbecerse, si se puede llamar soberbia la que nace de poca o ninguna reflexión del sujeto o de un primer movimiento de la ira?

Fue el V. Padre verdaderamente humilde, como se veía en todas sus operaciones, manifestando estas tener por su origen y principio un corazón a todas luces manso y apacible, y una razón señora de sus pasiones, las que tenía tan sujetas este V. Padre que más parecía ángel que hombre.

Varias ocasiones y motivos tuvo en el decurso de su vida de ensoberbecerse, y más con la general estimación que hacían de él así Religiosos como seglares; pero, como se hallaba predominado de la virtud de la humildad, base fundamental de la Religión Cristiana, no hacían mella en él las honras, como ni le inquietaban las adversidades; pareciendo más duro que el diamante en aquellas, y como insensible en estas.

“¿Os parece (decía a los naturales), que yo no he pasado mis trabajos y necesidades en España? Como mi padre era pobre, solía no haber qué comer en mi casa. Yo, que tenía buena ham-

Thirteen years before his blissful death, he girded himself with a strong chain around his waist. But according to one of the servants in whom he confided, the devil was not pleased with the rigor with which the Servant of God mortified his body and therefore tempted him many times to get rid of it. So, Father Maza added a padlock to it, secured it well, and threw its key into a river to avoid giving in to temptation.

The goodness of the tree is known by its fruits, and that of men, by their works. A good tree cannot bear a bad fruit, nor can a bad one bear good fruit. For what does it matter if an arrogant man is able to perform one or another act that appears to spring from humility if, ultimately, upon closer scrutiny, his haughtiness becomes apparent? And, on the other hand, what does it matter if a humble man, overpowered by anger at one time or another, goes a bit beyond the limit if, aware of his weakness and surprised at what he did, shows forth, through the admission of his guilt and submission, the profound humility hidden within his breast, thus perhaps meriting through his self-abasement more than what he lost through his pride — if we may call pride that which came from little or no reflection at all in a sudden impulse of anger?

The Venerable Father was truly humble as could be seen in all his actions by which he clearly showed that they had their origin and source in a heart that was meek and tranquil in every way, and that his actions were controlled by reason; and the Venerable Father had such dominion over them that he seemed to be more like an angel than like a human being.

In the course of his life, he encountered several occasions and motivations to be proud, and even more so because he was highly regarded by both the religious and the lay-men; but since he was well-grounded in the virtue of humility, which is the fundamental basis of Christianity, he was neither impressed nor was he affected by honors or upset by adversities, as if appearing to be tougher than the diamond in the former, and quasi-insensitive in the latter.

"Do you think," he would say to the natives, "that I did not experience trials and hardships in Spain? Since my father was poor, at times there was nothing to eat at home, and, as I felt

bre, lo que hacía era ir a mamar de unas cabras que andaban por allí paciendo”.

Estando el siervo de Dios una tarde en profunda oración en el pueblo de Calasiao, acaeció una grande tempestad de truenos y rayos. Cayó uno en la torre del dicho pueblo y la derribó. Uno de los harigues de la torre vino a caer en el coro inmediato el V. Padre. Los criados que advirtieron el destrozo que hizo el rayo, fueron corriendo al coro juzgando hallar a su amo ya difunto. Entraron en el coro y le hallaron de rodillas sin haberse inmutado ni movido de su lugar y junto al harigue que había caído, como si tal cosa no hubiera sucedido. Admiráronse de ver al Padre tan sosegado, y uno de ellos le dijo: “Padre, es posible que no temes harigue?” — “Hijo (respondió el Padre con gran sosiego), no espero otra cosa sino morir; y por esto que ha sucedido había de temer? Ios con Dios”. Con esto se salieron los criados admirados, y el siervo de Dios prosiguió en su oración como si tal cosa no hubiera pasado.

¿Dime ahora, lector mío, qué hicieras en semejante caso? Y ¿qué diré yo? sino que este siervo de Dios vivía en carne como exento ya de humanas pasiones.

Dotó Cristo a sus apóstoles de la virtud de curar las enfermedades especialmente la de ojos, con sólo untarlos con su saliva y hacer con el dedo sobre la parte dolorida la señal da la cruz. Pero ¿qué mucho que así curase los ojos doloridos si le trajo Dios a estas Islas para luz y consuelo de sus habitantes?

Es tan especial el gobierno de las Islas Filipinas, así en lo monástico como en lo secular, que no es fácil de ponderar ni menos se puede imitar el método que tienen en gobernarse, consecutivo a la grande variedad y mucha inconstancia de sus naturales, que son el blanco a que más principalmente o siempre atienden los que mandan.

De aquí nace que los súbditos estén siempre con el pie en el estribo, esperando órdenes de sus superiores, y que el que hoy es superior, mañana se halle súbdito, y por el contrario el que hoy

very hungry, what I did was to suck the milk of some goats that were grazing in the pasturelands over there."

One afternoon, while the Servant of God was immersed in deep prayer, a violent storm struck with terrible lightning and thunder. A bolt hit the belfry of the said town and demolished it. One of the wooden posts of the belfry happened to fall on the choirloft near the place where the Venerable Father was praying. Immediately, the house boys went running towards the choirloft, fearing to find their master already dead. But when they entered, they found him on his knees near the fallen wooden post, motionless and without having lost his composure, as if nothing had happened. They were so amazed at finding the Father unmoved that one of them dared ask him: "Father, how come you stayed motionless when the wooden post fell?" "Son," replied the Servant of God with calmness, "I hope for nothing else but to die. And, therefore, why should I be afraid of what might have happened? Go with God." With this, the houseboys left in wonder, and the Servant of God continued praying, as if nothing had taken place.

Tell me now, dear reader, what would you have done in a similar situation? And what shall I say but that the Servant of God lived in the flesh as if already exempted from passions?

God gave his apostles the power of healing the sick just by laying their hands on them, and the Servant of God shared in the same privilege, since he could cure any kind of illness, especially those of the eyes, just by anointing them with his saliva and by making with his finger the Sign of the Cross over the afflicted part. But is it any wonder that he could cure afflicted eyes when God had sent him to these Islands to be the light and comfort of its inhabitants?

The government of these Philippine Islands, in the religious as well as in the political order, is of such a nature that it is not easy to pass judgment on, much less imitate, the ways of its governance, these being the result of the great variety and unpredictability of the people towards whom the efforts of those in power are directed.

Hence, the subjects are always on their toes awaiting orders from their superiors, and he who is a superior today may become a subordinate tomorrow; or he, who today is a subject, may find

es súbdito mañana se vea superior; en que tienen no poco que hacer los superiores, ni menos que merecer los súbditos, si se resignan como deben en la voluntad de sus Prelados.

Bien hecho cargo estaba el V. Padre Fr. Francisco de esta necesaria variedad de esta tierra, por haber experimentado en sí, cual ninguno, su natural inconstancia. Pero, como tenía el corazón puesto en Dios, y por norte de su operaciones la santa obediencia, jamás se alteraba ni parece que le hacían impresión las más extrañas providencias acerca de su persona.

Tan presto estaba en el mejor ministerio como en el más ínfimo, tan presto subía como bajaba, y bajaba como subía. Tan en breve le sacaban para la misión como le ocupaban en el ministerio, sin que lo uno le hiciese novedad ni lo otro le causase alteración. La misma impresión le hizo el verse Vicario Provincial cuando lo fue de la provincia de Pangasinán, como le hizo el sacarle de Vicario para compañero. Y tan perfecto religioso le experimentaban en el estado de Superior como en el de súbdito. Y sí en aquel procuraba con su natural gracejo ocultar su mucha religiosidad, en este hacía todo empeño por disimular su mucha virtud.

Para que sepan los hipócritas que no consiste la verdadera virtud en torcer la cabeza y en decir que no apetecen honras ni desean conveniencias, sino en obedecer a cierraojos a lo que dispone la obediencia, como lo hacía este siervo de Dios, sin que por esto le faltasen motivos continuados de ejercitar la virtud de la paciencia en las muchas y varias persecuciones que padeció mientras estuvo en esta Provincia, que son varias las sendas que guían al hombre a la bienaventuranza. Pero, aunque todas sean angostas y sean tantos los caminos, todos han de ir a parar a otro más estrecho que es el de la persecución. Por este conviene que pasen los que caminan para el cielo, y este han de seguir los que buscan a Dios.

Era esto V. Padre de las prendas y virtud que dejamos dicho, pero para examinar Dios los muchos y altos quilates de esta, quiso probarle con repetidas persecuciones, o con una sola y tan dilatada que empezó cuando entró en Filipinas este V. Padre, y no dio fin hasta que le puso a sus días. Esta fue tanto más en él cuanto

himself a superior the next day. This keeps the superiors always watchful and concerned, which gives their subordinates all the opportunities to exercise their patience and gain merits if they submit, as they ought, to the will of their superiors.

The Venerable Fray Francisco fully understood how unavoidable such unexpected changes were in this land since, more than anyone else, he had experience in himself its natural fickleness. But, as his heart was fixed in God and he had made holy obedience the guiding star of his actions, he always remained constant, and he was never disturbed by whatever decisions his Superiors made regarding his person. He felt equally at ease in the best ministry as in the worst, and was always ready to go down from his elevated position as to resume it; with the same facility, he welcomed an assignment to the Missions as he received parochial work, without feeling elated by one or perturbed by the other. For him, it was just the same to be Vicar Provincial of the province of Pangasinan as to be removed from his elevated post in order to be made assistant to a town Vicar. In this, he proved to be as perfect a Religious as he was an obedient subordinate. And, as in the former he tried by means of his natural wit to hide his great religiosity, so he endeavored in the latter with all his intellect to dissimulate his remarkable proficiency in virtue.

From this, the hypocrites may learn that true virtue does not consist in twisting one's head or in saying that they do not crave for honors or long for conveniences, but rather in blindly doing whatever comes by way of obedience, just as the Servant of God did. And so, he never lacked motivations for continuously practising the virtue of patience in the many and varied persecutions which came his way while he was in the province of Pangasinan, they being as many as the paths that lead a soul to heaven. This narrow path of patient endurance in persecution must be followed by those who search for God.

The Venerable Father was endowed with the qualities and virtues already mentioned; but in order to test their excellence, God was pleased to purify him with repeated persecutions or, to put it more accurately, with only one, but it was so protracted that, having begun when the Servant of God arrived in the Philippines, it did not end until the last days of his life. This afflicted him so much as domestic enemies cause more grief than outside ones. By this

exceden los enemigos domésticos a los extraños. Por este camino le trajo Dios a la cumbre de la virtud: que lo precioso de esta no se conoce si no se prueba en el fuego de la persecución. Bien dio a entender este V. Padre los quilates de la suya, pues no sólo no descaecía en este dificultoso camino, sino que cada día se mostraba más robusto y gallardo para aguantar las precisas incomodidades que han de experimentar los que caminan por él.

Cuando el siervo de Dios fue ministro de los pueblos de Asingán y de San Bartolomé, eran muchos los negros gentiles que andaban por aquellos parajes, haciendo muertes en los patíños (sic) pangasinanes, como lo han de costumbre. Llega a tanto la barbaridad de esta nación, que tienen por honra y se glorían en cortar cabezas de hombres. Por esto no se atrevían los de Pangasinan a ir por aquellos parajes, si no iban muchos y bien armados, y aun así iban con un continuo sobresalto. Pero, si acontecía el ir con ellos el siervo de Dios, todos cobraban esfuerzo, pareciéndole a cada uno que él solo podía con todos los negros juntos; y aun muchas veces aconteció el ir el V. Padre solo con su muchacho por aquellos montes sin temor ni recelo alguno.

Hallábase el siervo de Dios ministro del pueblo de San Bartolomé, y también tenía a su cargo el pueblo de San Luis de Asingán, como queda dicho; pero como era tan grande el fuego de la caridad que ardía en su pecho, tenía muy a mal el ver con sus ojos innumerables almas que el demonio tenía cautivas con las cadenas de la infidelidad en la provincia de Ituy, que está de allí no lejos.

Lo otro, que siendo cristianos, huían el yugo suave de la verdadera ley. Esto le hizo salir de su recogimiento y hacer varias entradas en aquella bárbara nación, aunque sin fruto a los primeros pasos, por los radicales que estaban en su antigua ceguedad, sin querer dar oídos a los repetidos ladridos que daba a sus puertas este can dominicano. No por eso descaecía en su empeño este ca-

path, God led him to the summit of virtue, which is all the more appreciated because it was tested in the fire of persecution.

The Reverend Father proved well the sterling quality of his own virtue as shown by the fact that he did not slacken in this difficult road; on the contrary, with each day that passed, he showed himself more robust and ever ready to bear the unavoidable discomforts that must be experienced by those who walk along it.

When the Servant of God was ministering to the towns of Asingan and San Bartolome, the Negritoes who were accustomed to roam about those places were in the habit of murdering unwary Pangasinences found outside the inhabited towns. Such is the barbarity of this race that such people hold it a matter of honor and pride to cut men's heads. For this reason, the Pangasinences never ventured to pass through those uninhabited places unless they were many and well-armed, and even when they did so, they were always fearful of a treacherous attack. Yet, when they went with the Servant of God, they gathered courage, strangely confident in his ability to bring to their knees all the Negritoes in the area. On many occasions, it did happen that the Servant of God would cross those mountains without apprehension or fear, accompanied only by one boy-servant, and he always came out unharmed.

The Servant of God was ministering to the town of San Bartolome while also taking charge of the town of San Luis of Asingan, as has already been stated; but, as the fire of charity that was burning within his breast was so great, he could not bear to see the innumerable souls that the devil was keeping captive with the chains of heathenism in the province of Ituy, which is not far from there.

On the other hand, there were those who called themselves Christians but who were trying to shake off the gentle yoke of the true law. This compelled him to leave the safety of the towns and make several incursions into the areas of those barbaric races although there were no tangible results initially, due to the fact that those people were deeply-rooted in their ancient blindness and were without the will to listen to the repeated barkings of this Dominican dog which sounded right at their gates. Yet, this was not enough to deter this watchful dog from his intent; on the

chorro vigilante, antes iba y venía para aventar con sus ladridos al demonio, lobo sangriento, que tenía tiranizado aquel desdichado rebaño.

En las actas del Capítulo Provincial del año de 1702, encomendó la Provincia al siervo de Dios la conversión de la dicha nación de los ituyes. Este mandato superior parece que le sirvió de estímulo para proseguir con mayor empeño esta gloriosa empresa. ¿Qué descomodidades, qué desacatos, qué fríos no padeció para mover a aquellas gentes al conocimiento del verdadero Dios? Su gran caridad le precisaba a irse por los lugares más incultos, a buscar, como mastín castizo, muchas ovejas que tenía descarriadas nuestro común enemigo el demonio, del rebaño del mejor pastor, Cristo. Pues, siendo muchos de ellos cristianos antiguos, bautizados por los religiosos nuestros que en tiempos pasados habían andado por aquellos parajes, apostataron de la fe y vivían como bárbaros entre aquellos gentiles.

Como el siervo de Dios tenía firme esperanza y todo su corazón puesto en Dios, como otro esforzado David no temía, aunque le cercasen millares de enemigos. Por entre millares de infieles se entraba solo armado sólo con el escudo de la fe y con la floriga de la caridad; esta le daba valor para no temer a nadie y a entrarse solo por los montes enteros con las incomodidades que se deja entender y con los auxilios que se pueden esperar de una gente bárbara en su nativo suelo.

Después de tantos trabajos, de rigurosas disciplinas, de repetidas oraciones y continuos gemidos que despedía al cielo el siervo de Dios, se ablandaron aquellos empedernidos corazones. Y con el divino favor, muchos de los apóstatas se reconciliaron, y muchos de los infieles recibieron el santo bautismo. Muchos millares de almas seguían ya al V. Padre, pareciendo otro san Vicente Ferrer en su método, y otro Santo Domingo en lo ardiente de su caridad.

Supo el siervo de Dios la hora de su muerte, la que fue llorada no sólo de los cristianos sino también de los infieles. La causa de su muerte fue el mucho cansancio que padeció entre aquellas gentes, ayudando a esto el andar a pie, el continuo ayuno y las muchas mojadadas que recibió aquel mortificado cuerpo. Habiendo recibido

contrary, he often visited them in order to put the devil to flight with his barkings, that bloody wolf that had long tyrannized that unlucky flock.

In the Acts of the Provincial Chapter of the year 1702, the Province entrusted to the Servant of God the conversion of the Isinay race. This command of his Superiors gave him a greater determination to undertake this enterprise despite the setbacks he had experienced. What discomforts did he not endure, how much lack of respect, how many exposures to the inclemency of the weather did he not undergo in order to bring those peoples to the knowledge of the true God? His great charity urged him to visit the most out-of-the-way places, like a watchdog of pure breed, in search of the flock that the devil, our common enemy, had led astray from the Good Shepherd, Jesus Christ. Many of them were old Christians who were baptized by our Religious in times past when they visited those places and had now fallen from the Faith and were living like barbarians among heathens. Yet, the Servant of God, steadfast in his faith and having surrendered his heart totally to the will of God, was fearless, like another valiant David, even if besieged by thousands of enemies. For he threw himself into the midst of thousands of infidels, alone and armed only with the shield of faith and the coat of mail of charity which filled him with courage so that he feared no one and could go into the thick forests, undergoing unimaginable discomforts, with little help from those primitive people in their own land.

Armed with the merits from so many labours, rigorous self-flagellation, repeated prayers, and uninterrupted sighs, he was able to soften those hardened hearts and, with God's help, many of the apostates were reconciled and many infidels received Holy Baptism. In time, thousands of souls were following the Venerable Father who looked like another Vincent Ferrer for his apostolic method and another St. Dominic for his burning charity.

When the Servant of God became aware of his impending death, it was mourned not only by the Christians but also by the infidels. His eventual death was the result of exhaustion caused by heavy work among those people, aggravated by too much travelling on foot, frequent and regular fasting, and his mortified body oftentimes getting wet from the rains and the intense humidity of the place. Having received the Last Sacraments from a

todos los santos sacramentos de mano de un religioso de N.P.S. Agustín con mucha devoción y ternura, conmutó esta miserable vida por la eterna, en un pueblo pequeño llamado Burubur.

Es común tradición en esta provincia de Pangasinan que, para morir, se arrimó el siervo de Dios a un árbol y que en su muerte se oyeron campanillas que se tocaban en lo alto, y unas voces muy sonoras que causaban una suave música, y que todo esto lo oyeron hasta los gentiles, y decían ser música de ángeles.

Fue enterrado el venerable cuerpo en el dicho pueblo de Burubur y, habiéndose destruido dicho pueblo, le trasladaron los Padres de N.P.S. Agustín al pueblo de Caranglán, donde se conserva hasta hoy enterrado en el suelo, por omisión de la Orden, que hay santos de tejas abajo desgraciados.

Cuando le desenterraron para trasladarle, que fue un año después de su dichosa muerte, encontraron el santo cadáver entero, y lo mismo al hábito de su Orden con que fue sepultado. Sólo las suelas de los zapatos estaban podridas, no obstante el ser muy húmedo el lugar en que fue enterrado.

Un hombre del pueblo de Calasiao que abrió la sepultura para desenterrarle, aseguró delante de varias personas que él mismo fue el que cabó la sepultura del siervo de Dios, y que sin querer le había dado una azadonada en el pescuezo y que estaba tan fresco que empezó a pulular la sangre. Así honra Dios a los que le sirven. ¡Sea por siempre alabado!

Esto es, M.R.P. Provincial, Fr. Bernardo Ustáriz (4 de mayo de 1743) lo que he podido averiguar en suma de la vida de este siervo de Dios, de varias personas que le trataron y comunicaron y de otras que le sirvieron. Cuantos tienen noticia de este V. Padre en esta provincia la aclaman por *santo* Padre.

Como ha venido tarde la providencia de averiguar sus virtudes, no hay ya religiosos que sepan con fundamento su vida interior, de la que no dudo habría mucho que decir, y más siendo

religious of the Order of Our Father St. Augustine with great devotion and tenderness, he exchanged this miserable earthly life for the eternal one on one glorious day in a small town called Burubur.

It is said even today by the people of Pangasinan that when the Servant of God was about to die, he leaned against a tree and, when he died, people heard the ringing of bells and the sound of many beautiful voices which made even the infidels who also heard them, remark that it was like the music of angels.

His venerable body was buried in the said town of Burubur and when this town was destroyed, the Religious of Our Father St. Augustine transferred it to the town of Caranglan, where it is still buried in the ground due to the lack of diligence on the part of the Order; for there are holy men who, here on earth, do not receive the honors due them.

When, one year after his happy death, his remains were exhumed for transfer to Caranglan, the Religious found his body intact, together with the habit of the Order with which he had been shrouded. Only the soles of the shoes were rotten. This remarkable phenomenon cannot be explained, considering the fact that the place where he had been interred was watery.

A man from the town of Calasiao who opened the tomb to unearth the remains testified in the presence of several persons that he himself had dug out the tomb of the Servant of God and that when his hoe accidentally hit the cadaver on the neck, blood started to flow, for the body felt and looked fresh, and the Venerable Father looked as if he were merely sleeping. In such a way does God honor those who serve Him. May He be blessed forever!

This, Very Rev. Father Provincial, Fr. Bernardo Ustariz (May 4, 1743), is what I have been able to gather, all in all, about the life of this Servant of God, from several people who had known him very well and from others who had served him. All those who came to know about this Venerable Father in this province acclaim him as a *holy* priest.

As the precept to make an investigation about his virtues came late, there are no longer any living Religious who may have been, by virtue of their office, acquainted with his interior life, about which, there is no doubt, there would be much to say. It is

tan cauto el siervo de Dios, quien siempre tiró a ocultar su mucha virtud, por su rara humildad.

Quien me parece podrá dar más razón de su vida, son los Padres de Bujay y el Padre Fr. Alejandro Cacho, de la Orden de San Agustín, misioneros en aquellos montes, y un criado de este Padre llamado Sinumlat, a quien bautizó siendo ya adulto el V. Padre Maza. Este indígena dicen que era criado del siervo de Dios, y le asistió a su muerte, y es muy ladino, y así estoy en que dará bastante razón de todo.

Lo que llevo expresado en esta relación lo he oído a personas fidedignas, e hice esta averiguación en cumplimiento del precepto de santa obediencia que me impuso mi Prelado para este efecto.

Y, por ser así, lo firmé en este pueblo de Binmaley en 5 de noviembre de 1743.

Fr. Fernando de Sta. María, O.P.

(Ms. en APSR, Manila, Sección "Biografías,"
Tomo 1, Fols. 351-362; también en "microfilm,"
en UST Central Library, "Section
of microfilms" C, Roll 17.)

known, too, that the Servant of God was blessed with a rare humility that made him hide his virtuous life.

I believe that those who could shed more light on his life are the Religious of Buhay, and Fr. Alejandro Cacho of the Order of St. Augustine, missionaries (who worked) in those mountains, and also a servant of the latter named Sinumlat, who was baptized in his adult age by the Ven. Father Maza. This native — so they say — was a servant of the Servant of God, who attended to him until his death. He (Sinumlat) is very intelligent and I think he can give much information on the life of the Ven. Father Maza in the missions.

I have verified what I have written in this regard from trustworthy persons. I have made this investigation in compliance with the precept of holy obedience, imposed on me by my Superior for this purpose.

And in witness thereof, I sign it in this town of Binmaley on the fifth day of November of 1743.

Fr. Fernando de Sta. María, O.P.

(MS in APSR [Archives of the province of Our Lady of the Rosary] Section "Biografias", Vol. 1 fols. 351-362; also in microfilm at the Centray Library of the University of Santo Tomas, Section of "microfilms" C, Roll 17).