

SEPTEMBER 10
BLESSED FRANCIS GÁRATE
RELIGIOUS
OPTIONAL MEMORIAL

Francis Gárate was born in the hamlet of Recarte near Loyola (Guipúzcoa) in the year 1857 and, on completion of his elementary education, he went, in 1871, to do domestic work in the College of "Nuestra Señora de la Antigua," directed by the Jesuits at Orduña. In 1874, he entered the Society at Poyanne in France, and from 1877 till 1888 carried out the work of infirmarian and assistant sacristan in the College of St. James the Apostle in La Guardia (Pontevedra). Thereafter, for nearly forty years, right up to his death, he was doorkeeper at the University College in Deusto (Bilbao), where he was an example to all by his outstanding charity, hard work, courtesy, and other virtues. He died in 1929, and was enrolled among the Blessed by John Paul II in 1985.

From the Common of Men Saints, for Religious

THE OFFICE OF READINGS

Second Reading

From a letter of Cardinal Pietro Boetto, S.J., Archbishop of Genoa, one-time Visitor of the Spanish Assistency S.J.
(In: C. Testore, d.C.d.G., *Un portiano santo: Fratello Francesco Gárate, d.C.d.G.* Tipografia Pont. Univ. Gregoriana, Roma, 1941, pp. 7-8.)

I must say that the most precious memory of my time in Spain is that of the excellent Brother Doorkeeper of our University College of Deusto (Bilbao).

There was nothing remarkable in his outward appearance, but it was enough to exchange words with him even for a short time to realize that he was a man of deep Ignatian spirituality, endowed with outstanding virtues.

During my stay at Deusto, I would often stop in the porter's lodge, as I went in and out of the house, so as to be able to watch him in action. That entrance hall was a place of ceaseless activity: parents wanting to speak to their sons, all kinds of visitors asking to see the Fathers or the professors, tradesmen delivering their goods, beggars asking for alms. And all of them, as I saw for myself, were received or taken leave of with a gentle smile. He tried to satisfy each one's request; for everyone he had a courteous and friendly word and all this with truly remarkable serenity and calm.

What impressed me specially was the way in which, in the midst of all the turmoil, he was able to attend to the incessant ringing of the telephone, giving satisfaction to the callers and not keeping them waiting.

One day I asked him, "How are you able, Brother, to be involved in so many things and yet remain so calm, never losing your patience?" His reply was, "Father, I do what I can, and leave the rest to the Lord, who can do everything. With his help all is easy and pleasant, because we serve a good master." An answer worthy of a holy man of outstanding religious virtue.

Responsory (Apoc. 3:20; Mt. 24:46)

R. Behold I stand at the door and knock; if anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in to him, and eat with him and he with me.

V. Blessed is that servant whom his master, when he comes, will find so doing. I will come. . . .

Concluding Prayer

God, rewarder of the faithful, who have given us in Blessed Francis an outstanding example of enduring fidelity in your service, grant that, following in his footsteps, we may open our hearts to Christ and serve him in the poor. We ask this through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever.