

Blessed Maria Milagros Ortelles Gimeno (1882-1936)



he was born in Zaragoza on 29 November 1882, the third and last child of Enrique Ortelles and Dolores Gimeno. She was baptised the following day in the parish church of San Juan Bautista. She was very devout during her childhood, and the family atmosphere in which she grew was outstandingly Christian. Her acquaintances recalled that “her piety was extraordinary. Her love for penance was unique, to the point where one day her mother found inhaling foul odours because she had no other way to mortify herself ... In the church, instead of sitting on a seat, she would sit on the floor...”

The Capuchin nun, Sister Virtudes recalled that Sister Milagros “entered the Capuchin Order, drawn by her desire for greater perfection. Her mother had suggested she enter another community, but she did not want this, because she sought the great strictness of the Capuchin rule.” She entered the Capuchin Poor Clare Monastery in Valencia on 9 October 1902. The sisters remembered that “when she entered she did so with great enthusiasm.” In this monastery she would have various offices: infirmarian, *rotara*, sacristan and novice mistress – offices that she fulfilled with great fidelity.



Her monastic sisters described her genuine personality in these words. “She was very charitable and always offered herself to lend whatever service to the sisters. She was always recollected. After midnight prayer she usually remained for a little while in the chapel with the intention of doing greater penance.” “She enjoyed a holy reputation among her monastic sisters.” “Her piety was sound. Its most noteworthy characteristic was her love for the Eucharist and for Mary Immaculate. Her penance was extraordinary. She used the discipline, hair shirts, etc. All the sisters had a high regard for her and she carefully observed the Rule. Prayer and the presence of

God were evident in her. Her humility was clearly evident, believing herself to be unworthy of offices and even of receiving the Eucharist.”

At the outbreak of the revolution she had to take refuge in the house of her sister Maria in Valencia. There she led a life of prayer and recollection. Then she took refuge in a house in Via Maestro Chapí. A group of militiamen arrested her there on 20 November 1936. With seventeen other religious sisters she was killed in the place known as “Picadero de Paterna”. She was buried in the cemetery in Valencia. On 30 April 1940 her remains were exhumed and taken to the Capuchin Poor Clare monastery in Valencia where they rest today.

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