

## ***Claret and Antonia París committed to giving birth to a “New Order”***

### **CROSSING THE SEAS...**

The things regarding travel did not turn out as Claret proposed. But finally, they left Barcelona for the island of Cuba on February 22, 1852 after much waiting and with big number of difficulties. And, “thus armed with trust in my God, and being certain that only He could save me and all those He had entrusted me from so many dangers of this impending frightening trip... I said within myself: the Lord is the defender of my life, what grave danger can frighten you? This would be an offense to God’s paternal care for his children, who carries them in the palm of his hands” (París Aut 135)

Sailing became extremely difficult, with very serious dangers due to the ship rupture; they had to drain water for more than 29 days and nights. The integrity and serenity with which Antonia lived these circumstances were transmitted to her companions and served as great support to the crew. Finally, they had to land in Lanzarote and remained there from 29th March to 3rd May, until the steamer was fixed. Thrown back into the sea, they experienced a special closeness of Mary: “One day the tide was high and being chastened by the storm, I was startled by natural fear, but immediately I invoked Mary Most Holy ... and she told me: “have courage My daughter” and she spread her cloak over us all and she said: “Look, this is how I go ahead to the ship’s stern defending you from the impacts of hell” (París Aut 145-160). The constant prayer to Mary and assurance in her maternal presence was proof of the Virgin's protection over the nascent Congregation.

In the Autobiography, Antonia shares of the pain caused by the disappointment of not finding Archbishop when they arrived to Santiago. «We landed to Santiago de Cuba on May 26, 1852. We were received with much applause from all over the city. But God Our Lord, who in all things makes me taste ... bitter and sweet, took off the pleasure of meeting the Archbishop there, who was the only person I knew in this new world ... although God Our Lord took off the true satisfaction of meeting the Prelate, he arranged that the Provisor and other person carryout very well ... » (París Aut 161).

On 3rd June, Claret wrote from Manzanillo: “I just received the two esteemed letters from you, the one written from Canary Islands and the other from Cuba. Thank God you have arrived. Now rest, entrust me to God so that he may inspire us the way he wants to be served by you. As you tell me, although I am not present, everything is done as I arranged before I left”.