

# Stewardship Saint for June: Saint María Guadalupe García Zavala

A JUAREZ | JUNE 7, 2024



## SAINT MARÍA GUADALUPE GARCÍA ZAVALA

María Guadalupe García Zavala was born in 1878 in Zapopan, Jalisco, Mexico. As a child she made frequent visits to the Basilica of Our Lady of Zapopan, located next to her father's religious goods shop. Her acquaintances said Maria treated everyone with equal respect and kindness.

At age 23, Maria was engaged to be married, but broke it off because of a growing sense that the Lord was calling her to life in religious community and of service to the sick and the poor. When she confided this change of heart to her spiritual director, he revealed his own desire to establish a religious community to work with those who were hospitalized. He invited María to join him.

The new congregation, which officially began in 1901, was known as the "Handmaids of St. Margaret Mary (Alacoque) and the Poor." María worked as a nurse in the hospital. Compassion and care for the physical and spiritual well-being of the sick were the primary concerns. María worked tirelessly.

Sister María was soon named head of the quickly-growing community of sisters. She taught the community, mostly by her example, the importance of living the Gospel's spirit of poverty. This included living a life of humility and exhibiting joy and a loving demeanor each day to each person they encountered

At times, Mother María and others in the community would take to the streets begging in order to collect money for the hospital. The sisters also worked in parishes to assist the priests and to serve as catechists.

From 1911 until 1936, the Catholic Church in Mexico underwent severe persecution. Mother María put her own life at risk to help the clergy of Guadalajara, and even the archbishop, go into hiding in the community's hospital. The humble and generous treatment she extended even to their persecutors when they needed food or medical care did not go unnoticed. It was not long before they, too, began defending the hospital run by the sisters.

During her lifetime, 11 foundations were established in Mexico. Today, the religious community has 22 foundations and is active in Mexico, Peru, Iceland, Greece and Italy.

Mother María died on June 24, 1963, at the age of 85. Her feast day is June 24

## ICSC June Stewardship Prayer

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*Dear Heavenly Father,  
As we dedicate this month of  
June to the Sacred Heart of  
Jesus, we ask you to grant to  
us compassionate hearts;  
hearts rich with your love,  
embraced by your  
compassion.*



*Grant us generous hearts:  
hearts that never count the  
cost; hearts that seek to serve and not be served.*

*Grant us hearts that love peace: hearts that promote truth and justice,  
transform hatred and anger, and seek unity and reconciliation.*

*Grant us hearts of a steward: hearts that are filled with gratitude,  
eager to share, and long to give back to you.*

*Grant us hearts filled with your Spirit: hearts open to conversion, filled  
with hope, and on fire with your Word.*

*We pray this in Jesus' name. Amen*