



Sangguniang Laiko ng Pilipinas
CBCP Episcopal Commission on the Laity

CBCP Circular on the Causes of Beatification and Canonization of Mother Francisca del Espiritu Santo

[August 6, 2017 News](#)



CATHOLIC BISHOPS' CONFERENCE OF THE PHILIPPINES

Circular N. 17-13

Your Eminences, Your Excellencies, and Reverend Administrators:

At the CBCP Permanent Council meeting last July 7, 2017, the request of the Dominican Sisters of St. Catherine of Siena, Philippines, for the bishops to give them the opportunity to promote the Causes of Beatification and Canonization of Mother Francisca del Espiritu Santo de Fuentes, the Foundress of the said congregation, was presented and approved.

Enclosed is a brief description of her life. She exhibited the life of heroic virtue in particular, Eucharistic and Marian devotion, charity of neighbor and strength and perseverance amidst trials and difficulties. In the end, the Congregation which she founded exemplifies the ideals of consecrated life. Today, we know of the laudable work the sisters of the Order have accomplished and continue to accomplish in the Church in the Philippines.

It is for this reason that I write to you to help in the promotion of the Servant of God, Mother Francisca del Espiritu Santo de Fuentes. This will entail: 1. Distribution of printed materials regarding the life of Mother Francisca in parishes, schools and other communities; and 2. A simple conference on the life and virtues of Mother Francisca to the members of the laity.

The Dominican Sisters will be at hand to assist in promoting the Cause.

Given at the Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines, Intramuros, Manila, Philippines, this twentieth day of July in the year of the Lord Two Thousand and Seventeen.

+ SOCRATES B. VILLEGAS, D.D.
President
Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines

MOTHER FRANCISCA DEL ESPIRITU SANTO DE FUENTES (1647- 711)

(Foundress of the *Beaterio de Santa Catalina de Manila* now the Congregation of Dominican Sisters of St. Catherine of Siena Philippines)

In the diocese of Manila, in the 17th and 18th centuries, the Holy Spirit, the Lord and life-giver , inspired some forms of community life among women, that were connected with the spirituality of the religious Orders who were the evangelizers of the Philippine Islands from the end of the 16th century.

Experiences of this type were the foundations of some “*Beaterios*” which in more recent times opened up and become religious congregations. Such are the foundations of Servant of God Ignacia del Espiritu Santo (1663-1748) and of the Servants of God Cecilia Rosa Talangpaz and Dionisia MitasTalangpaz (1731-1732).

The older among them, was Francisca, daughter of Simon de Fuentes and Ana del Castillo y Tamayo, born in Manila in 1647, which became a Dominican Tertiary in 1682 with the name of Francisca del Espiritu Santo. In 1686, she together with 3 companions, opted to a form of Christian community life, under the Rule of the Third Order of St. Dominic and with the approval granted in 1688 by the Master General of the Friars Preacher, Antonino Cloche.

The *Beaterio*, dedicated to the great teacher, St. Catherine of Siena, was definitively established on July 26, 1696 with the profession of Mother Francisca and 7 other *beatas*, among them was her blood sister Ana Maria. They benefitted from the guidance of the Dominican Friars, among whom was Fr. Juan de Santo Domingo, author of a 50pp manuscript completed on October 28, 1711, “*Breve Relacion de la fundacion del Beaterio de Santa Catalina de esta ciudad de Manila*” published posthumously in 1911.

The institution endured difficult trials in its first years, even with the expulsion of its members from the place for 2 years. But the difficulties were largely external, arising from conflict of jurisdiction between the Dominican Order and the Archbishop of Manila. The *Beaterio* resumed its life and activity from 1706 opening its door to a large group of native girls to educate them in the faith and perfection of Christian of life. The personality of Mother Francisca was the unifying element and promoter of much Christian vitality. As foundress, she brought forth exemplary strength and virtues: Eucharistic and Marian devotion, compassionate charity of neighbor, strength in trials, penance, love of community and observance of the Rule.

Mother Francisca died in the peace of the saints on the 24th of August 1711 and was buried in the Church of the *Colegio de San Juan de Letran*. Her tomb was over the steps of the main altar on the gospel side. She left a memory of virtue and still lives today.

For this, the Congregation that reveres her as Mother, on the occasion of celebrating the 3rd centenary of the Foundation in 1996 felt inspired to deepen its knowledge and veneration of the life and charism of Francisca, the sisters felt the desire to promote her Cause for Beatification.

(*Supplex Libellus, Copia Publica*, pp. 11-12)

His Eminence Jaime L. Cardinal Sin on the 25th of July, 2000 decreed the acceptance of the “Supplex Libellus” in accord with the guidelines of the Apostolic Constitution “*Divinus perfectionis Magister*.”

On December 20, 2002, His Eminence Jaime L. Cardinal Sin, Archbishop of Manila, sent a letter to His Eminence Jose Cardinal Saraiva Martins to recommend the formal introduction of the Cause for Canonization of Mother Francisca. On March 11, 2003, The Prefect of the Congregation of the Causes of Saints, Joseph Cardinal Saraiva Martins granted the NIHIL OBSTAT of the Causes of Beatification and Canonization of the Servant of God Francisca del Espiritu Santo de Fuentes.

On July 8, 2003, The Archbishop of Manila, instructed all the Members of the Tribunal, the Members of the Historical Commission and the Members of the Theological Commission to appear at nine o'clock in the morning at the Sto. Domingo Church, Quezon City, for them to accept their respective designation, to make their oath and take active part in the first session of the Process.

On the 6th day of December 2003, the Judge Delegate convoked the board of inquiry at 9:00 in the morning in the presence of the Promoter of Justice and the Notary presented the original acts and two authentic copies of the process by the Judge Delegate on the life, virtues and on-cult of the Servant of God, Mother Francisca del Espiritu Santo. He ordered that the original acts be deposited in the archives of the Archdiocese of Manila and that the copies be sent to the Congregation for the Causes of Saints by the Chairperson of the Mother Francisca Commission.

(Copia Publica, pp 14-21)

The Decree of Validity on the Diocesan Inquiry was granted in June 2007 which allowed the writing of the *POSITIO* on the Life, Virtues and Fame of Sanctity of Mother Francisca. The completion of the *POSITIO* was in 2012. The Mother Francisca Commission received a copy of the *POSITIO* in December 2014 with the favorable evaluation from the Historical Experts of the Vatican.

The translated letter of the Cardinal, Angelo Amato, the Cardinal Prefect of the Congregation for the Causes of Saints informed Mo. Ma. Jesusa Enginco, OP, former Prioress General of the Dominican Sisters of St. Catherine of Siena: “***I am happy to inform you that nevertheless the long list of Positio waiting for their turn, the Cause of the abovementioned Servant of God is proposed to the study by the Theological Consultors of the Dicastery within the first half of 2018. Once the result is positive, it will be followed with the Ordinary Session of Cardinals and Bishops.***

However, for the Beatification, a need for a recognized miracle happened through the intercession of the Servant of God. As of the moment no case has been reported here.

Therefore, you invite your co-sisters and the faithful to spread the knowledge of Mother Francisca and to invoke her intercession in their needs with the trust of obtaining a miraculous intervention”