



PONTIFICIA
UNIVERSIDAD
CATÓLICA
DE CHILE

EXHIBITION

Charism and Mission:

religious orders in Southern
Andean Viceregal Art.



Collection Joaquín Gandarillas Infantes. American colonial art.

INTRODUCTION

The evangelization of the pre-Columbian peoples of America through art was a highly complex undertaking, especially in the territory of the Viceroyalty of Peru. More than just a vehicle of faith, art also allowed the transmission of European culture and the construction of a visual language capable of dialogue with local cultures. This process is inseparable from the fundamental role of religious orders — organized into male, female, and secular branches— whose presence extended for over three centuries.

The charism and mission of Franciscans, Dominicans, Mercedarians, Augustinians, Carmelites, Hospitallers and Benedictines gave rise to an abundant and diverse artistic production. Paintings, sculptures, architecture and devotional objects conveyed the Christian message in churches, convents, schools and public spaces. This heritage, represented in the Joaquín Gandarillas Infante collection, bears witness to a historical, spiritual and artistic process that deeply marked the southern Andean region.

COATS OF ARMS



AUGUSTINIAN

Features a book, a miter, a staff and a cross, symbols of the episcopate of Saint Augustine, next to a burning heart pierced by a dart, an image of the burning love of God. The *Tolle, lege* (Latin for “take up and read”) inscription recalls the episode of his conversion.



HOSPITALLERS

A pomegranate —symbol of the city of Granada— accompanied by a cross and other emblems that allude to sacrifice, charity and attention to human suffering.



BENEDICTINES

Cross on three mountains, accompanied by the word *Pax* (Latin for “peace”), the fundamental motto of the order and synthesis of its spiritual life.



CARMELITES

It represents Mount Carmel crowned by a cross and three stars, symbols of spiritual ascent, religious vows and the different branches of the order. Sometimes the armed arm of the prophet Elijah appears.



FRANCISCANS

The Tau cross, a sign of conversion and salvation, accompanied by the crossed arms of Christ and Saint Francis, an image of their spiritual identification with the Crucified One.



DOMINICANS

Floral cross on black and white field, colors that refer to the habit and mission of preaching the truth. Sometimes the rosary is incorporated as a symbol of prayer.



MERCEDARIANS

Of royal origin, it combines the Greek cross of the Cathedral of Barcelona on a red background and the red and gold bars of the Kingdom of Aragon, symbols of charity, sacrifice and redemption of captives.



JESUITS

A radiant sun with the acronym IHS crossed by the cross, abbreviation of the name of Jesus and expression of its centrality in Jesuit spirituality; at the foot, the three nails of the Crucifixion.

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Each religious order, except the Society of Jesus and the Hospitallers of Saint John of God, is composed of three branches –two consecrated, male and female, and one secular– and is identified by its habit and by the elements that make it up –tunic, scapular, hood, cloak, belt or cord–, as well as by the colors used, which are closely linked to the ideals of the founder and the evangelizing mission of each congregation. Added to this is the emblem or coat of arms, loaded with symbolic meanings, which usually appears in the monastic habit, in its attributes or in the objects used for the ministry.

The common base of this clothing is the clerical tunic, which reaches down to the heels, and whose origin goes back to ancient and biblical traditions associated with purity and the control of the passions. From the Christian perspective, the robe covers the body and leaves visible only the elements necessary for evangelizing action: the face that proclaims the faith, the hands that serve and the feet that proclaim the Gospel.

Unlike liturgical vestments, which are often sumptuous, the religious habit expresses the poverty professed by those who wear it. For this reason, it is characterized by its simplicity, spaciousness and austerity. In the male institutes, the cassock predominated, while in the female congregations the local vestments were adapted to the demands of the apostolate, always maintaining a visual language of consecration.

AUGUSTINIANS

Male habit: Black clerical tunic with wide sleeves, fitted with a one-piece leather belt in the same colour and a black chapel.

Female habit: Nuns wear the same black habit, with a white headdress and black veil.

Black symbolizes the renunciation of the world and the penitential spirit inherited from the first hermits followers of Saint Augustine.

BENEDICTINES

Male habit: Black clerical with wide sleeves and hood, long scapular and leather belt.

Female habit: Nuns wear the same habit, with a white headdress and black veil.

Black represents death to the world, as well as the penance and poverty typical of Benedictine monasticism. In the choir, they use the cogulla, or choral habit.

HOSPITALLERS OF SAINT JOHN OF GOD

Habit: Dark grey or black sackcloth tunic with hood (oval) and brown scapular up to half a leg; they can carry a backpack to help the sick with medicines and implements.
The set reflects sobriety and service.

DISCALCED CARMELITES

Male habit: Brown tunic with long scapular of the same color and, sometimes, white cape for the choir, complemented with sandals as a sign of austerity after the reform of Saint Teresa of Jesus.

Female habit: Sisters wear the same habit, with a white headdress, black veil and coral cape.

Brown alludes to humility and the penitent life; white, to purity.

FRANCISCANS

Male habit: Simple tunic of coarse wool, in earthy tones, with hood and drawstring at the waist with three knots that symbolize the vows of poverty, chastity and obedience.

POOR CLARES

Female habit: Sisters wear the same habit as Franciscans, with a white headdress and black veil. In addition, the girdle has a fourth knot that symbolizes the enclosure.

DOMINICANS

Male habit: White tunic with scapular and black cape; a rosary hangs from the belt.

Female habit: Nuns wear the same habit, with a white headdress and black veil.

White symbolizes purity and black, penance; together they express the contemplative and apostolic life of the order.

MERCEDARIANS

Male habit: White tunic of coarse fabric, with scapular and short cloak of the same color.

Female habit: Sisters wear the same habit, with a white headdress and black veil.

White expresses purity and delivery.

JESUITS

Clothing: The Society of Jesus has no habit of its own. Its members wear a black clerical tunic similar to the cassock, girded by a girdle and without buttons, and a short coat of the same color, consistent with its apostolic character. Sometimes with a black cap or tricorne.



FOUNDERS

HERMITS OF SAINT AUGUSTINE

Inspired by Saint Augustine of Hippo and his Rule, the order began with hermits in scattered communities, joining women of contemplative life from the fifth century. Formally recognized in 1244 by Pope Innocent IV, its charism focuses community life on union with God, contemplation, reading and fraternal charity.

Relevant saints: Saint Augustine of Hippo, Saint Monica, Saint Rita of Cassia.

BENEDICTINES

Founded by Saint Benedict of Nursia in Monte Cassino (c. 529), together with women who soon followed his ideals, they promoted Western monastic life with their Rule based on celibacy, prayer, work and stability. Its motto *ora et labora* expresses a charism of austerity, silence and simplicity, which inspired Cistercians and Trappists and permeated family and spiritual life.

Relevant saints: Saint Benedict of Nursia, Saint Scholastica, Saint Gregory the Great, Saint Gertrude the Great.

HOSPITALLERS OF SAINT JOHN / SAINT JOHN OF GOD

Originating in Jerusalem as a brotherhood of pilgrims (1113), they evolved into a religious and military order. Saint John of God founded the first modern hospital in Granada, focused on the care of body and mind, and his followers founded the branch that bears his name in 1563. Their charism promotes charity and service to the sick.

Relevant saints: Saint John of God, Saint John Grande.

CARMELITES / DISCALCED CARMELITES

With roots in Mount Carmel and the tradition of St. Augustine, they were consolidated in Europe in the 12th century. The reform of Saint Teresa of Jesus and Saint John of the Cross created the Discalced branch (1562-1568), with a charism of prayer, contemplation and interior life.

Relevant saints: Saint Teresa of Jesus of Avila, Saint John of the Cross, Saint Teresa of the Andes, Saint Edith Stein.

FRANCISCANS

Founded 1209 in Assisi, Italy, by St. Francis of Assisi, it is a mendicant order focused on evangelical poverty, fraternity, and service. It received approval from Pope Innocent III in Rome and spread rapidly throughout Europe and America through mission and preaching.

Relevant saints: Saint Francis of Assisi, Saint Clare of Assisi, Saint Anthony of Padua, Saint John XXIII.

POOR CLARES

The female branch of the Franciscan order, the Order of Saint Clare, was initiated in 1212, marked by the radical experience of evangelical poverty. The Poor Clares live a contemplative life centred on prayer, fraternity and work.

DOMINICANS

Created in 1216 by Saint Dominic de Guzmán in France, it combines contemplative and apostolic life, focused on preaching, teaching and the search for truth. The female branch was born contemporaneously to support this mission through prayer and praise.

Relevant saints: Saint Dominic of Guzmán, Saint Thomas Aquinas, Saint Rose of Lima, Saint Martin of Porres.

MERCEDARIANS

Founded in Barcelona by Saint Peter Nolasco (1235), its original charisma was the rescue of Christian captives. In America, the order was geared toward education and liberation from other forms of oppression, maintaining its commitment to service and redemption.

Relevant saints: Saint Peter Nolasco, Saint Ramón Nonato, Saint María Cervellón.

JESUITS

Founded by Saint Ignatius of Loyola in 1540, the Society of Jesus combines interior life with intense missionary, educational and cultural work. Its military-style organization and the motto "*To the greater glory of God*" reflect an active and purposeful global charism, decisive in the Counter-Reformation and in education to this day.

Relevant saints: Saint Ignatius of Loyola, Saint Francis Xavier, Saint Alberto Hurtado.