



# LA GRANADA



## December 2020



Order of Granaderos  
y Damas de Gálvez  
San Antonio Chapter



[www.granaderos.org](http://www.granaderos.org)



# National Meeting by Zoom

The National Order of Granaderos y Damas de Gálvez held its National Meeting on Saturday, November 7<sup>th</sup> via the internet.

Originally, we had planned to have it in person at the Hotel Gálvez in Galveston but the coronavirus changed that.

Not to be deterred, the National Officers and the officers of the Houston Chapter, which served as host, arranged a Zoom meeting for the members of every chapter, as well as special guests from Macharaviaya, Spain (the birthplace of Bernardo de Gálvez), to include its mayor. The business portion went well with the passing of resolutions regarding the national bylaws, old business, new business, chapter reports and updates from our friends in Spain.

The San Antonio Chapter had eight members in attendance. Chapter Chaplain Joe González gave the invocation, Chapter Governor gave our chapter report. Representing our chapter were Joe Perez, Alex & Melissa Zamora, Joe & Stella González, Sally Avila, Clifford Normand and Jason Bourgeois. Stella and Jason also volunteered to serve on the National Bylaws Committee.

Mark your calendars for next year's National Meeting, November 12-14, 2021 at Hotel Gálvez in Galveston.



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# Next Meeting

Wednesday, December 2

7:30 p.m. via Zoom

Meeting Link:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83259239234>

Speaker:

Joe Perez

Presentation:

Have a Merry Christmas  
and a  
Hessian New Year

## Dues-Paying Members With Birthdays in December

Dec 1

Ann Reynolds Bergeron

Dec 7

Gustavo Rodriguez

Dec 12

Judge Robert Thonhoff

Dec 15

Frank Galindo

Dec 16

Lynda Normand

Dec 20

Robert O'Bryan

Dec 24

Vedia Weathersby

Remember this about cats and dogs:

- You can not baptize a cat.
- Never trust a dog to watch your food.
- Never hold a hand-held vacuum cleaner and a cat at the same time.
- Dogs make terrible poker players, whenever they have a good hand, they wag their tails.

Governor

Joe Perez

Deputy Governor

Alex Zamora

Treasurer

Manny Rodriguez

Secretary

Janie Rodriguez

Drum Major

Ricardo Rodriguez

Chaplain

Joe González

# Prayer for Ailing Granaderos y Damas de Gálvez

Submitted by Granadero Chaplain José González

Into all our lives comes the mystery of illness and pain, veiled visitors which should always be greeted with prayer. The American Hopi Indians believed that medicine should never be given to a sick person unless prayer is also given. To turn, at times of illness, only to medical science, even with all of its marvelous gifts and knowledge, is to treat only half the person. By prayer and medicine, we do indeed find what the American Indians called "good medicine," a healing for body and soul.

With this in mind, let us now pray for our brothers and sisters, Granaderos y Damas de Gálvez, who are experiencing illness, pain, physical or emotional distress or discomfort as we pray:

"Lord of Health and Wholeness, in Your Divine Plan, You have seen fit to include, within Your marvelous creation, disease and sickness. Your servants desire to be restored to the balance of good health. Hear, O Lord, our prayers for the healing of our Granaderos y Damas brothers and sisters whom we love so much.

Remove them from illness so that, fully recovered and restored to health, they may return with renewed zeal to the daily life that we share. We trust fully in Your Divine Power to stir the hidden healing powers of the body.

Divine Healer and Lord of Wholeness, together we place ourselves in Your hands. We ask for healing but also for acceptance of Your Holy Plan for each of us. Help us embrace whatever You have decreed for our brothers and sisters and assist them in their acceptance of Your Plan, as You support them with the strength of Your Holy Spirit.

We humbly ask this in Your Son's Holy Name, Amen!"

(From "Prayers for the Domestic Church" by Edward Hays)

# DUES ARE DUE

Membership dues for 2021 are currently due by the end of this calendar year. Your support is needed to help us continue carrying out our mission of educating the public about Spain's participation in the American Revolution.

Dues can be paid via check or by PayPal. Checks made out to Granaderos may be mailed to Granaderos, P.O. Box 47785, San Antonio TX 78265. You also have the option of paying by using PayPal to [losgranaderosdegalvez@gmail.com](mailto:losgranaderosdegalvez@gmail.com). Dues are only \$30 for Full Membership,

which comes with automatic National Membership, holding office, voting privileges and discounts on books sold by the chapter. Associate Membership is \$15 and comes with the same benefits except those of holding office and voting.



If you don't pay membership dues, you're not a member.

Please help support your group by paying the membership dues in a timely manner. With your help, we will continue the mission of this unique organization. (*Honorary Members are exempt from dues.*)



For more than 20 years, Mimi Lozano has been publishing the online newsletter Somos Primos. It has been a very informative resource, dedicated to sharing information and furthering our understanding about the Hispanic heritage of our country. It has given a voice to all who were willing to share their stories of history, courage, family, patriotism, perseverance and achievement.

Fortunately, the newsletter will remain on the internet, archived for educational purposes. Although new issues will not be added, announcements such as obituaries and new books being published will serve as updates.

We thank Mimi for her tireless efforts and for serving as an example that *somos primos*.

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**Announcement to members: Due to Covid-19 restrictions, this year's chapter Christmas Party is cancelled as is the collection of toys for the Children's Shelter.**



## ***A CHRISTMAS STORY OF THE POINSETTIA***



***By Rueben M. Perez / Inspired by Robert H. Thonhoff***

It just happened... being asked to deliver some beautiful artificial poinsettias to some friends. One happened to be Robert Thonhoff, our Historian of the Granaderos y Damas de Gálvez. I keep up with Robert and Vicie Thonhoff often by phone.

Robert asked me one evening, "Do you know the story behind the poinsettia." As usual, I answered "No" and he proceeded to tell me. Well, that started another story, one I find interesting. First, the scientific name for the poinsettia is *Euphorbia pulcherrima*, (*meaning very beautiful*). It was identified as a new species in 1834 by German botanist Johann Friedrich Klotzsch, who credits Carl Ludwig Willdenow with the species name. Indigenous to Central America, the plant flourished in an area of Southern Mexico known as Taxco del Alarcon. The Aztecs called the plant *Cuetlaxochitlan* and used the plant in a variety of ways; as dye, cosmetics, and to treat fevers. Montezuma, the last Aztec king had the plants brought into Mexico City by caravans since it would not grow in high altitudes. Poinsettias are shrubs or small trees, with heights of 2 to 13 feet and became associated with the Christmas holiday and are popular seasonal decorations.



If not for the efforts of Joel Roberts Poinsett, the poinsettia may have remained unknown and unappreciated as a regional plant. Joel Poinsett was the son of a French physician and appointed as the first United States Ambassador to Mexico (1825-1829) by President Madison and later became a co-founder of the Smithsonian Institution. While visiting the Taxco area in 1828 he became enchanted with the brilliant red blooms of the poinsettia plant. He sent some back to his greenhouses in Greenville South Carolina where he began to propagate the plants and send them to his friends. A nurseryman in Pennsylvania, Robert Buist, is thought to be the first to market and sell the plants in the United States.

In Mexico, the plant is known as *flor de Nochebuena*, meaning, the Christmas Eve flower. Since the 17<sup>th</sup> century, Franciscan friars have used the poinsettia in Christmas celebrations with the star-shaped leaves representing the Star of Bethlehem and the red color representing the blood sacrifice of Jesus's crucifixion.

In the US, December 12 is National Poinsettia Day, marking the anniversary of Joel Robert Poinsett's death.



## ***THE POINSETTIA LEGEND***

There is a charming story of Lucida, a poor girl who had no gift to present to the Christ Child at Christmas Eve Mass. There are many variations of the story and names for the girl such as Pepita or Maria, but this one hit home. The girl in our story is named Lucida and, believe or not, the story takes place in San Antonio.



Lucida lived with her family and helped with the cooking, caring for children and feeding the burro.

Lucida also went to the shrine each evening to see if fresh candles were needed.

Everyone helped prepare for the Christmas Eve procession. The men built the nativity, the children practiced songs. Padre asked Lucida's Mama to weave a new blanket for the nativity.



Lucida helped weaving the blanket. Then Mama got sick. Papa told her to take care of things at home while he took Mama to the doctor.



Lucida tried to take care of everything, but messed up when she tried to finish weaving the blanket. The neighbor told her it would be ok, but she did not believe him. When everyone went for the procession Lucida did not. She met an old woman who told her, a **Gift from the Heart** is what matters most. So she gathered weeds to lay in the manger.....then they bloomed into Poinsettias!

***The End. Wishing all a Merry Christmas!***

### References:

*History & Legends*, University of Illinois Extension.edu

*Poinsettia*, Wikipedia

*History and Legend of the Poinsettia*, [www.phoenixflowershops.com](http://www.phoenixflowershops.com)

*Poinsettia Legend*, Storyboard, par starrhogan, Mis à jour: 11/10/2017



# *ST. GABRIEL CHURCH*

## *Part III*

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*By Rueben M. Perez*

*Edited by  
Clifford Normand*

The story of St. Gabriel Church and Parish in Louisiana is one of hope for exiled Acadians who found a place to call home. The expulsion of the Acadians, known as the Great Upheaval, the Great Deportation and *Le Grand Déangement*, was the forced removal of the Acadian people by the British from the present-day Canadian Maritime provinces of Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, Prince Edward Island, northern Maine and other parts of an area historically known as **Acadia**.

The Expulsion (1755-1764) occurred during the French and Indian War and the British campaign against New France. The first removal of the Acadians was to move them to the



Painting by George Craig depicting the 1755 Deportation in Grand-Pré, Nova Scotia, Public Domain

Thirteen Colonies. After 1758, the Acadians were transported to England and France. Approximately 11,500 Acadians were deported and 2,600 Acadians remained. British Governor Charles Lawrence and the Nova Scotia Council ordered Acadians to be removed to the British colonies, England and France, however, some migrated to Spanish Louisiana.

The Acadians wanted to remain neutral and refused to sign the unconditional oath to become British subjects. The British monarch was the head of the Protestant Church of England and the Acadians were mainly Roman Catholic. The first deportation began on August 10, 1755 at Bay of Fundi, then the Grand-Pré, Nova Scotia and Annapolis Royal.

The plights of the Acadians during **Le Grand Déangement** were harsh. Some left under the assistance of Henri Peyroux de la Coudreniere, a French politician and author, and settled in the Spanish colony of Louisiana. Others went to places such as French Guiana, Falkland Islands, and Saint-Domingue. Over a 1,000 died when both the Duke William Violet and Ruby ships sunk. Other Acadians were placed in overcrowded warehouses in England and many

were subject to the plagues or sent to lands that turned out to be infertile, forcing them to relocate again. About 1,400 were sent to the British Carolinas and Colony of Georgia and put to work on the plantations as field hands. Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, American poet memorialized the plight of the expulsion of the Acadians in his famous poem *Evangeline*.

The Louisiana population contributed to the modern Cajun population (the French word "Acadian" evolved to "Cadien". In December 2003, Governor Adrienne Clarkson, representing Queen Elizabeth II, acknowledged the expulsion, but did not apologize for it.

In 1764, the British established a trading post called Manchac and built Fort Bute at Bayou Manchac, which was the international boundary between England and Spain. Of interest is Oliver Pollock who was personally involved with Manchac and the Bayou trading post. He owned land on both sides of the Bayou and returned with Gálvez to help defeat the British at Fort Bute.

The town of Manchac was located at the point where the Mississippi River flowed into Bayou Manchac, which the British referred to as the Iberville River. As late as 1778, the British reported that large chunks of earth were falling into the river. Bayou Manchac provided a short route between the Mississippi River to Lake Ponchartrain. The Indians called the bayou *Ascantia* and the Spanish called it Manchac meaning a 'back entrance'.

Eventually, some of the land at Manchac washed away by the erosion of the river and Fort Bute disappeared.

Many Acadians found their way to Louisiana from 1759 to 1763 and settled along the Mississippi River, which led to the area being called the "Acadian Coast". Some of the exiles settled the land up to the Iberville River (or Bayou Manchac) and, being industrious, started to farm and build large plantations along the river banks.

Prominent family names such as Landry, LeBlanc, Trahan, Melanson, Clotre, Dupuy, Blanchard, Herbert Babin, Richcard, Chiasson, Como, Allein, Braud, Rivet, Capdeviel, Forret and other family names are still found there today. Still, the early settlers lacked spiritual guidance due to an absence of churches and no resident priests. In 1769, General Alexander O'Reilly requested a report to recommend where churches and priests should be located. One recommendation was the Post of St. Gabriel.



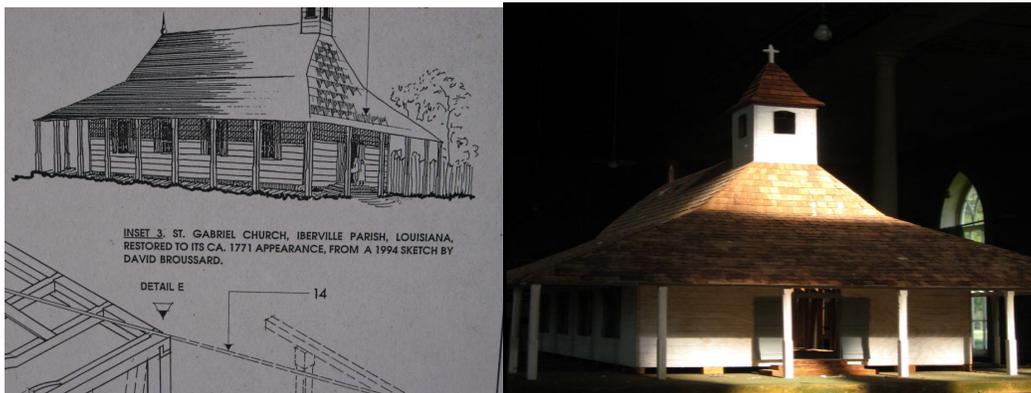
Map shows location St. Gabriel

The original settlers in St. Gabriel were originally part of some 900 Acadians exiled to Maryland. Approximately 200 reached New Orleans at the end of July or early August 1767. On August 8, 1767, the Acadians set out for New Orleans in boats provided by the Spanish Government, arriving there August 17. The Spanish provided them with land, farming tools, other services and enough provisions to sustain life until their first harvest came in.

The treaty of 1763 between England and Spain defined

Bayou Manchac as the boundary line between the two countries. The Spanish section below would become known as the *Island of Orleans*, following the French turning over Louisiana to Spain. In the meantime, the British established Fort Bute at Bayou Manchac.

In 1768, Spanish Governor Ulloa sent soldiers to build a fort on the opposite side of Bayou Manchac, approximately 400 yards from Fort Bute. A wooden bridge connected both sides of the bayou. Unfortunately, Governor Ulloa, who had little sympathy for the Acadians, sent them to settle near the new fort St. Gabriel de Manchac to help support the fort, also called *Fort of the Infante Gabriel*. The name St. Gabriel was in honor of Archangel Gabriel and also the name of a son of Spain's King Charles III. Still, there was no church for the Acadians and the need was getting greater.



Photos taken by author at St. Gabriel Church showing a drawing and a model of the church.

In 1770, Spanish Governor O'Reilly issued a royal decree for establishing a church for the Coast of Iberville to be named St. Gabriel and the parish would extend from Fort St. Gabriel to Ascension Parish. It wasn't until Spanish Governor Luis de Unzaga that, at last, the needs of the Acadians would be given attention. He reported the situation to the officials in Cuba and on July 19, 1772, two Spanish Capuchin priests were assigned to serve the Acadians in the Manchac area. The missionary work of Father Aloysius would be at St. Gabriel. In March 1774, Commandant Dustine wrote that construction on the church had not begun due to a lack of skilled craftsmen. In another letter, he writes "The settlers began [building] a church on November 20. The church is sixty feet long by thirty-three and a half feet wide. Louis LeConte, a settler from Lafourche is doing the job for the turnkey price of 1450 piastres. The settlers have decided to pay for the church with a per-arpent" (property tax)."

The church construction is a rare 18<sup>th</sup> century French colonial building now referred to as Creole Architecture. Built out of cypress from the nearby swamps, it is sturdy, solid, simple in design and still stands to this day. It is noted that about 73% of the original Creole form of the church still remains. Due to erosion by the Mississippi River, the building has been moved back several times. It still stands majestically today as it did when Gálvez saw it.

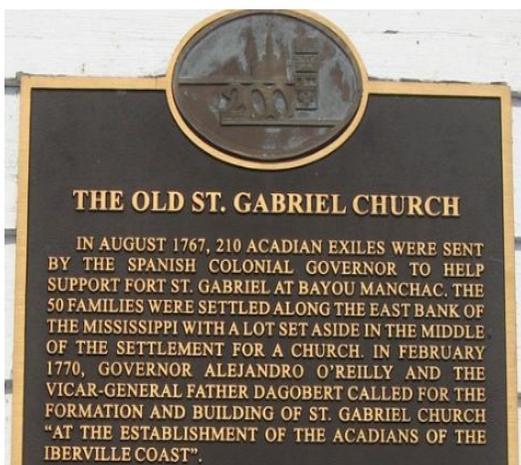


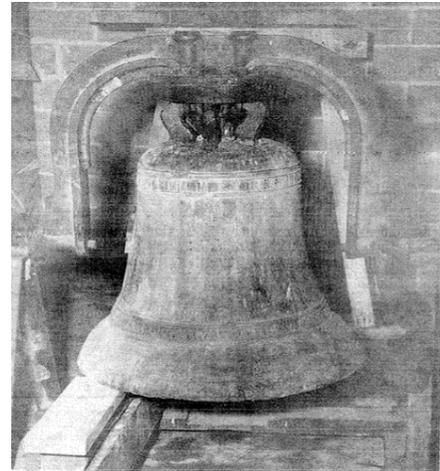


Photo furnished by Clifford Norman, note the Kerosene lamps on the posts



Photo of inside of the church today  
Picture furnished by Clifford Norman

The old St. Gabriel Church faithfully stands today, showing the resilience of the descendants whose ancestors came from afar. The bell to the right was cast in Spain and donated in 1771 to the church. Today, the bell survives in the new St. Gabriel Church built in 1953. On the top is inscribed: "***Sancta Maria de la Merceora pro nobis*** (Holy Mary of Mercy pray for us) and the lower half reads, ***Se Hizosiendo Comendador el M.R.P.I. Ygnacio de Jesus Maria, Año de 1768*** (Commissioned to be made by MRPI Ignacius of Jesus Mari, in the year 1768.



Historic Old Bell  
Sancto Maria Amereced 1768

King Carlos III of Spain declared war on England on June 21, 1779. On August 27, Gálvez and his little army of some 667 men of all sorts and colors set out to defend the colony from the English. Gálvez had endeavored to conceal from the English of West Florida that Spain and England were at war. His followers were ignorant of their real objective. Only when they had come in sight of Fort Manchac on September 6, did Gálvez announce to them that Spain had declared war and that he was ordered to attack the posts on the Mississippi. Joyfully receiving the news, his men seemed anxious to come to grips with the English.

On Sept. 7<sup>th</sup> under the command and orders of Bernardo de Gálvez, Spanish forces led by Captain Gilbert Antonio de St. Maxent (Gálvez's father-in-law) captured the fort. The answer to whether Bernardo de Gálvez went into St. Gabriel Church to pray or perhaps to recuperate from his illness is still unknown. In all likelihood, the probability remains strong, knowing the concern he had for the welfare of others, his generous donation of his personal resources, and ties to the Church as demonstrated when he was appointed Viceroy of New Spain and finished the completion of the Cathedral of México in México City.

### Interesting Facts About St. Gabriel Church

- James Bowie's brother Rezin Pleasant Bowie, a local resident was originally buried in the San Gabriel Catholic Church cemetery, but in the late 1850s his body was disinterred and reburied at St. Joseph Cemetery at Port Gibson, Mississippi, the home of his daughter.

- The first baptism record for St. Gabriel Church is dated 1773 and the first marriage record is January 1, 1773.
- The first resident pastor was Father Valentin, French Capuchin, August 1779.
- Four chapels were established under St. Gabriel: St. Raphael and St. Paul in the Bayou Goula area, Iberville Parish. St. Rose, and St. John the Evangelist Church in Plaquemine.
- St. Gabriel Church was completed in July 1776 and remains the oldest church building in the Louisiana Purchase.



With funds left by Father De Saintpierre, St. Gabriel's College for boys was founded in 1828. The college became difficult for the next Father to support. Bishop Blanc came to the rescue with funds and it continued to operate under Father Ennemond Dupuy, his successor. However, the school was discontinued in 1848 and the building later was used as a rectory.

- The church steeple was destroyed by Hurricane Gustav in 2008.
- St. Gabriel Church in Iberville Parish, Louisiana, is listed in the National Register of Historic Places.
- From the Sunday Advocate, Sept. 25, 1994-The old St. Gabriel Church was once called the Manchac Church of the Iberville Coast and finally:



"The Granaderos and Damas de Gálvez" of San Antonio,

### **San Antonio Granaderos visit St. Gabriel Church November 2006**

Front row: Michael Rojas, Orey Poret, Richard Whynot, speaker, Joel Escamilla, Past Governor of The Granaderos, Tito Fernandez, Ralph McKenzie, and Jesse Benavides (drummer)

Back Row: Clifford Normand and Larry Landry.

**A very Special 'Thank You' to Granadero Clifford Normand for providing photos, research material and editing and to Eugene LeBlanc, Resource Historian for St. Gabriel Church**

#### **Primary Resources:**

Baudier, Roger, K.S.G., *Dedication of The New St. Gabriel Church- 1773-1953*

Broussard, David., *Mysteries and Myths: Unraveling the History of Old St. Gabriel Church*

Casey, Powell A., *Encyclopedia of Forts, Posts Named Camps and Other Military*

Churchill, Charles Robert, *Bernardo de Galvez-Services to the American Revolution*

Wikipedia., *Fate of the Acadians, Expulsion of the Acadians*

Caughey, John Walton, *Bernardo de Gálvez in Louisiana, 1776..... Thecajuns.com/genealogy, history, andcultureAcadians.htm*

Willey, Leroy E., *St. Gabriel Church, Le Baton Rouge, Winter 2007, Vol.27, No. 1.*

# Order of Granaderos y Damas de Gálvez

Minutes for the meeting held November 4, 2020 via Zoom on the internet  
Submitted by Secretary Janie Rodriguez

## Attendance:

Governor Joe Perez, Governor General Fidel Santos, Juanita Santos, Sally Avila, Stan Bradford, Stella González, Joe González, Janie Rodriguez, Manny Rodriguez, Jesse O. Villarreal Sr., Vedia Weathersby, Joe Weathersby, Alex Zamora, Melissa Zamora, Rafael Cavazos, Walter Herbeck

The meeting was called to order at 7:34 p.m. by Governor Joe Perez.

The Invocation was given by Chaplain Joe González. Deputy Governor Alex Zamora led us in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Joe Perez announced the birthdays for November.

Treasurer Manny Rodriguez gave the Treasurer's Report for October. We had a Savings account Balance of 1,313.74. The checking account had a Beginning Balance of \$4,172.39. We had Expenses of \$16.00 for the monthly Zoom account to conduct our meetings and P.O. Box rental renewal for 130.00. We had Income of \$0.34 from interest on our account, which left an Ending Balance of \$4,026.74. A motion to accept the report was made by Joe González and seconded by Alex Zamora. After a vote, the motion carried.

Governor Perez announced that after 8 years of secretarial service for the Order, Miss Briana Perez has stepped down due to personal reasons. The Order thanks her for her service and sends her sincere well wishes. Janie Rodriguez has volunteered to take the position and was sworn in by Governor Perez.

Since committees are unable to meet, reports were not available at this time. Governor Perez announced the Veterans Day Parade and the Annual Christmas party have been cancelled. He also reminded all that the annual dues are due.

Governor General Fidel Santos gave the National report. He stated the National Conference would be held on Saturday 11/07/2020 via zoom and two delegates from Spain would be in attendance. He also informed us that the Luisiana Chapter has met all qualifications and have been accepted as a chapter.

Governor Perez introduced Tom Castanos as our Guest Speaker. Tom spoke of the San Antonio missions and was very informative. After a short Q&A and nothing more for the good of the order, Governor Perez adjourned the meeting at 9:11.