



**Miguel Godínez [formerly Michael Wadding] (1591-1644),
Jesuit missionary to New Spain**

By Edmundo Murray

Godínez, Miguel [formerly Michael Wadding] (1591-1644), Jesuit missionary to New Spain, was born in 1591 in Waterford, the son of Thomas Wadding and his wife, Marie *née* Valois.

Orphaned at an early age, Michael Wadding was sent to Spain, where he studied at the Irish College in Salamanca and adopted the name of Miguel Godínez. On 15 April 1609 he entered the Villagarcía novitiate of the Society of Jesus. Fr. Godínez obtained permission from his superiors to go to the Jesuit missions in Mexico, where he professed on 26 August 1626. He was first assigned to the mission of Sinaloa, and in the late 1620s he was working among the Tepehuan indigenous people of Sonora. He also worked with the Comicarís and, having expended much effort, converted the Basiroas. Miguel Godínez taught in various colleges in Mexico, including San Ildefonso and the Jesuit Collegium Maximum. In 1642 he became involved in the Mexican Inquisition as counsellor and advisor.

Fr. Godínez was the confessor of several religious women in Puebla de los Angeles and Mexico, including the mystic nuns Isabel de la Encarnación of the Carmelite convent, and María de Jesús Tormellín of the Inmaculada Concepción convent. Godínez charged their secretaries, Sor Francisca and Sor Agustina de Santa Teresa respectively, to write the biographies of both mystic women, and significantly influenced their writings. Politically, Fr. Godínez was part of the faction supporting Juan de Palafox y Mendoza, Bishop of Puebla de los Angeles and then Archbishop of Mexico and interim Viceroy of New Spain.

Miguel Godínez was the author of a popular theological treatise, *Práctica de la theología mystica* (1681), which was published posthumously owing to the reservations of the local inquisitors. A biography of María de Jesús Tormellín entitled *Vida de la Madre María de Jesús*, written by her secretary Sor Francisca, is sometimes attributed to Fr. Godínez.

Fr. Miguel Godínez died on 12 (or 18) December 1644 in Mexico City.

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