

Viera-Rossano, Juan Carlos (1938–2016)

JUAN CARLOS PRIORA, AND HUMBERTO M.
RASI

Juan Carlos Piora

Humberto M. Rasi, Ph.D. (Stanford University). Born in Argentina, Rasi served as faculty and graduate dean at Andrews University, as vice-president for editorial development at Pacific Press, and as associate director and then director of the General Conference Department of Education. He launched the journal *College and University Dialogue* and founded The Institute for Christian Teaching. Now retired, he directs Adventus 21, a consortium of Adventist universities in Latin America that publishes and distributes academic books.



Juan Carlos Viera

Photo courtesy of Ellen G. White Estate, Inc.

Juan Carlos Viera¹ served variously as pastor, evangelist, church administrator, writer, and translator.²

Early Years, Family, and Education

Juan Carlos Viera was born in Montevideo, Uruguay Republic, on April 30, 1938.³ His parents were Felipa Rosano (1916-2006) and Evaristo Viera (1903-1998), both Seventh-day Adventists. Felipa joined the church first after attending a series of Adventist evangelistic meetings in Montevideo, Uruguay, with her children Juan Carlos and Zulma. Evaristo joined the church in later years.

Juan Carlos attended primary school in Montevideo, Uruguay (1943-1950), and did his secondary studies at Adventist Institute of Uruguay, in Progreso, District of Canelones, Uruguay (1951-1955). In this same institution he was baptized on October 20, 1951. He graduated with a bachelor's degree in theology from the Adventist College of Plata, (now River Plate Adventist University), in Entre Ríos, Argentina, in 1958.

Juan Carlos married Alicia Clelia Meier (1937-2014), on January 5, 1959. Alicia went to high school at Uruguay Academy and graduated as a teacher and Bible instructor from River Plate Academy (1957), Entre Ríos, Argentina. Juan Carlos and Alicia Viera had one child, Elizabeth. After Alicia's death, Viera married Shirley Meier on August 22, 2015, who accompanied and cared for him until his death in 2016.

Service for the Church and Postgraduate Studies

In 1959 Viera began his life-long career in the Seventh-day Adventist Church, serving from 1959 to 1962 as a ministerial intern in the Buenos Aires Conference, Argentina. In 1963 he was pastor in the district of Bahía Blanca, in Buenos Aires Province. He was ordained to the ministry on March 28, 1964. From 1964 to 1966 he was an evangelist in the Buenos Aires Conference. From the beginning of his ministry he showed an ability to lead and manage. At age 28, Viera was elected president of the Buenos Aires Conference and served in that capacity from 1967 to 1972. From 1973 to 1974 he served as the South Argentine Conference president, and from 1975 to 1977 as secretary of the Ministerial Association of the Southern Union (which encompassed Argentina, Paraguay and Uruguay). During that time, he completed postgraduate studies at Andrews University in Michigan, U.S.A., where he graduated with a Master of Arts degree in religion (1976), after which he returned to Argentina to continue his ministry. From 1978 to 1985 he served as president of the Austral Union Conference. He was sponsored by the South American Division to Fuller Theological Seminary, Pasadena, California, U.S.A., where he earned a second master's degree (1988) and a subsequent doctorate in missiology (1993), with a dissertation titled *Seventh-day Adventists in Latin America: Their Beginnings, Their Growth, Their Challenges*.

Ellen G. White Estate and Later Years

While completing his studies at Fuller Theological Seminary, Viera was invited to serve at the Ellen G. White Estate as the Seventh-day Adventist Church's world headquarters, first as an associate director (1988-1995), then as its director (1995-2000), being its first director from outside of North America.

Viera authored numerous articles and several books in English and in Spanish, including *Ready to Meet Christ; The Voice of the Spirit; and Year 2000: Will This Be the End?* In Spanish: *La iglesia y el mundo; Listos para el encuentro con Cristo; Viene, espéralo con alegría; La voz del Espíritu.*⁴ After his retirement in 2001 he dedicated himself to translating books and articles for both the Ellen G. White Estate and Pacific Press Publishing Association. He also translated all the books produced by Jesus 101 Biblical Institute, led by his daughter, Elizabeth Viera Talbot.

Juan Carlos Viera died at the age of 78, on November 25, 2016, in Beaumont, California, U.S.A., after 57 years of fruitful ministry.⁵ As a church administrator, he was respected for his vision, kindness, and ethical leadership skills. His daughter, Elizabeth Viera, highlighted his integrity, his Christ-centric ministry, and his leadership characterized by grace and interest in people.⁶ He is remembered by those who knew him as a Christian who

radiated peace, and who loved the Lord and His church.

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NOTES

1. Juan Carlos most commonly used only "Viera" as his surname.
2. Much of the information in this article was given by Dr. Elizabeth Viera Talbot, Juan Carlos Viera's daughter. She is the Speaker/Director of Jesus 101 Biblical Institute of the North American Division of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. Information was corroborated with the files of the former Austral Union, now in the archives of the Argentine Union, accessed on April 9, 2018.
3. Biographical information form, General Conference Communication Department, March 3, 1988;
<https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/176062419>.
4. Juan Carlos Viera, *Ready to Meet Christ* (Boise, ID: Pacific Press Publishing Association, 1996); idem, *The Voice of the Spirit* (Pacific Press Publishing Association, 1998); idem, *Year 2000: Will This Be the End?* (Pacific Press Publishing Association). In Spanish: Juan Carlos Viera, *La iglesia y el mundo* [*The Church and the World*], (Buenos Aires: Ediciones Seminario Adventista Latinoamericano de Teología, 1990), 199 pp.; idem, *Listos para el encuentro con Cristo* [*Ready to meet Christ*], (Boise, ID: Pacific Press Publishing Association, 1996), 126 pp.; idem, *Viene, espéralo con alegría* [*Come, wait for Him with joy*], (Buenos Aires: South American Spanish Publishing House, 1997), 126 pp.; idem, *La voz del Espíritu* [*The Voice of the Spirit*], (Buenos Aires: South American Spanish Publishing House, 1998), 126 pp.
5. Mark A. Kellner, "Juan Carlos Viera, 78, Longtime Adventist Administrator, Ellen White Exponent, Passes," *Adventist Review*, November 28, 2016, <https://www.adventistreview.org/church-news/story4580-viera-remembrance>; *Adventist World*, February 2017. See also: <http://www.revistaadventista.com.br/blog/2016/11/29/morre-respeitado-administrador-adventista-sul-americano/>
6. Elizabeth Viera Talbot to Daniel Oscar Plenc, November 30, 2016, in the personal file of Juan Carlos Piora.

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