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Marrero, Antonio Charneco (1895–1979)

LUZ MINERVA GONZÁLEZ MARRERO

Luz Minerva González Marrero is currently a public servant of the Government of Puerto Rico. She is the granddaughter of the late Pastor Antonio Marrero Charneco. She has served in various positions at her local church and, like her grandfather, has been blessed with the gift of writing poetry.

Antonio Marrero Charneco was a pastor and church administrator from Puerto Rico.

Early Life

Antonio Marrero Charneco was born on November 26, 1895, in Moca, Puerto Rico. His parents were Antonio Marrero and Nicolasa Charneco. Antonio Marrero Charneco attended evangelistic meetings at Moca Adventist Church and was very interested in the Adventist message. Antonio learned of the Adventist message through Gertrudis Papin¹ Papin was a Bible worker who belonged to the group called *Banda de fe* composed of seven young people dedicated to promoting the Adventist message.² Antonio's older brother tried to discourage him so he would abandon his faith. However, Antonio accepted the Adventist message and became a missionary in his neighborhood, where he conducted evangelistic meetings and son converted a farmer and his family for Christ³

Education and Marriage

Antonio obtained an eighth grade diploma in the municipality of Moca, and then he went to study at an educational institution located between the municipalities of Maricao and Las Marías. Due to his father's death, he had to abandon his studies. He later went to study at *Colegio Adventista de Aibonito*.⁴

Antonio Marrero married Susana Rivera and had six children: Efraín, Antonio, Eleazar, Benjamín, Samuel, and Minerva. The eldest two children did not survive.⁵

Ministry

Finishing his studies, Antonio began his ministerial work in the Adventist mission of the Adventist church in Puerto Rico. He worked in Treasury, Sabbath School, Stewardship, and Youth departments. Antonio was the first appointed Youth director in the island.⁶ He also traveled as a translator on trips sponsored by the mission to destinations such as Panamá.

Antonio was appointed pastor in the municipalities of Naguabo and Ponce. He then later worked in southwestern Puerto Rico in the towns of Yauco, Sabana Grande, Guánica, Lajas, and San Germán. In the northwest area, he opened work in Isabela, San Sebastián, Aguadilla, Aguada, and also his native town of Moca. It was also there in the Rocha neighborhood that, on horseback, he proclaimed the Adventist message. He also founded the first Seventh-day Adventist church in the Rocha neighborhood of Moca, which he pastored for 12 years. Antonio was qualified in offering first aid, so he helped the community of Rocha, and it earned him great religious and altruistic recognition⁷ He also helped people who could not read and write, and they began to read the Bible and join the ranks of the church.

In November 1951, Ricardo Vega, manager of WABA Radio Station in Aguadilla in the 1950s, invited Antonio Marrero to start a religious program *La Voz que Clama en el Desierto* ("The Voice that Cries out in the Desert"). The program remained on the air for over 30 years.

On February 26, 1956, at Luquillo Beach, there was a mass baptism that was a result of the radio ministry. On that day 646 members were added to the Seventh-day Adventist Church of Puerto Rico. This event was witnessed by over 4,000 people. Brother Ángel Ortiz, who is a member of *Iglesia Adventista Mediana Alta* in Loíza and is now 90 years old, was baptized in this special baptism.⁸

Later Life

The poetic gift of Pastor Antonio Marrero Charneco resulted in the creation of over 100 unpublished poems with the main themes of nature, life, and, even more, spirituality. His poetic work includes *Jesús y el Mar de Galilea* ("Jesus and the Sea of Galilee"), *Doquier Te Veo* ("Everywhere, I See You"), *Canto a la Grandeza de Dios* ("I Sing to God's Greatness"), and individual poems for each of the Seven Words of Jesus in his Passion and Death.

Antonio Marrero Charneco died on October 12, 1979, waiting for the Second Coming of our Lord⁹

SOURCES

Fitch, David D. "Porto Rico's Needs." *ARH*, vol. 95, no. 15. April 11, 1918.

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Moon, Clarence H. "Medical Missionary Work Among the Hill People of Porto Rico." *ARH*, vol. 94, no. 46. November 15, 1917.

Ruiz, Francisco. "Large Baptism Conducted in Puerto Rico." *ARH*, vol. 133, no. 21. May 24, 1956.

Vega, Francisco J. *Avance Adventista en Puerto Rico: El Desarrollo de la Iglesia en 78 Municipios del País* Mayaguez, Puerto Rico: Antillian College Press, 2000.

NOTES

1. Samuel Marrero, personal knowledge as son of Pastor Antonio Marrero.?
2. David D. Fitch, "Porto Rico's Needs,"
ARH
, vol. 95, no. 15, April 11, 1918, 18.?
3. Clarence H. Moon, "Medical Missionary Work Among the Hill People of Porto Rico,"
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, vol. 94, no. 46, November 15, 1917, 11.?
4. Francisco J. Vega, *Avance Adventista en Puerto Rico: El Desarrollo de la Iglesia en 78 Municipios del País* (Mayaguez, Puerto Rico: Antillian College Press, 2000), 125. ?
5. Antonio González Román, "Datos biográficos de Antonio Marrero," unpublished document, family archives, 1981.?
6. Vega, 125.?
7. Minerva Marrero, personal knowledge as daughter of Pastor Antonio Marrero.?
8. Francisco Ruiz, "Large Baptism Conducted in Puerto Rico," *ARH*, vol. 133, no. 21, May 24, 1956, 19. ?
9. Minerva Marrero, personal knowledge as daughter of Pastor Antonio Marrero.?

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