

WALTER ELÍAS CHANGO RONDEAU was born in the town of La Aguada in Montevideo (Uruguay), on 01 November 1921, the son of Pedro Elías Chango and Teresa Rondeau. He was baptized in the parish of Our Lady of Peace at Canelones on 06 January of the following year. Walter grew up in a home that inculcated in him diligence and integrity. At the age of ten, Walter received his first communion. Through the rest of his short life, he would be noted for his devotion to the eucharist.



On 06 March 1933, Walter began his studies at the *Colegio y Liceo Sagrada Familia*, staffed and operated by the Brothers of the Holy Family of Belley. He concentrated on commerce and consistently received high marks in his courses, although he was not exceptionally intelligent. His classmates' impression was that Walter "studied for the sake of knowledge; he studied for the sake of life". This zest for life was further manifested in his love for the wide outdoors and fondness for camping. He was an avid football and chess player. Moreover, Walter delighted in socializing with his peers. Most recalled how

he generously gave his time for them in moments of infirmity. But he was also remembered for his intense displeasure with spreading rumors and

using coarse language. In fact, he did not permit anyone to be maligned in his presence. Walter is said to have desired whatever he felt was best for his friends, especially a life of holiness that he himself sought to attain with all his strength and by the grace of God.

From the testimonies at hand, it would seem that Walter was conscious that his life calling was not in the ministerial priesthood. He had fallen in love with a young woman from his home parish of Our Lady of Mount Carmel in La Aguada and had wanted to formalize his relationship with her. Likewise, he openly expressed his desire to form a Christian family and to settle one day in a house surrounded by a flower-filled garden.



These youthful dreams and activities did not inhibit his ecclesial consciousness. Walter was actively involved in his parish as a catechist and member of several church organizations. His zeal for the spreading of the faith was shown in his eagerness to collect money from his classmates to aid missionaries. But it was the economic plight of the poor in his town that directly affected him and impelled him to Christian action. In his spare time, he made toys for their children and taught them catechism under a tree in

the garden of his house. Frequently, he was seen pulling a cart-load of fruits and vegetables given to him by generous people in the local market for distribution among the poor. In essence, Walter was totally convinced that he beheld Jesus in the poor. He was accustomed to say: “What I give to the poor, I give to Christ.”

After graduating with highest honors in 1938, Walter found employment as an office worker, where he was noted for his industriousness. However, he only worked for a few months because he fell ill with tuberculosis. The sickness worsened rapidly. This physical decline took its toll on his romantic aspirations - his relationship with the girl he hoped to marry was never formalized.

His condition further worsened as the illness affected his intestinal system. A long and painful operation was performed to ameliorate this, but it proved futile. Due to frequent vomiting, his confessor, Fr. Atilio Nicoli, even had to suspend giving communion to Walter. In spite of all these, the young man remained serene and good-humored. On the verge of death, he gently consoled his mother: “We are not of this world but of God. It is to God that we shall go.” At around 7:00 pm of 18 November 1939, Walter passed from this life: “I die happily.” Tarcisius Ducruet, superior general of the Brothers of the Holy Family in the 1940s, eulogized him in this manner: “In the wholesome course of his short life, Walter Chango has shown, especially to young people, that holiness is not just an abstract idea. It is also a tangible reality which can

be harmonized with each and every trifle matter that constitutes the fiber of every student's life."



In the years that followed, Walter's reputation for holiness persisted in the archdiocese of Montevideo. In his home parish, a memorial mass in his honor has been celebrated regularly at the eighteenth of each month. In response to the petition of the faithful, Abp. Nicolás Cotugno

Fanizzi approved the translation of the remains of Walter from the cemetery of La Teja to the church of La Aguada on 18 November 1999. The Congregation of the Causes of Saints issued the decree *nihil obstat* for the beatification process of Walter Elías Chango Rondeau On 03 November 2001.

INFORMATION ON THE CAUSE

1. **COMPETENT DIOCESE: Montevideo (Uruguay)**

2. **ITER:**

- opening of diocesan inquiry: **25 June 2000**
- ❖ publication of decree “nihil obstat”: **03 November 2001**
- closing of diocesan inquiry: **21 March 2004**
- ❖ validation of diocesan inquiry: -----
- ❖ consignment of Positio to CCS: -----
- ❖ meeting of theological consultants: -----
- ❖ congregation of CCS cardinals and bishops: -----
- ❖ promulgation of decree on heroic virtues: -----
- ❖ promulgation of decree on miracle for beatification: -----
- ❖ beatification: -----
- ❖ promulgation of decree on miracle for canonization: -----
- ❖ canonization: -----

3. **POSTULATOR: Fra Florio Tessari, OFMcap**

4. **PETITIONER: Arquidiócesis de Montevideo, Calle Treinta y Tres 1368,
Casilla de Correo Central 356, 11000 Montevideo, URUGUAY**

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