

## Brother James Miller Biography

Brother James (Santiago) Miller, FSC, was born in Stevens Point, Wisconsin, in September 1944. He first met the Brothers when he attended Pacelli High School there, and he entered the juniorate in Glencoe, Missouri, in September 1959. He began his year of novitiate in June 1962, and following his formation years he started teaching. After professing his perpetual vows in 1969, he was sent to Bluefields, Nicaragua until 1974 when he was sent to Puerto Cabezas, Nicaragua. In July 1979 his superiors directed him to leave the country because the Sandinista revolution was in progress, and they feared he might be at risk.

In January 1981 he was allowed to return to Central America, this time to Guatemala. He taught at the secondary school in Huehuetenango and worked at the Indian Center where young indigenous Mayans from rural areas studied and trained in agriculture. The relations between the Brothers at the Indian Center and the Guatemalan military were often strained. To meet its quota of army conscripts, the government often rounded up Indian boys from the streets. Although students were exempt from military service, the boys from the Center were often conscripted into the army. When that happened, a Brother would present proof to the authorities that the boy in question was a student. The military would then reluctantly release him.

Two days before Brother James was killed, a Mayan pupil was forced into the army. A Brother tried to obtain his release from the authorities, but his petition was refused. By his adamant demands the Brother infuriated these authorities. In the afternoon of February 13, 1982, while he was repairing a wall at the Indian Center where his boarders lived, three hooded men shot Brother James point blank. He died instantly. Some saw his death as a warning to the Brothers to cease interfering in government affairs. Attempts to identify his assassins were unsuccessful.

Brother James' cause of martyrdom was undertaken by the Diocese of Huehuetenango in 2009 and received the Decree of Validity in Rome in July 2010 when he was designated a "Servant of God" and a martyr for the faith. The process leading to his beatification continues with the Congregation of the Causes of Saints in Rome.