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# CUBAN ANCESTRY OF POPE LEO XIV

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## **CUBAN ANCESTRY OF POPE LEO XIV**

HABEMUS PAPAM! White smoke signaled from the roof of the Sistine Chapel. Journalists, local witnesses, and lucky tourists described a frenzied rush to arrive at St. Peter's Square in time for the presentation of the new Holy Father.

Fascination instantly took over.

Within hours of his election, the world became immediately immersed in finding out more about the new Supreme Pontiff. Questions and speculations began, and people pondered what kind of pope he would be; how much he would deviate from his predecessor's approach; and what the merits were that brought him such a quick election during the most recent papal conclave. Efforts to learn about and understand the man who had just become the new global leader of the Catholic Church dominated the media.

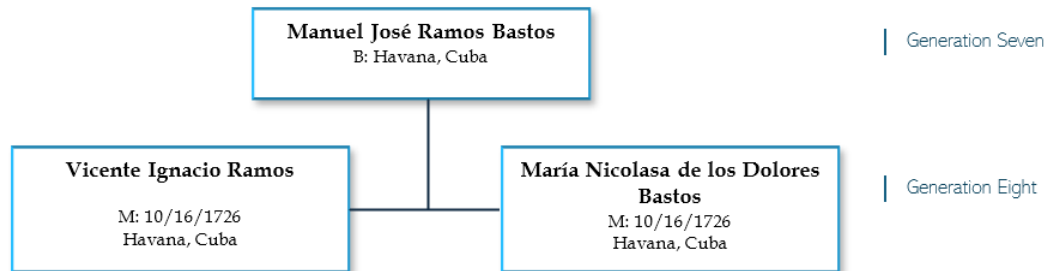
The masses wanted to know: Who was Robert Francis Prevost Martínez?

His first day as pope was not over yet, and we had already heard of his Chicago background and New Orleans roots. Hypotheses and conjectures began, and soon thereafter, researchers trickled in with records that uncovered a diverse background and ancestors whose lives had trekked across countries and continents. Several documents were published that traced his familial lines beyond the United States through different European and Caribbean countries, including Cuba.

Cuba!? A pope born in the United States of America was already something that surprised many of us, but a pope with Cuban roots? That was more than most of us would have ever expected to witness.

The ancestry reports we came across uncovered seven generations of relatives that ended with Manuel José Ramos y Bastos, son of Vicente Ignacio Ramos and María Bastos. They are the Cuban-born fourth and fifth great-grandparents of Pope Leo XIV. In this report, we expand that line, uncovering three more generations of Cuban ancestors and the corners of the world from where they originated.

*Eighth Generation<sup>(1)</sup>: Fifth Great-Grandparents of Pope Leo XIV*



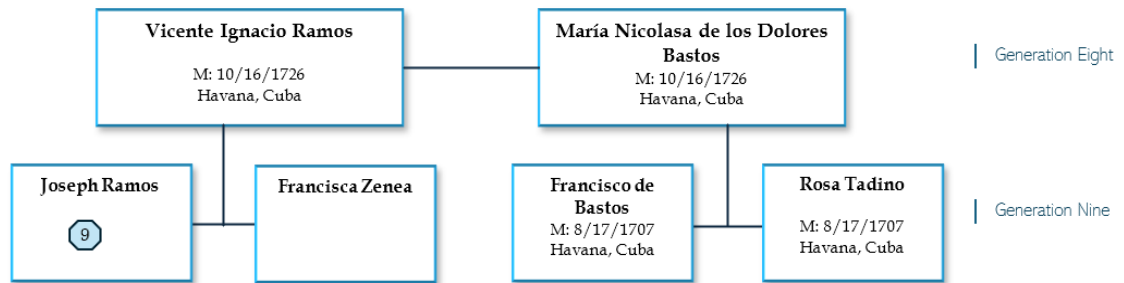
- **Vicente Ignacio Ramos** and **María Nicolasa de los Dolores Bastos**, married in Havana, Cuba, on October 16, 1726<sup>(2)</sup>, and their marriage is registered at the Iglesia del Espíritu Santo (Church of the Holy Spirit). Vicente was the natural<sup>(3)</sup> son of Joseph Ramos and Francisca Zenea. María was the legitimate daughter of Francisco de Bastos and Rosa Tadino.

[Vize]nte Ygnazio Ra[m]os y M<sup>a</sup> Nico- Lasa [de los] Dolo- res y Bastos [Ve]- laronse dicho día Alverja.

En dies y seis de Oct<sup>o</sup> de mill set<sup>as</sup> y veinte y seis a<sup>o</sup> ariendo prez<sup>do</sup> las dilig<sup>as</sup> ordinarias ante D. Thomas Nuñes y dispensado su S<sup>o</sup> Ill<sup>ma</sup> las tres amonest<sup>as</sup> por justas causas. Yo D<sup>no</sup> Man<sup>l</sup> de Marroq<sup>n</sup> Lassa Cura Ben<sup>do</sup> de las Parroq<sup>as</sup> de esta Ciu<sup>d</sup> de la havi<sup>a</sup> y mas antiguo asst<sup>e</sup> en esta del Spru<sup>te</sup> S. Despose por palanras de prez<sup>do</sup> segun orden de Nra. S<sup>ta</sup> M<sup>o</sup> Igla. a Vize[n]te Ygnasio Ramos Nat<sup>l</sup> desta Ciu<sup>d</sup> hixo nat<sup>l</sup> de Jph Ramos y Fran<sup>ca</sup> Zenea. Y a M<sup>a</sup> Nicolasa de los Dolores y Bastos nat<sup>l</sup> asimismo desta Ciu<sup>d</sup> hixa lex<sup>ma</sup> de Fran<sup>ca</sup> de Bastos y Rosa Tadino y ariendo prez<sup>do</sup> a ambos tube por rrespuesta su mutuo Cong<sup>to</sup> fueron testigos Xptoal Cardoso = Domingo Gonzalez y otras personas que se hallaron prez<sup>tes</sup> y lo firme, Man<sup>l</sup> de Marroquin.

- (1) We have started with Pope Leo XIV, which makes him generation 'one' or the home person of his ancestry. His parents are generation 'two' and each generation beyond that adds a number. Numbers ascend as each generation gets farther away in time. This report begins with His Fifth Great-Grandparents, which makes it generation number eight.
- (2) Book I Marriages, folio 17. Parish Archive Iglesia del Espíritu Santo, Havana, Cuba.
- (3) A 'natural' child is a child born to unmarried parents.

*Ninth Generation: Sixth Great-Grandparents of Pope Leo XIV*



- **Joseph Ramos:** He is mentioned as the ‘natural’ father of the groom in Vicente’s marriage record <sup>(4)</sup>, which tells us he was not married to Francisca at the time of Vicente’s birth. No additional information is added about his origin or residence. Until additional information is found on Joseph, this is the end of his line. ⑨
- **Francisca Zenea:** She is mentioned as the ‘natural’ mother of the groom in Vicente’s marriage record <sup>(5)</sup>, which tells us she was not married to Joseph at the time of Vicente’s birth. That is all the documented information we have found on Francisca. <sup>(6)</sup>
- **Francisco de Bastos** and **Rosa Tadino** were both born in Havana, Cuba, where they married on August 17, 1707<sup>(7)</sup>, at the Iglesia del Espíritu Santo. Francisco’s parents were Benito Lorenzo de Bastos and Antonia González Vázquez. Rosa was the daughter of Eugenio Tadino and Nicolasa de Arana.

(4) Book I of Marriages, folio 17. Parish Archive Iglesia del Espíritu Santo, Havana, Cuba.

(5) Book I of Marriages, folio 17. Parish Archive Iglesia del Espíritu Santo, Havana, Cuba.

(6) *We found a family we believe to be Francisca’s parents in Jaruco’s work. We will explore Bernardo Francisco Zenea y Mendoza and Francisca Polonia González Vázquez y González de Silva as possible parents of Francisca.* Jaruco’s Works refers to “Historia de familias cubanas”, written by Francisco Xavier de Santa Cruz y Mallén, Conde de San Juan de Jaruco y Santa Cruz de Mopox. This genealogical work constitutes the most extensive research and publication, to date, on Cuban Genealogy. It was completed and based on original documents and it compiles studies on 841 family names over nine volumes. The last name Zenea is one of those family names examined by Jaruco, which can be found in Vol. VIII, p. 334. All nine volumes of this work can be publicly accessed at [www.internetarchive.org](http://www.internetarchive.org) and [www.familysearch.org](http://www.familysearch.org).

(7) Book I of Marriages, folio 106v, entry n.861. Parish Archive Iglesia del Espíritu Santo, Havana, Cuba.

*En diez y siete de Agosto de mill setecientos y siete años haviendo precedido las diligencias Ordinarias ante Juan Franco. Gomes Noto. Puc. y no publicadose las tres amonestaciones Canonicas por aver dispensado en ellas (por Justas Causas) el Sor. Ldo. Don Diego Rodriguez Aramil Colegial del Insigne de San Pelayo en la Universidad de Salamanca Provisor y Vicario General en esta Ciudad de la Havana y su partido yo Don Manuel de Marroquin y Loza Cura Bdo. de las Parroquiales de esta Ciudad despoze por palabras de presente segun Orden de nra. Santa Madre Yglecia a FRANCO. DE BASTOS natural de esta dha. Ciudad hijo legitimo de Benito Lorenzo de Bastos y de Da. Antonia Gonzalez, y a Da. ROSA TADINO natural de esta Ciudad hija legitima de Dn. Eugenio Tadino y de Da. Nicolaza de Arana? haviendo preguntado a Ambos y tenido por respuesta su mutuo Consentimiento fueron testigos Dn. Joseph de Alberja Presbytero, Lorenzo de Noriega y Dn. Juan Tadino Presentes y lo firme.*  
*---- Manl. de Marrogn. y Loza ----*



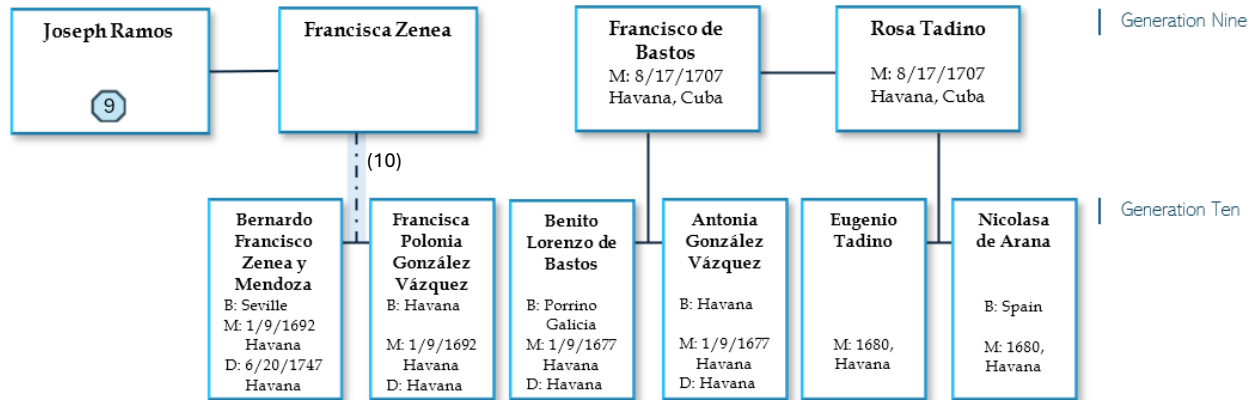
*Built in 1635 by a fraternity of Afro-Cuban free men, the Iglesia del Espíritu Santo is Havana's second-earliest Catholic church. It was given the rank of parish in 1660. A Papal Bull by Clement XIV, in 1772, along with a Royal Certificate by Charles III, in 1773, granted EL Espíritu Santo the status of sanctuary. It was the only church to hold the privilege of sanctuary in Havana, which meant that parishioners facing persecution could seek refuge within this church, and they were protected from the rigors and actions of the state. <sup>(8)</sup> Church records begin in 1654. <sup>(9)</sup>*

Fig. 1. Iglesia del Espíritu Santo, Historic Center of Havana, Cuba.  
Hampshire College's Digital Photographic Archive, Amherst, Mass.

(8) Book "Historia Eclesiástica de Cuba" by Pbro. Dr. Ismael Testé, Vol. 2, p. 453.

(9) On his 1970 book "Obispado de la Habana: Su historia a través de los siglos," Cuadrado Melo describes the state of decomposition of the earlier parish books: The first books of burials of Spaniards (1654-165...), burials of Indians, Mulatos, and Blacks (167...), and baptisms of Spaniards (1674-16...) have all been deemed illegible due to their state of decomposition; even their titles are no longer intact. The only one of the first books that remained readable was Book I of Marriages (1674-1724), which was repaired in 1893. (Vol. I, Parte IA de las parroquias, p.254.)

*Tenth Generation: Seventh Great-Grandparents of Pope Leo XIV*



(10) **Possible parents of Francisca Zenea:** The 'Alférez' (low-ranking officer, below that of a lieutenant, in the Spanish Army) Bernardo Francisco Zenea y Mendoza, a native of Seville in Spain, married Francisca Polonia González Vázquez y González de Silva, a native of Havana. Their union took place at the Iglesia del Espíritu Santo on January 9, 1692. Bernardo was the son of Francisco Zenea y la Calle and of Josefa de Mendoza y Avila, both from Seville. Bernardo functioned as the Administrator of the Royal Income, or a sort of Treasurer in Havana from September 15, 1713, until October 11, 1719. His death was recorded at the Iglesia del Espíritu Santo on June 20, 1747, eight days after he recorded his last will and testament, in front of public notary Cristobal Leal. Francisca Polonia's parents were Juan González Vázquez and Clara González de Silva (o Clara de Silva. Both versions are used in documents). While the link between Bernardo Francisco and Francisca Polonia as parents of Francisca Zenea is yet to be proven, Francisca Polonia is the sister of Antonia González Vázquez (see tenth generation) and a legitimate member of this family tree (if not as the grandmother of Vicente, as a great-aunt of María Bastos). Bernardo and Francisca had the following children:

1. María Gertrudis Zenea y González Vázquez
2. Clara Zenea y González Vázquez married Captain Manuel Sarmiento.
3. Antonio Zenea y González Vázquez
4. Lieutenant Nicolás Zenea y González Vázquez was baptized at the Havana Cathedral, on March 26, 1695.
5. José Francisco Zenea y González Vázquez was baptized at the Iglesia del Espíritu Santo, on November 16, 1711. He was a Navy Officer with the Royal Army. His will was recorded on December 7, 1774, by public notary Cristóbal Leal, and his death record is found at the church of Santo Cristo, on December 18, 1774. Francisco married María del Rosario Josefa de Salazar y Alegre, at the Iglesia del Espíritu Santo, on August 12, 1729. She was the daughter of Diego de Salazar y Ximénez, and of Lucia Alegre y García.
6. Bernardo Zenea y González Vázquez was baptized at the Iglesia del Espíritu Santo on June 14, 1700. He married Jacinta Ruiz-Tagle y González at the Havana Cathedral on July 9, 1718. His burial is also found at El Espíritu Santo on January 2, 1751. She was the daughter of Domingo Ruiz-Tagle y de la Sierra and María González y Reyes.
7. Francisca Zenea [potentially]. Currently, all the information we have on Francisca is that she and Josep Ramos were natural parents to Vicente.

All the information included for Bernardo Francisco Zenea y Mendoza and his family is from volume VIII of Historia de Familias Cubanas, p. 334. (Zenea).

Other factors that point in the direction of this familial connection are the shared church, the Zenea family name, which is not a common one in Havana within the last decade of the XVII century (Francisco Bernardo is the only Zenea we have found of his generation in Havana). Additionally, the estimated birth year for Francisca is a strong factor in this hypothesis. Vicente married in 1726, which places his birth no later than 1710, and it places Francisca's birth no later than 1696. Since Bernardo Francisco and Francisca Polonia married in 1692, we are *likely* in the presence of a child-parent relationship.

- **Benito Lorenzo de Bastos**, from Porrino, Galicia, married **Antonia González Vázquez**, at the Iglesia del Espíritu Santo, on January 9, 1677.<sup>(11)</sup> Benito's parents were Benito de Bastos and María Lorenza. Antonia's parents were Juan González Vázquez and Clara González de Silva (or de Silva). Benito's will was made on January 22, 1713,<sup>(12)</sup> when he gave 2003.00 pesos to his daughter María, to equate her and her brothers' inheritance, after considering the liquid value of the real estate properties in his inheritance.

Benito and Antonia had the following children:

1. María Josefa de Bastos was born in Havana, on April 2, 1682. She married Alferez Manuel Ramírez, widow of Magdalena Gaitán, on December 30, 1698, at the Iglesia del Espíritu Santo. Manuel was born in Ayamonte, Seville, on December 25, 1658, the son of Captain Vicente Ramírez and Ana de Garfias.<sup>(13)</sup>
2. Pedro Lorenzo de Bastos married at the Iglesia del Espíritu Santo, on April 13, 1714. He married Antonia Pérez, a native of Havana and the daughter of Juan Pérez Grasiano and Juliana Alvarez.<sup>(14)</sup>
3. Francisco de Bastos married Rosa Tadino on August 17, 1707<sup>(15)</sup>, at the Iglesia del Espíritu Santo.

*En nueve de Enero de mill seiscs. setenta y siete años aviendo presedido las diligencias ordinarias el sr. Br. D. Pablos de Pedroso y Farias ..... de la Parroquia. De San Christobal Provr. y Vicario general de esta Ciud. Y su distrito dispensando en las tres amonestaciones para qe. despues corran por justas causas qe. le movieron Desposo el Sr. D. Juan de Sotolongo Cura mas antiguo a BENITO LORENZO DE BASTOS natl. de la villa de Porrino en Galicia hijo lexitimo de Benito de Bastos y de Maria Lorenza y a ANTONIA GONSALES VASQUES natl. desta Ciud. hija lexma, de Juan Gonsales Vasques y de Clara de Silba fueron testigos Joseph Lopez de Molina presbitero Salvador Rodrigs. y Juan Milian presentes y lo firme.* --- D. Miguel de Añes ---

(11) Book I Marriages, folio 7, entry n.67. Parish Archive Iglesia del Espíritu Santo, Havana, Cuba.

(12) Book "Sentencias del Tribunal Supremo de Justicias" (1873), p. 436.

(13) Book I Marriages, folio 74, entry n.626. Parish Archive Iglesia del Espíritu Santo, Havana, Cuba. Book "Sentencias del Tribunal Supremo de Justicias" (1873), p. 436. Iturriza (1973) Algunas Familias de Cumaná, p. 402 and 537.

(14) Book I Marriages, folio 129v, entry n.1047. Parish Archive Iglesia del Espíritu Santo, Havana, Cuba.

(15) Book I Marriages, folio 106v, entry n.861. Parish Archive Iglesia del Espíritu Santo, Havana, Cuba.



**Eugenio Tadino** and **Nicolasa de Arana** married around 1680, at Havana Cathedral. <sup>(16)</sup> Nicolasa was the only daughter of Diego Arana Isla and Ana Fadino, both natives of Spain. In 1680, her father requested 2000 ducats from the Spanish Crown for the dowry of his daughter to marry Eugenio Tadino (appears as Fadino at times). Nicolasa and Eugenio had at least two children by the time her father passed in 1684. We are not certain whether this other child lived to adulthood as we have not yet found a record of him or her. We do not have any other documents to offer additional information on Eugenio's line. <sup>(17)</sup>



Fig. 2. La Catedral, Habana. Cuba Havana, ca. 1900. Library of Congress.

La Santísima Metropolitana Iglesia Catedral de La Habana, dedicated to the Immaculate Conception of the Virgin Mary. Its origin was a humble wooden building with a palm frond roof, sometime around 1519. For more than 100 years, it was the only church available to more than half of the island. <sup>(18)</sup>

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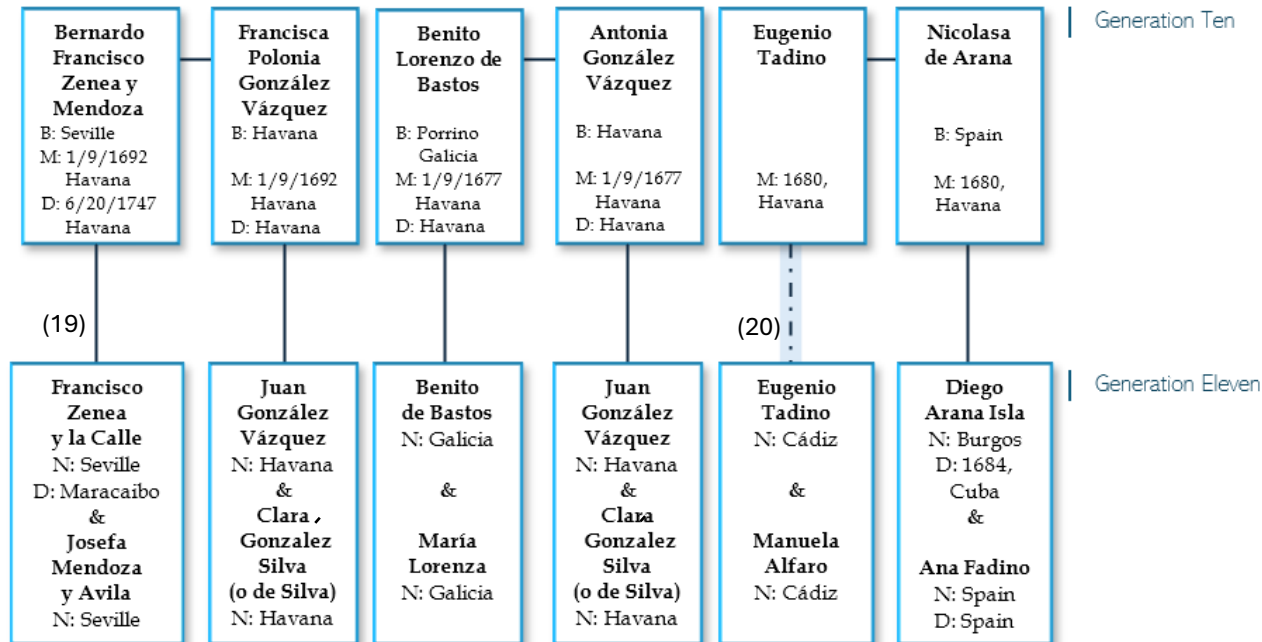
(16) Book III of Marriages of Spaniards, folio 225. Parish Archive Havana Cathedral, Havana, Cuba.

(17) We have discovered documents that point to Eugenio being a native of Cádiz, in Spain, and the possible son of Eugenio Tadino and Manuela Alfaro; however, we have not yet found a document to categorically make this connection. We will explore this potential family link with the next generation.

(18) Book "Historia Eclesiástica de Cuba" by Pbro. Dr. Ismael Testé, Vol. 2, p. 16.



*Eleventh Generation: Eighth Great-Grandparents of Pope Leo XIV*



- **Juan González Vázquez y Pérez**, of Havana, married **Clara González de Silva**, at the Havana Cathedral<sup>(21)</sup>. They had both passed by January 12, 1694, when the execution of their will and partition of inheritance took place<sup>(22)</sup>. Juan owned land on the eastern side of Havana, towards Pinar del Río, as evidenced by the corrals he left as inheritance and his role in founding the San Felipe Keys in 1671, (located between Isla de Pinos and Pinar del Río).<sup>(23)</sup>

(19) **Potential grandparents of Francisca Zenea:** Francisco Zenea y la Calle married Josefa de Mendoza y Avila, both were natives of Seville. Francisco was an Accountant for the Royal Treasury in Maracaibo, Venezuela, where he died on December 19, 1711. All the information included for Francisco Zenea y la Calle and his family is from volume VIII of Historia de Familias Cubanas, p. 334. (Zenea).

(20) **Potential parents for Eugenio Tadino:** Juan Tadino witnessed Rosa Tadino's wedding. Unsurprisingly, when we could not find further documentation for Eugenio, we looked to Juan for clues. Juan Antonio Tadino y Alfaro married Margarita de Bonilla, daughter of Juan Rodríguez de Bonilla and of Úrsula Guerrero, at Iglesia del Espíritu Santo on August 5, 1692. (Book I Marriages, folio 66, entry n.562). Juan's parents were identified as Eugenio Tadino and Manuela de Alfaro, both natives of Cádiz. *We suspect Eugenio to be the brother of Juan Antonio, and both the sons of Eugenio Tadino Sr. and Manuela de Alfaro. At this time, this is only a hypothesis and educated guess; once this familial connection is proven, we can establish with certainty the link between Eugenio Tadino and his potential parents.*

(21) Book III of Spanish Marriages, folio 304. Parish Archive Havana Cathedral, Havana, Cuba.

(22) Book "Sentencias del Tribunal Supremo de Justicias" (1873), p. 435.

(23) Pichardo (1854) Geografía de la Isla de Cuba, p. 60.

Juan and Clara had the following children:

1. Priest Juan González Vázquez, founded a “capellanía” <sup>(24)</sup> of \$ 2620.00 <sup>(25)</sup>
2. Juana González Vázquez married Juan González Alverja y García, from La Orotava, in Tenerife. <sup>(26)</sup>
3. Francisca Polonia González Vázquez, married Junior Officer Bernardo Francisco Zenea y Mendoza, a native of Seville in Spain, on January 9, 1692, at the Iglesia del Espíritu Santo. <sup>(27)</sup>
4. Hilario González Vázquez married Basilia de Aponte y Poveda, daughter of Tomás de Aponte y Flores, Deputy Lieutenant Governor of Havana, and of Ana Fernández Poveda y González de la Torre. Hilario’s will was registered on April 24, 1738. <sup>(28)</sup>
5. Antonia González Vázquez married Benito Lorenzo de Bastos, a native of Porrino, in Galicia, on January 9, 1677, at Iglesia del Espíritu Santo. <sup>(29)</sup>
6. Gaspar González Vázquez married at the Iglesia del Espíritu Santo, in Havana, on October 1st, 1682. He married Graciana de Balboa, a native of Havana who had been married to Pedro de Aramb[illeg.] <sup>(30)</sup>

- **Benito de Bastos** and **María Lorenza** were both from Galicia, Spain. We learned about them through the marriage record of their son Benito Lorenzo de Bastos <sup>(31)</sup>, where they are identified as the parents of the groom and Porrino, Galicia, as Benito’s birthplace, which makes them temporary residents if not natives of Galicia. No other information was found for Benito and María.

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(24) An ecclesiastical endowment or chantry, a means of providing family members with an income upon entering the clergy. (Bauer, 1983).

(25) Book “Sentencias del Tribunal Supremo de Justicias” (1873), p. 436.

(26) Jaruco, Historia de Familias Cubanas, Vol. I, p. 94. (Cárdenas); Vol. VII, p.261 (Morejón).

(27) Book I Marriages, folio 51v., entry n.448. Parish Archive Iglesia del Espíritu Santo, Havana, Cuba.

(28) Book I Marriages, folio 75v., entry n.640. Parish Archive Iglesia del Espíritu Santo, Havana, Cuba. Jaruco, Historia de Familias Cubanas, Vol. II, p. 169. (González de la Torre). Book “Sentencias del Tribunal Supremo de Justicias” (1873), p. 436.

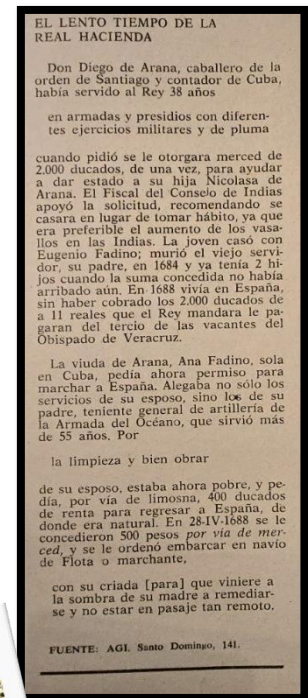
(29) Book I Marriages, folio 7, entry n.67. Parish Archive Iglesia del Espíritu Santo, Havana, Cuba.

(30) Book I Marriages, folio 23, entry n.219. Parish Archive Iglesia del Espíritu Santo, Havana, Cuba.

(31) Book I Marriages, folio 7, entry n.67. Parish Archive Iglesia del Espíritu Santo, Havana, Cuba.

- **Diego Arana Isla**, a native of Burgos<sup>(32)</sup>, Spain, and **Ana Fadino**, a native of Spain, were the parents of Nicolasa; an only daughter. Diego was an accountant in Cuba, for the Crown<sup>(33)</sup> and a Knight of the Order of Santiago since 1678. His service record and list of merits depict forty years of devout service to the crown with multiple military and administrative posts throughout the colonies. He died in Cuba, in 1684<sup>(34)</sup>. His wife was still in Cuba four years later, when she appealed to the Crown for financial help to return to her native Spain. Ana argued that her husband's long service history had surely earned her the Crown's help. On April 28, 1688, she received a "*merced*"<sup>(35)</sup> of 500.00 pesos to leave Cuba and return to her native country.

This is the end of this ancestral report, as we have exhausted the sources currently available to us. As we set out to do, we have expanded the information available for the parents of Manuel José Ramos Bastos, and uncovered three new generations on three of his four ancestral lines. Work remains to be done on the Ramos line, and on the two lines where the connections remain hypothetical until we can add documents that can prove the familial line. This report will be updated as new information becomes available to us.



(32) ES.28079.AHN//OM-CABALLEROS\_SANTIAGO,Exp.506<sup>a</sup>

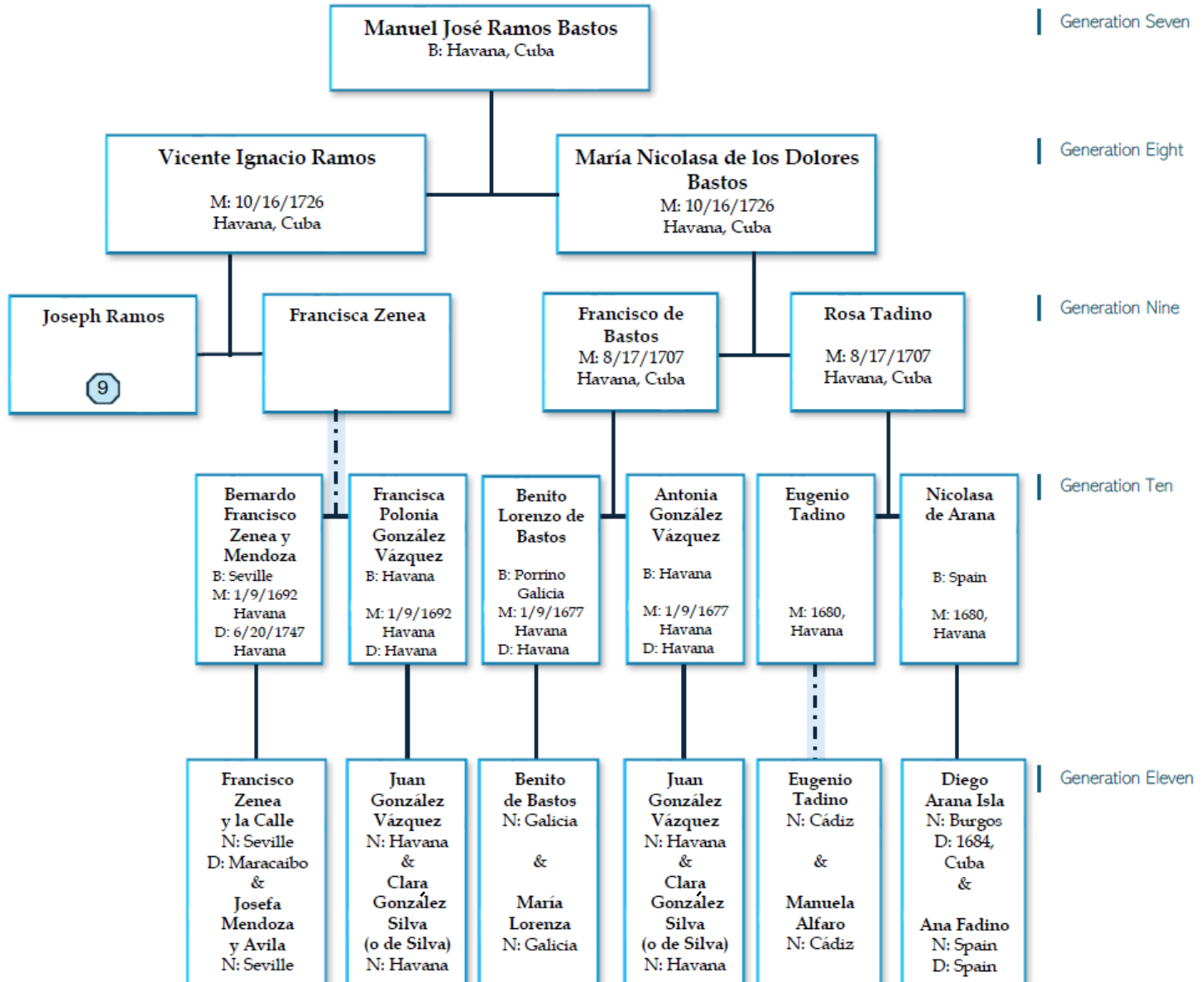
(33) ES.41091.AGI/22//INDIFERENTE,126,N.19

(34) Levi Marrero, "Cuba: economía y sociedad" Vol. V, p. 137.

(35) A gift or donation bestowed upon a person. The term dates from the colonial period, and it is not commonly used today.

**APPENDIX I: CUBAN BRANCH OF POPE LEO XIV'S FAMILY TREE.**

Developed by Mirelis Peraza González, Director of Cuban Genealogy Club of Miami, (CGC)



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