

Father Félix Varela in the memory of Cubans



Havana, February 25 (RHC) -- Cuba evokes the intense educational work of the priest, teacher, philosopher and politician Félix Varela, on the 171st anniversary of his death this Sunday.

Born in Havana on November 20, 1788, Varela is considered a thinker of enormous importance who advocated the recognition of the independence of America by the Spanish metropolis, the political autonomy of the island, the extinction of slavery and the modernisation of the entire educational system.

The priest was the initiator of the experimental teaching of Physics in Cuba, being a fervent advocate of experiment in the teaching activity and he is recognised as the first author of a Physics book in the country.

Father Varela was projected early on as an ideologist of the future nation and influenced successive generations to create the foundations of Cuban culture and nationality.

According to historians, his teachings echoed in the most capable minds of his generation, the cradle of the ideals materialised in the independence struggles that began in 1868.

His disciples included such personalities as José de la Luz y Caballero, pedagogue and philosopher; José Antonio Saco, historian and sociologist, and the naturalist and scientist Felipe Poey, among others.

Félix Varela died on 25 February 1853 in St. Augustine, Florida, USA, and since 1911 his remains have rested in a place of honour in the Aula Magna of the University of Havana.

In 1996 a process was officially opened for the beatification of the Cuban priest, which is currently in the phase of delivery of complementary documents.

Pope Benedict XVI declared Varela Venerable in 2012. (Source: Prensa Latina)

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