

# Introduction

## **What are priesthood application or ‘de genere’ records?**

The de genere records are records that were initiated when a man wanted to become a Priest. He had to show, by baptismal records and marriage records, that his lineage was untainted by any other religions (no converted Catholics). In most cases showing a direct line to the grandparents was sufficient. Where documents were available, the information was included with the application paperwork. The applicant also needed to show that he had monetary support (land, money) in order to be self-sufficient, and that information is evidenced in another related series of documents called patrimony records.

## **What help are these records in your genealogical search?**

Not all de genere records have survived, but those that have often include vital information. The certificates and parish record extracts were presented at the time of application, so in some cases they may include facts from church books which have since been lost.

It is not necessary for you to have any priests in your direct line for these records to be of help to you. If one of your ancestor’s brothers or cousins applied to join the priesthood, you may still be able to carry your lineage back another generation or two past the earliest available records.

Additionally, if there was a ‘father unknown’ in the applicant’s lineage it would have had to have been brought out, so de genere records could also potentially provide you with the name of a ‘pai incognito’ ancestor.

## **About this project:**

This publication is being made available thanks to donations made by São Jorge Genealogical Society members. It is comprised of all surviving priesthood applications for the Island of São Jorge spanning from 1766-1844 and includes all genealogically pertinent information that could be extracted from the original records. Transcriptions of the original documents held at the Angra Archive were completed by João Ventura.

João Manuel Diniz da Silveira Ventura has been immersed in Azorean genealogy for more than 25 years. He is a professional genealogist and has worked for the Government of the Azores in the field of genealogy and is currently the archivist of Direção Regional da Cultura (Regional Directorate of Culture). João was responsible for scanning church records for Terceira, São Jorge and Graciosa, and supervised the digitizing of the records for Faial, Pico, Flores and Corvo. He studied at the University of Coimbra where he earned a degree in English and German and a postgraduate degree in Archivology. He has successfully completed genealogical research for government entities, fellow genealogists, and individuals. João has also given genealogy workshops and lectures in São Miguel, Terceira, Faial, as well as in California and Salt Lake City.

~ Jeremy G. Berry-Cahn and Rosemarie Giamona Capodicci