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And He Dwelt
Among Us

This important statement refers to the enactment of the greatest event in history: the Incarnation of the Word and Son of God. (John 1:14)

But we can use these words in a different analogy when describing lesser events that comprise the history of Garabandal.

It was as if the Virgin, with her new Visitation on that first Sunday of July, 1961, was to begin her mysterious dwelling among us. In the first Visitation of the Gospel, Mary stayed in Elizabeth's home **about three months** (Luke 1:56) to accompany and assist her.

Now for the same purpose of accompanying and assisting at Garabandal, she has remained with us more than three years. Our need is greater than was that of her cousin Elizabeth.

* * *

More than once I have been thrilled at Lourdes in hearing the French song that begins, *Chez nous soyez Reine*. (Be with us, our Queen.) At the time of departure during the large pilgrimages, this song is sung with devotion and feeling. The words implore the Virgin to be Queen *Chez nous*. The French expression is hard to translate and refers to what is properly one's own; what belongs to one's own house. *Chez nous soyez Reine*. Be Queen among us, with us. Queen in our lives and in our homes.

At Garabandal this hymn might be slightly changed. For at Garabandal she came as a Queen, but also as a Mother. It seems that Mary came here to manifest her maternity in all its beauty and graciousness.

The children understood this from the first meeting. Although ravished by the unparalleled beauty of the apparition and by a glory greater than that of any earthly Queen, they did not stay in a state of awe toward the *Lady* as well they might have called the Vision seen at the calleja, as formerly Bernadette had called her Vision at the grotto.⁽¹⁾ The children looked at the Vision more in the quality of a mother and immediately began to

confide in her and speak freely. Conchita has related some of this:

That day we talked much with the Virgin, and she with us.

We told her EVERYTHING.

And she laughed because we said so many things.

She was like a mother who for a long time had not seen the daughter who was telling her everything that had happened.

And much more in our case since we had never seen her.

And she was our Mother from Heaven.

The first day was already marked with a pattern that would be seen from then on. The MOTHER came to listen with an interest and pleasure to all the words of her children, their little affairs, their child-like interests, their troubles. She came also to enter their lives as a MOTHER-CHILD, to place herself at the level of the children and even condescend to submit to their innocent requests. She gave them her crown of golden stars to touch and examine. She placed her Child in their arms. She received and returned kisses, and even went so far on one occasion as to play with the children.

Naturally she did not come just to hear or be heard. If she descended, it was done to raise us up. And all those things that seemed so trivial and disconcerting to the **wise and prudent of this world** (Matt. 11:25) were to become in her hands the elements of a divine pedagogy with which she would *teach, prepare, and condition* for the difficult works of God.

**Oh Lord how admirable is Your name in the whole earth!
For Your Magnificence is elevated above the heavens.
Out of the mouth of infants and of nursing babies
You have perfected praise,
because of Your enemies,
That You may destroy the enemy.** (Psalm 8)

But let us not get ahead of the story.

1. Bernadette Soubirous, the visionary from Lourdes, did not immediately recognize that the one who was appearing on the bank of the Gave River was the Most Holy Virgin; for weeks she only knew to speak of *the lady*, the lady of the grotto at Massabielle.

An Exciting Monday

We can imagine that the four privileged girls slept blissfully on that Sunday night. The marvelous presence of the Mother of God had filled them with joy through the music of her words and the radiance of her continence and smile.

Naturally on waking up that Monday morning, July 3rd, the thoughts of the four girls were drawn immediately to the Virgin, and so they returned in a hurry to the scene of their good fortune.

Monday, July 3rd, arrived, and we were very happy to have seen our Heavenly Mother.

In the morning, the first thing that we did on Monday, July 3rd, was to go and pray there at the *cuadro*, the four of us together.

Together and certainly alone. The villagers had a lot of things to do. They had to make journeys to the distant pastures. The girls themselves would have to do the same. However, since the happenings of the previous evening, they had to understand that prayer—conversation with heaven—should not be just one of the many things that take up the time of day. It should be the most important—that with which they should start the day—and it deserved their greatest attention.

Together and alone. Under the deep blue summer sky, surrounded by the silence and tranquility of a nature pure and renovated from the previous evening. What a beautiful morning prayer! God's four little girls were there looking up to Him, with their sighs supplying words for many of God's creatures like the sun and vegetation that cannot express themselves, as they prayed to the Spirit that breathes where He wills; and you hear His voice, but you know not where He comes nor where He goes. (John 3:9)

Together and alone. Offering up the new day to God in thanksgiving and petition, unusually joyful and unusually ardent, sensing themselves both sheltered and at the same time obligated by an immense display of Divine Love. From where had this mysterious whirlwind come to suddenly interrupt their way of life and draw them into something they could never have dreamed?

After praying there in the *cuadro*, we went back to our homes to do what our parents ordered.

And then we went to the school. At the class we met our schoolmistress Serafina Gómez.

She began crying and kissed us saying, *How lucky you are, etc . . .*

The good schoolmistress' feelings are readily explainable. How could she have even imagined that such things would happen to the children of her simple little school.

And the wave of excitement rippled through the village.

When we left the classroom everybody was talking about the same thing.

All were very impressed and happy.

And they believed very much.

And our family felt the same way.

As for Loli's family, her father Ceferino said, *There's never been anything like this.*

You are very right, my friend Ceferino. Things like these just starting to show themselves have been only rarely seen in the world, and perhaps it would be better to say that this type of thing has never been seen. Well could you praise God and try to cooperate with Him.

It was the same also with her mother Julia.

And María the mother of Jacinta, believed very much too, and her father Simón even more.

If we performed some practical joke, Jacinta's father would say that the apostles had done the same.

And he would begin to explain the things we did; to him it appeared that everything we did was good.

The good will of Simón and his noble sentiments for the things of God, (qualities found in genuinely good souls even with a lack of education) caused him to protect and excuse the girls from the opinions and comments which were soon to burst forth from the skeptics who never understand the working of the Divine Hand in lowly human affairs. Simón would have preferred then and there to see the girls immediately in a state of absolutely faultless



Jacinta's parents



Conchita's brothers: Miguel



Aniceto



Serafin

angelic perfection so as to prove the authenticity of their visions.⁽²⁾

The parents of Marí Cruz, Escolástico and Pilar, did not appear to have the same level of enthusiasm . . . As for the family of Conchita:

My mother really believed, without doubting anything.

How much we talked on that Sunday!



Conchita's mother

My brothers really believed insofar as they saw, and not only did they believe, but also it made them quite spiritual as it made many people.

2. There are apparitions and ecstasies which are a reward for virtue and at the same time a strong confirmation of it; and for this, they are only given to the highest realms of the spiritual life, to those we call *saints*.

But there are also apparitions and ecstasies that happen to those who, while receiving them, serve more as instruments than as recipients. God uses these persons to bring forth His extraordinary designs of mercy. And so He chooses not those who merit more, but those who are more useful for His plans. In such souls there can co-exist both the extraordinary favors of God and also many of their own imperfections. These imperfections will disappear if these souls try to correspond; not immediately and from the very first day, but as a fruit of persevering effort, since both in the natural life and in the spiritual life, progress is gradual. Without taking this into account, one will not be able to easily understand Garabandal.

Good sign! The affair was more than just something exciting, a remarkable change in the ordinary routine of country living. It was producing an impact on consciences and leading to a revision of ideas and conduct, awakening the need to become better.

There were people who liked what happened on that Sunday.

And there were others who were not impressed.

In our daily life, we did what our parents told us to do.

It is striking with what frequency Conchita repeats in many passages of her diary the fact that they applied themselves above all to fulfill the obligations of obedience.

Surely the obedience mentioned by Conchita had its foundation in the solid upbringing received in the families with Christian tradition; the contacts with the Angel and meetings with the Virgin could not but strengthen that way of acting. During those extraordinary sessions of instruction—the ecstasies—following teaching not invented by man, time would not be allotted for dissertation on a person's rights, on the requirements of one's own personality, on liberty. On the contrary, almost always would be taught the old doctrines of self-denial, taking up the cross each day, and of being submissive as the One who for love ended up, becoming obedient unto death, even the death of the Cross. (Phil. 2:9)

For this reason, it never occurred to the girls to oppose the recommendations of their elders in age, position, or authority by using the excuses used by many today to escape bothersome discipline such as, *You don't understand us. You belong to another century. Those old-fashioned ideas are passé.*

They obeyed and offered up the sacrifice, knowing that the way to God is by renunciation and sacrifice, that the chores and duties of each day are more important, though many times less satisfying, than anything else, even the moments of paradise in the calleja.

In our daily lives we did what our parents told us.

The ultimate instruction.

But duty did not take up all the hours of the day.

In the afternoon when we left the school, (5:00 P.M.) as we had spent a very happy Sunday, July 2nd, and as we already had such a desire to see her again (The Virgin), we went there; (the calleja) and we began to say the rosary.

We were alone.

And when we had finished and hadn't seen her, we said nothing at the time.

We weren't surprised, nor were we sad, as she could still come later.

Then, since she hadn't come, we went to our homes and did what we were told to do at home.

The Mysterious Calls

When the hour was approximately the same as Sunday—the first day on which we had seen the vision—our families, who were now believing a lot, said to us, *You should go to say the rosary in the Cuadro.*

And we told them, *We haven't been called yet.*

And they thought about this and said, *But how are you called?*

An we answered that it was like an interior voice, but that we didn't hear it with the ears, nor did we hear ourselves called by name.

It is a JOY.⁽³⁾

There are three calls.

The first is a very little joy.

The second is somewhat greater.

At the third we become very excited and feel great happiness.

And then she comes.

3. Here the youthful Conchita tries to explain in her poor vocabulary what no human tongue is able to express adequately. She does not succeed in telling us what these *calls* are in themselves; she informs us as well as she can about some of their effects. We are here before a case of direct communication between God and the soul, without the interplay of signs and words. The interior of the soul is marvelously filled by a divine breath which calls it, and fills it with light, assurance, docility, and joy toward God or the Virgin.



Conchita, Jacinta, Loli

We would go outside (to the site of the apparition) after the second call.

For if we would go after the first we would have to wait a long time, since from the first to the second there is a long wait.

Here emerges for the first time a phenomenon that is most amazing, most unusual, and most proper to Garabandal: the visionaries' interior calls. At this stage of our history Conchita advances explanations that were the fruit of larger experience later on. So as to better understand this phenomenon, I am going to insert here what was written in the early times of the apparitions by Father Ramón María Andreu S. J.,⁽⁴⁾ an exceptional witness of the Garabandal events. It is to be pointed out that the calls occurred only when the Virgin was going to come, and never when it was

simply a visit with the Angel.

Father Andreu reported:

«The phenomenon of the calls or interior touches from which the ecstasies arose happened to the four girls in the following way. They would say that there were always three calls. These could occur at the same time when they were together; they could occur at the same time when they were separated; they could occur at a time which was not the same even if they were together; they could occur to all four, to just one, or to several of them.

The word *call* was originated by the girls themselves who talked like this: *Today the Virgin did not "call" me. Today she "called" me. I have already had one "call" or two . . .*

It is not easy to describe the nature of the calls. The girls said they were like a joy from within, a clear and definite joy that was always present. It was as if the Virgin had said in the first call, *Jacinta!* and in the second, *Jacinta, come!* and in the third, *Jacinta, run, run, run!* But all this without audible words.

4. The name of this Jesuit priest will be forever linked to the history of Garabandal. He had three brothers in the Jesuit order, two of them stationed outside of Spain. He was dedicated especially to directing retreats on the Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius, and had his residence in the house of Christ the King in Valladolid. Later on we will see in detail his connection with Garabandal.



Between calls . . . waiting for the rapture

The children hid the calls; and if they were not asked, or if they did not spontaneously mention them in some cases, they would not have been noticed.

Here are some cases that I myself observed. One day Loli was pouring a glass of water for Mr. Matutano⁽⁵⁾ so that he could take an aspirin. And while she was still pouring she felt the third call. Putting down the pitcher and glass, she exclaimed, *Let's go, Father, since she's calling me.*

5. Mr. Matutano, who was from Valencia, lived in Reinosa (Santander) because of his rice business. He frequently visited Garabandal, pitching a tent near Conchita's home. One of his daughters was very close to Conchita, and from this came occasions of mild vanity for the visionary, since the young Valencian painted her nails, gave her jewelry, clothes, etc.

After relaying this information, this priest who was trustworthy added: «This is another detail that shows what many of us have done to the girls—disturbing at times the work of heaven in preparing and directing these girls toward the struggle that they are going to have to face in the future.»

On another occasion I was with Jacinta, Loli and three priests. Being advised that they had received the second call, I went with one of the priests to Conchita's house and there asked her, *How many calls have you had?* She answered me, *Two, Father.* Then Mari Cruz who was there said, *The Virgin hasn't called me.* I told her, *Well, then, go home.* And she obeyed.

The children could notice that, although the third call had begun, there still remained a period of time, as they told me on one occasion, *There is only time for one line.* (I was writing, and that was the way it was.) Another time I heard this, *Father, there are now two and a half. This half must be like the coming of the third.*»

These words were written down by Father Ramón María Andreu, an eyewitness of many things at Garabandal. Let us return now to the unfolding of the story on Monday, July 3rd.

We told (our families) about the calls.

They were astounded since they had never seen or heard this!

After our conversation with them, we had a call and we told them about it.

The four of us were together.

And there were many people and some of them didn't believe, which could have been because they had never come.

They spoke to the parish priest Fr. Valentín, *Why not put two in Loli's house and the other two in Conchita's house?*

And Father Valentín said, *That's a good idea.*

So with the parents' permission, it was done that way. Loli and Jacinta were put in Loli's house; Conchita and Mari Cruz in Conchita's house.

They separated us that way to see if the four of us would come together at the same time.

And after a half hour we received the second call.

And the four of us came together there in the *cuadro* at the same time.

And the people were amazed.

As soon as we arrived at the *cuadro*, the Virgin appeared to us with the Child Jesus.

But the Angels didn't come.

She came with a broad smile, and the Child was smiling too.

And the first thing that we said was, *Where are St. Michael and the other Angel?*

And she smiled even more.

The people and our parents who were there gave us articles so that we might present them to be kissed.

And she kissed them all.

And since we liked to make up games for the Child Jesus, we picked up pebbles.

And I put them in my braids, Loli put them in her sleeves, and Jacinta gave them to Him.

But He didn't take them; He only smiled.

(On this occasion Mari Cruz offered the Child some caramels that had been given to her.)

And she said many things to us.

But she didn't allow us to tell these things.

In this childlike narration there are many astonishing things: 1. The miraculous exact coincidence of the calls in the four girls in spite of the separation imposed on them; 2. The fact that the Angels, having completed their mission to prepare and accompany, had prudently withdrawn so that all attention might be directed on the person who really mattered; 3. The presence of the spectators who tried to enter more into the grace of Mary's presence, offering objects for her to kiss so as to treasure them later as the sweet radiation of her maternal benevolence; 4. The girls' normal reaction to a beautiful Child, making up games as an expression of their affection for Him.

But what is most worthy of attention is that **She said many things . . .** Although she did not permit the girls, at least for the moment, to repeat what she said.

With the visionaries she tolerates many *childish* things. What mother or teacher doesn't do so? But she raises them above their childish ways and



“She kissed them all.”

natural dispositions. She didn't come just to pass the time, even in her almost divine way. Nor did she come to demonstrate her kindness in a multitude of small favors. She came above all to *aid and direct*, not according to our ideas or plans, but completely according to the difficult designs of God. For this she spoke many things on that night. For this she was to continue to speak on many other nights. Certain things, that were of interest to all or many, would be known at the proper time; certain others would remain forever personal secrets of the visionaries. What St. Therese of the Child Jesus wrote about her own story, can be written now about Garabandal: *Many pages of this story will never be read on earth.*

In this meeting, after having exchanged words with the children, the Queen might have added the words from Proverbs (8:32-35) that the Catholic liturgy has often placed on her lips.

**Now therefore, you children, hear me:
Blessed are they who keep my ways.
Hear instruction and be wise, and refuse it not.
Blessed is the man who hears me,**

**and watches daily at my gates,
and waits at the posts of my doors.
He who shall find me, shall find life,
And shall have salvation from the Lord.**

The Kiss of Grace

On that July Monday, the day of the second apparition of Mary, Queen and Mother, the calls appeared for the first time, as we have just seen. And something else also appeared that has no precedent in the history of the Catholic Church, and which would come for that reason to be uniquely characteristic of Garabandal. I undertake to describe here the kisses of grace.

We have previously read:

**The people and our parents who were
there gave us articles so that we might
present them to be kissed.
And she kissed them all.**

Through these words this gracious event is indicated. During the course of history, many examples will come forth of the Virgin's hidden generosity. Here it is necessary to make some observations which will aid in understanding this better.

Again we go back to the testimony of Father Ramón María Andreu and the report he wrote three months after the Garabandal phenomena had begun.

«Stones have also been a frequent article in the visions of the children. The stones involved were small, about the size of caramel candy. They gathered them from the ground while in the trance, or else they brought the stones with them beforehand. They gave them to the Virgin to kiss, afterwards they returned them to people as a gift or sign of pardon. It was frequently seen that the Vision herself asked the children for more stones; but they didn't gather more.

Cases of hierognosis (*secret and mysterious understanding to distinguish holy and sacred objects from other things*) have been observed in connection with the stones kissed by the Virgin. For example, one day one of the children in a trance held up a little cup of stones to offer them up to be kissed by the Virgin. While raising one of them toward the Virgin, she was clearly heard to say, *What? What has already been kissed? Oh! It is André's.*»

A little stone is an insignificant thing, worthless; but the same stone is converted into a precious treasure by being distinguished with the Virgin's kiss.

The kissing of stones occurred mainly in the first weeks of the ecstasies. Later almost nothing else was kissed except religious articles like crucifixes, rosaries, medals, holy cards, scapulars.

«It was customary to see the children with rosaries, medals, and crucifixes around their necks. These were things that the public gave them for the Virgin to kiss. A considerable number of cases of hierognosis have been observed in connection with the offering of objects to be kissed. Also cases have been cited —the majority difficult to prove — of favors obtained or cures made either at the moment of giving those objects to be kissed, or on receiving them back, or later when the recipients used them.»
(Father Ramón)



“Cases of hierognosis have been observed in connection with the stones kissed by the Virgin.”

It was a proven fact that the children, in spite of the multitude of objects that passed through their hands and which they held up to be kissed without any pre-established order, never erred in returning each one of the objects to the proper person. And they did this with their faces turned upwards, without seeing the people, and sometimes with the persons involved being behind their backs, or deliberately remaining at a distance. In all these circumstances it was evident that someone invisible was there with words or gestures directing the hands of the children.

But the Virgin did not only kiss definitely religious articles and small stones, the simple stones of biblical significance; she also kissed other objects that did not seem appropriate for her lips.

Among the numerous episodes that have been recorded with complete guarantee of accuracy, this one is particularly striking:

One day Conchita was in the kitchen of her house surrounded by persons who were waiting for the moment of the apparition. On the simple table that served for the family meals, the objects that she was going to give to be kissed were being gathered. Together with these, someone had put there a stylish woman's powder case. The child and those present wanted this removed. How could the Virgin come to kiss an object so profane and used only for the service of vanity? Nevertheless, the powder case remained there.

The ecstasy began and those present saw with astonishment that the visionary's hand, without her looking at it, before going to any other object, went first of all toward the previously discussed powder case. The child raised it toward the invisible Virgin and then set it down with great respect on the table. Among those present, surprise must have been mingled with doubt. Was it really the Virgin who was appearing? It didn't seem that she would kiss such an object . . .

As soon as the ecstasy was finished, Conchita was asked for an explanation. And she declared

that the Virgin had asked immediately for the powder case in order to kiss it, saying that it was something *«belonging to her Son.»* The girl did not know anything more. But the person who had put the powder case there did know more and revealed the secret. During the terrible Spanish Civil War (1936-1939) in the Red Zone when priests were being executed and had to be hidden, the powder case had been used to bring Communion Hosts to various locations and especially to prisoners whom the Reds held captive in order to execute. Thus it had served as a pyx.⁽⁶⁾

Besides religious articles, the objects that probably were the most kissed at Garabandal were wedding rings. Concerning this we have innumerable stories, some of which will be mentioned later.

If there is anything mysterious as to why the Virgin kissed these objects, it is not difficult to figure out. This is the hour of great crisis in family

6. This episode definitely happened. Ramón Pifarré from Barcelona, visiting Garabandal with his daughter Asunción, brought the powdercase to Conchita's house.

Loli returning a wedding ring kissed by the Virgin.





Conchita holding up rosaries for the Virgin's kiss

life. Among non-Catholics the breaking up of married life has been advancing during the past few years in an alarming degree. But even in Catholic families this evil is becoming more and more prominent. Certainly in Spain it is noticeably less than in other countries, and certainly the people of Garabandal have remained in this respect unchanged; but the Virgin did not come only for Garabandal, nor only for Spain. She came for all her children and if some ought to reform for the evil done, others should be warned so that they do not fall into the same evil. With her kiss the Virgin here indicated in advance what the Church, united in the Council, wanted to remedy and declare later with its Pastoral Document *Gaudium et Spes* (Part II, Chapter I).

With regard to the Virgin's kisses, I would like to inscribe here two interesting things.

The first is an affirmation. It is certain that Conchita has said more than once on behalf of the Virgin:

«Jesus will perform prodigies by means of the objects kissed by her, before and after the miracle. And the persons who use these objects with faith will undergo purgatory in this life.»

The second is an anecdote which helps us understand that these kisses belonged strictly to Mary's maternal role. It happened several years later on June 18th, 1965, an important date in the history of Garabandal. On that day the village was swarming with strangers who had come to be present at a special apparition announced in December of the previous year. One of these strangers, undoubtedly not possessing a kissed object and wishing to have one, offered a rosary to Conchita. The young girl, sure that on that day only St. Michael was coming, would not accept it, saying to the surprised man:

—The Angel doesn't kiss.

—Why is that?

Conchita smiled and said, *Only the Virgin kisses. The Angel is not the person for that.*

Now let us return to those first days in July of 1961. The apparition of Monday, July 3rd, started at 7:30 at night and ended at 8:00.

When she said to us, *Stay with God and with me also*, that made us sad. (Her departure)

And we said, *Goodbye, goodbye.*

The last thing she said to us was, *Tomorrow you will see me again.*

On July 4th, we were the same as usual, and the people of the village and our parents, brothers, and sisters were believing more each day.

The strangers who came were very enthusiastic in telling other people to come.

We continued leading our normal lives, doing what our parents told us.

Evening came on Tuesday, July 4th, the third day of seeing the Virgin.

Many people had come, and priests.

The rosary was at 6:00 in the evening at the parish church and we had one call.

The church was full of people and on the main altar were about a dozen priests and photographers⁽⁷⁾ taking pictures.

When the rosary was finished we had two calls and we decided to run to the *cuadro*, and the people ran after us . . .

Before all had arrived, Mari Cruz and I were a little higher up than Loli and Jacinta. The two of us were inside the *cuadro* itself, and the other two not inside.

And the people said that for all that we had run, we didn't perspire.

And they were perspiring and arriving all exhausted.

And they were amazed.

But it was as though the Virgin carried us!

According to the witnesses of the Garabandal phenomena, the girls' race to the site of the apparition after feeling the third call was awesome, and there was no way of following them. Therefore, Conchita said with reason that it was the Virgin—a supernatural force—that carried them. Because of this they did not feel any tiredness or signs of

7. Cameras appeared in Garabandal from the beginning, brought for definite reasons, most of the time with the desire of perpetuating the beauty and emotion of those extraordinary scenes.

fatigue, like perspiration, shortness of breath, fast heartbeat, etc . . .

If all this were mere *child's play*, as has been said (even officially), they would have soon become physically and psychologically worn out. Nevertheless the races, the trances, the exertions and the vigils—which took place almost daily, month after month for several years—exhausted everyone else except the visionaries. And all who could observe these things from up close, including eminent doctors of various specialties, agreed in describing the amazing naturalness, normality, childlike and adolescent freshness and mental balance that the girls had in their way of acting. Only intervention from on high could have left the girls' weak natures intact and enriched in such circumstances.

Another new confirmation of the basic theological axiom, *Gratia naturam non destruit, sed perficit.* (Grace does not destroy nature, but perfects it.)

Serious Words

This apparition of Tuesday, July 4th, 1961 was very important because of the statements of the Celestial Apparition.

The Virgin was smiling as usual.

And the first thing that she said to us was,

—Do you know the meaning of the writing that the Angel carried beneath him?

We spoke out together, No, we don't know.

—It gives a message that I am going to explain to you so that you can tell it to the people on the 18th of October.

And she told it to us.

The message, brief in words, extended in content, was the girls' secret until the 18th of October. I would like to speak about this now; however, when the story arrives at that date, the message will be revealed and commented on.

Once again I must manifest my admiration for the divine teaching in the events at Garabandal.



“Tell it to the people on the 18th of October”

Heaven accommodates itself to the capacity of young girls lacking in education, but not lacking in intelligence. Little by little they are first introduced to what they will learn and experience. Then later on they are made to learn and experience many more advanced things.

It begins with the visual and the imaginative: the brilliant figure of an angel, suggesting so much to the visionaries even though he appears without speaking; an angel surrounded with signs very appropriate for drawing attention toward what he wants to say. To this is added the even more beautiful image of Mary with the two angels and Mysterious Eye. Then it goes on to words: a few important words that ought to remain engraved in the souls of the girls, although they did not understand them. Conchita testifies to this with a brief addition that she puts in her diary, showing the Virgin told her the message on July 2nd, but that only later, on Tuesday, July 4th would she begin to understand the message. **She told us on the first day, but we didn't understand.**

They heard the words without being able to comprehend either their significance or their content. Finally the explanations and illustrations begin.⁽⁸⁾

8. We know that on the 28th and 29th of July, there was an *intensive course* on the contents of the message. We will speak about the 29th of July in Chapter 8. With regard to the 28th, I put down here the testimony of the Police Chief Juan Alvarez Seco who was an eye-witness of what he reported:

«The visionaries were in ecstasy in the *cuadro*, very serious, and totally absorbed in what the Virgin had to be teaching and advising them. Big tears flowed from some . . . Emotion also held many of those present. When the ecstasy was finished, the girls spoke a little with Father Valentín and he said later, breaking the intense silence of all those who were there: *The Virgin has given the girls a message that they cannot reveal at present, either to the parish priest, their parents, or the bishop.*»

To the young village girls it was necessary to explain the significance of terms that seem self-explanatory to us. The girls, for example, did not know the meaning of *sacrifices* or what it meant to *make sacrifices*, something that was repeated very much in the conversations with the Virgin.

After her smiling condescension, the marvelous teacher comes forth with serious things. But she has such grace in her words! And how she accommodates herself to her little disciples. With a love and a patience without limits, she comes to instruct them first, and through them the rest of us . . .

● By giving small and progressive lessons that they are able to assimilate,

● By accompanying the lessons with kisses, smiles and condescension, even to the point of playing with them,

● By placing herself in the daily existence of the four girls, even listening to some of their conversations that appeared banal and unimportant, something to waste the time of one so great as the Mother of God.⁽⁹⁾

9. Fourteen years after the events, Jacinta confirmed many things for me.

«—Did the Virgin begin immediately to explain what you had seen in the Angel's inscription?

—Yes, from the first days.

—And did she spend some time giving instructions during all her visits?

—Yes, whenever she spoke it was always to teach us something.

—We know that you told her a multitude of affairs and trivia that could only have interest for you yourselves . . . How did she react to that?

—She heard us with an attention, a patience, and a goodness that I can understand only now.

—Did she take what you said as a basis to instruct and counsel you?

—Many times!

—And what was, in your opinion, the principal usefulness of all the conversations with the Mother of Heaven? . . . saying it in another way, what did you get



Yes, she lowered herself to our level, and among us she established her dwelling. In everything she acts as a mother who is in no haste when it comes to things concerning her children, since her haste is to wait for them: that they might believe and improve, that they might enter into the right way, and go forward beyond their childishness, frailty, and pathetic lack of correspondence.

It is the Seat of Wisdom speaking to everyone from her cathedral at Garabandal:

Oh, children how long you love childishness,
And fools covet what is harmful to themselves;
And the unwise hate knowledge.

Turn to my reproof:
Behold I will utter my spirit to you,
And show you my words.

(Proverbs 1:22-23)

out of these conversations?

—I don't know about the others. But for myself, what struck me the most was the necessity of submission and obedience to our parents and superiors, like priests, rulers, and so on . . .

—In all these visits, did she come for you, or rather for the Church and the world?

—For the Church and the world, no doubt about that!

—It seems that she revealed "secrets." Were they about your personal future?

—When we asked her about that, she never answered.

—At the time she predicted to you things about the future, referring to the Church and the world . . . Besides the Warning and Chastisement that we know already, can you tell me some others?

—No, I can't say anything, since we have to keep it secret.

—All right. How do you interpret, "They will believe. They will believe" that she responded to your repeated requests for her to perform a great miracle so that everyone would be convinced?

—I don't know . . . All that I can testify is that she told us this many times.»



Jacinta presents religious articles for the Virgin to kiss