

Affirmations of the Faith at Garabandal

The Blessed Virgin reaffirmed at Garabandal the teachings and traditions of the Catholic Church just as they were about to come under attack.

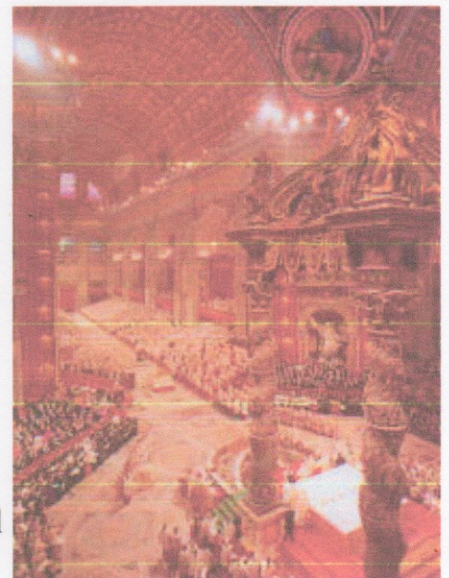
from GARABANDAL JOURNAL Nov-Dec. 2002
By Mark Regis

All of the Church recognized appearances of the Blessed Virgin in the first half of the twentieth century were timed to historical events. Our Lady appeared at Fatima in 1917 during World War I (1914-18) and said that the war would soon end, but that if mankind did not amend its ways, a second and worse one would come and that Russia would spread her errors throughout the world. Our Lady's last appearance at Fatima occurred one month before the outbreak of the Bolshevik Revolution in Russia (November 1917) which gave birth to one of the greatest scourges of human history, atheistic communism.

Lesser known appearances of Our Lady in Belgium at Beauraing (1932-33) and Banneux (1933) also had historical significance. It was in 1933 that Adolf Hitler established in Germany a dictatorship whose aggression would initiate the Second World War (1939-1945).

The Blessed Virgin's appearances at Garabandal from 1961 to 1965 also coincided with a significant event which although not political, was nevertheless historical in the life of the Church: the Second Vatican Council (1962-1965). What occurred in the aftermath of this Council can hardly be described as changes in practice, discipline, liturgy, art, architecture and music reshaped the familiar landscape of traditional Catholicism. The extent of the changes often finds expression in the phrases "pre Vatican II" and "post Vatican II" even though Pope John Paul II has vigorously opposed the notion that the Council was meant to be a point of departure from all that preceded it.

In his opening address to the Council on October 11, 1962, Pope John XXX stressed that there should be a "renewed, serene and tranquil adherence to all the teachings of the Church in their entirety and preciseness, as they still shine forth in the acts of the Council of Trent and the First Vatican Council." What actually happened during and immediately after the Council hardly conformed to Pope John's words. Father Joseph Pelletier summarized the situation: "Though in preparation for some years before the Council...the storm only manifested itself in a serious way during the Council. That storm grew in fury during the Council and in the first few years after it."



In the upheaval, what previously would have seemed unthinkable for Catholics, happened. The sacred

teachings and practices of the Faith came under fire. Core beliefs such as the existence of hell, purgatory, angels, Original Sin, and even the Real Presence of Christ in the Eucharist were challenged as well as the need for private confession. Attempts were made to suppress devotion to the Blessed Virgin Mary.

But, as Father Pelletier pointed out: "God anticipated all this and gave the remedy to His Church through the apparitions of Garabandal. The messages received through these apparitions gave us the answer to the problems that began to beset the Church. God through Mary, His messenger, was telling us to maintain our traditional belief and devotional practices in regard to all these things."

What follows are some of the beliefs and practices that have been challenged and how Our Lady responded in advance at Garabandal.

HELL: While hell is seldom if ever preached today in the majority of churches, the Blessed Virgin did not hesitate to make reference to it at Garabandal. In her second Message of June 18, 1965, delivered by Saint Michael on her behalf to Conchita, Our Lady said: "Many cardinals, many bishops and many priests are on the road to *perdition* and are taking many souls with them." If there is any doubt that perdition refers to hell, here is the Webster's Unabridged description: Perdition: 1. a state of final spiritual ruin; loss of the soul; damnation. 2. the future state of the wicked. 3. hell.

In that same Message, Our Lady again alluded to hell when she said: "You are now receiving the last warnings. I love you very much and do not want your *condemnation*."

Another reference to hell was made on January 1, 1965, during an apparition at the Pines, when the Blessed Virgin told Conchita that Catholic Christians do not think enough about life after death, about heaven and hell.

Picture: Jacinta in ecstasy in 1962 holds up religious articles for the Virgin to kiss.

PURGATORY: (See [Garabandal and Purgatory 2.](#))

ANGELS: A university student once asked Padre Pio: "Does God exist?" The Padre responded with a question of his own: "Are you crazy?" To ask a religious consecrated to God and especially someone who frequently saw Jesus and Mary and spoke almost daily with his guardian angel, the question must have seemed ridiculous. Equally absurd would it have been to ask the visionaries of Garabandal if they believed in angels since they not only were seeing one on a regular basis, but frequently received Communion from him. And although invisible to onlookers, the Hosts they received were real Hosts which they could taste and swallow.



The importance of St. Michael the Archangel appearing at Garabandal is of such significance for our times that it will be treated separately in a future issue.

ORIGINAL SIN: At Garabandal, the Blessed Virgin reaffirmed the existence of Original Sin. On March 31, 1962, Mari Loli's mother, Julia, gave birth to Lupita, sister to the visionary on the upper floor of the inn which served also as their dwelling. Mari Loli entered into ecstasy on the ground floor and was heard to say: "Ah! It is a little sister? What, so little and sin already in her?" She then came out of ecstasy. A priest present at the time asked her what she meant. She answered: "I saw sin in the soul of my little sister."

On another occasion, Conchita related the following. A young woman was holding a three month old baby in her arms. The visionary spoke of the baby to the Blessed Virgin who said the infant was in the state of sin. Out of ecstasy Conchita commented: "I don't know what it means, but if the Blessed Virgin said it is so, then it must be so."

She went up to the young woman and told her: "The Virgin told me that the baby is in the state of sin." The mother answered: "It's true. The baby has not yet been baptized." Soon afterwards, the child did receive the sacrament of Baptism. This incident had an influence on the young visionary in later life, since Conchita always insisted on having her children baptized the first Sunday after their birth.

CONFESSION: At Garabandal the Blessed Virgin reinforced the importance of personal confession. When interviewed in April of 1983, visionary Jacinta Moynihan was asked: "Did the Blessed Virgin ever speak to you about the Sacrament of Reconciliation?" She replied: "Yes she did. Now there are people who want to do away with it, but the Virgin said it was *muy importante*— very important." (On page 11 in this magazine, is an incident involving Jacinta during the apparitions where confession came into play.)

On September 8, 1961, Canon Julio Porro Cardenoso asked the Virgin through the visionaries what she urged the Spanish people to do above all to amend their lives. The answer was: "Let them go to confession and receive Communion."

THE HOLY EUCHARIST: Without a healthy devotion to the Blessed Sacrament, the very heart of Catholicism, the Church cannot thrive, and for more than three decades, we have witnessed the systematic dismantling of Eucharistic devotion. In her second Message of Garabandal dated June 18, 1965, the Blessed Virgin warned us of what was coming when she said "less and less importance is being given to the Eucharist."

* To counteract this coming trend, Our Lady placed such *great* importance on the Holy Eucharist at Garabandal that Father Ramon Andreu was of the opinion that the main thrust of the events was the priesthood and the Eucharist.

A detailed description of the Eucharistic dimension of Garabandal should be the subject of a separate article so all that will be touched upon here is the Blessed Sacrament reserved in the tabernacle.

There have been some disturbing stories of priests who did not believe the Real Presence remained in the Hosts after Mass. But at Garabandal, Our Lady left little room for doubt when in the first Message of June 18, 1961, she said we must "visit the Blessed Sacrament frequently."

During the events, once the ambulatory ecstasies began, the Virgin always led the seers to the village church where they would kneel and pray before the tabernacle. When they were asked why they went to the church so often, they replied that Our Lady said she liked being near her Son. On those occasions, the visionaries, in ecstasy led by the Virgin, would leave the church walking backwards. As a sign of profound respect, they never turned their backs to the tabernacle.

In her last appearance at Garabandal on November 13, 1965, the Blessed Virgin gently reprimanded Conchita when she said: "Why don't you go and visit my Son in the tabernacle? He waits for you night and day."

MARIAN DEVOTION: Our Lady responded at Garabandal, to the attempt to minimize her importance, by

proclaiming her rightful universal motherhood. In the second formal Message are her words: "I, *your mother*, ask you to amend your lives." And in her final appearance to Conchita she said: "Talk to me about my children. I hold them all beneath my mantle."

The two principal Marian devotions of the rosary and scapular were prominent at Garabandal. The Virgin appeared as Our Lady of Mount Carmel with the scapular on her right wrist and told the visionaries of its importance. During almost every apparition, she *commanded* the visionaries to say the rosary. She taught them the mysteries and how to say the prayers slowly thinking about the words.

TRADITIONAL CATHOLICISM

The above represent major issues, but certainly not all. The priesthood, religious life and virtually all aspects of the Faith were challenged immediately after the Council. But at Garabandal the Blessed Virgin affirmed not only the dogmas of faith, but the full expression of traditional Catholicism. One of the ways she did this was to incorporate the use of religious articles, so much a part of Catholic culture, into the events.

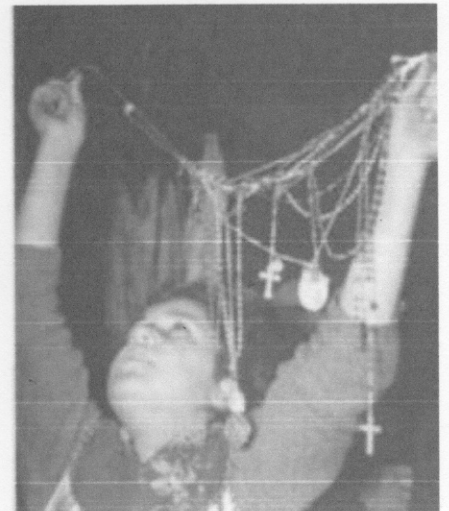
Prior to the visionaries seeing Our Lady, they received three interior calls or *llamadas* with each successive call coming at a closer interval. After the third call, the young seers, knowing the vision was imminent, began to search for a small crucifix to have in their hands when they were overtaken by the ecstasy. They did this at the request of Our Lady and once in ecstasy, they held it up to the Virgin to kiss, then kissed it themselves, and finally, as they moved along, held it out for the spectators to venerate.

The kissing of other religious articles by Our Lady at Garabandal was also a common feature of the events, and there are many fascinating anecdotes from this practice such as the following witnessed by villager Piedad Gonzalez.

At the beginning of 1963, in the third year of the apparitions, thirty women from Segovia went up to Garabandal to witness the ecstasies of the four girls. They brought with them a bag containing the rosaries of all the women in the group which they wanted to give to one of the visionaries so the rosaries could be kissed by Our Lady. Upon entering the village, the women came across Piedad and asked her what time there would be an ecstasy. "Mari Loli will have one at about 10:00 o'clock," they were told.

In Piedad's kitchen, one of the women removed the rosaries from the bag intending to distribute them because each member of the group wanted personally to hand their own rosary to the visionary. The rosaries, however, were all tangled together in a big ball and it was impossible to get them apart. Piedad said, "Look, just put them back in the bag and give it to Loli. She will untangle them." The women looked at Piedad not very convinced. "Don't look at me like that," she responded. "You'll see, you'll see!"

At the appointed time, Loli went into ecstasy holding the bag of rosaries. She left her house and went out into the village plaza followed by her father and a large crowd. After a while, she stopped, conversed with her Vision and then began effortlessly to draw the rosaries from the bag one by one to present to the Vision. Each time she did this, she took the rosary, and still in ecstasy with her head tilted back, went through the crowd until she was in front of the rightful owner, and then placed it around her neck. She repeated this action thirty times until all the women had their own rosaries, kissed by the Virgin, returned to them. Piedad said: "I saw



weeping and fainting that night."

ECUMENISM:

The concept of ecumenism was prominent at the Second Vatican Council from the very beginning. Fathers from countries with large Protestant populations were especially keen on a conciliar decree that would foster greater "dialogue" with non-Catholic Christians. To their way of thinking, in order to do this, the importance of Our Lady had to be de-emphasized.

In the preparatory stages of the Council, the schema on the Blessed Virgin was originally entitled: "On the Blessed Virgin Mary, Mother of God and Mother of Men." It was variously considered as a separate schema or as part of the schema on the Church.

The schema itself which contained traditional references to Our Lady and her prerogatives such as "Mediatrice of all graces" was especially protested by the German Fathers' chief *peritus*. Father Karl Rahner who said "unimaginable harm would result from an ecumenical point of view, in relation to both Orientals and Protestants" if the schema were not revised. Eventually it became the last three chapters of the Dogmatic Constitution on the Church with none of the chapter heads naming Mary as either Mother of God or Mother of Men.

But in the end, the progressives did not entirely have their way. The section on the Blessed Virgin in the document, with an additional thirteen lines added, came at the end giving it greater impact, and it did refer to Mary in the text as Mother of God and Mother of Men. A final blow to the liberal Fathers came on Saturday, November 21, 1964, closing day of the third session, when Pope Paul VI unexpectedly proclaimed the Blessed Virgin Mary as "Mother of the Church." [*The Rhine Flows into the Tiber*, A History of Vatican Two, Fr. Ralph M. Wiltgen, S.V.D.]

At Garabandal, Our Lady demonstrated what we might call her own form of ecumenism as related by Conchita in a 1975 interview: "One day there were in the village two men, one mentally unbalanced, the other a Protestant. They asked me to allow them to kiss my crucifix when I next saw Our Lady. I was quite concerned about this as in my mind I didn't think they should kiss the crucifix. When Our Lady appeared to me, I told her about their request and how I felt about it. She looked at them and said, 'They are all my children.' After the ecstasy, they came over to me and thanked me for having given them the crucifix to kiss. I did not do this on my own; it was Our Lady who gave them the crucifix. I do not remember giving it to them."

But Garabandal provides the ultimate solution to the ecumenical question. In the previously mentioned 1983 interview with Jacinta Moynihan, the visionary shed more light on what she had previously said regarding the unity of the Churches:

Q. Do you remember when the Virgin told you that the Churches would unite?

A. I don't remember when but she did say the Churches would unite.

Q. Did she say if it would be the Catholics and the Protestants or did it include, for example, the Orthodox Church as well?

A. All would reunite into the Catholic Church.

Q. All would come *into* the Catholic Church?

A. She didn't name the other Churches, but said that all would come into the Catholic Church. The way she said it was: *all humanity would be within one Church, the Catholic Church.*

In the first part of this article, is stated that the apparitions of Garabandal coincided with a Church event as opposed to a historical event on the world stage such as a major war. While that is true, an important qualification needs to be added here. Historians, especially Catholic historians, point to the 1960s as one of the most, if not the most, infamous decades in modern times. It was in the 1960s that the sexual revolution was born. It was a time of protest, a time of revolt against convention, and of every kind of authority: parental, governmental, military, civil, institutional and religious. Many of the problems we face today had their origins in the 1960s.

It was during this revolutionary period that the Blessed Virgin "went in haste" to the mountains of northern Spain to manifest her maternal love for her children, to give them a plan of action, and to warn them against the dangers of a life separated from God.

In reflecting not only on the historical timing of Garabandal but on the progression of the events, a question comes to mind. Why did the Blessed Virgin prolong her visits until 1965 when most of the apparitions ended in January 1963? Hadn't everything been accomplished by then? Throughout the rest of 1963 and all of 1964, there was only one apparition (for Conchita alone on December 8, 1963) and in 1965, only three also only for Conchita.

It would seem that she was waiting for something—actually two things: First, she wanted to see if her Message of October 18, 1961, would be heeded. This can be ascertained by the way she begins her second Message: "As my Message of October 18 has not been complied with and has not been made know to the world, I am advising you that this is the last one."

Secondly, she was waiting for the Council. Since Our Lady was officially proclaimed "Mother of the Church" by Pope Paul VI on the last day of the third Council session in 1964, she could now take the occasion to speak as a mother to her children among whom were those preparing for the final session. Her message of June 18, 1965, came three months before the last session began on September 14 of that year. And while the Message applied to all, some of it specifically referred to many cardinals, bishops and priests who at that time were engaged in the Council.

There are those who believe the upheaval that occurred after the Council was not so much due to the Council itself but rather by the way liberals took advantage of the general nature of the documents to interpret them their own way. Many of us are only too familiar with the "Spirit of Vatican II."

If the above is true, then the question is, Will the Council ever be implemented according to the Church's ongoing tradition the only correct interpretation? Snippets of a dialogue between Conchita and her Vision recorded on tape November 18, 1962, suggest that this will indeed happen, but not be until after the Miracle. During the same dialogue Conchita mentioned conversions on a very large scale.

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