

MODESTY

By Barry Hanratty

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In her lessons at Garabandal, the Blessed Virgin impressed upon the girls the importance of modesty. She did this in a number of ways by requiring: 1) a proper code of dress; 2) proper comportment; and 3) that they not wear jewelry or cosmetics (inappropriate for young girls) especially when they were going to see her.



PHOTO: From left: Conchita, Mari Loli, Jacinta and Mari Cruz. Although short-dresses for girls were the style of the time and area, the Blessed Virgin told them to wear longer ones.

With regard to how they responded to the Virgin's teaching on comportment, we have this testimony from Father José Ramon Garcia de la Riva as recounted in his *Memorias de Mis Subidas a Garabandal*.

Since my first visit, on August 22, 1961, I took advantage of all opportunities to go up to Garabandal, where I have passed and still pass my happiest days. I determined to study the girls closely, not only in their trances, but also in their normal state. I took pictures that show clearly the girls are not sick or peculiar, and have no abnormal symptoms. I can report with a thorough knowledge of the matter on their manner of comporting themselves in their homes, in the fields, in the stables, in the church, etc. They cannot be distinguished from the other girls of the village. They play, run, jump up and down, pray....

Now there is something that can be noticed in their external manners that is not the same as the other girls. For example, in their way of sitting, they always do it with great modesty. And never have they been surprised in the least lack of purity. Their comportment in this has been in

the extreme. Furthermore everyone has been able to observe in the ecstasies how they concern themselves that their dresses are in place.

In *She Went in Haste to the Mountain*, Father Eusebio Garcia de Pesquera has this to say on the subject: "Yes, their comportment was most proper, although we should bear in mind the customs and styles of dress then prevalent in their sheltered and secluded environment. The girls from Garabandal dressed like other girls of their time and area, and because of this, they sometimes wore short skirts, as was then the style.

"The Virgin called their attention to this with a mother's delicateness. In one of their ecstasies the three girls each went to their own homes separately, at the Vision's request, to change the dresses they were wearing for longer ones. Conchita was heard to say later during the trance, 'We should always wear long dresses like this, above all for coming to see you.'"

To further emphasize the importance of modesty, some of the laws of physics were suspended during the ecstasies as Father Ramon Andreu observed:

On August 31, one of the girls, while sitting on the ground in ecstasy, went several meters forwards toward the church and several meters backwards. The people who were watching became so filled with emotion that many cried — not so much for the action itself of going over the ground sitting down like this; but because in all the distance traveled, the girl's dress, without being disarranged, covered her to her knees. And I observed afterward that, in spite of having slid like this on the dirty ground, the dress had not become soiled. It was on this same day in August that the Virgin advised Loli to lengthen her skirt a little. "She said this smiling."

— *Father Ramón Andreu's report*

Another requirement of the Virgin was that dresses have long sleeves. She also told the girls not to allow themselves to be photographed with women with low necklines.

We will conclude with these words of Father Eusebio: "Modesty and decency can never be neglected in genuine morality because they are required by our condition as creatures made in the image and likeness of God, and furthermore raised up to be His sons and members of the Mystical Body of Christ.

"It is not that we are ashamed of our bodies, but that we are convinced that the most important part of us is not seen. And too much attention should not be given to our physical being while the other, our better part, remains forgotten and obscured.

"Proper dress is a distinctive trait of the human being who bridles and holds in check the animal nature, since there is in us a higher nature that deserves more attention and care."

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