

Fernando Imbernon's Testimony

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Excerpted from LOS PINOS DE GARABANDAL ILUMINARAN AL MUNDO and LOS MILAGROS O FAVORES DE NUESTRA MADRE DE GARABANDAL by Maria Josefa Villa de Gallego. Translated from Spanish by Dr. Edward Serrano.

In the summer of 1974 when I was in Gijon as inspector of sales for a company in Valencia, I went to the beach to take a swim and get some sun. I changed into my swimsuit and took a cold shower to cool me off from the heat in preparation for the cold seawater.

As I started down the steep marble steps, I slipped and flew through the air with my 200 pound body landing like a lead weight several steps down. My entire back hurt, but especially my right side in the kidney area.

Even though I didn't break any bones, I felt something was wrong; but I went swimming anyway. The cold Cantabrian water eased the pain. After about 15 minutes in the water I got out and lay on the cold sand.

After getting dressed, I went back to my hotel and rubbed my sore back and side with alcohol. I did not go to a doctor.

As a result of the fall, a bruise developed from my tailbone to my neck on the whole right side, which I sometimes treated with alcohol and liniment rubs. The hematoma lasted six months.

I continued my normal life for three years, occasionally giving myself an alcohol rub as my side still bothered me. I also applied holy water given to me by Father Elias, my spiritual director.

After three and a half more years, my right side had not improved. There was a persistent dull ache, and gradually it began to feel numb. I continued with the alcohol rubs but now in the mornings I had to do stretches and exercises. Little by little I lost all feeling there. My urine began to look cloudy and had an abnormal odor. Finally to touch this area was like touching a wooden stump as there was no feeling whatsoever. But I kept rubbing it with holy water.

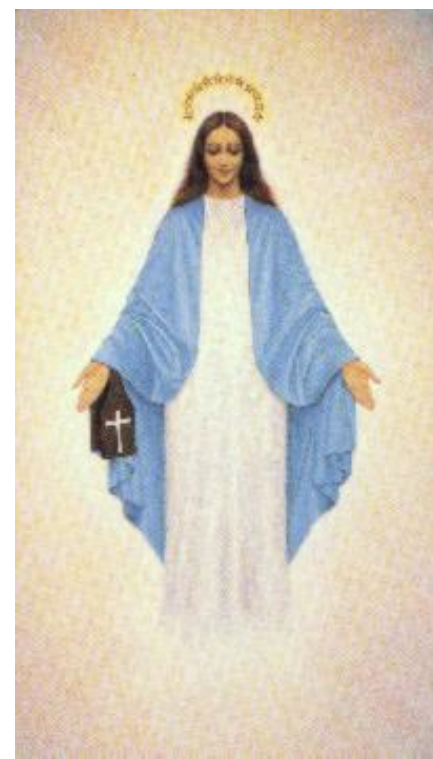
In September, 1982, I made plans with a Capuchin friend from Valencia named Fray Conrado, and Conchita Gallego, a lady very devoted to the Virgin, to go to Garabandal. We had to go through Madrid to pick up another friend, Mrs. Maria Paloma Fernandez-Pacheco y Garzon. I would drive and they were to stay a week or two, while I would only be there one day and then continue my trip to La Coruña to pick up my twelve year old son, who had spent the summer there and now had to return to Valencia to begin the school year.

So, we picked up Maria Paloma in Madrid, went on to Torrelavega, and picked up Conchita Gallego from the train station (she preferred the train to a long car ride). It was a wonderful trip of uninterrupted prayer, of rosaries, the Angelus, and hymns to the Holy Trinity, even though the weather was stormy with rain, lightning and thunder.

We arrived in Garabandal about midnight and went to the house of Juan Jose and Regina Gonzalez where we had a glass of hot milk before retiring to our rooms. I said my evening prayers, and as I knelt in front of a picture of the Immaculate Heart of Mary with my arms extended, I prayed the Hail Holy Queen asking Our Lady to intercede for me. I asked to be healed, but only if it be God's will. If it was not His will, I asked for the strength to bear my illness, and that at the time of my death I would die under her protection and the protection of her divine Son. I went to bed and slept well after the grueling trip.

At about 4:00 in the morning, I was suddenly awoken by a "presence" and felt something like a laser beam go through my lower stomach and right side. At the same time, an immense and marvelous spiritual happiness invaded me. I didn't even think of a physical healing, but a supernatural gift, and weeping with happiness I gave thanks to God and asked Him to give this proof to everyone on earth so they would be converted. I kept praying until I fell asleep again.

The next morning I met my friends and smiled as I told them about my welcome to the village. We ate breakfast, heard Mass and went up to the Pines where we would pray the rosary, then come down for lunch, go back up, then come down again to pray in the Church. Finally, we prayed some more before returning to our lodgings.



As we had planned, the next morning I had breakfast and left for La Coruña to pick up my son while my friends stayed in Garabandal.

About twenty or thirty kilometers from Garabandal, I suddenly realized that the pain I had suffered for so long was gone. On our way up to Garabandal, it had been so bad that I had to shove my fist in my lower back to get some relief. Now that I didn't feel any pain, I put my hand in the afflicted spot and found that everything was normal — no more numbness, no more pain. I was filled with emotion and began to cry and give thanks to God and the Virgin now that I realized I had been cured.

Later, when I saw my companions, I told them what had happened. Now, in honor and gratitude to the most Holy Virgin of Carmel of Garabandal, and to her Divine Son, Jesus Christ, I tell everyone I know, and anyone who cares to listen, what happened to me.

Signed: Fernando Imbernon Tudela
Silla, Valencia
September 22, 1996

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