

Fr. Ramón's Foot

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Two days after the feast of Our Lady of the Pillar, there appeared in Garabandal for the first time a German engineer who was residing in Spain at Madrid, Maximo Foerschler Entenmann. Although Protestant, he was a close friend of the Andreu family; because of this he went to Garabandal accompanied by Father Ramón Maria.

The journey was not easy. It was the fourteenth, the second Saturday of October, the octave of that special feast day of the rosary that had taken place in Garabandal. Let us listen to what he says:

Some 20 kilometers before Cosio we had a tremendous collision with another car on a mountain pass. The accident could have had fatal consequences. Only later did I come to understand that it was without doubt the Blessed Virgin who had saved us from certain death. Because of what had happened we arrived at San Sebastian de Garabandal very late, after eleven at night. We had barely arrived when we had the good fortune of being able to witness two ecstasies. I admit that at the time they didn't impress me in the least. We retired to the house where we had lodging (all the village houses were open to Father Ramon Maria Andreu). Following this, at twelve o'clock, Father began to feel very bad. He was nauseous and broke out into a cold sweat, with a terribly painful left ankle which appeared quite swollen.



I notified two doctors who were in the village: one from Santander and the other a bone specialist from Burgos. After an examination they made a diagnosis: besides the obvious swelling, there was probably a fracture of the ankle, at least a hairline crack. They applied a thorough dressing and an ice pack that they were able to get from the *indiano*, who had a refrigerator, and with several others carried him to the bed; he was in great pain. As an old friend of the Father, I stayed in a second bed they had set up in his room so I could look after him at night.

After a long time — it had to be 3:30 in the morning — we heard a noise in the street and people shouting that the owner of the house should open the door since Jacinta was there in ecstasy wanting to come in. Shortly afterwards she appeared in the room, went toward Father and gave him the crucifix to kiss. Following this she said something to him that I couldn't hear. The girl was starting to make expressions and gestures of farewell to the Vision when suddenly she stopped. She leaned backwards toward where I was and held out the crucifix for me to kiss — two times.

It seems that took away Maximo's indifference.

When the girl left, we naturally began to discuss all the details, and Father told me that he had actually made a mental request that the girl, before leaving, would also give me the crucifix to kiss. I thought about this for the rest of the night.



Father Ramon gives a more detailed and vivid description of this. A short time after having kissed the crucifix that Jacinta had offered him, he saw that she was beginning to make the sign of the cross and to hold out her cheeks for the invisible kisses, the unmistakable sign that the ecstasy was about to end. Then he quickly made a mental request of the Virgin: that the girl would also give the crucifix to Maximo. (Hours before, the good man had followed the visionaries in their trances without receiving the least bit of attention from them, but rather the opposite, since several times they had given the crucifix to the other onlookers while they had always passed him by.)

Father Ramon had hardly made the secret request when Jacinta stopped and exclaimed, "What?" She remained in an attitude of listening and added, "Oh!" She began to lean farther and farther backwards, until she was able to place the crucifix to the lips of Mr. Foerschler, whom she could not see, since he was behind her. Seconds later, the girl returned to normal. It was four o'clock Sunday morning, October 15, time to get some sleep!

Light was beginning to dawn on the morning of that day when several French people, followed by one of the two doctors, stopped by to see how Father Ramón was doing. It was about eight o'clock. Father told the doctor that all the pain was gone and that he was able to move his foot without difficulty. The doctor was surprised; but as a precaution, he counseled him not to put any weight on the foot, and to wait for the coming of the ambulance that they had

been able to summon from *Casa Valdecilla* in Santander. The injury had been serious and normally would take from fifteen to twenty days to heal.

We have the following information about this from Father Andreu. The doctor found him sitting on the edge of the bed.

"What are you doing, Father?"

"As you can see, I'm trying to get up."

"Don't do that! That's foolish. Let's see your ankle."

The doctor got down on one knee to examine the ankle. Then raising his head toward Father Ramón, he looked at him in a peculiar way and said:

"You're quite a joker! Show me the bad ankle."

The priest showed him the other ankle, which was the good one. The doctor examined it very carefully. He compared it with the other and ended up raising his head again toward Father Ramón while saying with an expression hard to describe, "*What strange things happen in this village!*"

Continuing now with Mr. Foerschler's description:

When the doctors left, Father began to I put his shoes on, since he felt no pain. He went to stand on his foot and did it without difficulty. Then he decided to celebrate Mass in the village, declining to advise Father Valentin to come up to the village [from Cosio] as we had first agreed. He ordered the bells to be rung for Mass, and we set off to search for a cane. I accompanied him myself to the church. As I did not understand anything about the Mass, when he was beginning the celebration, I found a place near the last pew to carefully observe from there how he managed on his foot. During the entire ceremony he moved and knelt down and got up without difficulty.

After the Mass, I gave him my observations, and he made various movements with his foot in front of me without the least trouble. Finally he confided to me what had happened. Jacinta had told him in ecstasy at 3:30 in the morning: "Father, the Virgin told me that you were ill, but she told me to tell you that you are cured." At the same time the pain disappeared.

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