

# Diagnosed with Leukemia

## *Keeping His Promise*

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*The religious brother, David Garcia, from the Order of Corazonistas, gave the following conference to a Garabandal group from Valencia. The Brother is from Burgos (Spain) and went to South America in 1932.*

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While in South America, I began to feel ill and weak. Whatever I ate gave me no sustenance, and I developed a chronic headache. One of the other Brothers thought I should have a blood test and since I had to take one of my students to the doctor anyway, I had it done so he would quit bothering me. I was surprised when this doctor called my Superior and told him that I should be scheduled for another appointment. I went to Buenos Aires for more blood tests and more examinations. They gave me medicine that did not help, but nobody told me what was going on.

One day one of the other Brothers, a very good friend, said to me: "I wouldn't want you to accuse me of hiding things from you, and besides I know you can handle it, but you have been diagnosed with leukemia and have two to three months left to live."

I wondered what I could do in such a short period of time and then I thought of the Virgin of Garabandal. I know it's always the same Virgin whether it's Fatima or Lourdes, but I chose Our Lady of Garabandal. I had just finished reading a book by Sanchez Ventura, *LAS APARICIONES NO SON UN MITO*, in which Our Lady said her first Message had not been heeded, and because of this she was very sad.

Then I said to the Virgin of Garabandal: "The doctor says that the life that God has given me will soon be over. If that's the case I offer myself to promote your Messages. First I will practice them myself and then I'll promote them. Thus I need you to prolong my life; whatever time you give me I'll use to make your Messages known in a humble way wherever I can."

Of course, the Virgin didn't answer, but a few days later I had to go in for more analyses and that was when a radical change was noted in the results. I asked the doctor what he thought, how things were going, and he answered: "Don't worry about the numbers, that's our business; things are going very well. Continue taking your medicine."

I wasn't satisfied with that answer, but what else could I do. I told my Superior and he made an appointment to discuss it with the doctor. He was more explicit with my Superior and said: "Everything is normal now, but the disease behaves like this. I suggest you don't tell him anything."

Since they couldn't explain this radical change in the illness, they satisfied themselves by saying the disease behaves in this way, sometimes very aggressive and sometimes in remission until the final moment unexpectedly comes. We had to wait. The date was August 1967.

Well, we have been waiting two and a half years now (today is the twentieth of March, 1970) and I feel perfectly fine. I continue with my medical checkups that always come out normal.

Last year when I was in Rome for the General Chapter of our Congregation, I took advantage of some free time to have a checkup without telling anyone. When I returned to my quarters, I met my Superior, and told him what I'd done. Even before I had the results, he had had them. The doctors in Rome said there was nothing there; everything was normal, and not only that; when I told them the doctors in Buenos Aires had

found leukemia, they said, "We don't know what happened in Buenos Aires, but here and now there is not the slightest sign of leukemia."

This was for me the final proof that Our Lady had heard me, and since then I try to keep my promise whenever I can, in a humble way.

I was in Spain last year and again this year, and whenever I talk about this case I always find contradictions. The same thing happens in Buenos Aires. But with the official medical documents and the declarations of the Holy Office, my conscience is at peace.

I have personally spoken with Cardinal Ottaviani, Prefect of the Holy Office, about my concerns in this matter. He told me: "The Holy Office is studying the case of Garabandal." I asked him for his personal opinion, but with a slight smile, he answered: "When we are studying a matter we don't give personal opinions for or against." Then I asked him: "Does this mean I can't comply with my promise to the Virgin Mary? Do I have to wait until the Holy Office gives its final word?" "Absolutely not," said Cardinal Ottaviani. "Privately you are allowed to promote the Garabandal events and wonders that happened there, your personal healing, but always as a private person and under your personal responsibility, without bringing the Church into it. Nobody can forbid you from doing that."

Since then I'm at peace, but it seems that every day that goes by I feel obliged to speak to someone about Garabandal, either with the watchman, or the street cleaner, or a priest, or a bishop, with anybody, and then I'm happy.

I've been to Garabandal three times to thank Our Lady for the opportunity that she granted me to continue my efforts in this life to prepare for that other life that we know will soon come. Truly, we don't know what is coming, but something is coming and we must prepare for it in this life. That is why I thank Our Lady; and I have one more thing to say. Shortly, I don't know exactly when, I will be going for the last time to Garabandal before returning to Buenos Aires, and I will take with me the memory of the place where I firmly and humbly believe the Virgin appeared for the good of humanity.

(During the conference he was asked if he had spoken to the girls. He answered:)

Yes, I have spoken with the girls, but when one talks to them one feels something indescribable — as though there is something supernatural. I couldn't get them to say a word either in favor of or against the apparitions. It seemed as though every question concerning the events caused them suffering. Outside of this they were very charming, but at the same time if I asked again about the apparitions they became mute. It seemed to me that at that time the girls were suffering martyrdom.

There are many things to talk about; perhaps you already know them, but the most important is the request of Our Lady to make sacrifices, visit the Blessed Sacrament, and pray the rosary.

It makes no difference whether the Virgin has appeared or not. If we comply with these requests the result will be the same. She, as the good mother she is, asked for these three little things so that we all can help her delay or ameliorate the great punishment that now seems to menace humanity. Will we do this for her?

Personally, I'm complying with these requests and I'm encouraging everyone to do the same. As Our Lord says in His Gospel: "Let him who has ears hear, and he who wants to believe, believe." Our Lady doesn't need official documents; she only wants our good will. I pray God that she receives it.

Before leaving Valencia I would like to ask, Why are there no special devotions being done here as in most of the rest of the Garabandal centers in the world? The principal devotion is a penitential Holy Hour on the eighteenth of each month. We have these things in Buenos Aires. Recently I was in Barcelona and I could see

with what reverence the holy hour was conducted in the Tibidabo, where more than 300 people were present. I attended this devotion recently with sincere Garabandal followers in Rome, and I ask Valencia to join the rest of the world in fulfilling this request. What do you think?

Now, I'm going to several countries in America, including Peru, where very good people have gone out of their way to prepare for me a series of conferences with the permission of several bishops and priests. I have never been there before but I have the feeling this has been very well organized. The people are enthusiastic and the Message will be promoted.

The older people seem to be the most interested. When I begin to talk about Garabandal, they ask me: "And what does the Bishop say? And the Church? And this or that priest?" I tell them, if they say it's so then I say it's so. Unfortunately, we find Bishops who say that it's not so or that the Church or some Bishop has condemned Garabandal and they want to silence us. This happened to me in Vitoria. I had already spoken to the Brothers and students when the school chaplain, without any notice, reported me to the Curia. He had already told the Brother Director that this visitor from America should not talk about this. The Vicar General called me for an explanation and told me, "Look, what you did wasn't serious, but don't do it again." I asked him why, and he told me, "Because of what the Bishop of Santander said." I then asked him to explain to me what the Bishop really had said, because he had never read it.



Photo: From left: Jacinta, conchita and Mari Loli in 1970. Brother David found them cordial but unwilling to speak about the events.

He had to go look for the official bulletin of the Diocese, and read it to me. Then I asked him, "Do you believe what you've just read?" And he answered, "Of course, it came from the Bishop." I told him, "Look at the date on that statement from the Bishop of Santander (it was March 17, 1967). Now, look at the note from Rome that follows the Bishop's statement, dated March 10, 1967, and according to you and everybody else confirms the Bishop's statement. Do you think a note dated March 10 can confirm a note dated March 17? This wouldn't be accepted anywhere, in any court or in any law. Look at what the Curia of Santander actually wrote, and what has been represented to the whole world as written. The only prohibition concerning Garabandal was that priests were not to go and make public acts of devotion there. With this, we have been silenced and nowhere in there does it say that."

Then the Vicar General said, "Well, it says you can't talk about Garabandal."

"Show me where."

He began reading it very carefully, and couldn't find it, so then he told me, "Well, it's not expressly there, but if you read between the lines..."

I had to tell him, "Forgive me, but in law you don't read between the lines. You read what's written and interpret it in the sense of common general social usage of those who speak the same language."

Reading between the lines is not allowed in a courtroom, so why are we being silenced? Why can't we talk about Garabandal? Why can't we promote it?

That is the only thing against Garabandal. Now, what is in favor of Garabandal?

So many things! The Pope, the supreme authority, four times on different occasions, spoke favorably of Garabandal; once, when he said, "Conchita, I bless you and with me the whole Church blesses you."

On another occasion he said, "This is the most wonderful event that ever happened to humanity since the birth of Our Lord."

This is like the second coming of Our Lady; she appeared day and night at Garabandal from 1961 to 1965, several times a day, sometimes for hours.

Some people will argue, the Pope is not in charge of apparitions, the Holy Office is.

And what does the Holy Office say? I already told you what Cardinal Ottaviani, head of the Holy Office said. He is the one who must investigate apparitions that have two important characteristics: universal importance for humanity and prophecies of future events. He is the one who asked for information from the Bishop of Santander, and the only thing the rest of us have to do now is be obedient and wait.

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