

FROM THE NOTEBOOKS OF FR. RAMON ANDREU: PART 11

OUR LADY'S VOICE IS HEARD

This will be last of Fr. Ramon's notes of daily descriptions of the Garabandal events which he could not have continued because he was not always there. But the last entry of his daily account includes something that was of special interest regarding Our Lady's voice. It occurred on August 5, 1961, in a 33 minute ecstasy of Mari Loli and Jacinta at the Pines. Since Fr. Ramon was not in the village himself, he relies on the notes of Fr. Valentin Marichalar, the village pastor, and the testimonies of several witnesses.



AUGUST 5, 1961

(Fr. Ramon takes this account directly from Fr. Valentin's notes)

The two girls went to the Pines, fell into ecstasy and proceeded in the usual fashion to offer rosaries and medals to their Vision. They also made the motions of taking Our Lady's crown and placing it on their heads and holding the Baby Jesus. They fell on their knees for three minutes. Then Jacinta, speaking to the Virgin about Conchita, said, "She has returned. They cut her braids and she looks very pretty, and sun tanned like you because they took her to the beach."

Note: During the few days that Conchita was in Santander, they cut her braids. I mention this because it may help to fix the date. There was mention of a holy card in the salon where they cut her hair and possibly some photos were taken but I don't have enough information about this. I just mention it here in case somebody wants to pursue it further.

THE TAPE RECORDER

After 24 minutes Mari Loli returned to a normal state and laughed upon seeing Jacinta in ecstasy, then she fell suddenly into ecstasy and placed the crown of the Baby Jesus on her own head. Thirty minutes later she returned to normal. Present at this time was a Director of the State Hospital of Salamanca, a hospital for the mentally ill. He had a tape recorder and began to ask the girls what they had seen. The girls said that they had seen Our Lady of Mount Carmel and the Angel and then suddenly they went into ecstasy again. Mari Loli, raising the microphone of the tape recorder on high as she spoke to her Vision, saying, "Come on, you talk now, so that people will believe. Why not? Come on, you talk now"

Note: This is the scene of the tape recorder as described by D. Valentin. He was not present during the ecstasy; he is just describing what some witnesses told him. To clarify this event further, here are the testimonies of seven [six are included here] other witnesses.

Guadencio Cepeda Palacios (33) from Torquemada, province of Palencia

"At the Pines the girls told us they had seen the Virgin. The gentleman with the tape recorder gave the microphone to the girls. They were sitting with their backs toward the Pines, and their faces looking up. The ecstasy came as the girls were holding the microphone, and they were asking the Virgin to talk so all would believe, and that if she did not want to talk, could she let the Child Jesus talk. At this moment the tape of the recorder ends. We rewound it to hear everything again. After the tape ran out we heard a soft melodic voice that appeared to be the voice of a 40 or 45-year-old woman that said only, 'No, no, I will not talk.' Twice she repeated the syllable 'no! The girls got up, saying it was the voice of the Virgin. The voice came out of the tape recorder when the taped area of the tape stopped running. Everyone was very impressed. I felt goose bumps. We

rewound the tape to make sure of what we had all heard, to hear again the Virgin's voice, but it was not heard anymore."

Jeronimo Diez Serrano (30) from Cabezón de Liebana, Santander Province

"I heard very little. I was at the Pines and saw a gentleman holding a microphone near the girls. Some people there were saying not to get too close to the girls, not to bother them. Two girls were present. When the tape was rewound and played again, the girls started laughing when they heard themselves talking to the Virgin, saying things such as, "You tell her to talk now" They talked about having seen the Virgin wearing a blue mantle, and her crown and the Child Jesus. They both said the same thing. A bystander said, 'Have you seen an angel with a sword?' The girls reply, 'That is a lie. We have not seen any sword.' At that moment the Virgin called them again, and one of the girls was still holding the microphone. One of the onlookers said, 'Take the microphone away from her,' but no one succeeded in doing so. At this moment they were standing with the Pines behind them. One told the other, 'You tell her to talk,' and this was repeated many times until the ecstasy was over. That was when they turned on the recorder and I heard the conversation where they said, 'Conchita has returned. She sure looks ugly! They cut her hair and she looks dark. She was on the beach.' They had rewound the tape and were playing it again when it came to the part where the girls said many times, 'You talk now.' A strange voice said, 'No, no, I will not talk.' This voice was a soft woman's voice, very refined. I was amazed to hear the girls say, Ay! The Virgin talked to us!' The strangest thing was that the voice came out of the tape recorder after the tape was completely played."

Agustín Piney Martínez (40) from Santillana del Mar

"I have been in Garabandal on other occasions. This time I found the girls playing, when one of them said, 'Mama, I'm leaving now; I'm being called.' The girls climbed to the Pines with us following them. When they arrived they knelt and began to pray the Rosary, and then they entered into ecstasy. A gentleman present had a tape recorder with a microphone. He turned it on and alternated placing the microphone in front of one girl and then the other. Only Loli and Jacinta were present. When they came out of the ecstasy they saw the tape recorder and asked what it was. It was explained to them. The gentleman gave the microphone to Mari Loli so she could say what she had seen. She said that she had seen the Virgin and the Child Jesus, and that she had tried on their crowns. This matches the motions they were making during the vision: the gestures of putting on one crown that was larger and came down lower on the head, and the other crown that was smaller and sat higher.



From top down:
Jacinta, Loli and
Conchita after her
hair was cut

"While Loli was holding the microphone, they again went into ecstasy. Now the girls were sitting with their backs to the pine tree where they had been seeing the Virgin Mary before. Their heads were so far back that they were seeing the Virgin straight up. Then Mari Loli said to the Virgin, 'There's a couple here with a gadget that records voices. And also there are some men here that don't believe. You talk now so that they believe,' and she raised the microphone as high as she could. Then the other girl, Jacinta, said, 'No, she doesn't want to talk to you. Let me try now! Mari Loli then passed the microphone to Jacinta, but the Virgin did not talk with her either so she returned the microphone to Mari Loli. For some time they argued back and forth with the microphone trying to cajole the Virgin to talk. Finally the microphone ended up in the hands of Loli, who, with much emotion pleaded with the Virgin, 'Please talk, talk, so the people will hear you! She repeated this several times, mostly for our own benefit. She herself knew she was speaking to the Virgin, and she wanted us to be convinced as well. Then, as she was saying, 'Talk, talk!' both the girls came out of the ecstasy. Mari Loli was surprised that she was still holding the microphone in her hand.

"Both of them with much curiosity examined the tape recorder. The owner insisted again that they speak into the recorder, but the woman with him said, 'It's impossible; there's no more tape! The tape had run out and the recorder could not record further. It had ended just when the girl was saying, 'Please, talk, talk!' The gentleman said, 'Now we are going to rewind the tape so you can hear everything you said! When the rewinding was done he told them, 'Listen carefully and be quiet!

"Everyone kept very still, as though attending Mass. The tape recorder was set to PLAY. Then the voices of the

girls talking to the Virgin were heard. On hearing themselves talking, the girls exclaimed, 'Oh, here is where she told us this' and 'Oh, here she told us that' and so on and so on. When it got to the place where the girl says, 'Come on talk, talk,' the tape ended. I remember very well what followed. How can I explain this well so people will understand? The owner of the tape recorder reached out as though to turn off the machine, and at that moment a voice was heard, a voice as I have never heard in my life. It said, 'No, no, I will not talk.' This voice was completely different from the voice of the children. I have never heard anything like it. It was not like any voice known. In my life I have never heard a voice even remotely similar. It had absolute strength and sweetness, and was crystal clear.

"When the voice ended the outburst of joy was unanimous and spontaneous. There were about 90 of us. Some of us jumped with happiness. A woman embraced me, crying and shouting, 'A miracle! A miracle!' Many others repeated the same thing. I was stunned. They told me I was very pale."

Luis Toribio Millan (38) from Aguilar de Campoo. Handicapped from a spinal lesion

"Because of a spinal lesion I was carried piggyback up to the Pines. I think it was about August 5th. Some people with a tape recorder were recording the girls' conversations with their Vision. One was Loli and the other Jacinta. We spoke with them and asked them what they'd seen. They answered that they had seen the Virgin wearing a blue mantle. She was carrying a Child in her arms and they also had seen St. Michael the Archangel. These questions were asked by several of those present. There were at least fifty people present. The girls had the microphone in their hands and were talking into it when suddenly they fell into ecstasy, still holding the microphone. They had been sitting with their backs to the Pines. They knelt and one of them raised the microphone so that the Virgin would talk into it. They were telling her that their voices had been recorded on it and they were asking her to talk, telling her, 'You talk now; say something,' and they repeated this several times. 'Come on, why won't you talk? Talk!' I believe after this they came out of the ecstasy. The owner rewound the tape recorder to play back what had been recorded. The tape ended, and then we heard a voice that did not belong to any of the girls that said, 'No, no, I will not talk.' The voice was a woman's voice, not a girl's voice, fine and delicate, very clear, very sweet and melodious. Completely different from the voices of the girls. All of us present reacted in an explosion of emotion. Some were shouting, some embracing each other. This was a very, very emotional scene. One man next to me was pale like a cadaver!"

Jose Saludo Calderon (52) living near Aguilar de Campoo

"We were about fifty people at 2:00 p.m., at the Pines. Among the people there was a married couple about 55 years old with a recorder used during the ecstasy. Because I was close to the girls I could hear them talking to the Virgin, telling her that Conchita had returned from Santander looking ugly and it seemed the Virgin had told them that she was not ugly, as they said, 'Well, not really ugly, but they cut her hair and she is black (she had been at the beach). Half an hour went by as they offered scapulars and stones to be kissed. When the ecstasy ended the owner of the tape recorder asked them if they would tell him what they had seen. They told him they saw the Virgin and the angel. When asked how the Virgin was dressed, they answered that she wore a blue mantle and a white dress. Asked if the angel had a sword, the answer was no. They entered into a second ecstasy, finding themselves in a position with their backs to the Pines but looking at them because of having their heads completely extended backwards.

"Mari Loli had been holding the microphone in her hand since the end of the previous ecstasy and now, addressing the Virgin, said to her, 'Some people are here and they have a machine that records what we say. They don't believe us. Here, you talk to them; give them some proof; tell them!' Then she raised her arm holding the microphone and insisted that the Virgin talk, telling her, 'Talk. You talk! Give them proof—Talk!' When this second ecstasy was over the tape recorder was rewound and the tape played back. We could easily hear it; it was very clear. It ended, but then the words were heard, 'No, no, I will not talk.' When this happened we all jumped with joy and shouted, saying, 'This is a miracle!' The strength of those words accompanied by such sweetness, so unique, they could only have come from the lips of the Virgin Mary. The owner of the tape recorder leapt up, shouting, 'I'm going to send this to the Pope!' He rewound the tape and played it again but this time those sweet words were not heard, leaving everyone confused. I forgot to say that when the Virgin spoke the girls shouted and hugged each other with great joy and jubilation."

Maria Elisa Salcedo (12) from Aguilar de Campoo

“I, Maria Elisa, at about 1:00 p.m., saw two of the girls climb up to the Pines. As they faced the Pines they began to pray the Rosary. A short time later they began to have their first vision. The girls offered rosaries and medals to the Virgin to kiss. They belonged to the people present there. In this first vision they made gestures as though putting on crowns, passing them from one to another. They also spoke about the girl that was in Santander, telling the Vision that they cut her hair and that she looks ugly now. Everything that they said was recorded by the recorder. After the vision the owner of the tape recorder asked the girls to tell us what they had seen. The girls answered that the Virgin had a white dress and a blue mantle. While they were talking the second vision occurred. They were telling the Virgin, ‘We have an apparatus that records words and they can be played back.’ A short time later the girls said, ‘You talk, why don’t you talk?’ Here the second vision ended. The gentleman that owns the tape recorder said that we will hear what is now recorded on the tape. When the tape ended with the girls saying, ‘Why don’t you talk?’ a voice that we all heard answered, ‘No, no, I will not talk.’ The girls, very happy, said, ‘She has talked to us!’ They rewound the tape and played it again, but this time the voice saying, ‘No, no, I will not talk’ was not there.”

These are the accounts I have that proceeded from just a few of the witnesses present at the scene. There are many others which I could not interview. As an appendix to this, a very small group of people with whom I have very little contact heard the words, “No, no, I will not talk” again in Conchita’s house. I learned this from my brother, Fr. Luis, from a phone call about thirty hours before his death. In my notes of this phone call I summed it up by saying, “it was heard two times.” The tape was played back a second time, not at the Pines but in the house of one of the other two girls and I seem to remember that I was told it was in Conchita’s house, so she could hear what the other two girls had said during their vision. When the tape ended, the same thing happened as when they were at the Pines. The voice said, ‘No, no, I will not talk.’ The girl also identified this voice as the Virgin’s voice. The number of witnesses on this occasion is very small and I don’t possess any testimony from anyone.

* * *