

# What is Garabandal?

*Has the Blessed Virgin Mary really appeared in Spain? What are the urgent messages reportedly given for the world? Is there a scientific explanation for the incredible events that took place there?*

## A Visit from an Angel

San Sebastian de Garabandal is a small hamlet of some eighty humble dwellings tucked away in the beautiful Cantabrian Mountains of northwest Spain. On the evening of June 18, 1961, four young girls, Conchita Gonzalez (12), Mari Loli Mazon (12), Jacinta Gonzalez (12) and Mari Cruz Gonzalez (11) were playing together at the southern extremity of the village when they heard a noise that sounded like thunder. Suddenly, there stood before them, a dazzling angel. He said nothing and quickly vanished from their sight. The children, awestruck and frightened, instinctively ran toward the village church. Their pale faces aroused the questions of others and the apparition became known. Over the next twelve days, the angel appeared eight more times and then on July 1, he spoke to



them for the first time. "Do you know why I have come?" he asked. "It is to announce to you that tomorrow, Sunday, the Virgin Mary will appear to you as Our Lady of Mount Carmel." The angel had thus prepared the children for Our Lady's coming.

## Our Lady Appears to the Children

News spread quickly. On July 2, many priests were among the numerous visitors from out of town who joined the villagers to witness the great event. At about six o'clock p.m., the children headed for the spot where they had been seeing the angel and before they even arrived, the Blessed Virgin appeared with two angels, one on each side. They recognized one of them as the angel who had been appearing to them

(later identified as St. Michael the Archangel) and the other looked identical. Above the Virgin was a large eye that seemed to the children to be the eye of God. They spoke openly and familiarly with Our Lady and at her request, said the rosary in her presence. Over the next four years, she would appear hundreds and hundreds of times frequently appearing several times in a single day.

## Interior Calls Precede Ecstatic Raptures

The children knew when their visions were to occur by a series of three interior calls or *llamadas* each one becoming stronger than the last. After the third call they would run to the sunken lane where the visions first began and crashing to their knees on the jagged rocks, enter into a heavenly ecstatic rapture. Their heads were thrown back, the pupils of their eyes dilated and their faces imbued with an angelic countenance. In this position they would remain a few minutes or several hours and never

showed a trace of muscle strain or fatigue. They were insensitive to pinpricks, burns with matches and physical contact. Even when bright spotlights were centered on their heads during night visions, the pupils of their unblinking eyes remained dilated. During their ecstasies, the weight of the girls became so excessive that two grown men had great difficulty in lifting one twelve-year-old girl. And yet, they lifted each other with the greatest of ease to proffer a kiss to the Blessed Virgin.



From its mountain setting, the small farming hamlet of San Sebastian de Garabandal looks down on the valley below.



The four visionaries from left to right, Conchita Gonzalez, Mari Cruz Gonzalez, Jacinta Gonzalez and Mari Loli Mazon. Despite the similar family name, none are closely related.



Many priests witnessed the young girls' ecstasies.



Mari Loli, the only one in ecstasy, follows her Vision.



Left, Conchita in ecstasy during a night vision, is unaffected by the bright spotlights centered on her head. Right, Mari Loli effortlessly lifts Jacinta so that she can receive a kiss from the Virgin.



## Ecstatic Walks and Falls Defy Natural Laws



Mari Loli, left, and Jacinta during a forward ecstatic march.



Conchita, left, and Mari Loli walk backwards in ecstasy. Notice how Mari Loli's foot carefully avoids a protruding stone.



Conchita after an ecstatic fall is about to raise herself up.



Fr. Luis Andreu was considered a saintly priest by all who knew him.

As the apparitions continued, a new phenomena began to occur—that of the ecstatic fall. While in ecstasy, from a standing position, the children would fall backwards until they were flat on the ground. They were never harmed from this and their clothing never became immodestly ruffled or indecorous. In this horizontal position, they would remain in ecstasy and without using their hands or pushing themselves up in any way, they would return to their original standing position. When two or more of the children in ecstasy would fall together, their movements were perfectly synchronized. One witness, Canon Julio Porro Cardenoso, said it could be likened to throwing the light switch in a large conference hall where all the lights go out simultaneously. The positions of the girls' bodies as they lay upon the ground after these ecstatic falls bore the mark of the supernatural and were described by onlookers as beautiful "sculptures." Another remarkable feature of the apparitions introduced about the same time as the ecstatic fall was the ecstatic march. With

their heads thrown back in that characteristic fashion and unable to see where they were going, the girls would march, arm in arm, without the slightest difficulty either forward or backwards over very hazardous terrain and sometimes at a pace so rapid that the onlookers were unable to keep up with them. Witness Señorita Ascension de Luis described in a written statement dated March 18, 1962, one of these "flights" from the village up the steep rocky incline to a grove of pine trees on a bluff overlooking the village; "... The child went up the lane and descended again backwards at an incredible speed." Also, at any time during these dashes the visionaries were able to stop instantly defying the laws of physics as the following crowd, like a speeding car trying to come to a screeching halt, would go right past them. Sometimes the children would resemble airplanes in flight as they seemingly flew across the terrain with their arms extended, touching the ground with only the very tips of their toes. Afterwards, they were neither out of breath nor perspiring and their pulse rates were normal.

## A Jesuit Priest also Sees Our Lady and Preview of the Great Miracle

Many priests came to the village of Garabandal to observe the children in ecstasy. One such priest was a young Jesuit theology professor, Fr. Luis Maria Andreu. On the night of August 8, 1961, as Fr. Luis was watching the girls in ecstasy, he too was granted the privilege of seeing the Blessed Virgin Mary and also the great Miracle to come. Those who were near him that night heard him repeat four times, "A miracle!" and remarked as to the profound expression on his tearstained face. He was the only person during the ecstasies to have had a

preview of the miracle\* and the only other person aside from the four girls to see the Blessed Virgin. On the drive home from Garabandal with friends late that night (August 8) into the early hours of the next morning, he exclaimed, "... What a wonderful present the Virgin has given me! How lucky to have a mother like that in heaven! We shouldn't be afraid of the supernatural... Today is the happiest day of my life!" Shortly after pronouncing these words, he died. In a subsequent vision, Our Lady told the seers that Fr. Luis had died of joy.

## Our Lady Kisses Religious Objects

From the early days of the apparitions, the children presented to the Virgin, religious articles for her to kiss. This was at Our Lady's request and when people became aware of it, numerous rosaries, crucifixes, medals and wedding rings were given to the young seers. The objects were invariably given to them in such a way that the visionaries could not possibly know to whom each belonged, the articles having either been placed on a table set aside for this purpose when the seers were not present or

being handed to them by persons other than the rightful owners. Yet, in ecstasy, guided by Our Lady, the girls always returned medals, wedding rings and other objects to the right person.

\*Padre Pio was reliably reported to have seen the Miracle before he died on September 23, 1968.





On Our Lady's last visit to Garabandal, she told visionary Conchita Gonzalez, "Through the kiss I have bestowed on these objects, my Son will perform prodigies . . ."

## Our Lady's First Message for the World

All the phenomenal aspects of the apparitions were not an end in themselves. They were the means Our Lady would use to attract our attention so that she could impart an urgent communication. On July 4, 1961, she gave a message to the children and directed them to make it known publicly on October 18, 1961. Having been alerted in advance, 3,000 people were in the village that rain soaked day to

## Miracle of the Visible Communion

After being repeatedly asked by the children for a miracle so that the people might believe, the angel finally consented and told visionary Conchita Gonzalez that on a certain date to be revealed to her by the Virgin (July 18, 1962), the invisible Communion that he had been giving to her (and the other seers) would on that day, become visible on her tongue. She was to announce it fifteen days in advance.

It was late at night (actually the early hours of the next morning) when the appointed time came. Conchita went into ecstasy in her house, came out, went around a corner and fell to her knees in an adja-

## Great Events to Come—The Warning, Miracle, 'Sign' and Conditional Chastisement

Three great future events were foretold by the Blessed Virgin at Garabandal. The first is a worldwide WARNING that will be seen and felt by everyone on the face of the earth. No one will escape it and no one will have the slightest doubt that it comes from God. It will first be seen in the sky and then felt interiorly. At that moment we will see the wrong we have done and the good we failed to do.

This WARNING will serve to purify mankind for the great MIRACLE which will occur shortly thereafter at a grove of nine pine trees overlooking the village of Gara-

This promise has been and continues to be fulfilled in numerous physical cures and spiritual conversions reported from around the world.

hear the following:

"We must make many sacrifices, perform much penance and visit the Blessed Sacrament frequently. But first, we must lead good lives. If we do not, a chastisement will befall us. The cup is already filling up and if we do not change, a very great chastisement will come upon us."

It was the Blessed Virgin's desire that this message be made known universally.

cent street. As the crowd pressed around her, she put out her tongue and held it that way for a while. Those just inches away attested to the fact that it was perfectly bare. Then suddenly, a brilliant white Host appeared on it. One witness who was close by, quickly dispelled any notions of trickery and stated that, ". . . It did not seem to have been deposited there but might be described rather as having materialized there, faster than the human eye could see." Although an amateur with a movie camera and with the aid of only flashlight illumination, he was able to film the last few moments of the miracle.

bandal. It will occur on a Thursday at 8:30 in the evening on or between the eighth and sixteenth of March, April or May. It will be on the feastday of a martyr of the Eucharist and will coincide with an ecclesiastical event in the Church. Conchita knows the date of the MIRACLE and will announce it eight days in advance.

Everyone in the village or on the surrounding mountainsides will see it. The sick will be cured, sinners converted and the incredulous will believe. As a result of the MIRACLE, Russia will be converted. A permanent supernatural sign will remain at the pines after the MIRACLE until the end of time. If, after the WARNING and MIRACLE, the world still does not change, then the CHASTISEMENT will come.



The visionaries hold up religious objects for the Virgin to kiss.



Mari Loli in ecstasy places a wedding ring kissed by the Virgin on the finger of the rightful owner.



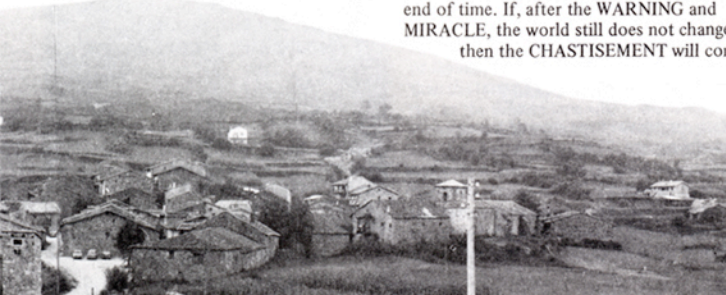
It was a moving experience for onlookers to have a medal or crucifix returned to them by the visionaries guided by the Virgin.



This frame of motion picture film clearly shows the Host that became visible on Conchita's tongue.

The events of Garabandal are still under the Church's investigation with no final judgment having yet been made. All Catholics however, are permitted by Canon Law to read accounts and be informed of what is recounted here.

Perched on a bluff overlooking the village is the grove of nine pine trees where the great Miracle is to take place.





## Our Lady's Second Message of Garabandal

Toward the end of the apparitions, Our Lady told the visionaries that she was displeased because her first message went unheeded. She therefore announced that she would give a second and final message, through the intercession of St. Michael, on June 18, 1965.

As the day arrived, thousands of visitors from Spain and many foreign countries swelled the little mountain village to witness the apparition and hear this further communication from the Blessed Virgin:

"As my message of October 18 has not been complied with and has not been made known to the world, I am advising you that this is the last one. Before, the

cup was filling up. Now it is flowing over. Many cardinals, many bishops and many priests are on the road to perdition and are taking many souls with them. Less and less importance is being given to the Eucharist. You should turn the wrath of God away from yourselves by your efforts. If you ask His forgiveness with sincere hearts, He will pardon you. I, your mother, through the intercession of St. Michael the Archangel, ask you to amend your lives. You are now receiving the last warnings. I love you very much and do not want your condemnation. Pray to Us with sincerity and We will grant your requests. You should make more sacrifices. Think about the passion of Jesus."

## Men of Science Concede That Events Have No Natural Explanation

People from all walks of life witnessed the events of Garabandal. Priests, canons and theologians, Spanish royalty, doctors, lawyers and the humblest of peasant farmers were numbered among the countless thousands privileged to see the four children in ecstasy. The vast majority were profoundly moved by what they saw and came away convinced as to the authenticity of the apparitions. One child specialist certified that the girls were always completely normal and

that the ecstasies did not fall under any known physiological phenomena. Dr. Ricardo Puncernau, leading Spanish neuropsychiatrist stated, "From a strictly scientific point of view, one cannot deny the possibility of a supernatural cause in all these phenomena." Dr. Garcia Ruiz and Dr. Ortiz Gonzalez said, "To keep silent would be true scientific cowardice . . . we do not find any convincing explanation for such phenomena."

## The Blind Apostle and the Spread of the Message Around the World

At the age of sixteen, Joseph Lomangino from Lindenhurst, New York was blinded in a freak accident which also severed his olfactory nerve. He journeyed through life sightless and with no sense of smell until 1963, when he made a visit to Padre Pio at San Giovanni Rotondo, Italy. Through the intercession of the famed stigmatist, Joey regained his sense of smell. While there, he asked Padre Pio if the Virgin Mary was appearing at Garabandal and if he should go there. The Padre replied in the affirmative and so Joey went. He soon made fast friends with visionary Conchita Gonzalez, became convinced of the urgency of the message and was determined to make it known.

He began by going around to friends'

houses and telling them about the apparitions. He then laid the foundation for an organization that would fulfill another prophecy of Our Lady: "The house of charity that he (Joey) will establish in New York will bring great glory to God." The local talks soon became lecture/film presentations which spread to other parts of the United States and eventually overseas.

In a spirit of brotherly cooperation, Garabandal promoters in other countries aligned themselves with Joey Lomangino and the New York based organization thus enabling the establishment of an international network. Now, with the help of Our Lady, the Message of Garabandal is being spread in a great number of countries on all five continents.

## The Visionaries Today

All four visionaries have entered the sacrament of marriage. Three are married to Americans and live in the United States. They lead exemplary Christian lives totally dedicated to their vocations as wives and mothers. Conchita married Patrick Keena of New York in 1973. They now have four

children. Mari Loli married Francis LaFleur of Massachusetts in 1974 and they have three children. Jacinta married Jeffrey Moynihan of California in 1976 and they have one child. Mari Cruz, the only visionary to remain in Spain, married Ignacio Caballero in 1971 and they have four children.



Conchita blesses herself during the vision of June 18, 1965, when she received the second message from St. Michael.



Pediatrician, Dr. Celestino Ortiz Gonzalez (arrow), checks Conchita's pulse while she is in ecstasy.



Joey Lomangino reaches for a statue of the Infant Jesus carried by Padre Pio during one of the blind man's many visits to San Giovanni Rotondo in the early 60's.



Mari Loli in 1982 with husband, Frank LaFleur, and their three children.

For more information on the events of Garabandal write to: The Workers of Our Lady of Mount Carmel, Inc., P.O. Box 606, Lindenhurst, New York 11757