

EYEWITNESS TESTIMONIES

In this segment of our mini-series on testimonies from village eyewitnesses to the Garabandal events, is that of Pilar Gonzalez.



Jacinta, left, and Mari Loli in ecstasy, 1962.

WE WERE LIVING IN THE CANARY Islands at the time [Pilar's husband was in the military], and in June 1961, I think, someone in the village wrote, telling me what was happening there. In October 1961 I returned to the village. Reading that letter from the villager, I had felt only somewhat astonished: "It's curious, the Virgin appearing to those children."

In October I was present at several ecstasies. One time I saw Jacinta and

Mari Loli, I believe, come down the stairs of Ceferino's former house on their hands, completely prone, face downward.

Like everyone else, I, too, used to run behind them through the lanes of the village, and in order to follow them I had to run very fast.

Their faces were normal but became very beautiful—but normal. The one I liked seeing in ecstasy was Jacinta. She became the most beautiful,

and her face took on a lovely pale coloring. I don't know how to describe it. Mari Loli was also ravishing. As for Conchita, one day when she was not in ecstasy, I saw that she was made to submit to tests with a flashlight [probably consisting of shining a flashlight directly into her eyes].

After the ecstasies, not a trace of fatigue or nervousness; on the contrary, they smiled on everything! Absolutely normal. I used to speak with

them often and I never noticed anything abnormal. And at all the ecstasies, it was the same!

I saw quite a few. It was the period when the ecstasies were the most frequent, and I stayed here in the village from October to January, that is, for three months.

Places

Often Conchita left her home already in ecstasy, so people would wait for her at the door of her house. She would leave and go running through the village. Sometimes she came here to Ceferino's house or to the church, or sometimes they climbed toward the heights of the village. They did not even know where they were climbing. Sometimes they arrived running at some place or other; and then abruptly they would separate and head toward the *calleja*. The number of times that they were able to scramble up the slopes in that way! Oh Lord! And then there were those

stones! And never a scratch! Oh no, I never touched them during their ecstasies!

The Reading of Thoughts

One time my niece Belinda, whose nickname is Beliz, was in bed sick. And I began to think: "The visionaries go into all the houses but never mine. It's strange." In fact, they had the habit of going to visit the sick while in ecstasy. I thought to myself: "Oh Lord, holy Virgin Mary. If only they would come to my house! But I only thought these two sen-

tences. I never said a word aloud, nor did I say anything to anybody. Yet hardly had I formulated these words in my mind, when I saw the visionaries come running and they entered the room. I believe that all four came. Ceferino was with them. They entered the room and I could not get into it. I had to stay outside in the street, which prevented me from seeing what they were doing. I know simply that Belinda was in a bad way and that she cried out: "Ah, my God, my God!" Ceferino must have told her not to touch them, and they left.

I remember also that at Ceferino's house, Mari Loli gave the crucifix to onlookers to kiss many times, and each time that she came to me, she passed in front of me and did not give it to me. I finally asked her one day: "But why didn't you ever give it to me?" She smiled and she didn't give it to me. I assure you that it's true: she never gave it to me. Afterwards how many times did I recall that!

Pilar Gonzalez with her daughter in Garabandal in 1971, ten years after witnessing the events she describes here.



Conchita with one of her young ewes during the time of the apparitions in 1961-62.

Abnormal Force

One time Conchita—I think it was Conchita—was looking for her ewes. She was in her normal state, and at the moment when she was in the act of grabbing one, she fell into ecstasy. That happened right here, just in front. So she grabbed it, and with one hand, held the ewe she had thus caught—and immobilized it! You have to take into account, a girl 12 years old! And a ewe must weigh between 40 and 50 kilos [about 100 pounds]. In any case, me, I'm not able to lift one nor hold it steady. That I saw with my own eyes, in front of me.

Simon tried to make her let go, but he didn't succeed, so he said: "Go call one of the girls, maybe Mari Loli, who will surely come." Someone went to look for Mari Loli, who wasn't in ecstasy and who came; and she made the girl let go with some difficulty and Conchita continued her ecstasy. That struck me, because to hold a sheep of that weight steady, with one hand, it's unthinkable! That happened right here, right here. □



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