

"For me it was something supernatural"

An interview conducted by Fr. François Turner

Clinio Sanz Lopez has the reputation in Aguilar de Campoo (Palencia), where he lives, for being a man of deep faith, a faith that he always had but which was reinforced immeasurably at Garabandal. On October 7, 1985, Clinio was kind enough to share with Fr. François Turner, some of his experiences during the ecstasies that have had such a salutary effect on his spiritual life and increased his love for Our Lady.

Fr. Turner: How many times did you go to Garabandal?

Clinio: During the first five years, some 85 or 90 times. The first was when Fr. Luis Andreu died.

Fr. T: Can you describe that day?

C: There were many people there when I learned there was an ecstasy. I think it was in the *calleja* where the apparitions first began. We followed the visionaries in ecstasy up to the pines which was difficult and dangerous to do.

Fr. T: How many ecstasies were there that particular day?

C: As I recall, I saw two. During one of them, when we were at the pines, I was very close to the girls in ecstasy and Fr. Andreu. I heard him say, "Miracle, miracle!" Afterwards, as we were coming down from the pines, Fr. Arroyo Marin and I both heard him say, "I don't have to come to Garabandal anymore because for me, this is supernatural." At Loli's house before leaving, in front of her

father, Fr. Andreu said, "This is the happiest day of my life." Those were the last words I heard him say. Then we left and as we passed through Puerto Carmona we were about 3 to 5 kilometers behind the taxi carrying Fr. Andreu that was driven by Pepe Salceda. We followed them all the way to Reinosa then we lost them. When we reached Aguilar (de Campoo) we heard the news that Fr. Andreu had died in Reinosa and we were stunned.

Fr. T: Would you mind repeating what you said about the visionaries making the sign of the cross on your car?

C: This is one of the many unforgettable memories I have from Garabandal. I was one of the first ones to drive up to Garabandal. I had a delivery truck because I used to sell fish and one time when I drove up to Garabandal, I took my four children with me. When the visionaries went into ecstasy, I was at a certain distance. They used to make the sign of the cross on the cars, one sign per car. On this particular occasion, they went to my delivery truck and made the sign of the cross four times. I didn't see it myself but was told about it. Then the ecstasy ended. The witnesses were impressed and asked the girls, "Why if you make only one sign of the cross on each car, did you make four on that one?" They answered, "Yes, we did it four times because that car belongs to (they mentioned my name even though I wasn't there) and his four children were sleeping inside. The Virgin said, "Make the sign of the cross on each child so that they may be blessed and that all will go well with them." The people were surprised



Clinio "was stunned and began to weep" the first time Conchita, in ecstasy, gave him the cross to kiss.

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and came and asked me if it were true. I said, “Yes, the children are asleep inside.” And they confirmed it.

Fr. T: Did you ever ask for a personal sign?

C: The most emotional day I ever had there was during another ecstasy when I obtained a great proof. The girls fell into ecstasy close to Conchita’s house. This was only my third or fourth visit and as I was watching them silently, they came and offered me the crucifix to kiss. I was stunned and began to weep, thinking, “If this is true, that it comes from God and the Virgin, then may they help me to go through life in God’s grace.” After the ecstasy I asked Conchita, “Why did you offer me the cross?”

She pulled me aside and said, “The Virgin told me this, that your tears are tears of contrition and to keep on the way of grace, that she loves you very much and that only you and her know the thoughts that have come to you.” And only I know what thoughts I had at that moment. Since then, I’ve had much more faith than before although I’ve always had faith.

Fr. T: Did you ever witness ecstatic marches where the children traveled at great speeds?

C: Yes, many, many times I saw ecstatic marches where the girls moved at great speeds.

Fr. T: Can you describe what those marches were like?

C: One time, as they were walking

Top left, Conchita poses for a picture by Clinio’s delivery truck upon which the visionaries had made the sign of the cross when his children were sleeping inside. Bottom left, visitors to Garabandal regarded a photo of themselves with the visionaries a precious souvenir. Clinio was no exception as he and a friend are pictured with Loli. Above, Clinio in October, 1985.

through the streets in ecstasy, their shoes came off and they went on for a half hour, an hour, however long the ecstasy lasted. They went among the thorns, over stones, everywhere, as if it were nothing and as the ecstasy was about to end, we saw them coming toward us at tremendous speed and their shoes were on!

something supernatural

I saw that with my own eyes. We asked them if they were injured or hurt and checked their feet but there wasn't a scratch. They didn't even know about it.

Other times, I saw ecstasies where they ran backwards up the *calleja* and back down again at tremendous speeds. It was really something to see. I have also seen ecstasies where, although they were in different houses, they went into ecstasy at the same time.

Fr. T: What about ecstatic falls? Did you witness any of them?

C: Yes, I witnessed them. Even while talking to the girls suddenly bang!—they fell right in front of me. I tried to pick them up but was never able to do it. Sometimes they said, "I've already had a call" because they used to have calls, and from one moment to the next, they went from the normal state into ecstasy right before my eyes and fell. This happened more than once.

Fr. T: Did all four fall at the same time?

C: Yes, or sometimes just one. At times they fell within minutes of one another.

Fr. T: Did you ever see anything unusual that has not been recorded in the books on Garabandal?

C: I have many books, but since I went to Garabandal so many times, I don't care to read them because if I find something . . . I don't care to read them because for me it was something supernatural. I have not even tried. I have seen the photos but even the photos can't compare to the real thing.

When I hear talk about Garabandal, I keep quiet. As far as I'm concerned, it was something supernatural and as each day goes by—although it is always the same Virgin—my faith in the Virgin of Garabandal increases. □

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