

# Garabandal's Shocking Revelation—

## The Crisis of the Priesthood

By Fr. Joseph Pelletier, A.A.

*"Many cardinals, many bishops and many priests are on the road to perdition and are taking many souls with them." Even in the middle of 1965, this declaration made by Our Lady at Garabandal to Conchita, the main seer, came like a bombshell and caused much consternation. People reacted to it as Our Lord's contemporaries reacted to His announcement about the Eucharist and the eating of His body and drinking of His blood: "This sort of talk is hard to endure! How can anyone take it seriously?" (John 7:60)*

For some time now, in my constant gathering of new information on the revelations at Garabandal, I have come to a clearer understanding of the main reason why Our Lady came to Garabandal and better insight into the heart of the message that she brought to the world in that humble Spanish mountain village.

We could say that one of the principal reasons Our Lady revealed herself in visions to the four seers from 1961 to 1965, was the crisis of the Church. With equal truth we could say it was the crisis of the priesthood, for this crisis is at the very heart of the crisis of the Church. As goes the priesthood, so goes the Church.

Therefore it seems evident that the urgent concern of Our Blessed Mother as she spoke with the four girls at Garabandal was the crisis of the priesthood and the way to deal with that crisis. She spoke more of the priest, his problems and needs, than of any other single topic, with the possible exception of the rosary. Other things that she spoke of frequently, such as prayer and sacrifice, she more often related to priests than to any other subject. She was continually asking the girls to pray and make sacrifices for priests.

### A Simple Message—Hard to Accept

Our Lady came with a simple, forthright message for the renewal of the Church through the renewal of the priesthood. The means she proposed for this renewal were prayer and sacrifice. In essence, her message was

the basic Christian message of redemption through the cross, the constant need of the Church, particularly in times of crises, for atonement and reparation. It is one of the hardest messages for us to accept.

It is significant that the time of Our Lady's visits to Garabandal coincided with the preparation and various sessions of Vatican II. Likewise, the purpose of her coming coincided with that of the Council, namely, the renewal of the Church.

The message of atonement, of prayer and sacrifice or penance, was a very important part of what Our Lady told us at Lourdes and Fatima, but there it was aimed at sinners in general and not so specifically at priests, as it was in Garabandal. Because penance runs counter to our nature, it is the part of heavenly messages that is always least heeded. This is true of Garabandal as it is of Lourdes and Fatima. It is most unfortunate but explains why these events have not borne the fruit—conversion and return to God and the blessings of peace which flow from this—that heaven was seeking.

### A Sense of Urgency

It is important to show the tremendous emphasis Our Lady placed on prayer and penance in her Garabandal messages and how she requested this principally for priests. As I gradually became aware of this new light on information that has become available, I made the most of recent opportunities which permitted me to question Mari Loli, one of the

Garabandal seers, and her mother. I was overwhelmed by what I gathered in these interviews and feel that it is most urgent to prepare all of this for printing as soon as possible. It is now unmistakably clear to me that the main reason why Our Lady came at Garabandal was the crisis of the Church and of the priesthood. And if we analyze what our heavenly Mother said, that crisis has not yet reached its peak.

It was evident to me from the beginning that the overall purpose of Our Lady's coming at Garabandal was the crisis of the Church, however, it is only recently that I have become aware of how much Our Lady said about this crisis and what precise and alarming things she predicted with regard to it.

There are three "unpleasant" things that everyone has known since my first books and pamphlets appeared. These are the prophecies about the Warning, the conditional Chastisement, and the statement of the Second Message of Garabandal: "Many cardinals, many bishops, and many priests are on the road to perdition and are taking many souls with them." Our Lady was fully aware that at the heart of the problem of a morally sick world and Church, was the crisis of the priesthood. It was the center of Our Lady's attention in her many visits, messages and conversations with the girls at Garabandal. She may have mentioned the rosary more often than the priesthood, but ultimately even the rosary, as a form of prayer, was very much linked to the priesthood.

### Our Lady Gives the Remedy

There also exists a superabundance of evidence that the solution Our Lady proposed to alleviate this crisis of priesthood, was prayer and sacrifice. The forms of prayer she asked for were varied and included Mass and Communion, visiting the Blessed Sacrament, the rosary, and reflection on the passion of Jesus. The wearing of the scapular can also

*... her life is the fulfillment of the messages of Fatima and of Garabandal ... the message of sanctifying the ordinary things of our everyday state in life in reparation for sin by penance and sacrifice for the conversion of sinners.*

all by the power of her prayers. She was God's answer to the challenge of unbelief.

### **The Marriage**

During the celebration that followed their wedding, Anna and Domenico found the courage not to feel the incompatibilities that divided them. These came later in the strain and clash of life. It was the marriage of a wolf and a lamb. He was obstinate and possessed of a violent temper. The least little thing, if not exactly just so, would set him off on a rampage. Everyone in the family had to be at his beck and call. Anna knew it well. She would not hesitate to dismiss the most illustrious visitors to her home once the demanding Domenico reached the threshold. She served him as the master in every way that she could. She never denied him any of his rights nor had she ever asserted any of her own. In modesty and mortification she obeyed her husband as the representative of Our Lord and did all she could to win him to God. It was not enough to be obedient and go where he led; yet by winning his total love and respect she drew him to holiness. By making a generous sacrifice of her own inclinations to God, God inspired her with His counsels.

Therein lay the whole secret of the Blessed Anna [Maria] Taigi, a model of wives: self-renunciation. The wolf will rage, but a smile and a still tongue will appease his wrath.

The Blessed Virgin Mary, appearing to Anna Maria, was even more precise:

"Know well, My dear daughter, that here below you will have for every one good day a hundred bad ones, because you must be like my Son Jesus. You must be devoted above all to doing His will and submitting your own constantly to His in the state of life to which it has pleased Him to call you; therein lies your special vocation. Later on, when people come to examine your conduct

more closely, every individual must be able to convince himself that it is possible to serve God in all states and conditions of life without the performance of great exterior penances, provided only one fights vigorously against one's passions and conforms oneself in all things to the holy will of God. Remember it is far more meritorious to renounce one's own will and submit oneself entirely to the will of God than to perform the greatest bodily mortifications."

### **Motherhood**

After the children had received catechism instruction and had made their communion, Anna Maria continued with the spiritual formation of each one. On rising in the morning, family prayers; after dinner, the Rosary, on their knees, with a reading from the life of the saint of the day. On Sundays and holy days she made the girls accompany her to the hospital to train them in the ways of charity. She would always train her children to keep busy at all times. It was a habit which developed into a necessity. She would often say, "Laziness is the mother of all vices." She loved all her children tenderly, but would punish them moderately, using the stick if necessary, but preferred to make them go without dinner. Most of the time this was sufficient. All of them were good Catholics and lowly working folk. They were not saintly. Holiness is not hereditary.

Hard times and misfortune caused



*Beatified on May 30, 1920, the Incorrupt Body of Anna-Maria Taigi is in the Basilica of San Crisogono, Rome.*

her married children to return to live with Anna Maria as they had nowhere else to go. She would, in perfect kindness and charity, assist each and give all that she had to comfort them and make them happy. The household was continuously full and almost always happy. Her daughters-in-law were also to add to the measure of her sanctity as there were many personality defects for them to overcome. Anna Maria showed remarkable patience with all of her family and especially with her daughters-in-law.

Anna Maria also had to undergo the pains of grief having assisted at the death of four of her children before her own departure from this world.

"I shall save your children," said Our Lord to her one day, "For they are blood of your blood. Moreover, they are poor, and the poor are my friends. Yes, I shall save them, though they have many faults."

The mission of this saintly soul, according to the Decree of Beatification, is manifold.

It is first of all a unique model for the family, for wives and mothers. It concerns a soul quite different from the virgins, nuns and widows canonized by the Church. The Blessed Anna Taigi alone presents to our eyes the holiness of the mother of many children, of the wife who until death abides subject to a husband "god-fearing and upright, but unpolished, rough and turbulent." She is a model for all wives, but especially for those who gain their bread by the sweat of their brow; Blessed Anna Taigi was poor. In her the Church will canonize the common life, the ideal of Nazareth.

Secondly, in this common life Anna Taigi is a victim of expiation; she atoned for the sins of the shepherd and the sheep. On the heart of this poor woman the justice of God strikes as on an anvil. At the same time she was the lightning rod of the Papacy and of the world.



be considered a form of prayer and supplication. The sacrifice she explicitly sought above all else was fidelity to daily duty and the acceptance of all the suffering, pain and hardship it involves. When the girls asked Our Lady how to make sacrifices, she told them to be obedient and to be patient. Every day God's providence provides disagreeable things that irk us and cause us to suffer in various degrees. He is asking us to accept all this suffering in atonement for the sins of the world and particularly of the priesthood, and to join these to the rosary and other prayers that we offer for these same intentions. The importance of praying for priests cannot be emphasized enough. Everyone can offer the sufferings of their day and their daily rosary for this intention. Holy Hours can be established for the purpose of praying for priests.

Our Lady has given us the solution—it is urgent that we fulfill her request.

*(Top) From the beginning of the events, the girls manifested a special predilection for priests and religious. They frequently counted those who went up to the village, were fascinated by their religious habits and always talked about them with the Vision during the apparitions. They soon understood clearly Our Lady's preoccupation with the priesthood and how heavily it weighed on her heart. Prayers and sacrifices for priests was what in practice it all added up to in their little minds.*

*(Bottom left) The impact of Our Lady's teaching about priests and of the preferential treatment granted them was very great. The girls soon came to manifest an exceptional love for priests. They were overjoyed when priests came to the village and they showed them great deference. Here we see a smiling Conchita speaking with Canon Julio Porro, later to become one of the most outspoken priest-champions of the Garabandal events.*

*(Bottom right) The peak of preferential treatment granted to priests at Garabandal was the sharing in a vision and the preview of the great Miracle by Father Luis Maria Andreu, S. J., on August 8, 1961. The only person, outside of the four girls, to ever see the Blessed Virgin at Garabandal was this priest. On the same day, when he participated in the apparition with the girls and saw the Blessed Virgin at the pines of Garabandal, Father Luis, as he was sharing in the vision of Our Lady, also saw the great Miracle that is yet to come.*









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