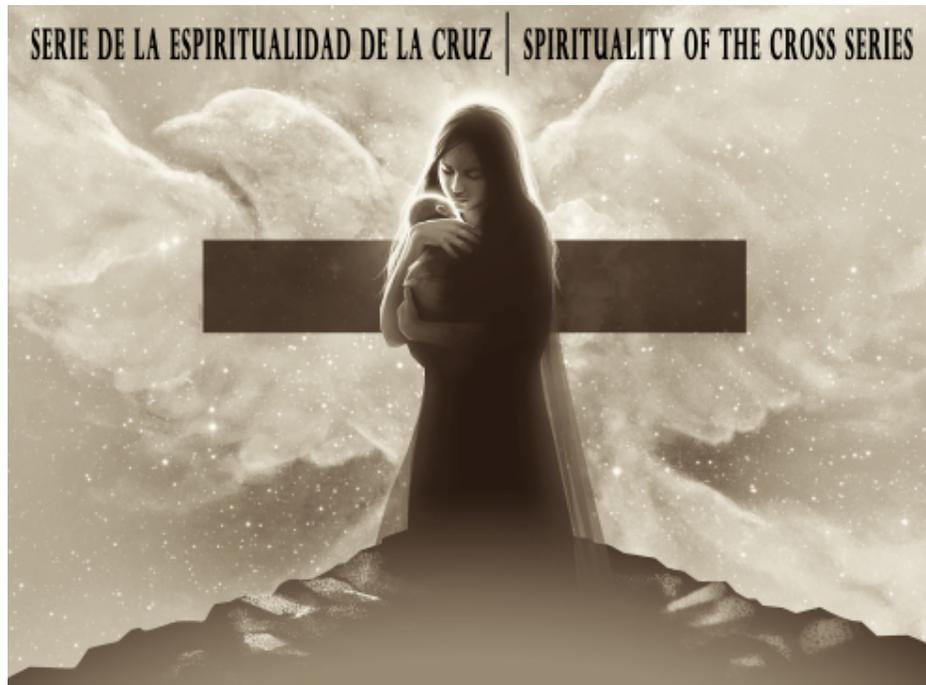


The Transformation in Christ in the Spirituality of the Cross



Opening Prayer

- ▶ Heavenly Father, through the hands of Mary we offer you Jesus, the Incarnate Word, the Victim in whom you are well pleased.
- ▶ Moved by the love of the Holy Spirit in our hearts we offer ourselves completely with Him as living hosts. May we be a living sacrifice out of love for you in all the events of our lives, obtaining graces for the world, the church and especially your priests.
- ▶ Jesus, Savior of all people, Save them!



Connection with the previous conferences.

The call of all faithful to holiness

- ▶ a) The theme of the last apostolic exhortation of Pope Francis is the call of all Christians to holiness. (conference of Father Rito)
- ▶ Words of Jesus to Conchita:
No one is **holy**, unless he is **transformed** in Me, by the Spirit and by Mary. (CC 50, 378 February 13 1928)
- ▶ The priestly ordination gives them the power **to be Myself** in the Masses, in the confessions and other sacraments in which they represent me. (CC 51 March 1, 1928)



Connection with the previous conferences: The different spiritualities

- ▶ Spirituality is a conscious relationship with God, in Jesus Christ and through the habitation of the Spirit ... and in the context of the community of believers. (See conference, Fr. Hugo on Spirituality).

There are different ways of responding to this call according to the different schools of spirituality.

- ▶ I cannot at this time describe those different schools of spirituality. I am going to concentrate on the current spirituality in the temporal context in which the Spirituality of the Cross was born.



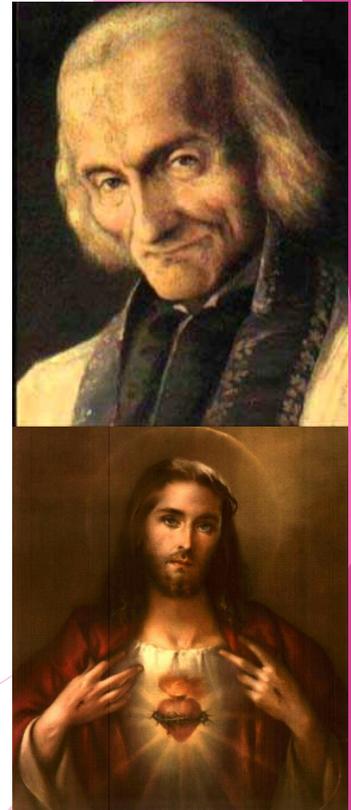
Catholic spirituality of the 19th century

- ▶ There is a Christianity based on **feeling, and devotions**, to the detriment of the spiritual aspect. **Asceticism and pietism are emphasized.**
- ▶ The cross is contemplated in its **ascetic aspect**. It is about following Christ with **mortifications, privations and humiliations**. The meaning of a life resurrected in Christ is forgotten.
- ▶ There are Marian devotions.



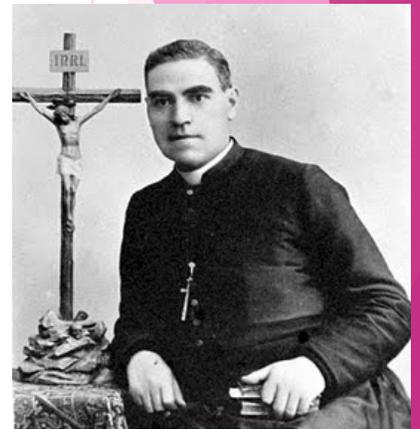
Priestly spirituality in the 19th century

- ▶ Saint John Maria Vianney is an attractive and accepted model.
- ▶ Priestly holiness is achieved in the ministry, in the celebration of the Eucharist, in the administration of the sacrament of Penance, in preaching and in catechesis.
- ▶ There is a special devotion to the Sacred Heart, and an interest in social issues.



Ven. Fr. Felix de Jesus Rougier, MSpS

- ▶ Father Félix, who had been in the Congregation of the Marist Fathers for 47 years, when he meets Concepción Cabrera de Armida (February 4, 1903), he became influenced by the Spirituality of the Cross.
- ▶ Father Felix lives under obedience, which he later exercised heroically, as a sacrifice, as an offering of himself.
- ▶ 6 months after his priestly ordination, he writes:
“To do in all your holy will, to love you finally with all my heart and perfectly conform my will to yours” (March 30, 1888).

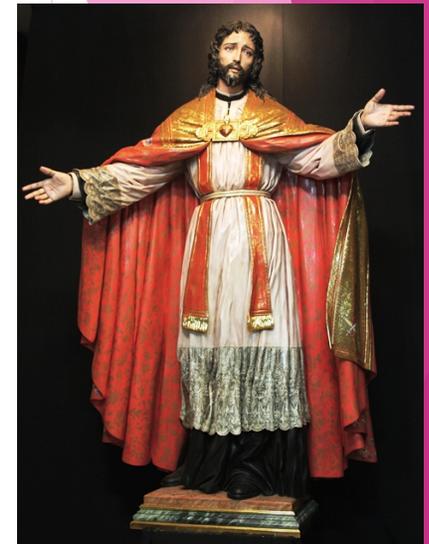


The (hidden) treasure of the Church On the priesthood of Christ

- ▶ Christ did not need to offer victims ... as the other priests have to do for their sins. (Heb 7.27)
- ▶ Only once, in the fullness of time, he came to cancel sin by **sacrificing himself** (Heb 19:26), with his own blood. (Hebrews 9, 11-14)
- ▶ It is not man, who tries to appease the divinity, and reconcile with it ... the sacrifice becomes the gift of God to placate man and make him desist from his violence and **reconcile him with Himself**. (Col 1.20) (See formula of absolution).

The (hidden) treasure of the Church On the priesthood of the people

- ▶ Saint Paul exhorts us to offer ourselves as **living, holy and pleasing hosts** to God (Rom 12.1)
- ▶ St. Peter says that we all form a **royal priesthood** (I Peter 5-9).
- ▶ Pope Pius XI in the Encyclical *Misereantissimus Redemptor* says that "all the faithful participate **mystically** in the priesthood of Christ."



The Second Vatican Council: The priesthood of the faithful and the ministerial or hierarchical priesthood

- ▶ The priesthood of the faithful and the ministerial or hierarchical priesthood.
- ▶ Although essentially different and not only in degree, are nevertheless ordered to each other, since both participate in their own way of the one priesthood of Christ.



The Second Vatican Council: The ministerial priesthood

- ▶ By the sacred power that it enjoys, it forms and directs the priestly people, **makes the Eucharistic sacrifice in the person of Christ and offers it** on behalf of all the people to God.
- ▶ The priest who represents Christ, the high priest and supreme victim, not only offers Christ, but offers himself to the Father. (Eucharisticum mysterium 3. Sacred Congregation of rites.)



The Second Vatican Council: The priesthood of the faithful

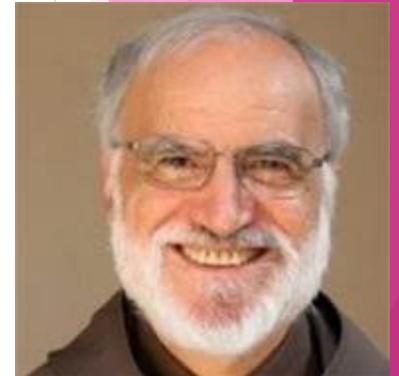
- ▶ The faithful, however, by virtue of their royal priesthood, **concur to the offering of the Eucharist** and exercise it in the reception of the sacraments, in prayer and thanksgiving, through the witness of a holy life, in self-denial and an active charity. (Lumen gentium 11.)
- ▶ All Christians participate in the priesthood of Christ by the grace of baptism.



The testimony of Father Raniero Cantalamessa

Second preaching of Lent in the presence of the Pope. March 12, 2010)

- ▶ “After my ordination, I closed my eyes, inclined my head in trying to forget everything, united to Jesus who spoke those words in the cenacle. In a low voice, in Latin, bending over the host and the chalice. I no longer close my eyes, but I look at the faithful in front of me and I say ... take and eat this is my body.”
- ▶ This I have seen confirmed in Conchita in a letter he wrote to his priest son:
"By having Jesus in your hands, you will not say, this is the body of Jesus, this is the blood of Jesus, but this is my body, this is my blood."



The contribution of Conchita.

- ▶ Laura Linares Romero, rscj. (IV International Congress of Spirituality of the Cross, Guadalajara 2013) affirms that the term *priestly people* does not appear in the writings of Concepcion Cabrera de Armida, however, this idea, or concept, is not a new thing ...
- ▶ The contribution of Concepción Cabrera de Armida consists in exemplifying the way in which the laity exercises the priesthood of the faithful, and advances the theology of Vatican II.

The journey of Conchita.

The desire and the dream to be a Priest.

- ▶ When she was a very young girl she used to play being a Priest.
- ▶ She complained with God:
“My Lord, why didn’t you make me a boy...?” I like being a priest so much and how I envy them. (CC 37, 62 August 1912)



The journey of Conchita 1889: Your mission is to save souls



- ▶ "One day when I was preparing myself for what the Lord wanted from me, I heard clearly in the depths of my soul, without doubts: Your mission is to save souls" (Aut. 1, 51).
- ▶ At that moment she thought that it was about sacrificing herself for her husband, her children and servants.

The Journey of Conchita

1894 Jesus, savior of all people! save them!

- ▶ To seal her longing to belong to Jesus, she engraved the monogram JHS on her chest, but the most important thing is not what she does, but what God did in her.

"Overwhelmed by a supernatural force, forgetting myself and my joy, I repeated: Jesus, Savior of all people, save them!" (Aut.11.33) January 14, 1894.

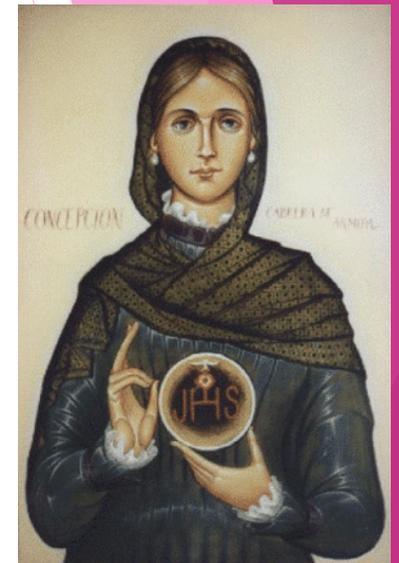
- ▶ Days later God reveals the Cross of the Apostolate which is a synthesis of the Spirituality of the Cross.



The journey of Conchita

March 25, 1906 The mystical incarnation

- ▶ “Here I am, I want to incarnate myself mystically in your heart ... Receive me. This is a very great grace. Be humble and give me thanks for this” (CC 22 171-172) (CC 35,279).
- ▶ “Fulfill your mission in the Church, offering me and offering yourself to the Eternal Father for the Church and for the souls.” (CC 35, 279)



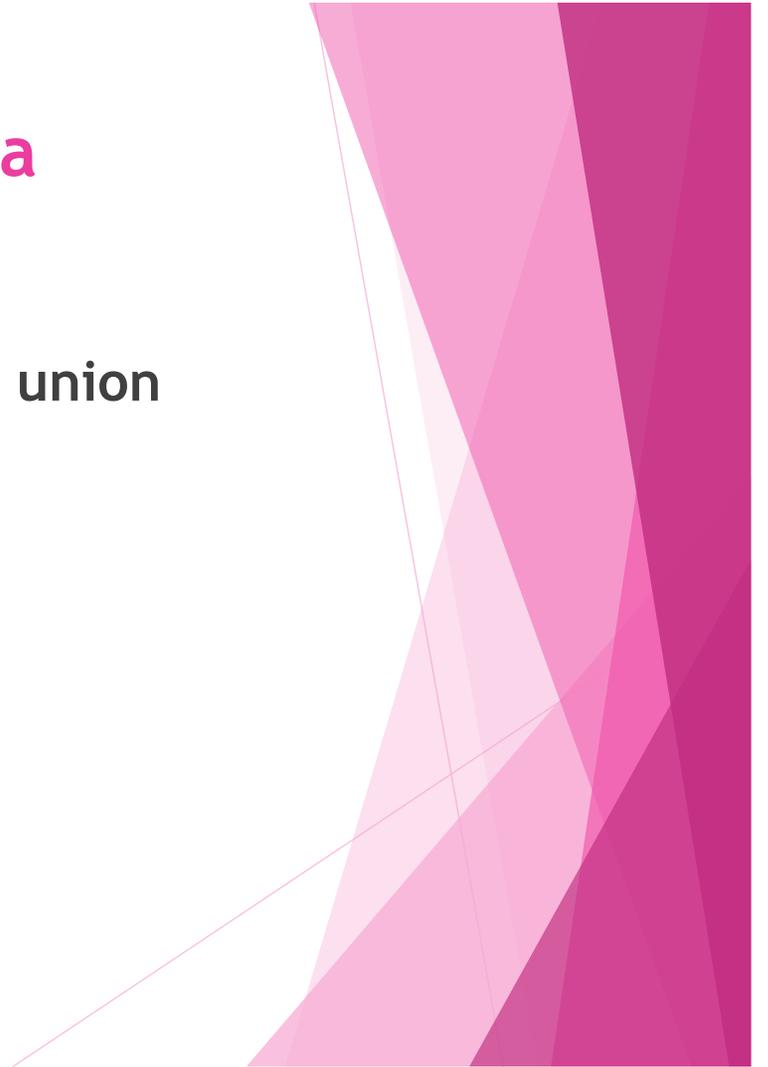
The journey of Conchita

1909 This is my body, this is my blood.

- ▶ “I asked you to offer me and offer yourself in union with me. Offer yourself and offer me, for this you have life, not yours, but Mine, because of the grace of the mystical incarnation in your soul, my life is yours and your life is Mine.” (CC 32, 119-126.) February 22, 1909
- ▶ “Let your children say with me: This is my body, this is my blood... with pure hearts and full of love, with a crucified body, with bodies and souls abandoned to my will.” (CC 32, 124-125)

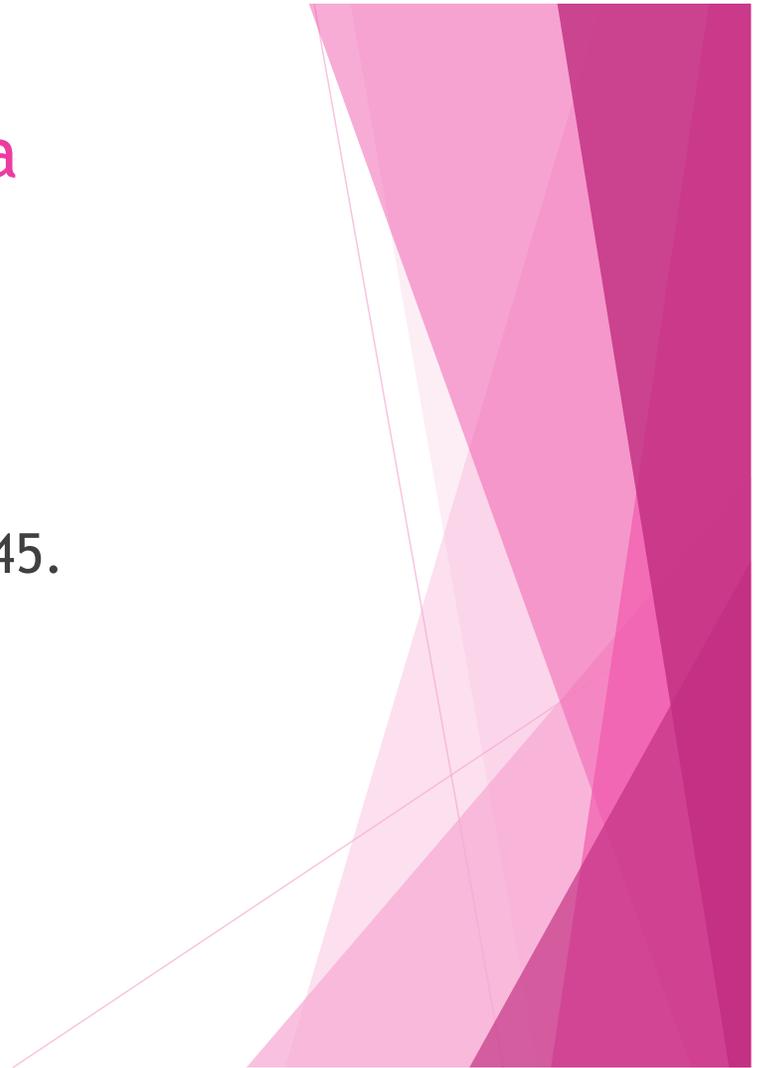
The journey of Conchita 1917: With Mary

- ▶ “Now I say to you that they do this in union with Mary and with her heart”
- ▶ (CC 41 269-279) June 17. 1925



The journey of Conchita With the Holy Spirit

- ▶ **“Love me with the Holy Spirit.”** (CC 45. 206-2080) July 3, 1925 1927



The journey of Conchita: As a mother

- ▶ “You, because you are mystically the mother of Jesus, must be the mother of innumerable souls” (CC 48, 338-339). In a special way he points out his motherhood to priests.
- ▶ Conchita tells Jesus: “I want to love you with the intensity of all mothers people, animal mothers, lionesses, cats, chickens, etc. With the same heart as Mary.” (CC 48 291) September 1927

