

ALVARO GARCÍA DE MOVELLÁN HERNAINZ

# LIFE OF ALEJANDRINA MARÍA DA COSTA



SOUL VÍCTIM

## A naughty and prankster girl

Alejandrina María da Costa was born in the village of Balasar, province of Porto (Portugal), on March 30, 1904. At that time the town had more than a thousand inhabitants.

As a child, at three years old, she tried to pick up a jar of glitter that was about a month old while her mother slept. But the jar fell and shattered into pieces. She also fell and made a wound in her mouth, the scar of which she carried throughout her life.

As she grew older, she showed herself to be a very cheerful girl who liked to joke around a lot. She was also quite mischievous. He tied the women's shoelaces while they were sitting, pretended that he had caught his fingers on the furniture of the house to observe with amusement the frightened reactions of his relatives... She often quarreled with her sister Deolinda, who was older than her, and who had a calmer character.

However, if the situation required it, she was able to overcome herself and her whims, thus showing firmness of character. His greatest victory in this regard was when an uncle of his died of a terrible flu, called the "Hispaniola", which ravaged Europe at that time. She didn't want to go into the room where her uncle had died because she was afraid of being infected. However, when she was asked to close the window of the room, she said to herself, "I must overcome myself, I must overcome fear." He was able to do it. "From then on," she said, "I was no longer afraid: I had overcome myself."

At the age of 7 he made his first communion. Receiving Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament was a special grace, which brought countless benefits to his life. Here we see how important it is for children to be able to receive communion. She herself would later narrate: "During Communion, I would have liked to always stay on my knees, even though I was very small, looking at the Sacred Form: it remained engraved in my soul. It seemed to me that I was inseparably united to Jesus. He bound my heart. I can't explain the joy I experienced."

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Her adolescence was very lively: endowed with a happy and communicative temperament, she was much loved by her classmates. However, at the age of twelve, she became ill: a serious infection (perhaps typhoid) brought her to the brink of death. He overcame the danger, although he was physically very marked.

The incident.  
Paralyzed to avoid her rape

March 30, 1918. Holy Saturday. Alejandrina (who was fourteen years old at the time), her sister Deolinda and a friend named Rosalina were in the house. Deolinda was sewing by machine (she worked as a seamstress), the crumb was sewing by hand, and Alejandrina, who was still convalescing from an illness that had bothered her weeks before (intestinal fever), was ironing. Suddenly, they saw three men through the window heading towards the house. Deolinda sensed something strange and ordered Alejandrina to close the door to the room. A short time later they heard the footsteps of these men on the stairs and then a knock on the door.

"Who is it?" asked Deolinda

One of them ordered the door to be opened. Deolinda replied: "You haven't commissioned any work. That's why it doesn't open.

There was a few moments of silence and then the girls listened as one of the men climbed the ladder that led from the ground floor to the living room where they were through a trapdoor in the floor. Terrified, they dragged the sewing machine over the trapdoor. The man, realizing that the trapdoor was closed, struck with a sledgehammer until the boards broke, managing to open a hole through which he entered the room. Deolinda, seeing this, opened the door and managed to escape, although the other two men tried to hold her by the dress. At the scene, she thought she was totally lost. It was clear what the men wanted: they had come to rape the girls. Alejandrina valued her purity, her virginity, by natural instinct and by a Christian sense of love of virtue and chastity. He looked

around the room and saw the window open. Without hesitation, in order to protect his purity, he threw himself into it. She leaned heavily into the garden from a height of four meters. She tried to get up right away but couldn't. A sharp pain pierced his spine.

After a few seconds, with effort, he managed to get up. She picked up a stick from the ground and ran to defend her sister, who had now been blocked by the other two men. "Get out of here!" He shouted with the palo in his hand.

Finally, the men decided to desist from their evil purposes and left. The girls, excited and exhausted, went back to work. For some time, they said nothing of what had happened. But in the end, the parents found out, mostly because the friend told everything.

The consequences of that fall were terrible, though not immediate. After a few days, Alejandrina was seized by strong odors and was forced to lie in bed for long periods of time. Something was wrong with her body and she herself suspected that this fall was going to be more serious than she had first thought.

In fact, the various medical visits he underwent in succession made an irreversible event ever clearer. Alexandrina was at risk of becoming paralyzed.

At first the sick woman tried to distract herself thinking that it would not come to that. She invited her friends to play cards with her and tried to take the drama out of what had happened. He prayed to God for healing and promised several things if such healing would come. Her mother and her relatives prayed

novenas and also made promises to obtain grace. But Alejandrina, far from healing, was getting worse and worse.

As his grief grew, he gave up the useless pastimes with which he tried to occupy his days. A love of prayer and a desire to unite herself to Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament began to grow in her.

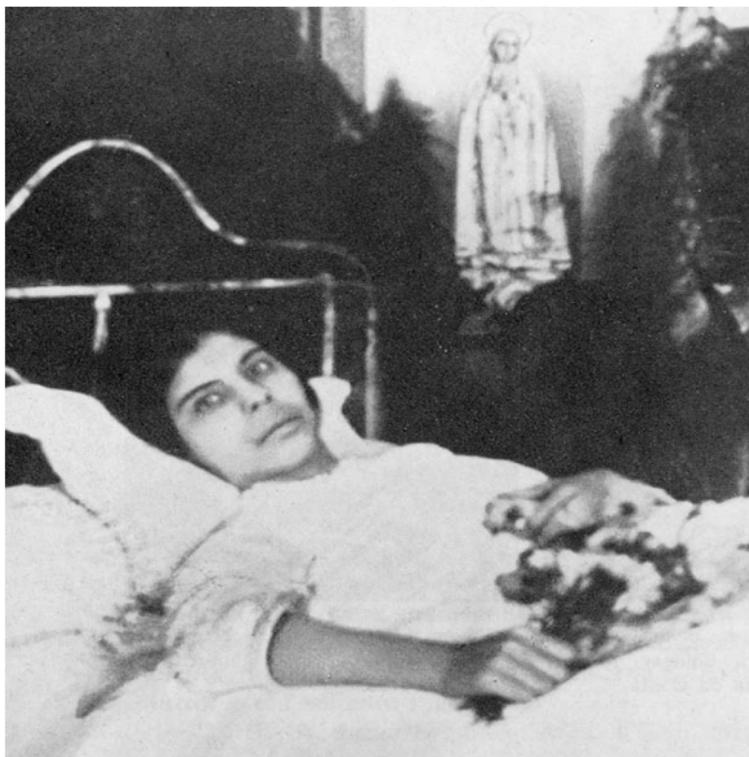
Up to the age of nineteen she was still able to crawl to the church, where, completely undone, she remained gladly, to the great astonishment of the people.

Then the paralysis progressed more and more, until the pains became horrible, the joints lost their movements and she was completely paralyzed as a result of myelitis in the spine. It was April 14, 1925, when Alejandrina got into bed never to get up again for the remaining thirty years of her life. Imagine how painful it can be for a girl in the prime of her youth, barely 20 years old, to realize that her entire life will be spent in a bed.

## Healing ain't going to come

Until 1928 she did not cease to ask the Lord, through the intercession of Our Lady, for the grace of healing, promising that, if she was cured, she would become a missionary. That year the parish organized a pilgrimage to Fatima and Alejandrina felt the hope reborn that, through the Blessed Virgin, she would obtain healing. She wanted to go to the famous place of the apparitions but it was not to be: it was a very long journey and just touching her or moving her from the bed caused her terrible pain.

After the pilgrimage, Alejandrina realized that, despite many prayers, she could not get what she asked for so intensely. Little by little, he came to accept that God's plan for his life was through illness. She paid for every desire for healing and devoted himself to loving pain and thinking only of God. To the people who felt sorry for the fact that Our Lady at Fatima had not obtained the grace of healing, Alejandrina said: "Our Lady has granted me an even greater grace. First resignation, then complete conformity to God's will, and finally the desire for suffering.



His love for Our Lady was immense. I wanted to have a statue of Our Lady. He began to save a little money, depriving himself of a few things. You can buy a small statue of Our Lady of Fatima. He loved to adorn her with flowers and candles on a small altar she set up next to her bed.

At the beginning of the month of May, she addressed the Virgin Mary with the following prayer: "Mother of Jesus and Mother of me, listen to my prayer. I know my body and all my heart. Pray me, Santissima Mother; Fill me with your holy love."

This surrender to Our Lady, without a doubt, was to bring her the great mystical graces that she was to receive immediately, for it is well known that, when we place ourselves in the hands of Our Lady, she leads us quickly, safely and effectively, towards the deepest union with her Son Jesus.

## Mystical Graces Begin

Alejandrina began to live a life of prayer and offering her pain to God, with full acceptance of her illness. I just wanted to talk and hear about God. His life of absolute paralysis was totally surrendered to God. Of course, he asked that Holy Communion be brought to him as often as possible.

She was such a pious and fervent girl that in 1933 she received permission for Holy Mass to be celebrated in her room.

In the same year, the family suffered a major financial ruin that lasted six years. They went through a lot of hardships. At

times, she didn't even have blankets to protect her from the cold. All these hardships he offered with great love to the Lord. In September 1934 the first mystical phenomena began. Alexandrina began to listen to the voice of Jesus who spoke to her, told her things, revealed mysteries of his love. This mystical grace is called "supernatural locutions." The first person who began those these locutions was his sister Deolinda.

It wasn't just words. Alejandrina began to feel the presence of the Lord in her life in a very special way, even with physical and emotional sensations that left her full of peace, joy, love. She herself wrote: "Sometimes, even before the Lord speaks to me, I feel like strong embraces; other times I feel it at the end; Suddenly, I am seized with a heat so strong, so fiery, that I cannot explain myself; sometimes I feel caressed by the Lord."

She asked Jesus why he had such a sweet and special treatment of her, who was nothing but a poor sinner. Jesus answered, "I do not do this only to holy souls. I also communicate Myself to sinful souls like you, in order to instill in them confidence in Me; They, too, can love the Lord and become holy."

When a soul begins to be led along mystical paths (apparitions, supernatural locutions, ecstasy in prayer) it is necessary that a wise and prudent spiritual director accompany and guide that soul, because the danger of being deceived is very great. Mystical souls can fall into arrogance (believing themselves to be better than others) and into

deception about the origin of their supernatural manifestations, attributing to the Holy Spirit what are nothing more than his suggestions (however profound they may be) or even possible deceptions of the devil. That is why the presence of a spiritual director is important. Alejandrina had already asked Father Mariano Pinho, a Jesuit priest, to be her spiritual director the year before, 1933.\* He quickly revealed to her all that was happening and followed his guidance and counsel in the face of these mystical manifestations.

Jesus revealed to Alexandrina what her mission was and the meaning of her sufferings:

"The mission I have entrusted to you is my tabernacles and sinners: it was I who raised you to such a high degree.

\*This would be his first spiritual director: from 1933 to 1944. Father Humberto Pasquale followed from 1944 until Alejandrina's death.

## The Tabernacles

Alexandrina's mission with the Tabernacles (the place in the Church where consecrated forms are kept) had begun years earlier. One day when she was alone, this thought suddenly came to her: "Jesus, you are a prisoner in the tabernacle and I am on my bed by your will. We'll keep each other company." From then on, he tried to accompany Jesus in every tabernacle of every church spiritually, going there with his mind and spirit to adore the Lord and console him. Especially at night His feelings are reflected in what he wrote at the time: "Oh, my

dear Jesus, I wanted to visit you in your tabernacles, but I can't because my ailment forces me to be held on my dear bed of pain. Thy will be done, O Lord; but at least, my Jesus, grant that not a moment passes without my going in spirit to the little doors of your tabernacles to say to you: My Jesus, I want to love you! I want to burn all over in the flames of your love and beg you for sinners and for the souls in Purgatory... O my Jesus, I want every pain I feel, every throbbing in my heart, every time I breathe, every second of the hours that passes, to be acts of love for your tabernacles. I want every movement of my feet, my hands, my lips, my tongue, every time I open or close my eyes, every tear, every smile, every joy, every sadness, every tribulation, every distraction, setback or disappointment to be acts of love for your tabernacles."

When Jesus began to speak to him, he simply confirmed to him the importance that this mission of the Tabernacles would have in his life. "Jesus tells me," writes Alejandrina, "that he uses me so that, through me, many souls may come to him and many may be stimulated to love him in the Most Holy Eucharist."

One day Jesus said to him expressly: "Grant that I may be loved by all in my Sacrament of love, the greatest of the Sacraments, the greatest miracle of my wisdom.... Do you want to comfort me? Do you want to comfort the sanctifier of your soul? Go to the tabernacles... Don't you feel sorry for me? I am in the tabernacles alone, so abandoned and so offended... Go fix all that... Visiting prisoners in prison and consoling them is a good deed. I am a prisoner, and a prisoner

for love. I am the prisoner of the prisoners... Men don't believe in my existence; They don't think I live there! They blaspheme Me. Others believe but don't love me and don't visit me; they live as if I were not there. Go to the Sanctums... He writes that I want devotion to the Tabernacles to be preached. I want devotion to these prisons of love to be kindled in souls; I have not stayed in them only for the love of those who love me, but for everyone... There are so many who, even when they enter the churches, do not even greet me and do not stop for a moment to adore me!"

Jesus also lamented the physical poverty of his agrarian people: "I am there like a poor beggar, dirty and ragged. Let souls see to it that I am clean and decorous."

Alexandrina took communion with great reverence and adoration. Asked about what she said to Jesus when she received Holy Communion, she replied: "I say to him like this: O Jesus, give me fire, give me love: love that burns me, love that kills me. I want to live and die of love." On one occasion he revealed that Jesus had answered him: "Yes, you will die of love since you live by love."

## Sinners

Along with the mission of the Tabernacles, Jesus entrusted Alexandrina with the mission of saving sinners. How? Praying for them and offering their pains to save them, uniting them to the saving Passion of Christ.

When Jesus began to speak to her, Alexandrina asked him, "O my Jesus, what do you want me to do?" and she always received the same answer, "Suffer. Love. Repair."

On another occasion he said to him, "Give me your hands, for I want to nail them with me; Give me your feet, I want to nail them with me; Give me your head, and I want to crown it with thorns, as they did with me; Give me your heart, that I want to pierce it with the spear, as they pierced me; Consecrate me, your body, offer yourself all to me, for I want to possess you totally." For these reasons, at every Holy Mass, Alexandrina began to offer herself to the Eternal Father as a victim for sinners, together with Jesus and according to His intentions. All the pains of his grievous illness were offered for this purpose. His mission was to suffer for sinners and make reparation for God's offended love.

The pains began to increase. Alejandrina didn't say anything to anyone. She revealed his suffering only to his spiritual director and her sister Deolinda. To the others she said nothing. Her mother, in fact, remained ignorant of much of what was going on in that room. From the day he offered himself as an Alexandrian victim, he often repeated this prayer: "O Jesus, put on my lips a smile that deceives, so that I may hide from others all the martyrdom of my soul; it is enough that you know only my suffering."

The love of suffering grew more and more in her, as her vocation as a victim made itself felt more clearly. Some people, when they read these things, will be very surprised: "Did Alexandrina love pain for pain's sake?" No way! To love pain

for pain's sake is not Christian. Alejandrina wanted pain because she had discovered that thanks to love she could offer it for the salvation of others. It is precisely love, and love alone, that gave meaning to their suffering! I had discovered that Jesus had done precisely the same thing: to turn something as absurd as pain into the means of saving us, because he offered his pains for us with great love! *He was pierced by our transgressions, crushed by our crimes. Our salutary punishment fell upon him, his scars healed us... The Lord wanted to crush him with suffering, and to give his life as an atonement (Is 53:5, 10) Christ loved you and gave himself for us to God as an oblation and a victim of sweet odor (Eph 5:2) In this the love that God has for us was manifested, that God sent his only Son into the world so that we might live through him. This is what love consists of: not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent us his Son as a victim of propitiation for our sins (1 Jn 4:9-10).*

Jesus said to her, "If you love me, if you are all mine, do not refuse me what I ask of you; Be my victim... My child, suffering, the cross, is the key to Heaven. I suffered a lot to open Heaven to humanity and for many it is useless. They say, "I want to enjoy, I didn't come into the world for anything else. I want to satisfy my passions." They say, "There is no hell." I have died for them, and they say they did not ask me, and they hurl heresies and blasphemies against me. To save them, I choose souls, I put the cross on their shoulders and I commit myself to helping them. Happy is the soul that understands the value of suffering! My Cross is soft when carried by my love."



## An Incredible Mystical Grace: Reliving the Passion of Jesus Mystically

On the morning of October 2, 1938, the Lord told Alexandrina that she was going to go through all of her Holy Passion, from the night of the olive to Mount Calvary. He told her that this would happen every Friday of the year shortly after noon until three o'clock in the afternoon, beginning her pains the Thursday night before. The first time would be the next day, Friday, October 3. She told this news to her spiritual director. They didn't really know exactly what was going to happen.

On the night of October 2-3, 1938, Alexandrina suffered greatly physically and spiritually. Tremendous and horrible pains invaded his body. He vomited blood. And so, he began to mystically suffer the Passion of Jesus every Friday of the

year. From October 3, 1938 to March 24, 1942 (that is, for 182 times), he lived the sufferings of the Passion every Friday.

On Thursday night, the pains had already begun. But the worst moments came on Friday, from noon to three in the afternoon. Alexandrina remained three and a half hours in ecstasy. He saw and heard nothing but the Passion of Jesus who was renewed in his body and soul. The Lord's pains reverberated on her one by one, from the Garden of Olives to her death on the Cross. To the astonishment of those who were able to contemplate her at that moment, Alexandrina, despite her absolute immobility and paralysis, when she went into ecstasy, jumped out of bed and reproduced all the movements that Jesus made during the Passion: carrying the cross, being crucified... The doctors, who were often present at the time and examined her, did not know how she could make these movements.

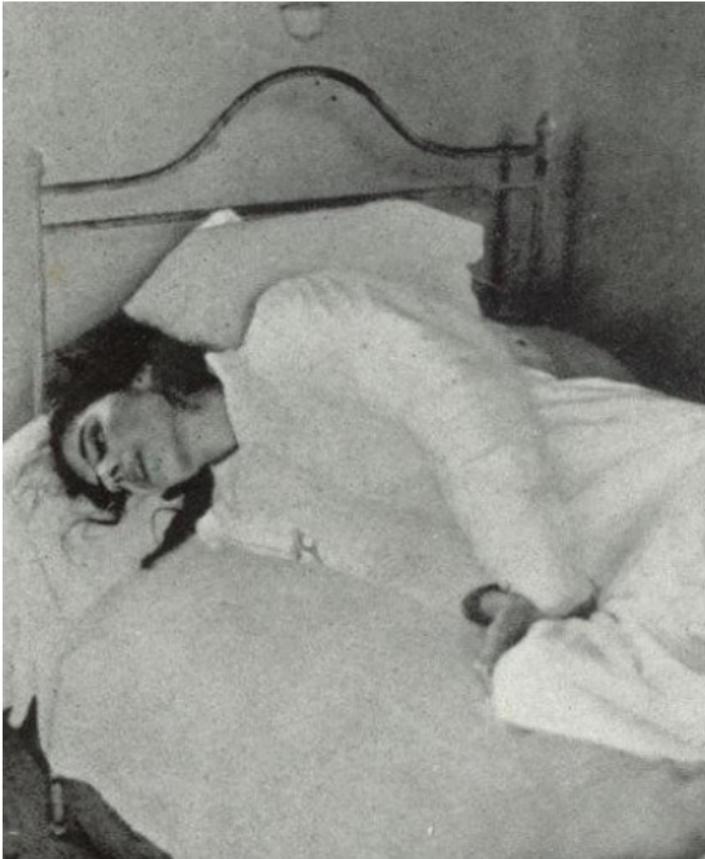
Other things also powerfully caught the attention of the witnesses:

Any movement, even abrupt, such as throwing herself out of bed, rolling and crawling, was done with such composure and modesty that it was never necessary to put her dress back together. The witnesses said: "We had the impression that he had an angel next to him to hold his clothes fast."

When she was reliving the moment of carrying the Cross to Mount Calvary, several men, friends of the family, tried to lift Alejandrina off the ground. They couldn't. No matter how hard they tried, it was impossible to move the body of that girl who barely weighed 40 kilos. A huge weight held her there. She

explained that it was the weight of the Cross. Her spiritual director once asked her during the ecstasy exactly what the weight of the cross was, to which Alexandrina replied, as if Jesus himself were speaking for her: "My Cross has a world weight." A perfect and incredible answer, because in reality in the Cross of Jesus were all the sins of the entire history of humanity. Alexandrina herself said that she also felt this world weight in the agony of the garden: it seemed to her that she was crushed and crushed by the accumulation of sins and the weight of divine justice.

\*Many witnesses noticed that at the time of the crucifixion Alexandrina showed special pain in the area of the wrists, not in the palms of the hands. They asked her why, to which she replied, "Jesus was not nailed to the hands, but to the wrists." In 1938 practically everyone had in their head the image of Jesus with the nails in the palms of his hand, as that is how he had traditionally been depicted. We now know, thanks to medical science and the discoveries of archaeology, that people who were crucified had nails driven into their wrists. The fact that Alejandrina knew this shows that he was indeed receiving supernatural revelations. He also explained that the crown of thorns, rather than a crown around the head of Jesus, was a kind of helmet of thorns that covered the entire head, a detail that we have also discovered in recent years and that responds perfectly to the reality of what Jesus' crowning with thorns was.



Alexandrina in ecstasy reviving the Passion

\*As soon as she was suddenly nailed, the body of Alejandrina was turned over, lying on her face for a few moments on the ground and then, with another incredible movement, she was placed on her back again. When asked about the reason for

such an extraordinary movement, she explained that at that moment she was turning the Cross over to rivet the nails.

\* All the falls and blows that Alejandrina suffered every Friday for three and a half hours in this mystical reliving of the passion of Jesus, left many bruises and bruises on his body that, inexplicably, at the end of the ecstasy, disappeared in a short time, leaving his body without any sign, as if nothing had happened.

From the moment he began this mystical grace of reliving the Passion of Jesus, Alejandrina began to feel and smell the smell of sins. There are incredibly disgusting smells. Many times, if a person who lived in sin came to see her, Alejandrina would notice a smell so unpleasant (like rotting flesh) that she could not stand it. It was just as at that moment to fill the room with perfumes or pleasant-smelling flowers: the bad smell of sin was terrible. From this moment on, at the mere hearing of the word sin or sinner, she felt a strong thrill in her soul and body.

When he finished living the mystical Passion of Jesus in his body (year 1942) he began to suffer the intimate Passion of Jesus: a more intimate and hidden pain. It was less spectacular (he no longer performed the incredible movements on Fridays of every year) but according to Alejandrina it was much more painful than the physical Passion.

## The Consecration of the World to the Immaculate Heart of Mary

In 1936, by order of Jesus, she asked the Holy Father (then Pius XI), through Father Pinho, to consecrate the world to the Immaculate Heart of Mary. This plea was renewed several times until 1941, so the Holy See questioned the Archbishop of Braga three times about Alexandrina. The request coincided with what Sister Lucia, the sole survivor of the apparitions of Our Lady at Fatima, was also asking.

On October 31, 1942, Pius XII consecrated the world to the Immaculate Heart of Mary with a message transmitted to Fatima in Portuguese. He renewed this act in Rome in St. Peter's Basilica on December 8 of the same year.

In this way, Alexandrina was linked to the prophetic mission of Fatima, since without having contact with Sister Lucia, they received the same message that was to be transmitted to the Pope.

### The devil hated her

God allowed the demon to attack Alejandrina in a special way. Not only with temptations, fears and doubts, as he can do with other Christians, but even with more direct, even physical, interventions. The devil could not endure all the good that Alexandrina achieved for the world, the Church, and souls by offering her pains.

Thus, the devil not only tried to torture her mind with temptations and with ugly and blasphemous thoughts, but he began to attack her physically: he threw her off the bed, both at night and at any time of the day, and even threw her violently against the wall. One day her sister Deolinda slept on a mattress lying near Alejandrina's bed to try to help her in these moments. But that night the demon threw Alejandrina so hard against the wall that he went over his sister's mattress that he could only look at it without being able to do anything. One afternoon the relatives saw Alexandrine's bed shrouded in dense, foul-smelling smoke. In addition, the bed was often shaken terribly.

Alejandrina was not frightened by these things. If God allowed the devil to bother her in this way, it is because these things could also be offered for the salvation of sinners, such as their sufferings. To those who asked him for explanations about these extraordinary manifestations of the spirit of evil, Alejandrina simply replied with a reassuring smile. I didn't want to give the devil much prominence.

Little by little, these manifestations disappeared.



Alejandrina in ecstasy

## An Extraordinary Fast

In March 1942 the Lord said to Alejandrina: "You will no longer eat on the earth. Your food is my flesh... I don't want you to take medicines, except those that can't be attributed nutritional value. This order is for your doctor."

And so, from March 27, 1942 onwards, Alexandrina stopped feeding. This extraordinary fast lasted exactly 13 years and 7

months, until the day he died. During this time the Eucharist became his only food.

In 1943, for forty days and forty nights, Alexandrina's fast was strictly controlled in a hospital (where she was admitted) by a team of excellent doctors.

The final medical report is very significant. He says: "It is quite true to us that, during the forty days of her stay in the hospital, the patient did not eat or drink; He didn't urinate or defecate... All this leaves us perplexed, waiting for an explanation to shed the necessary light... we also testify that Alejandrina's weight, temperature, respiration, pressure, pulse, and blood remained unaltered; that his mental faculties were clearly normal, constant, and lucid. The sick woman, during that time, answered many questions every day and held innumerable conversations, showing an excellent disposition and the best lucidity of spirit."

## Mission for priests

Alexandrina loved the priests and offered her sufferings for them, knowing the important mission they have in their hands. He prayed for them and helped them as much as he could.

We know that one of the times He relived the Passion mystically, Jesus asked Him to offer the odors of the Garden of Olives for a priest who had turned away from Him and was living in sin. I had deceived a lot of people. Along time ago she had to suffer immense odors from this priest. Jesus finally revealed to him the name of the priest and the spiritual director

of Alejandrina, with due prudence, made inquiries and learned that the priest had indeed lived far from Jesus and in a hidden life of sin. Finally, the priest asked for forgiveness, confessed and died peacefully.

On another occasion a priest who was visiting her, ongoing to bless her, saw in Alejandrina's face the sorrowful face of Jesus. He was so struck by the vision that, when he was able to be alone, he wept bitterly over his own sins as a priest, remembering the compassionate gaze of Jesus. The Lord had made him look with great light at his inner situation. That was his salvation.

We have testimonies of priests who, after going to see Alejandrina, felt their priestly vocation reborn more strongly. One of them testified: "I can and must say that he came out of that room priestly and with greater zeal for souls. There they spoke only of God and the things that lead to Him. One day, for about half an hour, he spoke to me about the Holy Trinity, about the intimate life with God, and about sanctifying grace. She had no culture, and yet she treated the subject as the most skillful theologian, and as no one would be able to speak of such high and sublime things. Once there were five of us priests and Alejandrina spoke of the priesthood and the need for holy priests in such a way that I must confess that no one ever spoke to me about such a matter in that way."

## Persecuted by the Church

As if the trials to which Alejandrina had been subjected were not enough, it seems that the Lord wanted to finish purifying

his beloved soul and allowed one of the most painful trials for a soul faithful to Jesus: that the church itself persecuted, doubted and distrusted her. Some priests charged with finding out whether Alejandrina was really a holy soul or an impostor distorted the facts and, swaying the reports of atheist doctors or people who did not deserve to be trusted, attacked Alejandrina saying that everything that happened around her was not supernatural but invented, and that therefore it was not appropriate to talk about her or make her life known. One of these priests, who was a canon, on one occasion, visiting her in her room and asking her inconvenient questions that Alexandrina would not answer, threatened her in a strong tone: "Remember, Alexandrina, that your case is in my hands.

To which Alexandrina, sweetly, replied:

"My case, Monsieur le canon, is in God's hands.

Finally, the Lord allowed the Church, after a time of distrust and trial, to know more deeply and accurately the facts of Alexandrine's life, and to confirm fully that what was happening around her came from the Lord. She forgave from her heart, not only the priests who had doubted her, but also certain people who had manipulated these priests by making critical and malicious comments to create distrust.

## Immense charity

As we have seen before, Alexandrina forgave from the bottom of her heart anyone who had harmed her, no matter what. A total and absolute forgiveness, without any trace of

resentment. She herself had written: "I love those who love me; I love the righteous and sinners; I love those who hurt me, because I see Jesus in everyone and I love everyone for Jesus' sake."

For many times throughout her life, she heartily forgave people who harmed her or treated her as a phony. Even the man who attacked her and tried to rape her when she was 14 years old, causing the paralysis that kept her bedridden all her life, benefited from this pardon. Much later, that person found himself in a critical and difficult personal situation. Alejandrina, who had already forgiven him from the heart, did not hesitate for a moment to help him out of his painful situation. The man, repentant, even went so far as to visit Alejandrina in her room several times. He was always deeply moved. One day, with tears in her eyes, she said to the spiritual director of Alejandrina: "He's in that bed because of me."

In spite of her sufferings, she was continually concerned with the spiritual or material good of all the poor and needy who dared to turn to her in their misfortunes. Especially in the last years of her life, many people came to her, even from afar, attracted by her reputation for holiness, and quite a few attributed their conversion to her counsels.

We have the case of a man who showed up dressed very elegantly to talk to Alejandrina. This individual led a messy life: he had sex with a woman to whom he was not married. As proof of this, he showed the sick woman the key to the woman's house. Alejandrina convinced him to abandon that life and the man promised that when he passed the bridge,

next to the parish, he would throw the faucet into the water. The sick woman stared at him, approving of the decision. But he added at once:

"From here to the bridge there is a certain distance. Along the way, the temptation to evil can change your mind. You'd better leave the key to me.

The man did so and left the key on the bedside table. He walked out of the room with a serene and smiling face, thanking that his heart felt a relief of peace like he had never experienced. Alejandrina kept the key and it was in fact found among her personal belongings after her death.

We have a multitude of testimonies, from many people in need, speaking of the great benefits that Alejandrina had done for them. Here are some of them, as they were collected in the investigation for the trial into his virtues and reputation for holiness:

"During an illness of mine, and to support my five children, Alejandrina helped me many times."

"Having been admitted to the hospital, she helped my family. She asked his sister to visit me quite often and always bring me financial help."

"He lent me money to meet serious family needs and he never wanted interest. He dressed my children many times. She found a job for my husband in a factory."

"During my stay in the hospital, he always provided food for my two children. He was helping me with money until I was able to go back to work."

"When the court evicted me from my home with my family, Alejandrina was interested in us having a house of a friend of hers for free. Then he set up a commission to raise enough money to build us a house."

"I had nine children and became a widow when I was still quite young. He came to my aid at once, saying, "Don't go hungry." When you need it, come, and I will always give you whatever you need."

"He dressed the orphans so they wouldn't feel the absence of their parents. From his bed of sorrow, he poured out much attention and affection on them."

Alexandrina performed these acts of charity in silence. When he chose a person as an almsgiver, he would give him the money wrapped in a piece of paper and say, "Such and such a person is in distress. Bring him this money, but I beg you to keep it a secret." And when people wanted to thank him for the help they had received, he would say, "Thank God's Providence and let no one else know!"

The reputation for holiness that had accompanied her throughout her life began to grow. However, Alexandrina lived in deep humility. In no way did she think she was a saint or did she act in a way that implied that she was seeking the applause or admiration of the people. In fact, Dr. Irene Acevedo, a close friend of Alejandrina, said of her: "The praise didn't even touch her... he attributed everything to God."

In 1950 Alejandrina celebrated the twenty-fifth anniversary of her immobility.

He received new painful trials, such as when the priests who had spiritually directed his soul, Father Pinho (from 1933 to 1944) and Father Humberto (from 1944 onwards) were sent out of Portugal to other countries, thus far from Alexandrina. She took it with peace and dedication, showing that she was not attached or tied to anyone.

## "I'm happy because I'm going to Heaven"

On January 7, 1955, he was told that this would be the year of his death. Jesus said to her, "My daughter, you are in your year... Your mission on Earth will soon end... Heaven is yours. There you will continue your mission."

In May 1955, the Blessed Virgin Mary appeared to him showing him her Immaculate Heart. Alejandrina tells us: "She showed me her open Heart; united to his was that of Jesus, also open. After caressing me, he said to me: "My daughter, my daughter, Jesus asks - and I ask with him - for penance and reparation. It is sins that tear us apart like this. Soon he'll come to take you and take you with me to heaven. Unite your heart to ours so that you may experience our sufferings." Then Jesus came and made the three hearts one heart, injecting into mine a drop of his divine blood."

In the month of September, the grace called "mystical communion" took place in Alejandrina. For two consecutive Fridays, the parish priest who used to bring communion to Alexandrina was absent. He did not miss it because it was

carried away by the angels in an extraordinary way. The first time three angels. The second time it was a crowd.

On October 12, he wanted to receive the anointing of the sick. When he saw those present weeping, he said to them, "Do not cry, for I am going to Heaven." And he added: "O Jesus, I can no longer be on earth... I suffered everything in this life for souls. I have squeezed myself; I have consummated myself in this bed until I give my blood for souls. O Jesus, forgive the whole world. I feel very happy. I'm happy because I'm going to Heaven."

The next day she said to a large group of people who came to visit her: "Farewell, to Heaven! Do not sin! The world is worthless! Receive Communion often! Pray the Rosary every day!"

In the afternoon he gave the crucifix a long kiss and without any sign of pain expired. It was Thursday, his favorite day because it was the day of the Eucharist (since on a Thursday Jesus instituted the Blessed Sacrament); it was October 13, the anniversary of the last apparition of Our Lady of Fatima.

Immediately a very large crowd of people came to the house to see for the last time that sick saint, who had obtained so much good and so many graces from God.

On October 16, 1955, while he was in Sicily, Italy, after celebrating Holy Mass, the spiritual director of Alexandrina, Father Umberto, received a visit from a woman who entered the sacristy and said to him: "While you were celebrating, the Virgin Mary came and asked me to tell you this: that Alexandrina has died and is already in the Church. "This is the

first time that we have been able to I don't know who that Alexandrine is, you'll know; but Our Lady has said that. What's more, he added, "tell the father not to be sad because Alejandrina is close to him." Four days later he received the news of Alejandrina's death. He immediately began to work, writing his life, so that the world and the Church would know the beauty of this soul.

Her funeral was very simple and poor, as she herself had asked to be buried in a box that would not attract attention. He wanted a cross on his tomb and next to it an image of the Blessed Virgin Mary.

In 1978 his remains were transferred from the cemetery to the parish church of Balasar. On her tomb are these words that she wanted to put there: "Sinners, if the ashes of my body can be useful to save you, come near, pass over them, tread on them until they disappear. But sin no more; no longer offend our Jesus!" It is the synthesis of his life spent exclusively to save souls.

Alejandrina was beatified by Pope St. John Paul II in 2004.



*Alejandrina's Room & Bed*

We end this brief summary of her life with an open letter that Alexandrina herself, in July 1947, wanted to write to sinners:

"I have spent my life suffering and I will spend my Heaven loving and praying to Jesus for you sinners. Repent and love Jesus; love the Heavenly Mother.

Come, let's all go to Heaven. If you knew the love of Jesus, you would die of grief for having offended him.

Do not sin, do not sin! Jesus created us; Jesus is Father."



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