



MOTHER CANDIDA AND ST. JOSEPH

M^a del Carmen Cruz, FI



It was impossible for a saint as great as the blessed Saint Joseph not to be present in the life of M. Cándida. It was. And very present. Even in the buildings he inhabited. Let us see.

We start with the Salamanca "casa de San José". On the façade of this baroque house is located a niche with the saint who gives it its name. In this house was installed the Inclusa. Hence, S. José, the holy protector of childhood, presided over the façade. It was later Hospice and, later, its new owner would allocate it to housing. One of those rooms on the first floor, we do not know if on the right or on the left, was rented for the first Daughters of Jesus. Well, this saint had to look pleased at Juana Josefa when he saw her exclaim excitedly, kneeling at the doorstep: "Here my peace, here my rest forever". As pleased he contemplated the "night in sleep" of this young woman and her first companions in the new path undertaken that December 8, 1871. Although we do not have the full text of the "fervent exhortation" that Fr. Herranz addressed to those apprentices of founders, it is almost certain that in it there would be no lack of a reference to the holy holder of the house.

From his niche the saint would contemplate smiling the arrival of bearers with small but delicate gifts that crossed his threshold: the flowers "on behalf of Mrs. Marquesa", for the altar, in a certain festivity and the chocolate that a servant of Mr. Bishop made them arrive for the breakfast of "a day of bells". La Madre Cándida – San José M^a del Carmen Cruz Tapia, FI I would also hear, from such a privileged place, the unmistakable voice of Fr. Herranz giving rules to the new founder to perfect her writing and to give personality



to a firm that would have to stamp on paper thousands of times. And I would hear at the right times the fervent prayers and joyful communication of those sisters.

Nor do we know the text of the prayers made by the sisters before retiring to rest, but can we doubt that in this plea at the end of the day the great Saint Joseph was not present? Juana Josefa, Emilia, Juana, Petra, Gertrudis and Cipriana, on their knees in that makeshift chapel of the "house of San José", would do the last prayer of the day invoking the blessed Saint Joseph to watch over his dream. A dream populated by luminous "dreams". Aware that "they were few in number and in even less quality," they prayed to the Virgin, to St. Joseph and to all the saints. They felt so poor, so small... As poor was the bouquet of flowers they had deposited on the small altar. With him had approached there the Marchioness of Castellanos, excited to discover the boldness and greatness of Cándida María de Jesús. She had just been presented to her at the Clerecía and, since then, she has become a distinguished benefactor of the new congregation born in her land.

Among her friends, many bore the name of San José: Mrs. Vicenta San José, a close friend of the Sabater family in whose house, in Burgos, the young Basque Juana Josefa, was a maid.

And how can we not remember here the dear Fr. Miguel San José Herranz, who had a privileged place in the work of the M. Foundress?

But, let's go back to the first years of life of Juana Josefa, future M. Cándida. Let us remember a daily morning scene that would undoubtedly take place in his house.

She, like all children born in the Basque Country – where it was the ancestral custom for the grandmother to bless the granddaughter every morning – would receive the blessing of hers: "Jesus, Mary, Joseph, Saint Anne and Saint Joaquin, may the five be with us and us with them to go to heaven together." There couldn't be a prettier awakening.

One more little curiosity. The godfather of baptism of the little Juana Josefa could not attend the baptism ceremony but was replaced by a certain Miguel Antoni de Carrea, of profession "simple ebanista" of the town. cabinetmaker. Like the saint of Nazareth.

Juana Josefa Cipitria, was the eldest of the three sisters that bear the name of the saint: Juana Josefa, Josefa Ignacia and Josefa Jerónima. Is it that in Andoain there was so much devotion La Madre Cándida – San José M^a del Carmen Cruz Tapia, FI for San José? Because also his grandmother, with whom he lived since childhood, was called Josefa. Josefa Antonia. And his paternal grandfather, José Ignacio de Cipitria. And an aunt. It was precisely her husband who found her one day, and very early, in the bush. "To see



the Virgin". She, as a child, was called Juanaxepa. Much was honored to the saint in that family.

In the church of Santa María de Tolosa there was a chapel dedicated to St. Ignatius. The book that this saint carried in his hand caught the attention of little Juana Josefa: "My saint, I want to do what you say in your book." Wouldn't there be another chapel dedicated to St. Joseph? And what would inspire the child that this saint carries in his arms?

But there was in the church of the Piarists in the same city of Tolosa. M. Cándida, kneeling before the Tabernacle, prayed intensely. At one point he looked up and found the image of St. Joseph placed on top of the altar. Suddenly he understood how much suffering was in store for him in that foundation. And right there he promised the saint that he would build a school in Tolosa and put his "Colegio de San José" on it.

Many more schools founded by M. Cándida bore the name of S. José:

Pitillas. The College of San José, in the Navarrese town of Pitillas, was inaugurated on October 12, 1888 and was called "de San José" in response to D. José Cadena y Eleta, bishop of Vitoria and promoter of this school. "It is very beautiful – I would say in the inspection of the works – but it is going to cost me a lot of money".

The next was the College of San José de Coca, inaugurated on January 22, 1893, as recorded in the minutes of this town. We do not know the reason for this degree. Perhaps it was because of the number of children, more than a hundred, who were running around the streets of that town. "M. Cándida," they said, "had her eyes shining when she contemplated them." Would you remember the blessed Saint Joseph staring enraptured at his baby Jesus?

And then came the College of San José de Medina del Campo, which would open its classes on October 8, 1896. It took a lot for M. Cándida to get along with the founder D. Isidoro Sanz who at all costs wanted a religious school in Medina. He counted on the money of his late sister Regina. But the character of this priest was not very temperate and did not make it easy for M. Cándida. Finally, after many interviews in which he always intervened, to complicate matters, Mrs Sabina, his housekeeper, reached the agreement. And Medina had his school that would open its classes on October 8, 1896. Third school that would bear the name of San José and that would have his blessing.

Didn't St. Joseph always have "small details" with the Daughters of Jesus. Well, hadn't the Constitutions of the Congregation been approved on November 25, the feast of the



Wedding of The Blessed Mary with the Most Holy Patriarch, and which were signed by Fray Joaquín Lluch, Bishop of Salamanca, in 1873?

There are more than thirty letters in which M. Cándida alludes to San José.

Sometimes it will be to give him glory. "Glory to God, to his immaculate Mother, and to his adoptive Father Saint Joseph" (c. 15).

Or to claim that it says to him, "To him I entrust the dear deceased." (c. 99). He asks, at the same time, to pray for her: "Start the whole community a novena to San Jose for an intention, that I am in terrible troubles". (c.26).

He encourages confidence in him "because he can do much in heaven." (c. 180).

They must turn to him for he is protector of the good death: "Blessed be Jesus, Mary and Joseph, may they assist us in life and death and take us to heaven to sing their praises eternally." (c. 38).

But, first, one must live in holiness: "Let us live holily and, in that tremendous moment, let us surrender our souls in his arms." (c. 40)

It encourages you to have confidence in him, because he can do a lot in heaven. Indeed, this paragraph is precious: "May God that we all go to heaven to praise him there for all eternity. What a joy! There, with the Virgin and in the company of all saints forever and ever. Amen." (c.46).

And this one as a culmination, written in 1985: "I suppose the feast or function of the patriarch and blessed St. Joseph would be very good. This saint can do much, much with God. oh! Who could imitate its virtues! What silence! What modesty! What patience! What a presence of God! What humility! What poverty! What chastity! What obedience! What a prayer! What love for Jesus and Mary! What to sanctify yourself at work and all the moments of your beautiful life! How holy his precious death! Blessed are we if we really love him. He will watch over our body and guard our soul so that we serve God in this life, and then we will sing his praises in heaven with Jesus, Mary, and Joseph. Amen.