



## Un Carisma vivo, un Camino compartido 150 años de las Hijas de Jesús

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# Filiation in Mother Cándida

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The experience of Filiation is, at the same time, a characteristic of its own and a continuous call in the life of the Christian person. Biblical feature, emphasized especially in the spiritual and charismatic experience of St. Candida María de Jesús. In this Jubilee Year we want to deepen it more, get to know it better so that, as members of her great family, we may live it, grow in it and strengthen our evangelical being and of being people committed to the Kingdom, the one that Jesus of Nazareth came to announce to us.

### How did Mother Candida live this trait?

Throughout her life, M. Cándida —Juana Josefa before she became foundress— learned to live her being a Christian woman with depth. First, in the simple environment of her home through the testimony and teachings of her parents, her maternal grandmother and the church of her time. In the fact of the founding and development of the Institute, from that continuous openness to God and connaturality with Ignatian spirituality, confirmed in the encounter with Father Herranz who leads her, in filial response to grace, to found the Congregation of the HIJAS DE JESUS (Daughters of Jesus), a name that clearly expresses this trait.

She lived her filial experience closely linked to Christ-centeredness. An experience nourished in prayer and service, of immense love and faith in Him, who invades her whole being suddenly, leading her to experience clear filial attitudes of poverty, trust in God, fidelity and obedience to his will, self-denial, boldness, fortitude and patience (1). We do not have a treatise properly about this charismatic feature of the Sonship or her Trinitarian devotion (2), but above all a profound experience that expresses it in prayer and is interwoven in her daily life. She was a woman of practical life and her little notebooks with spiritual annotations as in many of her letters, let us see quite clearly how a diversity of issues, experiences, advice are mixed in her daily living (3).

We know from oral and written tradition that the experience of Mother Candida is that of a God who, in Jesus, gives himself freely, a God of mercy, supportive, patient, close, a God who has created the world for everyone, one who loves her immensely and treats us all, good and bad, as his favorite children, as was also the experience of Jesus: “You



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are my very dear son, my favorite, in you I am well pleased" (4). God whom she blesses in everything and under any circumstance (5).

"May God be blessed for everything, and may He give us his grace so that we may love him very much." Yes, "love Jesus, who is our Father, ... our everything, very much and very truly; because He deserves everything, our being and our love", "How good God is and how much He loves us". Blessing God is easy, especially when things are going well, but the good thing is to be able always to bless him, as Mother Candida María did, because he is our Good and Loving Father. That is where believers truly stand out, when we can exclaim from that filial relationship, blessed be God for everything, because we know that, in Him, we have everything, that He is a Father who never separates himself from us, who cares for and loves us as his children (6). That God is the one from whom M. Candida lovingly and continuously receives his grace, his strength, his Spirit. This God who is Father, leads her to experience herself as sister of others, to feel the deep need to love and serve everyone, taking care of the gift of brotherhood with everyone, especially with those most in need, since whoever loves God and does not love his brother is a liar (7).

It will help us to find spaces for reflection-prayer to contemplate Mother Candida in the deepest experience of her being daughter and sister and, to bring her with the eyes of the heart, to see and listen to her, from different circumstances, to dialogue with her and ask ourselves:

- What particularly strikes me about her in her experience of filiation?
- What was her secret to living it fully? How can we, today, learn from it? How does she live that fraternal sense that derives from filiation? Some other questions that may arise, take advantage, thank, desire ...

### **How can you live it today, according to the world context in which we live and the vocation to which you have been called?**

For those of us who make up the family of Mother Candida, in this complex world context that we have been given to live, our gaze turns to God. We ask ourselves: is this security in God who is Father and cares for everyone, alive?

**Pope Francis** in his homily on Christmas Day reminded us that in Jesus we have to find the strength to face every trial, since his birth and incarnation was for everyone. What does this mean to us? May the Son of God, the one intrinsically blessed, come to make us his sons and daughters, blessed by grace. What a wonderful gift we received!

Today, God amazes us and says to each of us: "You are wonderful." Sister, brother, don't be discouraged. Are you tempted to feel out of place? God tells you: "No, you are my son, beloved and favorite!" Do you have the feeling of not achieving it, fear of not being up to par, fear of not leaving the tunnel of the test? God tells you, with your own name: "Have courage, I am with you." And he does not tell you so much with words as by making you son, daughter of God.

This is the indestructible heart of our hope, the core that sustains existence, beyond our qualities and defects, stronger than the hurts and failures of the past, than the fears and



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concern for the future, one finds this truth: **we are beloved children**. And God's love for us is gratuitous love, pure grace. We listened to St. Paul at Christmas time, "The grace of God has appeared". Nothing is more valuable (8).

Let us ask ourselves: What experience do I have today of God the Father-Mother, who loves me with a love of predilection for me and for everyone? Can I bless God like M. Candida in all circumstances even if life does not smile at me? What helps me to strengthen this experience? Which persons speak to my life of this filial condition, how do they question me and why?

**The encyclical Fratelli Tutti** invites us to begin anew each day in the experience of fraternity, the other side of being filial, to make it inclusive for all, building bridges, being a great family where we can all feel at home. Today we are faced with the great opportunity to manifest our fraternal essence, to be good Samaritans ... instead of accentuating hatred and resentment. It is possible to start from the bottom and one by one, strive for the most concrete and local, to the last corner of the country and the world, to take charge and look for others without fear of the wounded.

What specific demands of fraternity does filiation place on my life? Whom can we look for to overcome this impotence to take charge together because the good is found there in the heart of the human being?

Pope Francis insists on the need for the world and for all of us to take charge: of our crimes, laziness and lies; of a restorative reconciliation that resuscitates us and makes us lose our fear of ourselves and of others. We are all responsible for the wounded that is the people themselves and all the peoples of the earth today. Let us take care of the fragility of each man, each woman, each child and elderly (9).

The Congregation also reminds us that, if we are daughters, sons, we are called to live every human relationship from the perspective of fraternity in a world where it is quite broken, to respect the dignity of every person as a daughter of God, to be merciful and especially in solidarity with those who suffer exclusion or need (10). "We wish to serve the incarnate God, inserted in an unequal and constantly changing world, being tenderness and mercy for all, especially those most in need. Having our eyes and hearts open to reality and putting our whole being and abilities at the service of others, through prayer and any service performed with joy and passion for humanity" (11).

### NOTAS

- 1) De Juana Josefa a Cándida María de Jesús – Inés Laso.
- 2) *Seguir el hilo. La devoción de Cándida María de Jesús a la Santísima Trinidad*. Pilar Linde.
- 3) *Principios fundamentales de nuestra vocación FI*.
- 4) Cf. Mc 1, 7-11.
- 5) *Iluminación sobre el Cristocentrismo y la filiación en nuestra vocación FI*. Inés laso y Pilar Linde – Roma 1983.
- 6) "Perlas escondidas" en *las Cartas de la M. Cándida*. Antonio Grau.
- 7) Cf. 1Jn 4, 20.
- 8) Mensaje de Navidad 2020- Papa Francisco.



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- 9) Encíclica *Fratelli Tutti* 56, 62, 77, 78, 79.
- 10) Principios fundamentales de nuestra vocación FI.
- 11) LVAF, 6.

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