

Apparition of the Holy Cross - In 1894, Conchita started having the so-called “Apparitions of the Cross” while she was praying before the Blessed Sacrament. She first saw the Holy Spirit appear to her surrounded by a great light; then she saw a cross. On the cross, she saw a heart; she said: *It was a living heart, pulsating, human, but glorified; it was surrounded by fire... and above it, a different type of fire emerged from it, a fire of better quality.* There was a small cross on the heart, which represents the pain on the cross that the souls of those God most trusts cause him — at times consecrated ones.



So Conchita understood that her mission was to save souls, and one of the ways she could do so was by offering up her daily crosses and sufferings. After this experience, and with the spiritual direction of Father Félix de Jesús Rougier and Bishop Ramón Ibarra y González (the first bishop of Puebla), the Apostolate of the Cross was established.

In some of her revelations, Jesus showed his concern for priests: *[Tell them] not to fear... that if they have offended me, I am God’s forgiveness; that they have a brother, son, mother, father, God-man in me, who loves them... who extends his arms and wants to save them, embrace them against the heart that let itself be torn so that all priests could fit in it, to transform them in me, their Jesus, all mercy and goodness.*

Cabrera was beatified on May 4, 2019 in a ceremony which was held in Mexico City at the Basilica of Our Lady of Guadalupe. She is also the first Mexican lay woman to be beatified.

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Blessed Concepcion “Conchita” Cabrera de Armida ***Wife, Mother, Mystic & Co-Foundress***



Born: December 8, 1862, San Luis Potosi, Mexico

Died: March 3, 1937, Age 75
Mexico City, Mexico

Spouse: Francisco Armida (married 17 years. 1884–1901)

Beatified: May 4, 2019

Concepcion Cabrera de Armida (Conchita), born in Mexico into a pious Catholic family, was a married woman, mother of nine children, an early widow, and wrote nearly as many volumes as Thomas Aquinas. She was foundress of the five Works

of the Cross and a great mystic of the Mexican Church.

She began to experience supernatural graces at a young age, such as the Baby Jesus coming to her room to play with her. On other occasions, the devil would come into her room disguised as a grotesque creature, in a futile attempt to frighten her. She never had to fear them, as her guardian angel would not allow it.

As a child, she displayed a powerful love for the Holy Eucharist, a devotion that was above the norm. Her devotion was so pronounced that, at a time when the age to receive First Holy Communion was between 12 and 14, Conchita was allowed to receive her First Communion when she was only 10.

When Conchita turned 13, as was the custom, she made her debut into society. She was pretty, led a normal life, began to attend dances and go to the theater. It was at one of the dances where she met her future husband, Francisco de Armida.

She learned how to care for a home, and became an excellent equestrian. On her parents' farm, she even helped the peasants. When she saw people criticizing others, she would interrupt them by telling a joke so that people would laugh and change the topic.

Before getting married, she asked her fiancée, *Pancho*, if it were possible for her to receive Communion daily, and he agreed to this. They got married November 8, 1884, when she was 22 years old; they had nine children.

Sadly, when Conchita was only 39, Francisco died. They had been married 17 years, and their youngest child was only two at the time. Life as a widow was not easy, but this is where the mystical life of Conchita again came to the forefront.

My husband had a very violent personality, he was like gunpowder, and when the fire had passed, he would calm back down embarrassed; after a few years, he changed so much that his mother and sisters were amazed. I think it was due to grace and the continuous filing the poor man had to endure with [me as] the sand paper and flint.

Two of their children became religious: Manuel, their third child, became a Jesuit priest; and Concepcion, the fourth, joined the order of the Religious Sisters of the Cross of the Sacred Heart of Jesus.

Four children got married: Francisco, Ignacio, Salvador and Guadalupe. The other three died at an early age: Carlos, 6; Pablo, 18; and Pedrito, the youngest, who drowned in a fountain near the family home at the age of 3.

Before Francisco passed on, Conchita had begun to write. In 1894, she had entered into what is known as a “spiritual marriage” with Jesus, and other special graces. Conchita was chosen to serve God in different ways. But her primary method was always her writing.

She was a model of holiness as a wife, mother, widow, and grandmother. Because of the depth of her writings, Conchita is recognized as a great mystic of the 20th century.

Amazingly, her children had no recollection of her time spent writing, even though she wrote over 60,000 handwritten pages of religious work. This amount of writing rivals that of St. Thomas Aquinas.

As a lay woman, she often tried to show her readers how to love the Church. She wrote the following words, which are so fitting for today's secular world:

To love the Church is not to criticize her, not to destroy her, not to try to change her essential structures, not to reduce her to humanism, horizontalism and to the simple service of human liberation.*

To love the Church is to cooperate with the work of Redemption by the Cross and in this way obtain the grace of the Holy Spirit come to renew the face of this poor earth, conducting it to its consummation in the design of the Father's immense love.

*horizontalism - is a social relationship that promotes the creation, development, and maintenance of social structures for the distribution of management power.

In addition to her voluminous writings, Conchita founded several apostolates under the banner of “Works of the Cross.” These included the Apostolate of the Cross founded in 1895; the Congregation of Sisters of the Cross of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, founded in 1897; the Covenant of Love with the Heart of Jesus, founded in 1909; and the Congregation of Missionaries of the Holy Spirit founded in 1914, of which Archbishop Gustavo Garcia-Siller is a member.

She built many relationships with bishops, was obedient to her spiritual directors, and at the same time, she cooked, and was able to read, pray, teach her children to pray, speak with her spiritual director, visit the sick — she always looked for a way to help; as a wife, she never neglected Francisco, whom she truly loved.

Conchita tried to give practical advice to her children, married or religious. *Never use harsh or offensive words against Elisa*, she wrote to her oldest son Francisco when he got married. To her daughter living in religious life, she said, *Such a precious jewel was not meant for the world: The Lord chose it for himself.*