

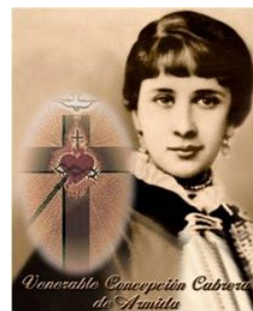
The Chain of Love: To See With the Eyes of Jesus (Part III of V)

Mary Kaufmann

Editor's note: In the [first part](#) of this series, we introduced the concept of the Chain of Love, from Venerable Concepción Cabrera's Spirituality of the Cross. [Part II](#) examined how we are to live our baptismal priesthood and briefly looked at the concept of the fourteen rules of the Chain of Love. Today's post explores the idea of seeing with the eyes of Jesus and goes into greater detail on the rules of the Chain of Love.



Concepción Cabrera, a wife, a mother and a mystic who lived during the Mexican Revolution in the early 20th Century in Mexico, received an awareness from Jesus that each of us would do well this Lent to meditate upon. If we do, the Chain of Love, the set of fourteen rules that Concepción followed, would move from a mere set of guidelines for the spiritual life to a set of responses that someone in love with Jesus makes, which we can emulate. Our task this Lent, rather than just tweaking our spiritual practices, is to become people in love with Jesus that surrender everything and make our entire lives a gift to Him. Concepción determined a way to integrate everything in her into a response of love to God.



In *Priestly Oblation of Christ and Priestly Dimension of Baptism in Concepción Cabrera*, Father Luis Ruiz Vazquez, M.Sp.S. shares a snippet from Concepción's journal and shows us the power of letting God take control of our lives. Concepción wrote:

"It is very difficult to explain what I feel. I experience union with Jesus like one hand fitted into the other. This comparison is very coarse. It would be better to say that I experience the presence of Jesus as if a light enters within the soul and the body; and would invade it and illuminate it totally. I feel Jesus as Light, but also I feel Him as most sacred and pure humanity that impregnates me. It is fitted within me without the "I" disappearing, in the sense of leaving it be, but that the material is spiritualized leaving the misery that is carried with it. I experience it as a supplanting of Jesus in me. I feel as if His eyes are within my eyes, his body, his heart, within my heart, his blood within my blood, His life giving me life" (Account of Conscience 25:21-24).

Concepción describes a reality open to each of us, and a unity with God that each of us can progressively cultivate by studying and praying with the Chain of Love. Our call is to learn to love Jesus like Concepción, "to love to the extreme to excess"^[1] so He can fill us uniquely with His living presence.

The first part of the Chain describes the power of selfless love and purity in all forms. The Lord reported to Concepción: "I want souls that make up the Chain of golden links, which I have asked you for, to be far advanced in virtues, above all in humility, sacrifice, and purity. They must be pure in body, soul and intention, empty of all earthly affection in order that I may fill them in their entirety" (Rules 1,2,7). The cross empties us.

We have to learn to recognize God's love to us in its most distressing disguise, when it comes to us in the form of the cross. The cross loosens the bolts of our existence, of our tendency to be selfish so we can re-center in God alone. With this, we appreciate humiliating experiences and welcome times we can be despised like Jesus, for they empty us of anything that could repel Jesus, or harden our hearts. We want to be able to move in grace and have freedom to

step out to be kind and caring towards people that may be jealous of us, who may misunderstand our motives and who may judge us unjustly, like they did Jesus. Transformation into Jesus is not “pie in the sky” but something that we encounter in our concrete experiences. How do you respond when a friend, family member or colleague jilts you?

Next, we have to welcome the virtue of poverty (Rule 5), by trying to feel some effects of this simplicity by how we utilize and share material goods. When other people are seeking comforts, like houses or cars, for example, bigger than they need, our job is to determine how to meet our needs while having enough left to share. We can do this by asking for insight, for Jesus to give us light to see what other people need from what we can offer. What is more, we are to become modest people, who practice discernment in sharing about our spiritual lives (Rule 4). In releasing our wants to God, we become forgetful of self, simple, natural and without presumption, so others can approach us in their need (Rule 6).

By moving self off center, we become God centered and open to other people to gift them. By relinquishing ourselves, God has more room in us to fill. We are not to try to grasp people to meet needs we must find met in God before all others. We are to develop a supernatural perspective by cultivating consistent lives of prayer, to live as Concepción did, “to live in God and only for God, dead to all that is not God” (Rule 14) something that we will explore in the next post of the Chain. We want to see, to feel and to love with the heart of Jesus so others, in seeing us, can see Jesus.

Editor’s Note: Mary has provided a link so that those who wish may [download the “14 Rules of the Chain of Love”](#) and pray with them along with the post. Here is that link at the Incarnate Institute: incarnateinstitute.org. When you go to the link, click on “The Chain of Love” and then on “14 Rules of the Chain of Love”. Feel free to look around the site itself as well. Mary has some wonderful things there.

[i] Vazquez, Ruiz, Father Luis, M.Sp.S., *Priestly Oblation of Christ and Priestly Dimension of Baptism in Concepción Cabrera de Armida*, unpublished English Translation, p. 37.

Art: Venerable Concepción Cabrera de Armida, used with permission.