

Jesus, Savior of the World, Save Them! (Lenten Series Part II of V)

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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. Today, we will explore a bit of how we are to live our baptismal priesthood and look briefly at the concept of the fourteen rules of the Chain of Love.

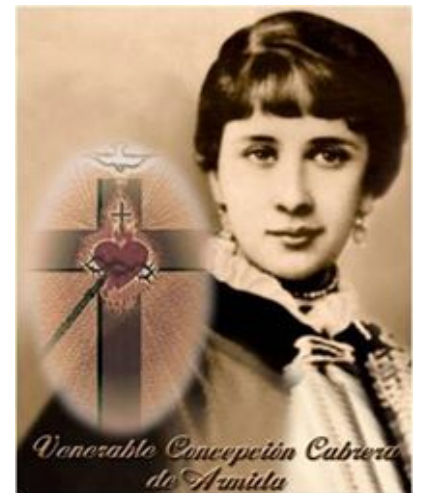


At times, it is very valuable to review the ups and downs of your life story. Look at what happened, your reactions and the graces the Lord liberated in you through your joys and your sorrows. I am the mother of a large family of six kids. What many do not realize when they get our Christmas card, however, is that we have several children in heaven too. After my sixth child, I experienced a series of miscarriages. We prayed, discerned and felt the Lord guide us to be open to life. My question early on in this experience was why did God seem to lead us into such an intimate crucifixion? Maybe you have asked the same thing about your life! I have come to see that God invites us to learn to hold nothing back from Him, to surrender all personally to the power of the Cross, for He loves us too much to deny us our greatest purification. From this period, I grew immensely from a faithful Catholic to a deep and personal friend of Jesus. The life and writings of Venerable Concepción Cabrera, a wife, a mother of nine kids, a mystic and the foundress of the "Works of the Cross,"^[i] show us each how deeply the Lord desires to conform us to His nature and teach us to offer our lives as a living sacrifice for others.

The Spirituality of the Cross, or the way of Venerable Concepción, is a new movement for all the baptized to cultivate a practical holiness by learning to welcome and use the crosses of their lives *for others*. It's a way to cultivate flexibility of heart by being united to Jesus through the ups and downs of every day. It is a spiritual training program that offers tremendous richness for the Church of today. As an unpublished formation exercise on the "Spirituality of the Cross" suggests, "We are to live our baptismal priesthood as a prolongation of the priestly love of Christ, exercising ourselves in the work of sanctity on behalf of and in place of those who do not do it, in order to gain graces of interior conversion and transformation in Christ" for them. Think of the possibilities this nuance to the spiritual life provides us!

In fact, we are called to live as altars for Christ in the depth of our souls, for as the Catechism of the Catholic Church (CCC) describes, "The altar of the New Covenant is the Lord's Cross...On the altar, which is the center of the church, the sacrifice of the Cross is made present (CCC paragraph 1182)." Through the liturgy *and* through the events of our lives, we are invited to welcome "Christ, [who] truly died and is truly risen (CCC 1182)." The Spirituality of the Cross and the life and way of Venerable Concepción show us that we can do more than we have considered, letting our holiness be a force in the lives of people we care about.

The fourteen rules of the Chain of Love, the ways and means that Venerable Concepción Cabrera used to become a powerful force of redemption for others, show us how to become mediators or baptismal priests for each other. Our call is to participate in the grace of our baptisms by developing a plan of intentional holiness that allows us to welcome and even rejoice at the Cross. While we are not all mystics as Concepción was, she reveals to us how Christ allows us to



participate in His redemptive mission by inviting us to live with His priorities.

The Chain of Love is like what a personal trainer sets up for someone wanting to become physically fit but it relates to the spiritual life. It is a set of virtues, attitudes and a life style of self-offering that we will unpack in subsequent posts.

Father Luis Ruiz Vazques, M.Sp.S. in *Priestly Oblations of Christ and Priestly Dimensions of Baptism in Concepción Cabrera* recounts the words of Jesus to Concepción:

“I, from my incarnation in the womb of Mary, purchased graces; I want you to be transformed into me, living from my life, do nothing else. You must forget yourself and day and night offer all for the salvation and perfection of souls.

You will make a chain, each hour of your life will be a link; I want no break even till your death. You will see all the hours are to be offered with this intention and yes, filled with acts relative to this. Give me souls as I give myself, since you must assimilate yourself to Me. And, how did I give myself? With Love, with sacrifice, and without interruptions. I want this to be your life in the future. This will be your particular examen every day” (Account of Conscience, 22:203-204).



At first he encouraged her to do everything in His sight from 12-3 PM and then later for the entire day. After intentionally practicing this glancing towards and connecting everything to the Lord, her constant prayer became, like our prayer can be, “Jesus, Savior of the World, save them!”

[i] [The Missionaries of the Holy Spirit](#), The Sisters of the Cross of the Sacred Heart, The Covenant of Love, The Apostleship of the Cross and the Fraternity of Jesus Christ Priest.

Editor’s Note: In our next post, we will discuss the rules of the Chain of Love in greater detail.

Art: Venerable Concepción Cabrera de Armida (used with permission). Heart on Fire from Mary Kaufmann’s upcoming book (used with permission). The baptistery in the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary in Baltimore, 30 June 2013, own work, Farragutful, CC, Wikimedia Commons.