

By nature and by grace, Mother Clara was gifted with an open, receptive spirit, well grounded in reality, making her capable of assimilating the fruitful signs that God was sending her. Endowed with highly feminine gifts and a naturally kind and sensitive attitude to the suffering of others, Libania do Carmo gradually allowed herself to be guided by her kind heart and maintained cordial, direct and personal relationships with everyone who crossed her path.

The poor and underprivileged of all sorts totally captured her gaze and the sensitivity of her heart, transforming it into almost obsessive attention and the desire to dedicate herself totally to them. It was because of this sensitivity that, when she perceived the ardour of Father Beirão's dedication towards them, the eyes of Libania's heart were opened to an increasingly concrete and consistent future. Spontaneously, Father Beirão began to see in Libania the unifying factor not only of his ideas, but above all, the hope of their fulfilment, always with the help of the destitute in mind, whom she cared for with maternal affection.

In the life of Sister Maria Clara, nothing was ready or foreseen, but everything was done, according to experience and circumstances, always illuminated by the light of faith and hope, stemming from a deep love for the Lord God, mirrored in the faces of the poor and perceived in the depths of her own interiority (cf. MENDES DE MOURA, Rosa Helena. *Maria Clara do Menino Jesus: sua gente e sua obra*, Coimbra, 2013, pp. 23-26).

With the eyes of an eagle, our chronicler expressed the highest regard for the never-to-be-forgotten magnitude of the maternal heart of our Foundress: (...) *we will have to repeat several times that Mother Clara was very affectionate towards*



Mother Clara A Motherly Heart



The affectionate love that our venerable Foundress had for the children did not prevent her from loving the poor with the same tenderness. For them too there was a special place in her extremely loving heart! She considered them as members of her family of predilection and tried to do all possible good that a generous soul can ever imagine and do (Chronicle, 1933, Part 1 - IV pg. 143).

all her Sisters, she had a special gift to encourage those whom she found discouraged and tempted in their vocation. She knew how to moderate her gentleness with a certain dose of firmness which made them fall into themselves and recognize in their temptation the bond of the wise enemy of souls. There was no Mother who was more loved and more respected. The seriousness and solemnity with which she gave her orders made them fear her but also to love her (Chronicle, 1933, Part 1 - IV pg. 102).

The children, on their part, dedicated the most filial and tender love to Mother Clara, by whom they felt affectionately loved. They used to feel very happy when they met her, because her motherly heart only inspired in them filial trust and love (...) If good Mother Clara was so tender hearted and compassionate towards the children, she was not less with her Sisters (ibid., pg 134).

A mother's heart weeps with those who weep. This attitude of Mother Clara enabled her to share in the beatitudes and to accept in her heart the painful feelings of her Sisters. Our Sister Saudade recounts that on one occasion Mother Clara came across some Sisters crying and wanted to know the reason for their tears. These Sisters were being transferred to a distant mission and so their tears were of longing, as they were leaving and would be far from Mother Clara. The chronicler observes: "*When Good Mother Clara, saw them crying, she too cried, and embracing them, she said: - If it costs you my dear sisters to leave the Mother House, even more does it cost me, to see you leave! I would very much like to have all of you here, but we have to fulfil our mission, working and sacrificing ourselves for Our Lord*" (ibid., pg. 135).



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**125th death
anniversary
Mother Maria
Clara of
the Child Jesus**

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