

to church where, hunched over, she would remain in prayer, to the great amazement of the parishioners. With her paralysis and pain worsening, however, she was forced to remain immobile, and from 14 April 1925 until her death - approximately 30 years later - she would remain bedridden, completely paralysed.

Alexandrina continued to ask the Blessed Mother for the grace of a miraculous healing, promising to become a missionary if she were healed.

Confined to her bed, her thoughts frequently turned to the Blessed Sacrament in the Parish Church of St Eulalia, which she could see from her window. Little by little, God helped her to see that suffering was her vocation and that she had a special call to be the Lord's "victim". The more Alexandrina understood that this was her mission, the more willingly she embraced it. She said: "Our Lady has given me an even greater grace: first, abandonment; then, complete conformity to God's will; finally, the thirst for suffering".

### **Mission to suffer with Christ**

Alexandrina went into her first ecstasy in 1931 when she heard Jesus say to her, "Love, suffer and make reparation." As she grew more and more in holiness she offered herself to



**The home of Blessed Alexandrina today. The window from which she jumped is covered by the tree**

God as a victim soul and asked that she be allowed to suffer to the limit of her endurance in order to help sinners to escape Hell.

In 1933, Mass was celebrated for the first time in her little room. Shortly afterwards she had a vision of Christ showing His wounds as they would have appeared when He was taken down from the Cross. She was, by now, suffering intense pain almost continuously, and experiencing many ecstasies. In a vision, Jesus instructed her to urge the consecration of the world to the Immaculate Heart of Mary.

From 3 October 1938 until 24 March 1942, Alexandrina lived the three-hour passion of Jesus every Friday, having received the mystical grace to live in body and soul Christ's suffering in His final hours. During these three hours her paralysis was overcome, and she physically enacted step by step on the floor of her bedroom, the sufferings of Our Lord from the Garden to the Cross, her movements and gestures accompanied by excruciating physical

and spiritual pain. She was also diabolically assaulted and tormented with temptations against the faith and with injuries inflicted on her body. Initially, her Spiritual Director kept these extraordinary trances secret except for a select number of people. However, in 1941, a visiting missionary priest wrote without permission an article about Alexandrina for a popular Portuguese magazine. From then on she was besieged by pilgrims from all over Portugal wanting to see the “woman of Calvary”. These mystical experiences were witnessed by many, described and reported in detail, and even photographed.

Alexandrina took advantage of the ever increasing crowds by speaking to them constantly about the importance of the message of Fatima. She became a confidante of the Fatima seer, Sister

Lucia, and they corresponded with each other.

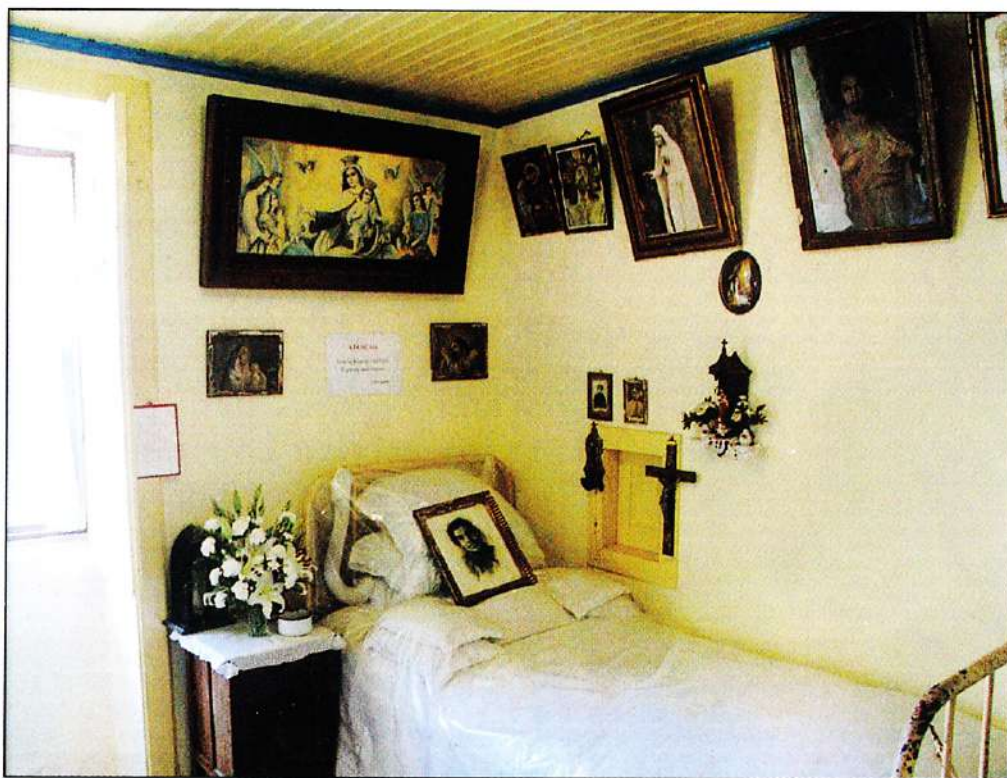
In one of her ecstasies, Jesus said to her: “Keep Me company in the Blessed Sacrament. I remain in the tabernacle night and day, waiting to give My love and grace to all who would visit Me. But so few come, I am so abandoned, so lonely, so offended... Many ... do not believe in My existence; they do not believe that I live in the tabernacle. They curse Me. Others believe, but do not love Me and do not visit Me; they live as if I were not there... I am truly present there as in Heaven, Body, Blood, Soul and Divinity.”

### **Nourished only by the Eucharist**

On Good Friday of 1942, the year when Pope Pius XII consecrated the world to the Immaculate Heart of

Mary, Alexandrina learned in a vision of Our Lord that her passion ecstasies had ended. Jesus said to her: “You will not take food again on earth. Your food will be My Flesh; your drink will be My Divine Blood...” On that day, she began an absolute fast that lasted until her death 13 years later; during this period no food or water passed her lips, except the Holy Eucharist which she received every day.

News of her fast



**Alexandrina's room, where she suffered in agony for 30 years. Above her bed is one of her favourite pictures, of Our Lady of Mount Carmel, whom Alexandrina says appeared to her in this room on 12th November 1954**

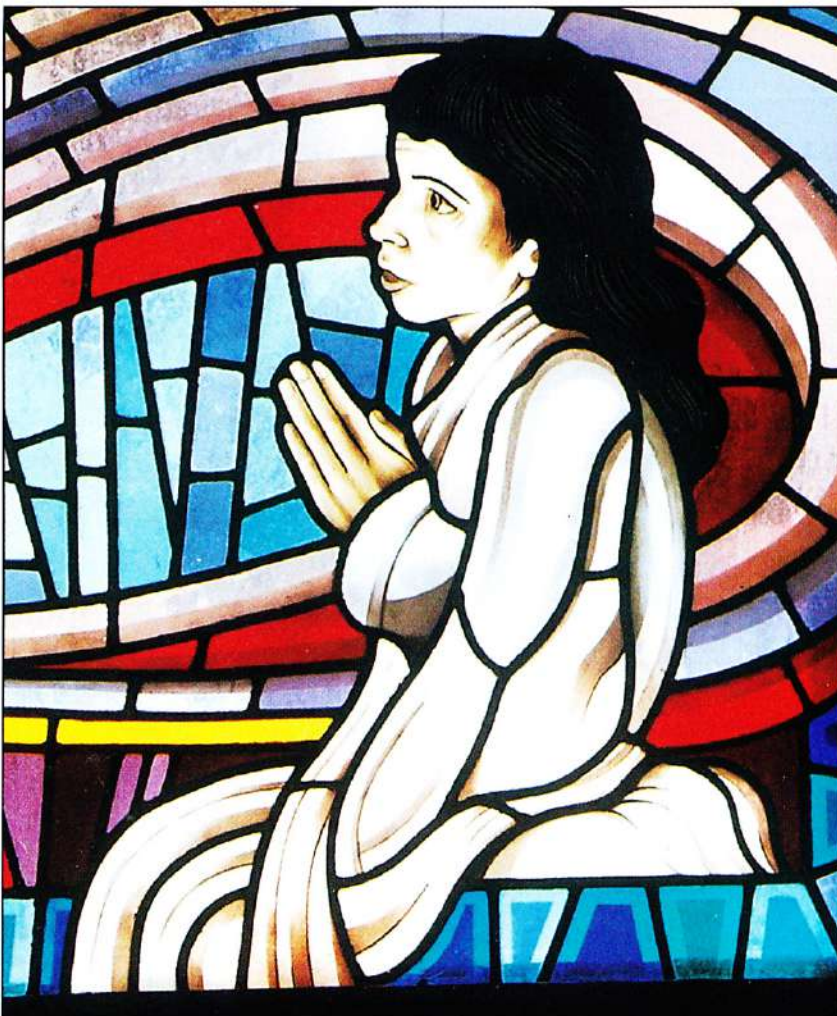
spread and the crowds became even bigger. Some people had doubts and suspicions about her fast and accused her, her sister and mother of fraud. Therefore, on the recommendation of her Bishop, she agreed to enter hospital for a thirty-day observation of her fast so that fraud could be ruled out. During this time she underwent constant medical supervision with a 24-hour relay of doctors and nurses, some of whom were openly antagonistic towards her. They even showed her tasty food to entice her to eat. The doctor in charge of the examination acted in a very cold and hostile way towards her and at the end of the thirty days said the nurses watching her must have been deceived

and decided she was to remain there for a further ten days. This increased her suffering and humiliation, but she remembered the words that Jesus Himself spoke to her one day: “You will very rarely receive consolation... I want that while your heart is filled with suffering, on your lips there is a smile”.

As a result, those who visited or came into contact with her always found a woman who, although in apparent physical discomfort, was always outwardly joyful and smiling, transmitting to all a profound peace. Few understood that she was deeply suffering and how real was her interior desolation.

When the test was finally over the official medical report confirmed without reservation that Alexandrina had abstained from food and liquid from June 10, 1943 to July 20, 1943. Part of the medical report reads as follows: “Her abstinence from solids and liquids was absolute during all that time. We testify also that she retained her weight, and her temperature, breathing, blood pressure, pulse and blood were normal while her mental faculties were constant and lucid and she had not, during these forty days, any natural necessities... The laws of physiology and biochemistry cannot account for the survival of this sick woman.”

Alexandrina confided to her Spiritual Director that Our Lord had told her: “You are living by the Eucharist alone



The stained glass window in the Church of St Eulalia is based on an actual photograph. It depicts Alexandrina in prayer at the end of her ecstasies of the Passion.

because I want to prove to the World the power of the Eucharist...”

Many thousands of pilgrims visited her home to seek her advice and comfort, and to hear her constant exhortations to penitence and reparation. She offered her suffering for the salvation of souls and for the sanctification of youth.

### **“Do not offend Jesus anymore!”**

As a “testimony” to the mission to which God had called her, Alexandrina desired the following words written on her tombstone: “Sinners, if the dust of my body can be of help to save you, come close, walk over it, kick it around until it disappears. But never sin again: do not offend Jesus any more! Sinners, how much I want to tell you... Do not risk losing Jesus for all eternity, for He is so good. Enough of sin. LOVE JESUS, LOVE HIM!”.

Alexandrina died on October 13, 1955, the 38th anniversary of the final appearance of Our Lady at Fatima. Her last words were: “I am happy, because I am going to Heaven.”

### **Beatified by Pope John Paul II**

Thousands of people from all social classes came to Balasar to pay their last respects at the burial of Alexandrina. As she had requested, her coffin was carefully positioned in her tomb so that her

head would be facing the Tabernacle of her nearby Parish Church.

The decree of her heroic virtues was promulgated by Pope John Paul II in 1996, thus declaring her “Venerable”. In 2003 the Congregation for the Causes of Saints accepted the cure of a Portuguese woman in 1995 of Parkinson’s disease, as a miracle. Alexandrina was beatified by Pope John Paul II on Sunday, April 25, 2004 in Rome.

### **Opportunity to visit Balasar**

Little Way pilgrims to Fatima will have the opportunity to visit Alexandrina’s home in Balasar, and to hear Mass in the Church of St Eulalia, where she is buried.



**The Church of St Eulalia**