

# **Dora, Pumpkins, and Angel Hair**

Isabel Garcia Martin knew Dora and worked with her from 1991 until Dora's passing on January 10, 2004. "In life we get to know a lot of people, and we value and remember them. But there are some people who are unforgettable because, doing things that no one notices and without calling attention to themselves, they make a deep impression on us. We ask ourselves what it is about them...and we begin to discover the heroes of the world, the ones who know how to make us happy in little things."

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Isabel Garcia Martin knew Dora and worked with her from 1991 until Dora's passing on January 10, 2004. What follows are some of her impressions.

*Note: “Cabello de angel” (Angel Hair) is a sweet pumpkin confection used to fill traditional Spanish pastries called “ensaimadas.”*

“Whenever I see this photograph, I remember Dora in the garden in the month of August, at the age of 89, watering the pumpkins she would use to make the last *cabello de angel* of her life, to fill the *ensaimadas*. “If a thing is worth doing, it is worth doing well,” she would always say-- and so she collected the seeds, planted them, and took care of the seedlings. Finally, she filled jars and

jars with her *cabello de angel* for the many people who would enjoy this treat, made with the love of a grandmother. She made marmalade and candy. **She enjoyed anything that had to do with spreading the warmth of hearth and home. She didn't talk about this—she just did it, and that was enough.**

“She loved life and delighted in carrying out the familiar, lovable traditions of each holiday, and she spared herself no work in this regard. She created the extraordinary by doing ordinary things with perfection: the peace which comes from living the virtue of order, from finding everything in its proper place, a simple but well prepared meal, and a spotless table set with good taste and simplicity. She was always working but she did so calmly, seeking to serve the others, taking care of the clothing, the garden, all the details of the meals,

the cleaning, making sure that “the cold things were cold and the hot things were hot,” as she liked to repeat, **doing all of the things which she had learned from Saint Josemaria himself**, in order to be a sower of peace and joy.

“In life we get to know a lot of people, and we value and remember them. But there are some people who are unforgettable because, doing things that no one notices and without calling attention to themselves, they make a deep impression on us. We ask ourselves what it is about them...and we begin to discover the heroes of the world, the ones who know how to make us happy in little things, the saints, who show us the wonder of creation, the goodness of the world, the importance of caring for others, one by one, cheerfully, enjoying what they are doing.

“I was reading a novel recently and I came upon a passage which immediately made me think of Dora. The author was writing about a Hungarian immigrant working for a lady in North America at the beginning of the twentieth century. ‘They liked to make delicious and plentiful meals, and see the others enjoy them; they liked to prepare soft, clean beds and see the children sleeping in them...both of them had in their depths a kind of overflowing joy, a pleasure in life which was delicate but invigorating.’

“Dora, following the example of the Blessed Virgin, took care of the others like a mother or an older sister and sought their good in the beauty of the work she carried out. **In those details, apparently unimportant, she demonstrated her love for God and for the transcendent life to which He had called her.”**

*Isabel García Martín*

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