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# Formulas for Holiness

February 10 is the International Day of Women and Girls in Science. Considering Guadalupe's passion for chemistry, we are starting a series on some of her "formulas" for how to face the problems affecting professionals today: lack of time, stress, restlessness, fear, sadness...

02/11/2019

Guadalupe Ortiz de Landázuri loved chemistry. Her enthusiasm for her profession remained a constant throughout her whole life, even at times when it was nearly impossible for her to dedicate much time to it, although she also learned how to balance it with other tasks. In her later years, however, she did receive a Doctorate in Chemistry and a post as a professor at a prestigious institute in Madrid, The Ramiro de Maeztu, in addition to giving classes at other research centers.

Now the Church is presenting Guadalupe to us as a model of holiness. Her example can help today's Christians know what God is like, to seek that identification with Him to the point of living with Him forever in Heaven.

Considering Guadalupe's passion for Chemistry, we want to discover some of her "formulas" for solving some of

the problems of our times: restlessness and fear, lack of time, stress, selfishness, sadness... We will let Guadalupe's own writings – most of them in letters to different people – together with testimonies from those who knew her, show us her formulas for happiness, friendship, and trust.

## **#Formula 1 Effervescence**

Effervescence is the result of a chemical reaction between an acid and sodium, whereby some molecules pass from the liquid state to the gaseous state. Acid is a limiting reagent: the more acid you have, the more effervescence is produced.

We experience effervescence when we feel happy. The “reagent” of total trust in God produces immense joy, even when we still experience the “sodium” of our defects.

**Guadalupe did it this way...**

*"I am very happy and feel very glad. Don Alvaro asks me all the time if I'm truly happy, and I am more than ever in my life. **Although I see that I do everything with many defects (vanity and self-love especially), I can also tell how much Our Lord helps me and I am sure that if He persists, one day I will really please Him.**"* (Letter to Saint Josemaria, Bilbao, 12 December 1945).

*"Father: What a joy it gives me to tell you that here you have me, in charge today and tomorrow in the last place, always happy because I serve the Lord. **I confide more in His help and less in my own strength every day,** and for this reason, from the moment Nisa told me that she was going, I asked Our Lord that He not separate Himself from me at any moment. Together with Him, I want to carry the house very much on my shoulders at all times, and push my*

*sisters toward Him."* (Letter to Saint Josemaria, 17 March 1946)

After they held an all-night vigil at the residence for the first time, Guadalupe writes to Nisa González Guzmán: *"What a joy for all of us! And how much we prayed! I imagine you did something similar there, right?"* (Bilbao, 4 April 1946)

*"Father, sometimes I think I prayed to Him, saying I felt that I didn't have the Cross, because it's not hard for me to do my work; now I feel the same way, although I am finding some crosses: my crosses are my worries for the others, seeing my sisters with struggles, the realization that the girls aren't responding well, and my lack of energies; **but I try to carry these things with joy and do what I can, leaving the rest in Our Lord's hands.**"* (Letter to Saint Josemaria, Bilbao, 3 November 1946).

*"All these little things are nothing compared to your worries, Father, and since you are always calm and happy in spite of everything, I try to do the same thing to be able to help you. I also notice that **thanks to these crosses, I've been having more presence of God and each day I'm less worried about myself.** Only in the Oratory, I see very clearly my great, great defects, I humble myself and then I don't worry about it anymore. Sometimes I think that I should feel more remorse, but I don't; not even the memory of my previous faults causes me to worry."* (Letter to Saint Josemaria, Bilbao, 11 November 1946)

Those who knew her closely also give their testimony. After heart surgery, in 1958 in Rome, Encarnita Ortega writes to Eduardo, the brother of Guadalupe: *"Dearest Laurita and Eduardo, It gives me a lot of joy to be able to tell you the good news about*

*Guadalupe. She is no longer in danger and within a few days, she will be able to get up for short periods. I'm sending you the report from the doctor. **Guadalupe has not even for a second lost her typical cheerfulness and peace**, although she was fully aware of the state of things."*

*From this radiant sky, all the light of glory where you are, make it so that we do not note your absence, your move to a new House. We will miss your smile, your advice, your attention, your jokes and your gusts of laughter filling corners of the house with joy... **Intercede for us now, Guadalupe so that our heart will always have greater resonances for joy. Because you knew a lot about deep joys, of joys rooted in the form of a cross.** (Invocation to Guadalupe, following her death, by an anonymous author)*

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