A KISS AND A PROMISE
The story behind the Garabandal relic medals.

In the earliest stages of the Garabandal apparitions, the young visionaries were seen holding up small stones to their Vision. They did this to amuse the Infant Jesus whom the Blessed Virgin carried in her arms. The Infant did not accept the stones but the Virgin took them, kissed them and told the girls to distribute them among the onlookers.

Being told that the Virgin had kissed the stones, people began giving the visionaries their rosaries, medals and other religious objects hoping that she would kiss these as well. Although this first initiative came from the people, Our Lady told the girls to accept the objects and that she would kiss them. There are several photos of the girls in ecstasy that show them holding up rosaries and medals on chains to their Vision.

But these articles not only had the special distinction of being kissed by the Blessed Virgin; two special graces were attached to them: 1) that those who wore them with faith and confidence would do their purgatory on earth and 2) that through them, Our Lord Jesus Christ would perform prodigies.

Among the many types of religious objects Our Lady kissed were missals. One might legitimately ask, “Did she kiss only the covers of these missals or did she kiss the pages as well?” And, “If she kissed the pages how could she possibly have kissed all of them?” In fact, this very question was asked of Loli who explained that when she held up the missal to Our Lady, she fanned the pages. Her questioner was still a bit puzzled as to how the Virgin could have kissed all the pages but Loli simply responded, “She does all things well.”

An Idea Is Conceived
One person who showed a keen interest in the kissed objects and the
graces that had been attached to them was Margarita Huerta of Madrid, a witness to the events. In 1968, three years after the apparitions had ended, she was in Garabandal visiting the home of Mari Loli. While in the kitchen with the family, she suddenly came upon an idea: “I asked Mari Loli if she had a book or missal that had been kissed by the Virgin Mary during an ecstasy. She answered, yes, that she had several and that they were in the attic. I asked her if she would give me one and was overjoyed when she said, yes.”

Margarita was leaving for Madrid the following morning and was hoping to take the missal with her but a search of the attic that night led by Loli’s father, Ceferino, with the aid of only a flashlight, proved fruitless. Nevertheless Ceferino assured her, “I give you my word that when we find them, the first one will be yours.” On her next visit to Garabandal, Margarita was delighted to receive from Mari Loli her child’s missal of some 800 pages.

Once back in Madrid, Margarita immediately began looking for a manufacturer who could produce medals that would each contain a small piece of a missal page. With the thought of Our Lady’s promises ever present in her mind, she pursued the project with interest and once a manufacturer was found, the medals soon began to be reproduced in large numbers.

The small “relic” medals distributed by Margarita today are made in Milan, Italy, but the original ones were made in Spain.

Obtaining More Missals
Among the persons to whom Margarita first began sending medals for distribution was Father Lucio Rodrigo, S.J., former Rector of the Pontifical University at Comillas and himself a witness to the Garabandal events. A few years after she started her apostolate, she visited Father Rodrigo in Comillas and received an unexpected present from him: “Because you are doing so much work with the medals and rosaries, [Margarita also had rosary center pieces made which contained the relics, work which I consider most admirable], I want you to have half of this book kissed by the Blessed Mother at Garabandal.” Father Rodrigo explained that the half of the book had been given to him by Maria Herrero de Gallardo (R.I.P. 1995) of Madrid, also a witness to the events, who had given the other half to Father Matene Laffineur of France.

Father Laffineur was Europe’s first promoter of the Message, and he also had distributed medals he had made containing missal pieces from his half of the book.

Later, Margarita acquired Jacinta’s missal, also kissed by the Virgin, and finally a fourth from a woman of Garabandal which Margarita believes to have been the last of the kissed missals in the village.

The first shipment of medals were sent to provinces in Spain. But when it became known that they were available, requests began coming in from other countries.

Worldwide Dissemination
The New York Center was among the first to place orders in large quantities and continued to order more medals than all other centers combined. In Europe, the Irish Center headed by Richard Stanley has ordered quantities second only to the New York Center. By now, people throughout the world are in possession of these precious relics of Our Lady.

The Same Promise
Some people seem to feel that the small relic medals don’t carry the same promise as a larger medal, such as the one Joey Lomangino has. But the promise is exactly the same and there is sufficient testimony of graces received to substantiate that. In fact, there have been many reports of favors received from objects such as scapulars, that were simply touched to one of the kissed objects.

The relic medals are no longer as readily available as they once were so those who have them should guard them preciously. It has even been suggested that they be placed in a small reliquary case.