**Partner D:**

<http://www.elena-curandera.com/index.htm>

# An excerpt from:

# The pope and La Curandera, the Healer

by [Dr. Clarissa Pinkola Estés](http://ncronline.org/users/dr-clarissa-pinkola-est%C3%A9s) on Aug. 09, 2010

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Latino healing practices called *curanderismo* are often taught under the guidance and protection of the older women. *Curanderismo* is the spiritual practice, most often devoted to intercession through *Jesús y Maria*, toward the healing of spirit, soul, mind and body.

This spiritual discipline is specific and varied in each locality. It can be said that in parts of Mexico, it is a combination of the ancient Nahua people’s (the original tribal name which Spaniards overlaid with their word, Aztec) spiritual understandings, blended with very old Sephardic traditions that had entered the Catholicism of the 16th century Conquistadores, and sometimes merging further with spiritual practices from 15th century Africa, via slave women and men forced to the east coast of Mexico and Central America.

**In *curanderismo*, the old people teach there is to be no shyness or false modesty about artfulness, for every person’s bloodline is sacred.** The healer is thus considered from day one, an *artesaño* of the soul. The invisible world is acknowledged easily, and without undue eeriness or superstition. What is sometimes called ‘*la primera*,’ first reality, is fully acknowledged directly along with consensual reality.

No *curandera* worth her *herbias* will take on students who are hyperfascinated, egotistic, or thrill seekers. As in the priesthood, in the convents across the world, selection tries to avoid the passive-dependent personality as well as the one seeking deference from others without having earned it in spades.

*Curanderismo*’s practices are steeped in holiness and in sacred prayer, in hands-on healing touch, and *platicas*, talking as spiritual companions... the very same attributes prized by monks, priests, nuns, brothers and other consecrated persons, whether avowed, or not.