

Interview: Gervasio Martín Gómez

Mayor of Caminomorisco

When we asked Gervasio how many years he has been Mayor of Caminomorisco, his answer is curious: "I have been 29 years of Mayor. I started when I was 23 years old. That madness I did!". The truth is that whoever goes across Las Hurdes, does not conceive Caminomorisco without Gervasio and Gervasio without Caminomorisco. We had a nice chat with him, which we have discussed issues of the municipality, but we also wanted to know a little more about the man there is behind the public office and here you are his points of view, and his hopes, of course!

-So many years of Mayor..., don't they produce a great tiredness?

-8 or 10 years ago I had a problem of exhaustion, but I got over it. I really like politics, from 16 years I am in the political party, I've been in this business forever. It is true that I never thought to be in politics, I was studying in Cáceres and when I got home in summer, they said we had to stand in the elections. I was 19 or 20 years, and I said no, I did not think to dedicate the town hall then. A group of students talked to me and told me that there were things that were wrong, there were things to change. The City Hall has older people then. I was encouraging people and ultimately I get involved. We run in the local elections and won. And since.

-And don't you "burn", as most people say?

-No, I enjoy it because I do something I like. That is the difference! I believe in politics, in "Politics" in capital letters, especially the city, the City Council, which I love. I have been provincial deputy, regional deputy, but nothing like this,... There is nothing as to be Mayor of the town village.

-Why?

-That This is the question that all the mayors do to ourselves. Why? The City Council takes us much time, we dedicate 24 hours, sometimes there are dislikes, obviously, you take away a lot of time to the family, it is true, but we like it. Perhaps the contact with people, being able to solve little problems, however small, if someone comes to the council with a little problem, even administrative, and you solve it, you can notice the satisfaction of the persons...

-But your territory is very large...

-Yes, but we are used because we have always lived with our villages. Some, as Riomalo, are far away, but they are part of the municipality and, besides, we haven't done all that badly. Above all, we serve people. We do

not make miracles, because we are not miraculous, But solving these little problems makes us feel satisfied. I always say that when I grow up and people walk by me, I'll think that I have some guilt for what has been achieved. All this encourages me to continue. Also, I have been lucky enough to make a young team, and I'm thinking about retiring, but I do not know if I leave, because little to encourage me, I will continue.

-Are the number of activities, promoted by the City Council, normal in Las Hurdes, or it is just a question of Caminomorisco?

-It's not quite normal, unfortunately. It should be. The reason for this lies on the councilwomen and councilmen, who are young, very involved too and we have tried that culture was felt, to organize sports, cultural activities, that topic ... So far the mayors had to take concrete, to arrange streets. It is true that it had to be done, reparations, pipelines... this kind of things. I am delighted with people of the Council, they are great. We organize culture activities, activities for children, older people ... And people have responded very well. Since these young people have entered, already eight years ago, we are giving an important turn. Culture, I believe, it is important.

-Where do you think Las Hurdes go towards?

-The region itself is complicated. We have difficulty in the villages of Las Hurdes Altas because the depopulation. It is an aging population and the future is complicated. Pínofranqueado, Caminomorisco, Vegas, Riomalo... the south..., I think we have an important future, I am convinced, and I am optimistic by nature. We believe in tourism, which is an important sector and we are working on it ... We need to create jobs, it is true, and we are working on it.

-Do you think Las Hurdes have a hopeful future in natural tourism?

-I am sure. I think we have a gold mine there that we have not know how to develop yet. Our deficit has always been the wait-and-see attitude, to hope that someone was coming to solve the problems. Fortunately there are people who are entering this topic, they are creating small businesses, of nature activities, environment... I think this is the way the wind is blowing. Tourism is important. The current crisis has made us a problem with employment, because people have returned to village, people who worked and lived in Madrid or Cataluña. This is a complicated problem right now, but I'm optimistic. We are going to sign with a biomass