

## THE WRITINGS OF THE SERVANT OF GOD LUISA PICCARRETA AND THE DIVINE WILL PROPHETIC MESSAGES

Dear Friends in Christ,

In recent weeks, certain individuals, bereft of legitimate authority, have taken it upon themselves to discourage others from reading or sharing the prophetic revelations of the Servant of God Luisa Piccarreta, several of which enjoy the Church's official and present-day Magisterial seals of the approval.<sup>1</sup> This approach of said individuals is prohibited by the Church and her Code of Canon law. By virtue of my vocation of theologian, and as articulated in *Donum Veritatis*, it is my duty to share with you the following points.<sup>2</sup>

First, the Magisterium of the Church has the duty to “preserve God’s people from deviations and defections, and to guarantee them the objective possibility of professing the true faith without error”,<sup>3</sup> as well as “expound it faithfully”,<sup>4</sup> it examines publications, particularly works on faith and morals and pronounce whether they are free from doctrinal error.

On March 19, 1975, the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith issued norms for pastors of the Church who have the duty to be vigilant with publication of materials on faith and morals, which should be submitted to the Church for “approval.” This mandate was reiterated in the 1983 Code of Canon Law, canon 823. This approval occurs through a process that begins with the author submitting the manuscript to the *ensor librorum* or *deputatus*, who is appointed by the bishop or other ecclesiastical authority to make such examinations. If the censor finds no doctrinal error in the work, he grants a *Nihil Obstat* (“Nothing obstructs” its publication) attesting to this. If the bishop grants his *Imprimatur* (“Let it be printed”), **this ecclesial seal constitutes an ‘approval’ of the work that allows it to be “displayed and sold in churches”<sup>5</sup>**

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<sup>1</sup> The prophetic revelations contained in the writings of the Servant of God Luisa Piccarreta enjoy the Church official Magisterial official seals of approval, i.e., multiple *Imprimatures* and *Nihil Obstats*. Cf. footnote 19.

<sup>2</sup> Congregation for the Doctrine of Faith Instruction, *Donum Veritatis*, On the Ecclesial Vocation of the Theologian, Joseph Cardinal Ratzinger, Rome 1990.

<sup>3</sup> Catechism of the Catholic Church, Libreria Editrice Vaticana, St. Paul Books & Media, 1994, art. 890.

<sup>4</sup> Pope Saint Paul VI, *Dei Verbum*, Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 1965, n.10.

<sup>5</sup> The commentary of the Code of Canon Law relates: “*Approval (approbatio)...* signifies that he has found nothing in it which he perceives to be harmful to faith and morals... This approval... informs the prospective reader that the pastor of the church deemed the book not to be a danger to faith and morals. It also permits the book to be... displayed and sold in churches.” (The Commentary in the Code of Canon Law – A Text and Commentary, p. 580, Paulist Press, Mahwah, 1985). Cf. also Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, “*Instruction on Some Aspects of the Use of the Instruments of Social Communication in Promoting the Doctrine of the Faith*”, March 30, 1992, in “The Permission to Publish: A Resource for Diocesan and Eparchial Bishops on the Approvals Needed to Publish Various Kinds of Written Works”, Committee on Doctrine - United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, Washington D.C. 2004, pp. 34-36. Cf. also can. 827, 4.

of all dioceses of the Catholic Church and a declaration of “both a juridical and a moral *guarantee* for the authors, the publishers and the readers”<sup>6</sup> that the work “contains nothing contrary to the Church’s authentic magisterium on faith or morals” and “that all the pertinent prescriptions of canon law have been fulfilled.”<sup>7</sup> These ecclesial seals were appended to the inspired writings of the Servant of God Luisa Piccarreta multiple times (cf. footnote 19).

I here wish to emphasize that it is canonically amiss for any prelate or layperson to challenge the authority and judgment of Catholic Archbishops and bishops re. their appended seals of approval. **No prelate or layperson has the authority to supersede the Church’s Code of Canon Law that allows the episcopally approved writings of the Servant of God Luisa Piccarreta to be displayed in churches, nor can any priest or layperson compel any of the Christian faithful to desist from sharing said approved writings.**

Second, the Church requires of the Christian faithful “adherence with religious assent”<sup>8</sup> to the Church’s Magisterium, which is particularly exercised by those bishops teaching in communion with the Pope.

Third, bishops in communion with the Pope and exercising the Magisterium<sup>9</sup> have granted to the Divine Will prophetic revelations of Jesus and Mary to Luisa said seals of approval, which remain in full force today.

Fourth, by virtue of the conferral of the Magisterium’s *Imprimatur* and *Nihil Obstat* upon said Divine Will prophetic revelations, Christians are prohibited from setting themselves up as their judge and from publicly condemning them.<sup>10</sup> On the contrary, inasmuch as all Christians are to “concur with their bishop's judgment concerning faith and morals” and “adhere to this” judgment and to the Magisterium “with a religious assent of the mind”,<sup>11</sup> the Magisterium’s seals of approval conferred upon Divine Will writings elicit from the Christian faithful said religious assent.

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<sup>6</sup> Ibid., pp. 35-36.

<sup>7</sup> Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, “*Instruction on Some Aspects of the Use of the Instruments of Social Communication in Promoting the Doctrine of the Faith*”, March 30, 1992, in “The Permission to Publish: A Resource for Diocesan and Eparchial Bishops on the Approvals Needed to Publish Various Kinds of Written Works”, Committee on Doctrine - United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, Washington D.C. 2004, p. 35.

<sup>8</sup> Vatican Council II, The Conciliar and Postconciliar Documents, ed., Austin Flannery, O.P., *Lumen Gentium*, 25, Northport, NY 1996.

<sup>9</sup> Op. cit., CCC, art. 892.

<sup>10</sup> Cardinal P. Lambertini, *De servorum dei beatificatione et canonizatione*, III, chapter 53, n.15, Aldima, Prato 1840.

<sup>11</sup> Decrees of the Ecumenical Councils, op.cit., vol. II, De ecclesia (*Lumen Gentium*), cap. III, art. 25, p. 870.

Fifth, noteworthy is Jordan Aumann and Raymond Cardinal Burke's endorsement of the teaching that it is "reprehensible" for one to oppose publicly a work that bears the Church's official seals of the approval.<sup>12</sup>

In addition to the aforesaid Church teachings, I wish to respond to repeated requests of Catholics who are loyal to the Church's Magisterium, asking me to address those individuals who, bereft of both ecclesial support and theological credentials, shamefully condemn the writings of Luisa that the Church has approved, cast aspersions against the Church, her teachings and her accredited instructors.

As a theologian of the Pontifical University of Rome, which is authorized by the Holy See, I am happy to share the following traits of those individuals who condemn those post-biblical prophetic revelations that the Church has approved: 1) the absence of higher learning and ecclesial credentials, which prohibits them from teaching theology; 2) refusing to comply with Church teaching (e.g., they refuse to give aforesaid "religious assent of the will and intellect... in a special way to the authentic teaching authority of the Pontiff even when he is not speaking *ex cathedra*;<sup>13</sup> they act "reprehensibly" by publicly opposing works that bear the Church's official seals of the approval;<sup>14</sup> they adamantly refuse to seek to collaborate with the Magisterium, but unscrupulously attack it,<sup>15</sup> and this list goes on); 3) a disdain toward and the

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<sup>12</sup> Jordan Aumann, *Spiritual Theology*, Christian Classics, 1980, p. 492; *Mariology, A Guide for Priests, Deacons, Seminarians and Consecrated Persons*, bearing the Imprimatur of the Most Rev. Raymond L. Burke, and the *Nihil Obstat* of Fr. Peter Felner, F.I., 2007, Queenship Pub. CA, p. 830.

<sup>13</sup> *Decrees of the Ecumenical Councils*, op. cit., vol. II, pp. cap. II-IV, *Ibid.*, p. 869.

<sup>14</sup> Jordan Aumann, *Spiritual Theology*, Christian Classics, 1980, p. 492; *Mariology, A Guide for Priests, Deacons, Seminarians and Consecrated Persons*, bearing the Imprimatur of the Most Rev. Raymond L. Burke, and the *Nihil Obstat* of Fr. Peter Felner, F.I., 2007, Queenship Pub. CA, p. 830.

Those who criticize and belittle the official Magisterial seals of approval, the *Imprimatur* and the *Nihil Obstat* do not seek to collaborate with the Magisterium, but attack it and thus act contrary to the Magisterial teaching expressed in *Donum Veritatis*, arts. 20, 30, that relates,

*"The theologian, to be faithful to his role of service to the truth, must take into account the proper mission of the Magisterium and collaborate with it. How should this collaboration be understood? How is it put into practice and what are the obstacles it may face? These questions should now be examined more closely..."*

*If, despite a loyal effort on the theologian's part, the difficulties persist, the theologian has the duty to make known to the Magisterial authorities the problems raised by the teaching in itself, in the arguments proposed to justify it, or even in the manner in which it is presented. He should do this in an evangelical spirit and with a profound desire to resolve the difficulties. His objections could then contribute to real progress and provide a stimulus to the Magisterium to propose the teaching of the Church in greater depth and with a clearer presentation of the arguments.*

*In cases like these, the theologian should avoid turning to the "mass media", but have recourse to the responsible authority, for it is not by seeking to exert the pressure of public opinion that one contributes to the clarification of doctrinal issues and renders service to the truth."*

<sup>15</sup> Op. cit., *Donum Veritatis*, arts. 20, 30.

spreading of public disinformation against those Church accredited instructors who challenge their dissident ideas.

The adamant approach against the Church and her instructors was sharply condemned by Our Blessed Lord when confronted with the cognitively dissonant Pharisees of his day who saw religion as the observance of every detail of the law, and the New Testament message as too novel. What did these individuals do? They attacked Christ, his teachings and his disciples. In response Jesus issued seven woes to them in order to challenge their preconceived ideas of religion in order to win them over to the virtue of docility. Sadly, He did not always succeed on account of the hard-heartedness to which they cleaved. As in the days of Christ, so today there are critics who lose sight of the inner meaning of religion in which they prefer their own ideas of religion to God's idea of religion.

Sadly such individuals bereft of theological credentials and ecclesial backing set themselves up as the sole interpreters post-biblical prophetic revelations, and in so doing, fail to observe the Roman Pontiff's encyclical on Sacred Scripture in which he exhorts all to "better understand what the inspired author wishes to express"<sup>16</sup> (intention) and consider their "setting in life" (context) before pronouncing judgment on them. Subsequently such individuals limit the interpretation of the prophetic text to the pure letter, thereby divesting it of intentionality and context. This type of approach constitutes a form of *rationalism*, which espouses the following errors: a) the interpretation of the literal prophetic word; b) the dismissal of the 'analogy of faith' (i.e., every individual statement of the text is interpreted in the light of the whole objective body of the text); c) the non-acceptance of human error in the transmission of God's revealed word (a refusal to acknowledge the influences that St. Hannibal di Francia addresses,<sup>17</sup> which are

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<sup>16</sup> Pope Pius XII, Encyclical Letter, *Divino afflante Spiritu*, Vatican City, 1943, 33-34.

<sup>17</sup> St. Hannibal founded the Rogationist Fathers and the Sisters of Divine Zeal, and he was the spiritual director of many mystics, including the seer of La Salette, Melanie Calvat, and the Servant of God Luisa Piccarreta. In the following passage, he emphasizes the importance of the Church's "learned writers" or theologians who are to remove such errors before the prophetic revelation is published and read by the faithful. In a letter to Fr. Peter Bergamaschi who had published all the unedited writings of a renowned Benedictine mystic, Sr. M. Cecilia of Montefiascone (1694-1766), Hannibal criticizes his decision to publish them:

*"Conforming to prudence and sacred accuracy, people cannot deal with private revelations as if they were canonical books or decrees of the Holy See. Even the most enlightened persons, especially women, may be greatly mistaken in the visions, revelations, locutions, and inspiration. More than once has the divine operation been restrained by human nature. For example, who could ratify in full all the visions of Catherine Emmerich and St. Brigitte, which show evident discrepancies? I love the private revelations of holy persons, but I never accept everything.*

*Were I to publish revelations, I would eliminate or revise what is inconsistent with a sound criterion, or reliable tradition, or opinions of sacred, learned writers. I think of behaving prudently... My dear father, to consider any expression of the private revelations as dogma or propositions near of faith is always imprudent!... This is proved by experience, by the mystical theologians, such as St. John of the Cross, St. Teresa, Castrotevere, Poulain, etc... We cannot consider their revelations and the locutions as words of Scripture. Some of them must be omitted, and others explained in a right, prudent meaning."*

responsible for the prophet's unintentional human error); d) inattentiveness to the disparity between the profound theological doctrine contained within prophetic text and the lack of doctrinal education of the prophet; e) a de-emphasis of the prophet's habitual exercise of the virtues, rectitude of moral life, mental balance, honesty, habitual sincerity, frequent reception of the Sacraments, etc.<sup>18</sup> The dismissal of these important criteria in the examination of post-biblical prophetic texts gives rise to false criticisms against the writings of the Servant of God Luisa Piccarreta, several of which enjoy numerous Magisterial seals of approval.<sup>19</sup>

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<sup>18</sup> Cf. Norms Regarding the Manner of Proceeding in the Discernment of Presumed Apparitions or Revelations, issued by the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, Jerome Hamer, O.P., Cardinal Francis Seper, 1978.

<sup>19</sup> Luisa's first **19 volumes** received the *Nihil Obstat* from St. Hannibal di Francia, and the *Imprimatur* from Bishop Joseph Leo.

*The Twenty Four Hours of the Passion of Our Lord Jesus Christ* received the following ecclesiastical seals of approval:

**First edition** (Italian):

Revisione arcivescovile, Naples, February 20, 1915

*Nihil Obstat*: Francesco Sorrentino

*Imprimatur*: A. Can. Laviano, V.G.

**Second edition** (Italian):

Revisione arcivescovile, Naples, 1916

*Nihil obstat*: Francesco Sorrentino

*Imprimatur*: A. Can. Laviano, V.G.

**Third edition** (Italian):

Revisione arcivescovile, Naples, 1917

*Reimprimatur*: Francesco Sorrentino

**Fourth edition** (Italian):

Messina, August 8, 1924

*Nihil Obstat*: D. Prestifillipo, SJ

**Fifth edition**

Curia Archiepiscopale, Taranto, August 28, 1934

*Nihil Obstat*: Delegato dall'Arcivesco, Giuseppe Blandamura

**Sixth Edition** (German)

First Printing

Trans. Rev. Ludwig Beta, O.S.B.

Munich, May 6, 1936

*Imprimatur*

Second Printing

1938

Trans. Rev. Ludwig Beta, O.S.B.

Munich, May 6, 1938

*Nihil Obstat*

*Reimprimatur*

*The Blessed Virgin Mary in the Kingdom of the Divine Will* received the following ecclesiastical seals of approval:

I welcome you to redouble your efforts in remaining loyal to the sound teachings of the Servant of God Luisa that are grounded in Sacred Scripture, Sacred Tradition and Magisterial teachings. Do not let anyone diminish your resolve to follow the Will of God in these End Times, for upon your divine acts and rounds the entire universe depends.

Jesus tells Luisa: *“My daughter, when the soul prays in My Will, all things and created beings stand at attention, they stop what they are doing, and remain in complete silence. And while all remained intent on admiring one act done in the Divine Will, they collectively follow its prayer; its power calls and impacts everything in such a way that all things concur in whatever this act accomplishes. If one were to compare all other prayers united together with one simple prayer said in My Will, this one prayer [alone] would surpass them all, because it possesses a Divine Will along with its immense power and its incalculable value. I Myself feel invested with this prayer: I feel invested with its power and, recognizing it as the prayer of My own Will, it becomes one with Me”* (Vol. 22, 16, 1927).

*“You should know how to behave in the household of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and foundation of truth”* (1 Tim. 3:15).

*Nos cum prole pia, benedicat Virgo Maria*

Rev. JL Iannuzzi, STL, S.Th.D.

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**First Edition** (Italian):

Episcopal Curia of Montepulciano, March 30, 1932

**Imprimatur:** Bishop Joseph Batignani

**Second Edition** (Italian):

Taranto, November 23, 1933

**Nihil Obstat Quominus Reimprimatur:** Joseph Blandamura

**Third Edition** (Italian):

Taranto (Feast of Christ the King) 1937

**Nihil Obstat Quominus Reimprimatur,** Msgr. Francis M. della Cueva S. M.

*In the Kingdom of the Divine Will [first part, the story of a soul] the Rising Dawn* (Italian), compiled by Rev. Benedict Calvi:

**Imprimatur:** Archbishop Joseph Leo, Trani 1930