

# PROPER CATHOLIC PERSPECTIVES ON THE TEACHINGS OF LUISA PICCARRETA

by Rev. Joseph Iannuzzi – 2005  
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As a priest completing a thesis in theology for the Pontifical University of Rome on the correct interpretations of Luisa Piccarreta's writings with the approval of my ecclesiastical superiors and the endorsement of G.B. Picchieri, the Archbishop of Trani and Postulator of Luisa's Cause for Beatification, I receive many requests to address errors<sup>1</sup> of modern Divine Will presentations at conferences, retreats and cenacles. I received such requests during my authorized travels to teach and preach the Divine Will in over 13 countries and 45 American states.

This letter therefore has one aim: to assist the faithful in the proper interpretation of Luisa's writings.<sup>2</sup> I write this letter with deep respect for my brother priests and for those laity that are devoted to Luisa, and pray that my words may be received in the spirit in which they are written – a spirit of unity and openness to the truth that Jesus Christ revealed to the Apostles 2,000 years ago.

I recall Jesus' words to Luisa on "how" He wants these writings made known:

"As I chose Saint Joseph... as cooperator, guardian and vigilant sentry for Me and for the Sovereign Queen, so I have placed beside you the vigilant assistance of My priests as cooperators, guardians and depositaries of the knowledge, the goods and the prodigies that My Will contains. As My Will wants to establish Its Kingdom in the midst of people, so, through you, I want to deposit in My priests this celestial doctrine, as to new apostles. By this means, I will first form in My priests the link with My Will, that they may, in turn, transmit It to the people" (June 15, 1926).

Let me begin with a litany of early-century heresies and schisms that hindered early Christian communities in their interpretation of the Gospel, which bear striking similarities to many of today's teaching errors on Luisa and the Divine Will. Again, the sole purpose of this letter is, as St. Paul says, to "speak the truth in charity."

- Of the teaching errors publicly or privately propagated by unauthorized promoters of the Divine Will, the primary error puts a new face on the ancient heresy of **Gnosticism**. This heresy is being revived with the following affirmation: "One cannot receive the gift of living in the Divine Will without access to the secret knowledge contained in Luisa's volumes."

This approach to Luisa's volumes is not sound Catholic doctrine, as many modern mystics received this gift with no knowledge of Luisa's private revelations – e.g., Ss.

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<sup>1</sup> "Errors" are false teachings at variance with Church teaching.

<sup>2</sup> Luisa's first 19 volumes received the *nihil obstat* by St. Hannibal di Francia, and the *imprimatur* by her bishop H.E. Mons. Joseph Leo.

Faustina Kowlaska, Blessed Dina Belanger, Ven. Conchita de Armida, et al. (For more information on how God disposes and informs the human intellect to receive the gift of the Divine Will – even before the individual reads Luisa’s volumes, so rich in this knowledge – please refer to the Church-approved book, *The Splendor of Creation*, St. Andrew’s Productions Pub. [2004] p.142ff – tel. 412-787-9735).

The human creature’s ability to receive the gift of living in the Divine Will without “explicit” knowledge of Luisa’s private revelations is analogous to the soul’s ability to receive the gift of Baptism: The Vatican II Council (*Lumen Gentium*, 16) affirms that while no one can be saved without the gift of Baptism, those who do not have “explicit” knowledge (particular knowledge) of this sacrament, yet live according to the dictates of their conscience by avoiding evil and doing good, are indeed saved through a baptism of *desire*.<sup>3</sup> Likewise, those who do not have “explicit” knowledge of the gift of living in the Divine Will as contained in Luisa’s revelations may indeed receive this gift by *desire*,<sup>4</sup> that is, by living in the state of grace and by seeking to live the Will of God in their daily lives.

Naturally, the “explicit” knowledge of Luisa’s writings enables us tremendously to advance and progress rapidly in degrees in the Divine Will, and the exercise of the Christian virtues enables us to remain anchored in it. But the absence of the “explicit” knowledge of Luisa’s revelations does not impede us from receiving this gift.<sup>5</sup> Put simply, *desire* admits, *knowledge* advances, and *virtue* anchors us in the Divine Will!

- Gnosticism involves **Elitism**, which affirms: “The knowledge of living in the Divine Will equips the human creature with a new power and superiority that places it above all other creatures. Hence the creature that lives in the Divine Will is greater in sanctity than all other saints of the past, whose sanctity is inferior to theirs.”

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<sup>3</sup> “Those also can attain to salvation who through no fault of their own do not know the Gospel of Christ or His Church, yet sincerely seek God and moved by grace strive by their deeds to do His will as it is known to them through the dictates of conscience. Nor does Divine Providence deny the helps necessary for salvation to those who, without blame on their part, have not yet arrived at an *explicit* knowledge of God and with His grace strive to live a good life. Whatever good or truth is found amongst them is looked upon by the Church as a preparation for the Gospel. She knows that it is given by Him who enlightens all men so that they may finally have life” (*Lumen Gentium*, 16-20).

<sup>4</sup> Jesus tells Luisa that all that is required to receive the gift of the Divine Will is that the soul “desire” it with a “firm desire” and “an upright intention.”

<sup>5</sup> “While I was thinking about the Holy Divine Will, my sweet Jesus said to me: ‘My daughter, to enter into My Will... *the creature does nothing other than remove the pebble of her will*... This is because the pebble of her will impedes My Will from flowing in her... But if the soul removes the pebble of her will, in that same instant she flows in Me, and I in her. She discovers all of My goods at her disposition: light, strength, help and all that she desires... It is enough that she desires it, and everything is done!’” (Luisa Piccarreta, *Pro-manuscripts*, Milano, Italy: Associazione del Divin Volere – Casa Editrice di Francesco Gamba, 1977 [this is the only Publishing House on Luisa Piccarreta’s writings that is authorized by the Archdiocese of Trani], February 16, 1921).

“To Live in the Divine Will and not know it is absurd, for if one does not know it, it is not a reality but a manner of expression, as the first thing that My Will does is to awaken and to make itself known to those that desire to live together with My Will” (Luisa Piccarreta, *Ibid.*, August 13, 1933).

This approach to Luisa's volumes is not sound Catholic doctrine, as greatness is determined by the intrinsic nature of the "gift" of the Divine Will itself, and not by the response of the recipient, which God alone beholds. The new and sublime holiness that we receive from the new gift of the Divine Will does not depend on any novel merit of our own, for it is God who accomplishes this eternal holiness and does everything in us (Phil. 2.13). And if God has prepared for us in heaven a unique mansion for having lived in his Will on earth, it is because He has done it all in us through our simple *Fiat*.

- Another common error in the modern Divine Will teaching resembles the ancient heresy of **Montanism**. It can be summed up in the following affirmation: "Because the church hierarchy is unenlightened regarding the sublime gift of living in the Divine Will, the faithful should submit themselves directly to the Holy Spirit's revelations to Luisa. The Word of God contained in Luisa's private revelations is the only true authority on this great gift which the unenlightened hierarchy has not yet understood. Furthermore, because the Holy Spirit reveals the gift of living in the Divine Will through Luisa's revelations, her writings ought to be placed on the same level as Holy Scripture. Therefore, the writings of the Church Fathers, the Councils and the Catholic Catechism are of value to our spiritual growth only insofar as they conform to Luisa's private revelations – not vice-versa.

This approach to Luisa's volumes is not sound Catholic doctrine, as it usurps Scripture's singular role as the normative expression of the fullness of Christ's revelation constituted by the Apostles, to which nothing may be added for all time to come. All private revelations that claim to match Scripture or that contradict Scripture must be rejected as false revelations. Luisa's prophetic revelations add nothing to what Jesus Christ revealed. On the contrary, they explicate Christ's teachings through the activity of the Holy Spirit whom Jesus sent to continue his work of explicating and actualizing the gifts Christ purchased for us, in particular the gift of living in the Divine Will.

It is our Christian duty from Baptism: to walk humbly with Holy Mother Church, neither lagging behind her (ultra-conservatism), nor running ahead of her (liberalism). Those that adopt the cavalier attitude of placing Luisa's writings on the same level as Sacred Scripture run ahead of the Church (liberalism); and this is the most dangerous road of all. Rather our approach to the Church should be one of filial submission and patience. This was Luisa's approach. Therefore we may prudently encourage others to read Luisa's heavenly volumes in a spirit of filial obedience and docility to the Church's teaching and to her judgment in this matter.

The appropriate Church authorities are preparing a "critical edition" of Luisa's collected works along with necessary annotations and comments, which may take several years to complete. Since the Archdiocese of Trani must return to the Vatican in October 2005 all of Luisa's original writings (including the original volumes it withdrew from the Vatican in 1994), the Vatican will decide whether or not they will be returned to the Archdiocese of Trani. If they are returned to the Archdiocese, the Archdiocese will, in turn, prepare them and release them to the public.

In its official letter of April 15, 2002 and in its official letter to EWTN of August 16, 2003, the Archdiocese of Trani stated that during this interim period pending the publication of Luisa's "critical edition," the faithful may draw from sources made lawfully available in print. However, no further printings of her writings are allowed without its explicit approval of the archdiocese. This moratorium on printings is effective as of the date the official letter, August 16, 2003.<sup>6</sup>

In June 2005, the Archbishop of Trani H.E. Mons G. B. Pichierri stated publicly that "all" editions of Luisa's volumes that are available to the public today ("pro-manuscripts") contain "errors." And this is a matter of theological concern to Vatican officials in this period pending her beatification. For such errors have led promoters and devotees, possibly in good faith, to misinterpret Luisa's writings and to publicly spread these misinterpretations at conferences, retreats and cenacles. While the diffusion of Luisa's "pro-manuscripts" is permitted simply to allow the faithful to continue being nourished by her spirituality, only those theologians conversant with Luisa's theology and authorized by the local ecclesiastical authority "in writing" may instruct the faithful on the correct interpretation of Luisa's writings.

- Another modern Divine Will teaching error revives the heresy of **Quietism**, which affirms: "To Live in the Divine Will one must accept all that happens – good, bad or indifferent – as coming directly from the hand of God, and ignore the human instrument that causes the good or the bad, to focus only on the good that may be derived thereof.

This approach to Luisa's volumes is not sound Catholic doctrine, for God created us in solidarity and with human bodies equipped with talents and gifts to be placed at the service of others, for the building up of the Body of Christ. While one must discern the things he can and cannot change, and change the things he can with charity and with holy compassion, he is not exempt from such charitable acts as fraternal correction of the neighbor who has inflicted harm (Mt. 18.15: "If your brother sins against you, go and show him his fault, between you and him alone..."; Gal. 6: "If a person is caught doing something wrong, you who are spiritual instruct such a one in a spirit of meekness..."), or to extend holy gratitude to his neighbor for charity received (Eph. 5.20: "give thanks always for all things..."; 1 Thes. 5.18: "In all things give thanks..."). Quietism replaces the Christian response of charity toward one's neighbor for the sake of his spiritual welfare, with indifference to one's neighbor on the pretext of attaining the heights of holiness – thereby discouraging the human initiative and positive contributions to society. As St. Paul says, we are to "speak the truth in charity" (Eph. 4.15).

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<sup>6</sup> Articles 9 and 14 of the official letter of August 16, 2003 states: "The Diocese and the Postulation have not permitted nor promoted the printing of her writings since the process is underway and they don't want to create an obstacle in the progress of her cause... The Archdiocese maintains every right to the writings and anything relative to their printing. Any violation of these writings will be punished according to the applicable laws."

*Note:* The words, "the writings and anything relative to their printing", refers to Luisa writings that are printed, published and on Internet sites – as devotees may be led to download and "print" the volumes from the Internet sites), which is prohibited as of this official letter dated August 16, 2003.

- Another modern Divine Will teaching error is relates to the heresy of **Pietism**, which affirms: “Once you receive the gift of Living in the Divine Will, you are exempt from the need to receive the Sacraments, in particular the Holy Eucharist and Penance. This is because in the Divine Will the soul of the human creature embraces God’s one eternal act, which communicates all that God contains to the soul, including the sacraments and all their effects.”

This approach to Luisa’s volumes is not sound Catholic doctrine, as it distorts the liturgical and Eucharistic reality of the Church, and denigrates the Real Presence. Otherwise put, the Holy Eucharist is the very God from whom the gift of living in the Divine Will springs forth, and the human creature cannot receive this gift without the Holy Eucharist. And if the soul is transformed into a living tabernacle, as Luisa states, it is because it’s every thought, word and deed are sustained by the power and eternal act of Christ’s Eucharistic reality on earth! To deny the need for the Holy Eucharist is to accept Christ’s divinity but to deny his humanity that unites a Triune communion of Persons to the penitent and the perfect, to the sinner and the saint. No less erroneous is the assertion that in the Divine Will one need not frequent the Sacrament of Penance because the creature ceases to sin altogether. This assertion refutes the teaching of the Councils of Carthage and Trent that condemn the idea of “perfect sinlessness” in this life, and distorts the purpose of the Sacrament of Penance that not only removes sin, but infuses in the soul sanctifying and sacramental graces that positively strengthen it. When Luisa reveals that Living in the Divine Will restores God’s likeness to man by the action of the Holy Spirit who takes full possession of the human spirit – so that the inclinations to sin no longer exercise the same “active” psychosomatic influence with the intensity that strained and scarred it in the past – man nonetheless remains free to sin. Because man is free to sin he does not enjoy the “perfect sinlessness” that the saints enjoy in heaven.

- Another modern Divine Will teaching error relates to the heresies of **Fideism** and **Esotericism**. These mistakenly exalt private devotions and pious practices above the Church’s public devotions and pious traditions. Such modern examples are: the changing of the traditional initials “J.M.J.” - representing Jesus (the head of the Church), Mary (the universal mother and patroness of the Church) and Joseph (the universal father and patron of the Church) – with the novel initials “J.M.L.” – the “L” representing Luisa.

This approach to the Divine Will and to devotion to Luisa deviates from the Church’s traditional practice, inasmuch as it usurps St. Joseph’s role of universal father and patron of the Church by placing Luisa in his stead. In point of fact, since 1870 the Church officially confirmed the great dignity of St. Joseph when Blessed Pope Pius IX declared St. Joseph Patron of the Universal Church, and when Pope Leo XIII set St. Joseph before us with a rank and place best described in his encyclical *Quamquam Pluries*, 1889:

*“The special motives for which St. Joseph has been proclaimed Patron of the Church, and from which the Church looks for singular benefit from his patronage and protection, are that Joseph was the spouse of Mary and that he was reputed*

*the Father of Jesus Christ. From these sources have sprung his dignity, his holiness, his glory... But as Joseph has been united to the Blessed Virgin by the ties of marriage, it may not be doubted that he approached nearer than any other creature the supremest dignity by which the Mother of God surpasses so nobly all created natures.”*

It is important to distinguish between the encyclical terms of “dignity” and “holiness.” While Luisa cannot match the “dignity” of the offices of mother and putative father that Mary and Joseph perfectly fulfilled, Jesus assures Luisa that the new gift of his *continuously eternal* “holiness” that he imparted to her can indeed excel all other gifts of holiness that he imparted to other creatures before her, save Mary. As another illustration, to the Venerable Conchita Cabrera de Armida, Jesus reveals that the continuously eternal holiness that he also imparted to her surpasses the *continuously divine* holiness that Ss. Teresa of Avila and John of the Cross experienced in Spiritual Marriage:

“I dare say to him [Jesus]: Lord, what you had promised me, what you had asked of me, was it (spiritual) marriage... would it be my Jesus, spiritual marriage? ‘Much more than that... the grace of incarnating Me, of Me living and growing in your soul, never to leave it, of possessing you and of being possessed by you as in one and the same substance... is the grace of graces.’”<sup>7</sup>

Jesus reveals to Luisa that St. Joseph experienced the “effects” of this new gift of holiness that she possessed in view of its full actualization in Mary and in her. It is no wonder that in heaven both “dignity” and “holiness” constitute our eternal reward. In heaven we will be rewarded both for having faithfully fulfilled the office that God has given to us in this life (dignity), and for having faithfully corresponded to whatever sanctifying graces God deigned to grant us in this life (holiness). Thus the dignity of Luisa’s office as the “little daughter of the Divine Will”, or as the secretary of the Holy Spirit’s Fiat of Sanctification, does not supersede the dignity of St. Joseph’s office of father of Jesus. But the new gift of the *continuously eternal* holiness that God communicated to Mary, to Luisa and to all souls after these for the good of the Church, raises them to the new plane of God’s *continuously eternal activity*, which supersedes all previous states of mystical union (For more information on the distinction between the “continuously eternal mode of holiness” and the “continuously divine mode of holiness,” I refer you to the Church-approved book, *The Splendor of Creation*, St. Andrew Productions [2004] cf. chapter 3.5).

- Another erroneous teaching places Luisa on the same level of holiness and maternity as Blessed Mary, the Mother of God.

This kind of devotion to Luisa is not sound Catholic doctrine, as no creature conceived with original sin can ever match Mary’s holiness, nor can anyone equal the dignity of her singular office of universal and divine mother. Certainly, we can “participate” in Mary’s office of universal mother, inasmuch as we too can influence the lives of every act of every creature like Mary, but never can we or Luisa ever match her degree of union with

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<sup>7</sup> Marie Michel Philipon, O.P., *Conchita: A Mother’s Spiritual Diary* (New York: Alba House, 1978), p.62.

the Divine Will – a degree of union that she helped communicate to Luisa and that she helps to communicate to us.

- Another teaching error affirms that living in the Divine Will is greater and more exalted than sainthood.

This affirmation is inconsistent with the Church’s traditional teaching on sainthood, which is the attainment of heroic virtue and the beatitudes in this life. While this attainment may differ in degrees, the Church regards sainthood as the participation on earth in the divine and eternal life of God. Living in the Divine Will is the “continuous” participation in the eternal life of God. The Church has taught since time immemorial that the only step toward God beyond sainthood is that of the “beatific vision” or “beatific mode” that the saints enjoy in heaven. Those that live in the Divine Will on earth do not experience the beatific vision or mode, but the “eternal mode” that admits them to the continuous participation in God’s eternal activity (for more information on the distinction between the eternal and beatific modes, I refer you to the Church-approved publication entitled, *The Splendor of Creation*, St. Andrew’s Productions, 2004).

- Another controversial teaching affirms: “That which makes Luisa’s gift of holiness new is a ‘Divine’ holiness.”

While the gift Luisa describes of living in the Divine Will is indeed new, one ought not identify it exclusively as a “divine” holiness. All the baptized enjoy a divine holiness, and for this reason, divine holiness is not new. Rather, the new trait of living in God’s Will is God’s sublimation of his divine activity in the soul of the baptized to his “*continuously eternal*” activity. Living in the Divine Will is not simply a divine holiness; it is an *eternal* holiness. Living in the Divine Will is described in the writings of Luisa as the creature’s participation on earth in God’s “*new, continuously eternal activity*” that the Blessed enjoy in heaven. It is heaven on earth internalized! The Church has always offered to the faithful a “divine” sanctity, and in recent years she has received a greater outpouring of this sanctity by virtue of God’s continuously eternal activity’ within the soul of the human creature.

- Controversy also surrounds the “consecrating” of oneself to the Servant of God Luisa.

While the Church has not expressly discouraged consecrating oneself to Luisa, it directs our attention to the question, “What exactly do we intend by consecrating ourselves to Luisa?” and to the very words of consecration themselves. Suffice it to say that the Church has expressly prohibited certain forms of consecration. In a letter sent to the Holy See dated December 1, 1977, Cardinal Joseph Hoffner, Archbishop of Cologne and President of the German Episcopal Conference, requested an examination of a Pious Association within the Catholic Church dedicated to the work of the holy angels. The Congregation for the Doctrine of Faith, headed by Cardinal Ratzinger, affirmed that various forms of consecrations to the angels practiced in the Association are prohibited. We must keep this in mind when using certain forms of consecration that the Church has

not approved or acknowledged, and we must always submit our judgment to the Church in this matter.

Let us remember that devotion to Luisa cannot be placed on the same level as devotion to Christ or to Mary. While Luisa was the “*little* daughter of the Divine Will”, and the secretary of the Holy Spirit’s Fiat of Sanctification, we should be ready to die for Christ *before* Luisa. The misplacement of devotion to Luisa has led some to nurture and promote an unhealthy “infatuation” in regard to her person and her private revelations, and to neglect of the reading of Sacred Scripture and of participation in the Church’s liturgical life, in particular the frequent reception of the Sacraments of the Holy Eucharist and of Penance.

- Another ambiguous teaching affirms that Luisa’s relics “touched the divinity.”

If this assertion is predicated on the assumption that since the Real Presence of Jesus abided in Luisa from one Holy Communion to the next, the contact of her body to such clothing or articles rendered them divine, this is not sound Catholic doctrine. For the mere contact of an article or material object with Luisa’s human body does not translate into direct contact with God, the divinity Itself. On the other hand, if this assertion is predicated on the affirmation that Luisa or her clothes touched Christ (i.e., during apparitions), one merely identifies Luisa’s apparitions with the scores of seers throughout the centuries who also enjoyed apparitions of Christ, without presuming that such articles or clothing produce grace. To make such a presumption is to elevate an article to the level of a sacrament, and this is not sound Catholic doctrine.

Furthermore, while the term “relic” may be extended to the body and to the effects of a Servant of God and a Venerable for whom there is an official process, such relics cannot be freely marketed for a profit. Canon Law 1190 strictly forbids the sale of sacred relics. First-class relics are pieces of a saint’s bone or flesh and are the most sacred. Second-class relics are objects a holy person wore or owned and are also highly valued. Third-class relics are items that have touched other relics and can be found in many church gift shops. It is worth noting that there is always the possibility of fakes being passed off as the real thing. Most relics when originally issued are accompanied by a document of authentication warranting the veneration of the relic. When relics are obtained from Church sources a “donation” is usually asked to cover the cost of the theca (the metal container) and manual labor, and this is relatively cheap. A donation is simply to cover costs, and anything more is not a donation – it is for a profit, and it is a violation of Church law, otherwise known as Simony.

In light of the above, those who replace the Crucifix or the Cross of Christ with Luisa’s relic on the premise that Christ’s Fiat of Redemption is inferior to the Spirit’s Fiat of Sanctification, violate Catholic doctrine. The gift of living in the Divine Will that Luisa received for the good of the Church does not do away with the Church’s traditional symbols, devotions and customs, but complements and perfects them.

- Another false teaching affirms that those who seek to live in the Divine Will must avoid praying or cultivating devotion to saints that existed before Luisa, as these possessed a holiness that is inferior to that of Luisa, and are therefore less capable of assisting us from heaven.

This affirmation is inconsistent with the Catholic Church's view of the efficacy of the merits and prayers of her canonized saints, whom she equally extols for their heroic virtues and sacrificial conquests. While the Church confers particular titles upon certain saints that correspond to their missions begun on earth, this is so these very saints may aid us in our missions on earth. Thus the Church confers upon Ss. Benedict, Catherine of Siena and Bridget the title Patron of Europe, to whom God entrusts the continent of Europe and, in particular, those inhabitants who turn to them in prayer. The Church (Pope Pius XII) conferred on Our Lady of Guadalupe the title Patroness of the Americas, likewise entrusting to her the continents of North and South America and, in particular, those inhabitants who turn to her in prayer. The Church also gives us the patron of workers (St. Joseph), of preachers (St. John Chrysostom), of seminarians (St. Charles Borromeo), of confessors (St. John Vianney), even of the mentally ill (St. Dymphna), and so on. These patrons are given to us to aid us in our corresponding ministries and missions on earth. Certainly we can turn to Luisa or to any other saint to aid us in any undertaking or enterprise, but we must not denigrate or demean the efficacy of the prayers of the Church's saints simply because they came before Luisa and did not receive the gift of Living in the Divine Will. After all, Luisa prayed to St. Joseph and to other saints.<sup>8</sup> Let us not forget that in heaven "all" saints live in the Divine Will, and their prayers from above are vested with the efficacy and the effects of the Divine Will!

Moreover, God's gift to the Church of those saints whose bodies remained incorrupt bears witness to the eminent degree of their holiness that continually increases in heaven, and reminds us to turn to them in prayer. This miraculous legacy of posthumous incorruptibility is something that not even Luisa enjoyed, nor can she replace – at the exhumation of her body, Luisa was found corrupt. This gift of incorruptibility is one that God gives to whom He wills and why He wills. Also, in the approved prophetic revelations contained in the publication, *An Unpublished Manuscript on Purgatory* that bears that Church's *nihil obstat* and *imprimatur*, one discovers that the prayers of the souls in purgatory are sometimes more efficacious than the prayers of the saints in heaven.

- Another false practice involves the replacing of the Church's traditional Sign of the Cross, "In the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit," with the novel sign of the cross, "In the name of the Father, and of the Son and of Luisa."

This false practice constitutes a radical departure from the early teachings of the Apostles and the Church Fathers, and nullifies the indivisibility and unity of the three Divine Persons, the validity of Baptism, Penance and other Sacraments whose Trinitarian canonical form (along with matter) renders them valid.

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<sup>8</sup> Cf. message April 21, 1899;

- Another modern Divine Will teaching error threatens to revive the ancient heresy of **Manichaeism**, which affirms: “Marriage is an inferior state of sanctity, and the marital act of sexual union is an improper or imperfect expression of marital love.” Some promoters are reported to have affirmed that before original sin Adam and Eve brought Cain and Abel into being without the procreative act, since physical generation was a sin and physical maternity a calamity. According to this false view, in the beginning God intended that Adam and Eve magically materialize Cain and Abel into existence through pious gazing at each other.

This approach is not sound Catholic doctrine, as the Book of Genesis reveals the goodness of the marital union before original sin (Gen. 1.28), and several early Church fathers affirm that the marital sexual union is intrinsically good. To affirm that the original procreative act was a sin is to affirm that all subsequent marital procreative acts are sinful, and this is contrary to Church teaching. Furthermore, in the Church-approved writings of the modern mystic Venerable Conchita de Armida who was a mother of nine children, Conchita affirms: “Being a wife and a mother was never an obstacle to my spiritual life.” Speaking as a woman to one of her daughters-in-law, she added: “I have been very happy with my husband.” And the Lord Himself told her one day: “You married in view of My great designs for your personal holiness, and to be an example for many souls who think that marriage is incompatible with holiness.”

- Another Divine Will teaching error relates to the ancient heresy of **Monothelitism**, which affirms: “When you receive the gift of Living in the Divine Will, the human will ceases to operate, for God so totally absorbs, fuses and melts the human will within his own Divine Will that there remains only one operating will, only one active will in you, the Divine Will.”

This heresy has been squelched in recent years thanks to the positive intervention of Church authorities, who have shown that when a soul lives in the Divine Will, both the human will of the creature and the Divine Will of God operate distinctly but not separately, in one accord.

May these clarifications regarding modern Divine Will teaching errors help all of you to abide in the truth, as you continue to enter ever-more deeply into the gift of living in the Divine Will. Never forget that living in the Divine Will is compatible with “all” devotions: it does not demean them, it does not denigrate them, but it elevates and perfects them through the *continuously eternal activity* of the three Divine Persons at work in you. I pray that unity may abound among the promoters of the Divine Will and among its devotees, who one day will join hands in reciting the *Our Father* prayer. Please remain obedient to the teachings of the Church, “speak the truth in charity” (Eph. 4.15), and above all love one another as children of the one Father who unites all things in Christ!

***FIAT!***