



Mons. Leonardo D'Ascenzo

ARCIVESCOVO di TRANI - BARLETTA - BISCEGLIE
TITOLARE di NAZARETH

Prot. N. 113/20/C3

COMMUNICATION n. 4
regarding the Servant of God LUISA PICCARRETA

In continuity with the care my Predecessors have shown for the reputation and spirituality of the Servant of God Luisa Piccarreta, and making my own what they have written to all the faithful involved¹, I would like to propose a few indications and perspectives.

Thanks to the activity of the public Association of the faithful "Luisa Piccarreta - P.F.D.V." of Corato I have been able to learn about the surprising diffusion of the writings of the Servant of God in many parts of the world, about the visits made by the faithful to the places relevant to her life, and about the solid network of groups present in various countries. I am absolutely amazed by the fervor of this extensive community. I encourage everyone to continue along this rich and fruitful path toward holiness. As Pope Francis recalls, "The important thing is to not walk alone, but to rely on each other as brothers and sisters, and especially under the leadership of the Bishops, in a wise and realistic pastoral discernment" (Apostolic Exhortation *Evangelii gaudium* n. 33). Together, indeed as people of the Risen Jesus, we are invited "to a new chapter of evangelization" in the places where we live, through the power of the charisms of holiness with which the Holy Spirit continually enriches His Church.

As is well known, the loving adherence to the life and teaching of the Church, as manifested in the indications of her Pastors, is not a limit but a guarantee. Only in this way can what has been gifted to the Servant of God Luisa Piccarreta bear the fruit of her "sighed *fiat*", as she loved to say. Feeling "with the Church" allows us to combat the temptation "to flee to a safe haven. It can have many names: individualism, spiritualism, living in a little world, addiction, intransigence, the rejection of new ideas and approaches, dogmatism, nostalgia, pessimism, hiding behind rules and regulations." (Pope Francis, Apostolic Exhortation *Gaudete et exsultate*, n. 134). Allow me then to exhort everyone to walk together as Church.

Not infrequently, however, a certain isolationism has led some to an erroneous, distorted, and partial reading of the Servant of God's writings. These texts came forth from and have been watched over in the bosom of the ecclesial communion. One thinks of the solicitude shown for her writings by the Confessors officially appointed by the Archbishops, by St. Annibale Maria Di Francia who, in his role as ecclesiastical censor of the Archdiocese, was able to review several notebooks of her *Diary* and publish *The Hours of the Passion*, and by Luisa herself who did not

¹ For previous communications see <https://www.luisapiccarretaofficial.org/cause-archbishop>

hesitate to submit herself fully and in unconditional obedience throughout her life to the judgment of the Church regarding her writings.

It must be understood that the Servant of God wrote under obedience to communicate her personal experience and knowledge. She did so according to her own abilities. The assistance of divine grace in no way cancelled out the contribution – though understandably limited – of the work of the creature. Therefore, her writings contain passages with both theological and orthographic difficulties. Some portions clearly refer to an understanding linked to her time, and therefore it would be incorrect to transpose these statements in a slavish way onto our own time without creating ambiguities and anachronisms. St. Annibale affirmed the same – having received the full consent of the Servant of God Piccarreta – when he spoke about the “indispensable work” of revising her writings, saying “there are points that, however true and holy they may be when looked at with the Spirit and holy simplicity, prudence would still restrain us from publishing” (Letter of February 23, 1927).

A simplistic and indiscriminate dissemination of the Servant of God’s writings – especially when manipulated and arbitrarily translated into other languages – has met with the approval and support of people, communities, and groups which have not made an effort to publish texts accompanied by the proper introduction and contextualization required by such writings of mysticism, thereby exposing readers in some cases to the possibility of subjective interpretations.

A team of experts, organized by the Luisa Piccarreta Association – P.F.D.V., has spent nearly five years carrying out the arduous and complex task of carefully transcribing the original manuscripts of her *Diary* notebooks, and has delivered a text faithful to the original, as desired by the Congregation for the Causes of Saints. However, this merely marks a new starting point. In fact, the continuation of the Cause for the beatification of the Servant of God to verify her exemplary conduct of life and her heroic exercise of the virtues cannot fail to take into account the fact that her writings present some ambiguities and equivocal elements. Though not to be considered doctrinal errors in themselves, these elements require great attention. The Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith has ruled that the message contained in her writings cannot be presented in the Church today without further evaluation of them, which will take a long time due to the magnitude of the themes touched upon and the amount of text to be examined. I ask everyone to support this ongoing investigation through prayer and by offering any available material resources.

Given this new situation, as we read her writings, we should all feel encouraged to pay more attention to the author’s intention, in greater faithfulness to the teaching of the Church and above all in the awareness that the Divine Will is the Heavenly Father’s merciful appeal addressed to the free will of the men and women of our times, and never a threat to be hurled against the world corrupted by sin. The Lord, as the Second Vatican Council affirms, “who is the final Adam, by the revelation of the mystery of the Father and His love, fully reveals man to man himself and makes his supreme calling clear” (Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World *Gaudium et Spes*, n. 22). Each of us therefore – living in unity of will with the Risen Lord – becomes the Father’s “appeal” to all the children created and loved by the Glory of Heaven. Such was the conduct of Luisa and the purpose of her writings.

I recognize that many “groups of the Divine Will” have long travelled a path under the guidance of the Church. Many have striven to anchor the reading of these writings in the doctrine of the Church and in a dignified conduct of life, making a balanced and respectful missionary proclamation spring from the “doctrine of the Divine Will”, a proclamation which has been

harmoniously inserted into the pastoral activity of the local Churches. I urge everyone to continue with renewed commitment, so that the charismatic gifts in the Church “enable the faithful to respond to the gift of salvation in complete freedom and in a way suited to the times. In this way, they themselves become a gift of love for others and authentic witnesses to the Gospel before all mankind” (Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, Letter *Iuvenescit Ecclesia*, n. 15).

At the same time, I wish to address a heartfelt invitation to the leaders of all groups to commit themselves to making unity with the sisters and brothers of other groups ever more visible, in order to form a “bond of unity” for the formation and dissemination of the doctrine of “living in the Divine Will”. Even in areas of relative geographical vicinity, groups often ignore or discredit each other. In order to concretely realize this intention, associations that have received canonical recognition – though preserving their juridical, operative, territorial, and patrimonial autonomy – are welcome to join the “Family of the Divine Will”, which the Luisa Piccarreta Association – P.F.D.V. of Corato established as a service structure following the IV International Conference of 2015. According to the Statutes: “The associative realities that adhere to the “Family of the Divine Will” intend to collaborate with a specific synergy in view of forming their own members, of spreading the knowledge of the gift of the Divine Will, and of delving into those matters relevant to the writings of the Servant of God Luisa Piccarreta, also with the aim of avoiding distorted and instrumentalized interpretations thereof” (art. 2).

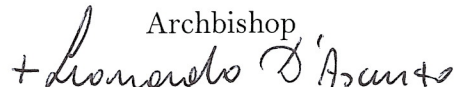
I hope this appeal will encounter hearts that are open to the awareness that – if truly accepted – the “gift” opens us to the desire to share a communal journey which is not without difficulties. However, it is precisely in this sharing that we will be given renewed courage and perseverance.

Accompanying you in prayer, I bless and greet everyone.

Trani, March 4, 2020

✠ *Leonardo D'Ascenzo*

Archbishop

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Leonardo D'Ascenzo". The signature is written in a cursive style with a cross at the beginning.

PS: For more information please consult the multilingual webpage www.luisapiccarretaofficial.org