



Benedictine Daughters of Divine Will



“Let the little children come to me, and do not stop them; for it is to such as these that the Kingdom of Heaven belongs.” *Luke 18:16-17*

And they had but one heart and one soul



The other night for recreation, we watched *Snow White and the Seven Dwarves*. It was actually a Christmas gift from our monks. At a certain point, Mother Gabrielle Marie turns to one of the sisters and says, “They kind of remind you of a religious community, don’t they?” She hit the nail right on the head. That’s exactly what we are: *little dwarves*. A bunch of unique characters living together with very distinct qualities and personality quirks. We’ve got a variety of talents and strengths with no shortage of defects and weaknesses, as well. Yet somehow, it seems to work...not despite our differences, but *because* of them.

Differences only put us at odds when we live from our own human will, seeking first our own personal preferences, what’s best for *me*, *my* way of doing things. But when all live of the same Divine Will, seeking only what God wants, everyone remains united in one mind and heart. Like a good orchestra,



when the musicians allow the conductor to lead the show, a musical masterpiece results for all to enjoy. And the more diversity of instruments, the more beautiful the music.

So it’s silly to waste time on jealousies and ambitions, on trying to be more like others

or attempting to make others be more like us. Even our defects and mistakes the Lord uses to accomplish His Will...at the very least, allowing us to grow in humility and others to practice virtue. We are all so precious in the eyes of our Heavenly Father and He has a special and unique place for each of us in His divine plan. Just take a look at some of the wide variety of saints the Church has canonized: Preachers, contemplatives, missionaries, hermits, priests, parents,



popes, children, kings, queens, slaves, nuns, theologians, farmers, fishermen, etc. The list goes on and on, not including the multitude of uncanonized saints also gazing upon the face of God.

The grandeur or simplicity of our individual missions isn’t important, and

neither is the level of difficulty or talent required. All that matters is Will of God. Am I doing what He wants of me right at this very moment because He wants it? Am I inviting Jesus to come do everything in, with, and through me, remembering my nothingness? When more members of a community choose to live in the Divine Will, responding “yes” to both questions, the more their differences will complement (rather than divide) one another. And since every word, every motion, every breath will be an act of God, not only will the group enjoy greater unity, peace, joy, and love, but those graces also will

rise to Heaven, descend into Purgatory, and spread throughout the whole world. It is the Body of Christ in its fullness, the “call of the creature to return to the

order, to the place, and to the purpose for which it was created by God”.[†]

[†] *The subtitle Jesus Himself gave to the Divine Will writings of the Servant of God, Luisa Piccarreta*

[Jesus to Luisa]: “My blessed daughter, every created thing has a distinct office that it occupies, and although the Will of all is one, yet they all do not do the same thing... The good and the value with which they are invested is that they can say: ‘I am a continuous Act of Will of my Creator; greater glory, honor, virtue, He could not give me’... The little blade of grass, with its littleness, the little space that it occupies on the earth—it seems that it does nothing, no one looks at it—and because My Will wanted it so, it does not seek to do more than what a blade of grass can do. But by doing My Will, it equals the glory that the sun gives Me, that with so much majesty rules over the earth such that it can be called continuous miracle of the whole Creation.

“See, therefore, that everything is in doing My Will...one can say: ‘What God does, I do.’ And does this seem little to you? God does everything, and the soul takes part in everything such that it is not the diversity of actions or of offices that the creature can say that she

does great things, but My Will that

confirms the nothing... In regard to the diversity of offices and of actions, rather it is order, harmony, of My infinite Wisdom. Even in Heaven there are diversity of choirs of angels, diversity of saints... On earth My Providence maintains so many diverse offices... If all were doing one single office, what would become of the earth? A complete disorder. O! if everyone knew that only My Divine Will knows how to do the greatest things, and although they would be little and insignificant, O! how they would be all content

and each one would love his little place, the office in which God has placed him... Therefore, content yourself to do the little united with My Will, and not the great without It... The most beautiful, most solemn, most pleasing act for Us, is the nothing of the creature, given freely to Us in order to let Us do what We want.”

(Book of Heaven, Vol. 33 – 10/4/1935, Luisa Piccarreta)



We'll soon be nine little dwarves! Two new postulants will be entering the Benedictine Daughters of Divine Will in the coming months. One is probably boarding the plane as you read this newsletter and the other hopes to settle her accounts and officially join the community by December or January. Please keep Marylou and Rita in your prayers as they prepare to make this very big step.



Just an Oblate?

A friend and Third Order member of our community recently wrote us a letter, filling us in on how things are going in her life and some of the graces that she's been receiving since making the Benedictine Oblate of Divine Will consecration. However, she ended the letter with the phrase: "even if I'm just an Oblate". In fact, we've noticed that she's not the only one who thinks that way.

No branch of the Benedictines of Divine Will should be considered greater or lesser than any other. We're three distinct, yet equal, communities all under one Order – symbolic of the Most Holy Trinity. If we're all remaining faithful to the vocation that God has called us to, striving to live more and more in His Most Holy Will, how can one be better or holier than another? Though we don't know most of our Oblates personally, we've had the great grace to meet and even host several during the past year since the Third Order was officially founded. And actually, we were humbled by them all... in the best sense of the word. Their free, joyful, and loving spirits combined with a deep love for God and fire for the Divine Will struck us very much. More than once we discussed how blessed we feel to be part of such a strong family.

To all of our Oblates out there, never forget that by living in the Divine Will, you're bringing Jesus all over the world, to places our few sisters and brothers could never reach alone. You're able to share Luisa's writings far and wide – in restaurants and hotels, on buses and trains, at work and family gatherings, etc., etc. Jesus desires to do Divine Acts in husbands and wives, moms and dads, in grandmas and grandpas, in kids and students, in office workers and laborers, in patients and caretakers, in (you fill in the blank). So please believe that you are not "just Oblates." You mean so very much to your Sisters and Brothers, but more importantly, you are of infinite value to the Kingdom of the Divine Will.

Just a little reminder - In order to remain an Oblate, you must read the Divine Will writings that Our Lord gave to Luisa Piccarreta for thirty minutes every day. For Jesus Himself explains to Luisa (and us):

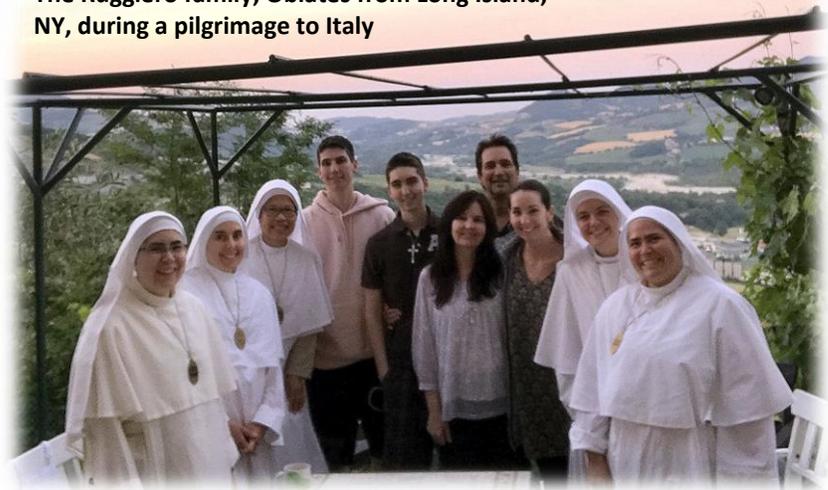
"For my truths: the more one thinks about them, reads them, writes them, talks about them, and diffuses them, the more fragrance they give off, in such a way as to perfume everything and reach even into Heaven... On the other hand, if my truths are not touched, the fragrance and the light remain as though compressed and do not spread; the good and the utility which my truths contain remain without effect, and I feel defrauded of the purpose for which I manifested my truths." (Vol. 14, 8/26/1922)

"One must study the language, the ways, the customs of this Divine Kingdom—and these are the knowledges, the prerogatives, the beauties, the value that My Will contains. Otherwise, one would be like a stranger; he would neither take love, nor be loved. If he does not sacrifice in making of It a study in order to be able to speak with that same language, and does not adapt himself to the customs of those who live in this Kingdom so holy, he will live isolated, because, not understanding him, they will shun him; and isolation makes no one happy. In addition to this, one must pass from the study to the practice of what was learned; and after a length of practice, at last, he is declared a citizen of the Kingdom of My Divine Will, and then will he enjoy all the happinesses that are in a Kingdom so holy; even more, they will be his own properties, and he will acquire the right to live in It as in his own Fatherland." (Vol.29, 7/13/1931)



Sister Benedicta and Beth, an Oblate hermit from Texas

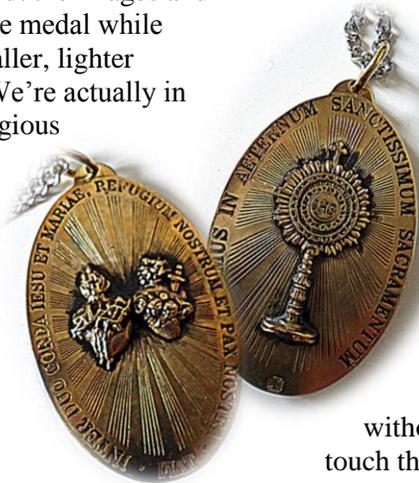
The Ruggiero family, Oblates from Long Island, NY, during a pilgrimage to Italy



Our Medal

Over the years, quite a few people have shown interest in the medal that both the Benedictine Monks and Daughters of Divine Will wear after first profession. Some are curious about the images and what's written on both sides of the medal while others have asked if there are smaller, lighter versions available for the laity. We're actually in the process of searching for a religious goods manufacturer capable of replicating the design, but at half the size and at a reasonable price. So far we've had little success here in Italy, but if God Wills, the right solution will manifest itself. And we promise that all of you, our dear friends, will be the first to know.

We designed the medal with the intention of emphasizing our devotion to the Sacred and Immaculate Hearts, Eucharistic Adoration, and the Divine Will. It consists of an image of the two Hearts on the front with the following Latin phrase framing it: *Inter Duo Corda Iesu et Mariae, Refugium Nostrum et*



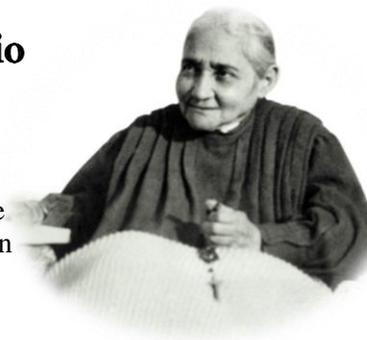
Pax Nostra. Fiat ("Between the Two Hearts of Jesus and Mary, Our Refuge and Our Peace. Fiat"). The reverse side contains an image of a monstrance with the surrounding Latin words: *Adoremus in Aeternum Sanctissimum Sacramentum* (Let us forever adore the Most Blessed Sacrament).

As we hoped, the medal has also become an evangelization tool. Strangers have stopped us just to ask about it, giving us a chance to explain the significance of all the images and phrases. That's why it's so important for all Catholics to wear some kind of sacramental, some symbol of their faith on the outside of their clothing. In doing so, without having to say a word, we allow Jesus to touch the hearts of those we encounter (even without realizing it). You never know what questions and conversation will arise when a co-worker glances at your crucifix or when a child catches a glimpse of your miraculous medal. How much the Holy Spirit can do with just the little seeds that we plant every day!

The Luisa Piccarreta / Padre Pio Connection



With Saint Padre Pio's feast day coming up on September 23rd, we thought it appropriate to reminisce a bit about the strong (yet widely unknown) connection between the renowned Capuchin Friar and the Little Daughter of the Divine Will.



So here are a few fun facts that you may or may not know, taken in large part from Fr. Bernardino Giuseppe Bucci's book: *Luisa Piccarreta - A Collection of Memories of the Servant of God*. Not only does he provide us with his own personal experiences of Luisa, but Fr. Bucci recounts countless invaluable stories from his Aunt Rosaria's forty years of living with and serving "la Santa" (the Saint), as well. We've also thrown in a couple of testimonies from Adriana Pallotti, spiritual daughter of Padre Pio and disciple of the Divine Will, who recently passed away late last year at ninety-nine years old.

Saint Padre Pio sent many people to Luisa Piccarreta and would say to the people of Corato who went to San Giovanni Rotondo: "*What have you come here for? You have Luisa, go to her*". ~Fr. Bucci

(Mother Gabrielle Marie, Fr. Bucci, and Sister Francesca) →



In about 1930, a well-known figure arrived at Luisa's house, sent personally by Padre Pio. He was Federico Abresch, a convert of Padre Pio... Federico became an apostle of the Divine Will and regularly visited Luisa, with whom he always had long conversations... When Luisa was condemned by the Holy Office and her works put on the Index, Padre Pio sent her this message through Federico Abresch: "*Dear Luisa, saints serve for the good of souls, but their suffering knows no bounds*". ~Fr. Bucci

When Luisa Piccarreta was still alive, Adriana Pallotti attended weekly Divine Will cenacles lead by Federico Abresch. There she learned a great deal from the wisdom he received directly from Luisa and from the copies he made of her diaries. According to Fr. Bucci, Adriana affirmed that it was Saint Padre Pio who encouraged her to spread Luisa's Divine Will writings in San Giovanni Rotondo and help disseminate them throughout the whole world.

In obedience to Padre Pio's wishes, she eventually opened the "House of Prayer for the Kingdom of the Divine Will" at San Giovanni Rotondo, a spirituality center inspired by the Servant of God Luisa Piccarreta.



Fr. Bucci, Adriana Pallotti, & Fr. Elijah at the "House of Prayer for the Kingdom of the Divine Will"

After Luisa's death, Aunt Rosaria increased her visits to San Giovanni Rotondo in order to receive enlightenment and advice from Padre Pio. During one of her confessions, he told her: "*Luisa is not a human factor, she is a work of God and He Himself will make her emerge. The world will be astounded at her greatness; not many years will pass before this happens.*

The new millennium will see Luisa's light". ~Fr. Bucci



In a 1994 interview, Adriana Pallotti related the story of a lady who went to confession with Padre Pio. When the lady told him that she had read Luisa's *Hours of the Passion*, Padre Pio said: "*I read it four times! Oh, how beautiful! And now, another one is about to come out — about the Blessed Virgin in the Kingdom. Oh, how beautiful that one, too!*" According to Adriana, Padre Pio was aware of everything that came from Luisa's hands.

During one of Mother Gabrielle Marie's visits to San Giovanni Rotondo, she had personally asked Adriana Pallotti if it was true that Padre Pio received the stigmata shortly after reading from the Passion book. Adriana said yes, explaining that it was found on the floor in the choir loft where the saint had just received the wounds of Christ.

Visit the "Family Tree" page of our website and scroll down to Luisa for Fr. Bucci's book, *Luisa Piccarreta - A Collection of Memories of the Servant of God*. You'll also find a complete PDF with over 130 letters from Luisa Piccarreta, many of which were written to Federico Abresch and make mention of Padre Pio.

Letter #89: To Federico Abresch

J.M.J. / In Voluntate Dei – Fiat!

Most esteemed one in the Divine Volition,

I received your dear letter from Bologna, and since I was unable to answer you soon, I was not sure about where to write you - whether to Bologna or to San Giovanni (Rotondo); this is why I did not write you. If the Divine Will wants it, you can come whenever you'd like; because it is the Divine Will that must have Its prime place in all our acts. If we do so, It will carry us on Its lap and will do together with us whatever we do: we will love with Its Love, we will pray together with It; Its steps will be ours. Oh, how happy It will be to live Its Divine Life with the creature who knows It, because only knowledge gives us the highest good of possessing It...

Dearest son in the Divine Volition, since you are near holy Padre Pio, talk to him about our things, that he may talk about them with the Lord; and if the Lord wants, let him tell you something. Entrust me to his prayers, for I need them very much. Kiss his hands for me.

I commend myself to your prayers, and leaving you in the Divine Volition, that you may live more in Heaven than on earth, from the heart I greet father, mother and son.

Most affectionately yours,
The little daughter of the Divine Will

Corato, August 5, 1940



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www.benedictinesofdivinewill.org

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