



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*

An Interior Lent

“Nothing that goes into a person from outside can defile him; it is the things that come out of a person that make him unclean” (Mk 7:15). This passage from Scripture got us to thinking about the usual Lenten sacrifices that we almost all take on each year: the giving up of some kind of food or beverage. And that’s super important. Even the Church asks us for days of fasting and abstinence to mortify our bodies and wills as means of reparation for our sins. Yet do these penances alone change us? How many of us still feel so weak, so full of defects and sinful tendencies even after forty days of physical renunciation? Our theory is because we tend to focus more on exterior practices than on what’s going on in the depths of our soul. Only in our interior will we find both the roots of our faults and the source of our goodness, depending on how much space is occupied by the Most Holy Trinity or by the “not even close to holy” earthly trinity...me, myself, and I.



True, our hearts are God’s work. We can’t heal, purify, or sanctify ourselves. However, we can cooperate with grace and help Him along with practical exercises to train, mortify, and strengthen our interior as found throughout the earlier volumes

of Luisa Piccarreta’s diary. They prepare our souls to receive the great gift of living in the Divine Will, teaching us how to be detached from everything, die to ourselves, embrace the cross, love and live for the Lord alone. And no matter how long we’ve been reading Luisa’s

writings and trying to live in God’s Will, our human weakness will always have need to return to these beginner lessons to keep us fixed on the right path.

But enough from us. We leave you now with Jesus’ own teachings – little concrete “flashcards” to help shape up our interior life for the rest of Lent. And hopefully by Easter, we’ll all be able to sing with the psalmist:

“All the glory of the king’s daughter dwells within” (Ps 45:13)

Before getting started, let’s entrust everything to our Heavenly Mother!

«Place your hand upon your heart, and observe how many voids of love there may be in it. Reflect: that secret self-esteem, that becoming disturbed at every slightest adversity, those little attachments you feel to things and to people, that tiredness in good, that bother caused in you by that which is not to your liking, are



equivalent to as many voids of love in your heart; voids which, like little fevers, deprive you of the strength and of the desire to be filled with Divine Will. Oh! how you too will feel the refreshing and conquering virtue in your sacrifices, if you fill these voids with love. My child, give Me your hand now and follow Me...»
(The Virgin Mary in the Kingdom of Divine Will, Appendix, Meditation 1)

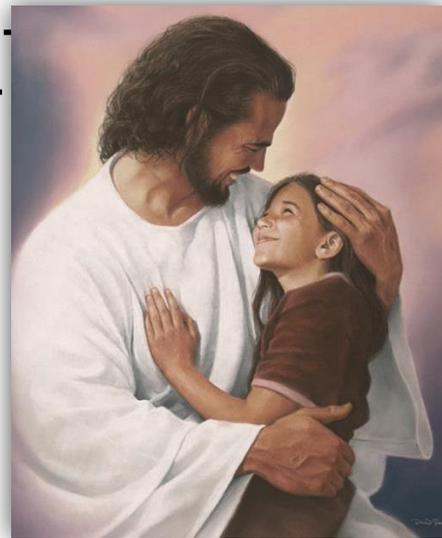


Interior Silence

«From the beginning, the Divine Master began to strip my heart of all creatures, and through an interior voice He would tell me: *‘I am all that is beautiful and that deserves to be loved. See, if you do not remove this little world that surrounds you – that is, thoughts of creatures, imagination – I cannot enter freely into your heart. This murmuring in your mind is a hindrance to letting you hear My voice more clearly, to pouring My graces into you, to truly enamoring you of Me. Promise Me that you will be all Mine... You are right that you can do nothing. Do not fear, I will do everything. Give Me your will - this is enough for Me.’*» (Book of Heaven, Luisa Piccarreta, Volume 1)

Freedom of heart

«Jesus taught me how to love people without detaching myself from Him – that is, by looking at creatures as images of God. If I received good from creatures, I was to think that God alone was the prime author of that good and that He had used the creature in order to send it to me so that my heart would be bound more to Him. If then I received mortifications, I was to look at them also as instruments in the hands of God for my sanctification so that my heart would not stay huffy with my neighbor. In this way I would look at all creatures in God. Whatever defect I might see in them, I would never lose esteem for them. If they mocked me, I felt obliged, thinking that they were allowing me to make more gains for my soul. If they praised me, I received these praises with contempt, saying: ‘Today this, tomorrow they may hate me’, considering their inconstancy. In sum, my heart acquired such freedom, that I myself cannot explain it.» (Volume 1)



Not wallowing in the mud

«One day, reprimanding me, Jesus told me: *‘...When a soul has humbled herself, being convinced of having done wrong, and has cleansed her soul in the Sacrament of Confession, and is ready to die rather than offend Me - it is an affront to my mercy, it is a hindrance to drawing her close to My love if her mind is always trying to wrap itself with the mud of the past...I no longer remember anything...Do you see any rancor or shadow on my part?...So, are you the one who wants to carry these things on?’* And I: ‘No, no, I don’t want to.’ And He: *‘Let us think about loving and contenting each other.’*» (Volume 1)



Adoring wherever we happen to be

«*Everything I did in the course of thirty-three years, from when I was born up to when I died, I am continuing in the Sacrament of the altar. Therefore I want you to visit Me thirty-three times a day*, honoring My years and also uniting with Me in the Sacrament with My own intentions – that is, reparation, adoration...You will do this at all times: with the first thought of the morning, fly before the tabernacle in*

which I am present for love of you and visit Me. With the last thought of the evening, while you sleep at night, before and after your meal, at the beginning of each one of your actions, while walking, working...' While Jesus was saying this to me, not knowing whether I could manage to do them, I said to Him: 'Lord, I beg You to be with me until I acquire the habit of doing them, for I know that with You I can do everything.'» (Volume 1)

** Don't worry so much about the number of visits. Just try to develop the habit of uniting your mind and heart to Our Lord in the Blessed Sacrament throughout the day. It's a way of loving and adoring Him always, even when we can't physically be before a tabernacle. Jesus teaches us through Luisa that our desire to be with Him makes it a reality.*



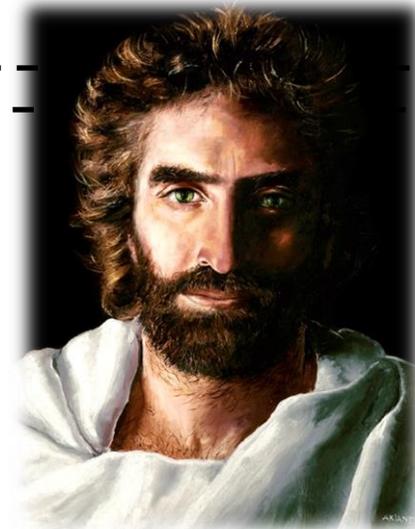
Battling temptations

«Jesus Christ taught me that the most effective means for the soul to be freed of every vain apprehension, of every doubt, of every fear, was to protest before Heaven, earth and the very demons that she does not want to offend God, even at the cost of her life, and that she does not want to consent to any temptation of the devil. And this, as soon as the soul feels the coming of the temptation, in the act of the battle, as she begins to feel free, and also during the course of the day. By doing this, the soul will not waste time in thinking about whether she has consented or not because the mere memory of her promise will already give her peace.» (Volume 1)



The secret to peace

«And the Lord, benignly, added: '...What I want from you is that you abandon yourself in My arms...Don't you know how much I love you and that everything I allow, either through creatures or from demons or directly from Me, is truly for your good and serves for nothing but to lead the soul to that state for which I have chosen her? Therefore I want you to remain in My arms with your eyes closed, without looking at and investigating this or that, trusting Me completely, and letting Me operate freely. If then you want to do the opposite, you will lose much time and come to oppose what I want to do with you.'» (Volume 1)



How to pray the contemplative way

«And Jesus answered my thought: 'Sometimes the groom is pleased to deal with his bride and to entrust his most intimate secrets to her. Other times he delights with greater pleasure in resting, as they contemplate each other's beauty. Speaking impedes resting, and the mere thinking of what one has to say and of what one has to deal with diverts one's attention from looking at the beauty of the groom or of the bride. But this is needed. In fact, after they have rested and comprehended each other's beauty more, they love each other more, and with greater strength they enter the field again to work.'» (Vol. 2, 9/30/1899)

How to suffer well

«I saw Him for just a little and He told me: 'My daughter, the true way of suffering is in not looking at whom the sufferings come from, or at that which one suffers, but at the good that must come from those sufferings. This was my way of suffering. I looked neither at the executioners, nor at the suffering, but at the

good I intended to do by means of my suffering, also for the very ones who gave Me suffering. And looking at the good that was to come to men, I disregarded everything else, and with intrepidity I followed the course of my suffering. My daughter, this is the easiest and most profitable way to suffer - not only with patience, but with unconquered and courageous heart.'» (Vol. 4, 3/19/1901)

* Already feel good things happening in your soul and want to read more of Luisa's Divine Will writings? Email us at daughtersofdivinewill@gmail.com and we'll tell you how.



Sister Frostina on investment day



A Winter Vocation



The Lord surprised the Benedictine Daughters this winter with a new vocation: *Sister Frostina of Our Lady of the Snows*. Though she only joined the community last month during a much anticipated blizzard that hit our area, we decided to put her on the fast track with the white veil and new name already. Sister Frostina can often be very cold, but still manages to always have a smile on her face and maintain a quiet, contemplative spirit. Who knows if she'll persevere until spring? So please keep her in your prayers...along with all of her older sisters who obviously need it.



Sister Maddalena chillin' out with Sister Frosti



Both patient and doctor



For those of you who may not have heard, Mother Gabrielle Marie had an unexpected bout with cancer earlier this year. A malignant tumor was found in her ascending colon during a routine colonoscopy to check on pain she had been experiencing in that area for several years. Within two weeks, surgeons already had Mother on the operating table to remove the third of her colon which contained the tumor along with all of the accompanying lymph nodes. By the grace of God, her doctors were able to successfully perform the surgery laparoscopically with just one small incision and four small holes. No cancer cells were found on the lymph nodes and, in answer to many prayers, no chemotherapy will be needed. Three days later, Mother Gabrielle Marie was released from the hospital to rest up and continue her recovery at home.

Though the healing process has brought some physical ups and downs, Mother's spirit never wavered. Always a true mom, she taught all of us daughters a great deal about the gift of suffering by word and especially by example. She even came out of surgery with the most serene smile on her face. And when Mother opened her eyes, the first thing she whispered was: "I just kept asking Jesus to suffer in my suffering." Sure she's felt quite a bit of pain and discomfort, but, as she often reminds us in the trials of our own lives, that's ok. When God

sends tribulations, we're expected to tribulate. That's why they're called crosses. How we feel is not so important. It's what we do with our sufferings, how we choose to respond to the gift that matters most.

[Vol. 7, 10/2/1906]: "I saw a person who was oppressed by various crosses, and blessed Jesus was saying: *Tell her that in the act in which she feels as though dogged by persecutions, by punctures, by sufferings, she should think that I am present with her, and that whatever she suffers she can use to heal and medicate My wounds. So, her sufferings will serve to medicate now My side, now My head, now My hands and feet, which are too much in pain and embittered by the grave offenses that creatures give Me. This is a great honor that I give her - Myself providing her with the medicine to medicate My wounds and also giving her the merit of charity for having medicated Me.*"



From the desk of our Mother:

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all of you who prayed for me for a successful surgery and a quick recovery. As you can see, your prayers were answered. The surgery couldn't have gone better and I feel almost back to my old self again. God is so good! Thanks also for all the masses offered for this intention. God bless you all for the great kindness and thoughtfulness you showered upon me throughout this whole ordeal. Know that I'm praying for each and every one of you, too.

With much love and gratitude,
Mother Gabrielle Marie

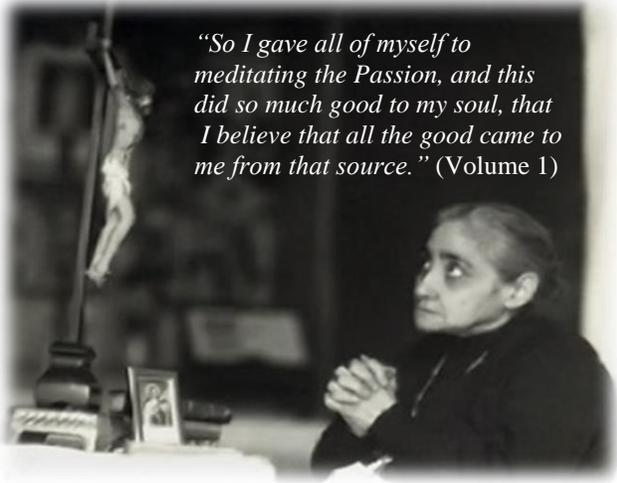


White all around

The streets of Talamello weren't the only things clothed in white around here this winter. Postulants Marylou Rodriguez and Rita Valentino officially entered the Benedictine Daughter novitiate upon receiving our signature white habit and their new names: *Sister Anne Marie of the Child Jesus* and *Sister Maria Teresa of the Merciful Heart of the Eternal Father*. Neither expected it, but both were thrilled to find out on investment day that St. Anne and St. Teresa of Avila would now be their special patrons and spiritual mothers. May the grandmother of Jesus together with one of His most faithful spouses intercede for their new spiritual daughters, that they may persevere in giving their whole heart, mind and soul to God and permit Him to transform them into little children after His own merciful Heart.



Does your heart desire to belong only to Jesus? Contact us at daughtersofdivinewill@gmail.com or visit the "Vocations" page of our website if you think the Lord may be calling you to do so as a Benedictine Daughter of Divine Will. You don't have to be sure what God's Will is yet. Just drop us an email and we'll begin the process of discerning together.



“So I gave all of myself to meditating the Passion, and this did so much good to my soul, that I believe that all the good came to me from that source.” (Volume 1)



Have you been reading Luisa’s *24 Hours of the Passion of Our Lord Jesus Christ* this Lent? If you haven’t started yet or want to share this treasure with others, visit the “Family Tree” page of our website and scroll down to the Servant of God, Luisa Piccarreta to download the full PDF. But don’t limit the Passion book to just these forty short days. Form the habit now of finding a little time each day to read it all year long, even if for only ten minutes. It’s about the quality, not the quantity.



Supporting the Sisters



If you feel called to help support the Benedictine Daughters of Divine Will this Lenten and Easter season or on a regular basis, visit the “Donations” page of our website to make a one-time donation by credit/debit card or to sign up for automatic monthly contributions: www.benedictinesofdivinewill.org

Or simply send a check or money order to the address of our non-profit organization below:
(All donations are tax-deductible)

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Though we pray for our benefactors daily, all of our prayers throughout Holy Week and the Octave of Easter will be offered specifically for each and every one of you who have so generously supported us in any way, shape, or form. And in thanksgiving for your goodness to us, Holy Mass will also be offered for all of your needs and intentions.



*With much love
and many blessings for a
happy and holy Easter
Season from all of the
Benedictine Daughters of
Divine Will!*