



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*

The Fathers in our Lives

We have no other reason or explanation for this newsletter’s theme than the Holy Spirit. He has filled our hearts with so much gratitude for all of the different paternal influences in our lives that we just couldn’t keep it to ourselves. How important, indispensable is a father’s love and guidance! Bet you don’t realize just how many dads you have. We’ve got a bunch whom we cling to and try to learn from every day.



Our Eternal Father

(Feast Day: First Sunday in August or August 7th)*

Living in the Divine Will is nothing more than a loving relationship between the Eternal Father and His children. Acts and rounds, therefore, are simply an outpouring of love, adoration, praises, and gratitude to the One who bore us and filled us with His love first. They’re not words and formulas, but a deep desire to always be with our Abba, our Babbo (in Italian)...our Dad. So whether we’re in the midst of joys or sorrows, victories or falls, trials or temptations, let us never forget the words Jesus spoke to the children of Egypt when in exile as a child. They will be our secret to happiness and holiness.

[Jesus to the Servant of God, Luisa Piccarreta]:

“You must know that My exile in Egypt was not without conquests. I gave My first little sermon to the little ones, adapting Myself to their tiny capacity. And would you like to know what My sermon was about? I said to them:

Look up at Heaven. Up there you have a Celestial Father who loves you very much and who was not satisfied being your Father only from Heaven...but loving you with exuberant love, He wanted to descend inside your hearts and form His royal residence in the depth of your souls... But, to do what? To give life to your



heartbeat, breath and motion. So as you walk, He walks in your steps. He moves in your little hands. He speaks in your voice... and because He loves you so very much, as you walk or move—now He kisses you, now He squeezes you, now He hugs you and carries you triumphantly as His own dear children...My dear children, do you know what this Celestial Father wants from you? He wants to be recognized within you, as having His own place in the center of your souls; and since He gives you everything, He wants your love in everything you

do. Love Him! Let love be always in your little hearts, your lips, your works—in everything—and this will be the delicious food that you will give to His Paternity. He loves you very much and wants to be loved. Nobody can

ever love you as He loves you... your Celestial Father never leaves you... Give Me your word that you will always, always love Him! Say together with Me: **'We love You, our Father, who are in the Heavens. We love You, our Father, who dwells in our hearts!'**

My daughter, at My words they rejoiced and made feast, because they no longer had a Father who was far away from them, but inside their own hearts. This sermon that I, as a little Baby, gave to the children of Egypt was the foundation—**the essence of the creation of Man**. It contains the most indispensable doctrine and the highest sanctity. It makes love arise in every instant: the love between the Creator and the creature... Pray for many, that they may be taught that I am in their hearts—that I love and I want to be loved."

(from the diaries of Luisa Piccarreta, *Book of Heaven*, Vol. 35, 1/10/1938)

* According to the Church-approved apparitions of the Eternal Father to Mother Eugenia Elisabetta Ravasio in 1932. For the complete text of God, the Father's messages to His children along with a brief biography of Mother Eugenia, visit the "Family Tree" page of our website and check out the section dedicated to the Holy Family.



St. Joseph

(Feast Day of the Most Chaste Heart of St. Joseph: the First Wednesday after the Solemnity of the Sacred Heart of Jesus)

Ever wonder how one comes to live in Nazareth? That should be the goal of everyone, whether married, single, or a consecrated religious. It's the perfect model of life in the Divine Will. But what exactly does that entail, what should it look like in the day to day? Well, Jesus offers us a little advice as Luisa recounts in her notebook of childhood memories: *"My daughter, your life must be in our midst in the house of Nazareth. If you work, if you pray, if you take food, if you walk, you must give one hand to Me, the other to our Mama, and your gaze to St. Joseph, to see whether your acts correspond to ours, so as to be able to say: first I make my model based on what Jesus, the Celestial Mama and St. Joseph do, and then I follow it."*

So fixing our gaze upon St. Joseph, what did he do? In the most hidden way, he **worked** at his trade in order to support the family entrusted to him by God. He **served** and **protected** them, with the deepest respect and humility. He **loved** his Immaculate Spouse with the highest purity and **adored** Her Divine Son with his whole being, often laying his own head on Jesus' chest so as to absorb every loving heartbeat. His Most Chaste Heart daily **suffered** the most excruciating pains of compassion, knowing all of the pains his beloved Wife and Son would have to endure. But above all, St. Joseph perfectly **obeyed** the Will of God...doing what he was supposed to do at each moment until the Lord revealed the next step.

How could anyone sufficiently sing the praises of glorious St. Joseph? Jesus, the Incarnate Word, and Mary, the Mother of God, looked to him for security and guidance. They eagerly sought to obey and serve with love the one whom the Eternal Father chose as His representative in Nazareth, knowing that Their dear Joseph could never nor would ever take one breath outside of the Divine Will...for he, too, was "in possession of and lived in Its Kingdom" (*Book of Heaven*, Vol. 29, 5/31/1931).

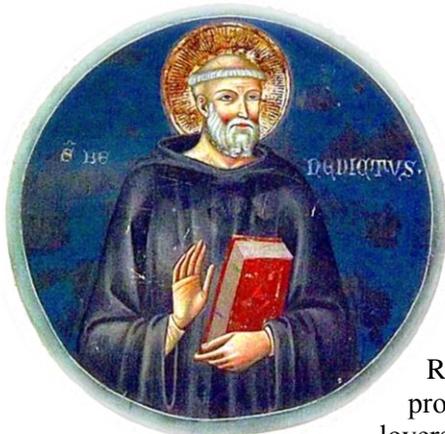


Taking our cue from the Most Holy Trinity and our Celestial Queen, we also entrust ourselves to the paternal care of St. Joseph. He guards our doors

and protects our vocations. We honor him daily with prayer, song, and invoking the intercession of his Most Chaste Heart. If you don't have a devotion to St. Joseph yet, pray for the grace to fall in love with him. Make sure you have his image somewhere in your home. Even in the most turbulent moments, he never failed the Holy Family and he won't fail you.

*"I desire souls to come to my Heart that they may learn true union with the Divine Will...I am the protector of the Church and the home, as I was the protector of Christ and His Mother while I lived upon earth. Jesus and Mary desire that my Pure Heart, so long hidden and unknown, be now honored in a special way. **Let my children honor my Most Pure Heart in a special manner on the First Wednesday of the month** by reciting the Joyful Mysteries of the Rosary in memory of my life with Jesus and Mary and the love I bore them, the sorrow I suffered with them. Let them receive Holy Communion in union with the love with which I received the Savior for the first time and each time I held Him in my arms. Those who honor me in this way will be consoled by my presence at their death, and I myself will conduct them safely into the presence of Jesus and Mary."*

(St. Joseph to Sr. Mary Ephrem in March of 1958, visionary to whom Our Lady of American began appearing in 1956. Her spiritual director, Archbishop Paul F. Leibold, supported the apparitions and granted his Imprimatur to all the messages.)



Our Holy Father, St. Benedict...

(Feast Day: July 11th)

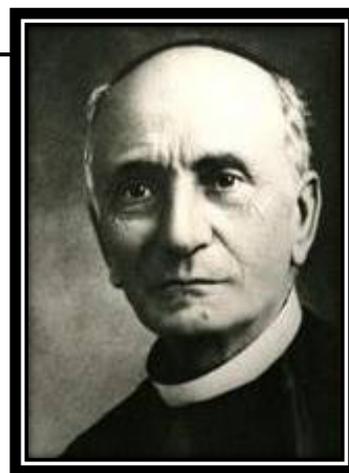
...who guides us through what he called his "little Rule for beginners". For those of you have already read it, what's at the heart of the Rule of St. Benedict? The Gospel...living a life totally for Christ within the context of a community, or in other words, a family. A family under the guidance of an Abbot, an Abba. A family who works and prays together – the famous Ora et Labora. Yet St. Benedict reminds us at the end of his Rule that this is just the beginning of true sanctity. Though at the time he probably didn't fully grasp the profundity of what he wrote, we Divine Will lovers get it. One cannot live in God's Will without doing His Will. The

necessary first steps are fervently practicing our Catholic faith to the fullest, living the fundamental Christian virtues, being faithful to the duties of our state in life. Once we've got the "doing" part down, only then can we enter the true living. But be careful, the "what" we do never changes...just the "how". And that's where the Rule of Benedict passes the baton to the diary of Luisa.

St. Annibale Maria Di Francia

(Feast Day: June 1st)

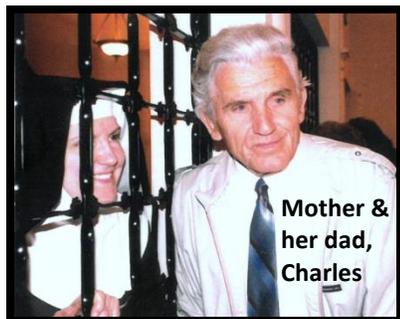
St. Annibale saw everything as from the hand of God. He neither complained nor tolerated the complaints of others, even when the mother house of the Rogationists burned to the ground. In sickness, in tragedy, when under spiritual attack...he always adored the Most Holy and Divine Will. But probably the greatest legacy that Father Annibale leaves us is his deep faith in Luisa's writings, "the great deposit of the Lord's Divine Revelations" as he referred to them. He devoured every page he could get his hands on, placed Luisa under strict obedience to neglect not a syllable, hastened to obtain the Archbishop's Imprimatur on all the volumes available before his death, and tirelessly worked to get the writings published and out to the people. Less than four months before his death, he confided the following to Luisa:



"Know that I no longer occupy myself with almost anything of the other things of my institutes, since I dedicated myself completely to the great work of the Divine Will. I talk about it with people of spirit; I engage in

conversation about this topic with whomever I best can; I promote it as much as I can, also in my institutes.”
(from Letter #13)

If you haven't read the series of letters that St. Annibale Di Francia wrote to Luisa Piccarreta during their seventeen year spiritual relationship, pull the PDF off of the "Family Tree" page of our website and get started. His passion is truly contagious. You'll see for yourselves why the Lord lifted him to the altar of sanctity and chose him as the Ecclesiastical Censor for the publications of the Divine Will writings.



Mother & her dad, Charles



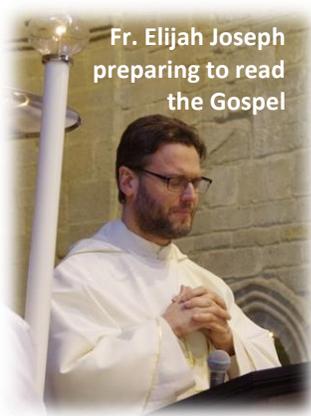
Sister Francesca & her dad, Vito

Our hand-picked, made-to-order Dads

A very happy Father's Day to all of the fathers, grandfathers, and godfathers out there – especially those of you to whom we belong. Thank you for all you have done, but especially for who you have been to each of us. We know most families aren't perfect and that there are a lot of wounded and broken homes out there. Some of you may be getting on in years, in poor health, or simply feel like you have nothing left to offer. But that's just not true. Courage, dads, in whatever situation you might find yourself. The grace of God passes through your prayers, your sacrifices, your sufferings, and your example to your whole family. You each have a great, great responsibility, but we have faith in you and, more importantly, so does your Father in Heaven!



Sister Scholastica & her dad, Rafael



Fr. Elijah Joseph preparing to read the Gospel

Last, but certainly not least...our Shepherds

Can you imagine a world without the Sacraments? Not being able to gaze upon Our Lord in the Blessed Sacrament, receive Him daily at Holy Mass, cleanse our souls from the burden of sin with a good Confession? That's how much harder our exile down here would be without priests. We all have a duty to love and pray for our shepherds, as Our Lady of Medugorje never fails to remind us at the end of her messages to the world. They bring us Jesus and are always on the frontlines in the spiritual war in which we live. When tempted to judge and criticize, let's remember this...for just as our souls have been entrusted to their care, their souls have also been entrusted to us.



A super quick explanation of Acts and Rounds

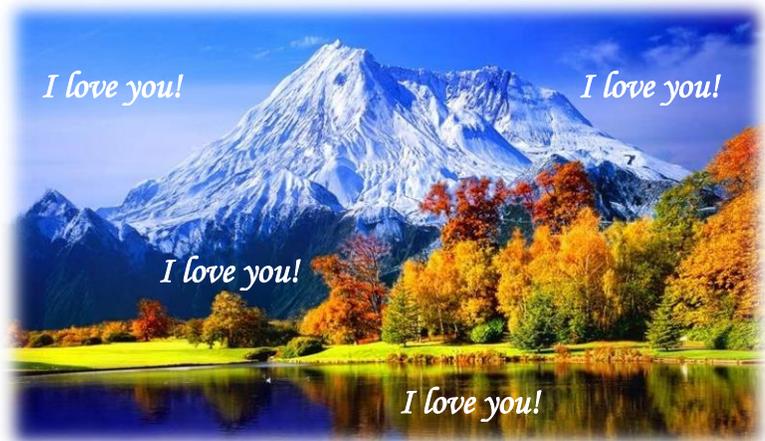


Feel a little lost when we mention these "acts and rounds" in the Divine Will in some of our articles? For those of you new to Luisa Piccarreta's writings or if you haven't yet read a page, here's a quickie lesson on what we're talking about:

An "act" is a way of praying in which we call upon the Divine Will to do everything in, with, and through us. And since it is Jesus Himself operating, all of our acts – even the most seemingly insignificant ones – become

divine. **“Rounds”** are circles of reciprocal love between Creator and creature. It’s a type of act in which we take possession of all that God has created and done for pure love of us in order to return all of these gifts, all of that love to the Father with our own “I love You, I adore You, I praise You, and I thank You”. The purpose of both acts and rounds is to give God all of the love, honor, and glory He deserves on behalf of all souls past, present, and future.

Our brief explanation is just the tip of the iceberg to get you started. The best way to learn about these powerful, yet simple ways of not just praying, but living in God’s Most Holy Will, comes from reading Jesus’ own words found in the diaries of Luisa. Just drop us a quick email to find out how you can get your hands on them, too: daughtersofdivinewill@gmail.com



[Jesus to Luisa]: *“My daughter, how beautiful are the prayers and acts done in my Will!...I created everything for man and gave it all to him...The creature in turn, overcome by the multiplicity of so many gifts and lacking the power to create as many things as she has received, offers these same things back to God in an act of loving reciprocity. Sun, stars, flowers, water, fire, air - I have given them all to express my love. Recognizing this, you have accepted them and, putting my love into action, have given them back to Me in reciprocity...Thus the music of my love has resounded anew in all created things.”* (Book of Heaven, Vol. 14, 4/6/1922)



**Celebrating Italian-style with a bit of Nutella.
Just a little gift from someone who knows us too well.**

Seven years and counting...

On April 12, the *Benedictine Daughters of Divine Will* celebrated their seventh birthday as a Public Association of the Faithful. Looking back on all that has happened these past few years, we marvel at what the Lord was able to accomplish with us little ones. When we left our homeland and came to Italy to obey God’s call, knowing nothing of the language and little about the culture, it really was a blind leap of faith. But as we continued to move forward, one small step at a time, our always faithful Heavenly Father never failed to send us the right people at the right time to help and guide us along the way.

So we just wanted to take a minute and thank all of you who were instrumental in the divine plan for our community. It would take ten newsletters to describe all the ways we have been supported and sustained by so many of you, but we entrust the task of thanking and rewarding to Our Lady who will do it best. She knows who you are. We’ll just leave you with a word of wisdom from Mother Gabrielle Marie that pretty much sums up the journey we’ve been on up to now:

“We don’t know what we’re doing, but God’s getting good at it.”

Do you have a sweet-tooth, too? More importantly, do you desire to give your whole heart and soul to God alone? 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.



Not even death will do us part

Fiat Voluntas Tua. That's what Sister Maria Maddalena of the Divine Will chose to inscribe on the wedding ring she received at her perpetual profession of vows on May 13th. We originally picked the day in honor of Our Lady of Fatima, only afterwards realizing that the Ascension and Mother's

Day would all coincide. No accident in our book.

As the tiniest of our sisters lay prostrate at the altar during the Litany of Saints, just moments before promising to live the rest of her life in poverty, chastity, obedience, and charity, it was as if Maddalena was also preparing to ascend with her Spouse to Heaven while still remaining on earth.

As St. Paul reminds us, that's something we're all called to do. If we seek the things that are above, we can live from Paradise even while down here. To live is Christ and to die is gain. That's life in the Divine Will...Heaven on earth! And if God keeps getting good at that in us, death would be nothing more than a simple transition from one room to another.



Sr. Maddalena and Br. Raphael with our beloved bishop, Msgr. Andrea Turazzi, after making their perpetual vows.

Instruments of our Father's loving Providence

If you feel called to help support the Benedictine Daughters of Divine Will this summer 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)

**Benedictine Daughters
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Be assured that we hold each and every one of you in our hearts and daily prayers. May the Lord repay your goodness to us a hundredfold as He has promised, for He can never be outdone in generosity. God bless you and have a joyful summer!

