

LETTERS OF GOLD

From the House of the Divine Will

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ANNOUNCING THE THIRD FIAT OF GOD

*The Recall of the Creature to the Order, the Place,
and the Purpose for which it was created by God*

"That which I say to you about my Will is but the development of our Decree, made from all Eternity in the Consistory of the Most Holy Trinity, that Our Will must have Its Kingdom upon the earth; and our decrees are infallible; no one can impede Us from effectuating them. As was the Decree of Creation and of Redemption; so, too, the Kingdom of Our Will upon the earth is our Decree." –

(Jesus to Luisa Piccarreta - Oct. 2, 1938)

Tom & Kathy Fahy and the Divine Will—Our Story

Part One

Years ago, a Priest asked me to write the story about our life and work on behalf of the Reign of the Divine Will. Over the years people frequently ask how we learned about Luisa and her writings, and recently, several persons responded positively to our inquiry about whether to tell our story. I have had much difficulty in finding the time or inclination to undertake this project. When I did begin to put this story together, it seemed that the memories just kept coming, so much so, that a book could be written about all that has taken place in our lives concerning the Reign of the Divine Will on earth as in Heaven. Perhaps it may be good to do this story in parts. We'll undertake the first part with this last issue of 2001 of "Letters of Gold" and continue our story in the first issue of 2002. So, here goes!

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Kathy and I met at an evening course in Spanish at Tulane University in New Orleans, Louisiana, and married two years later on September 1, 1962, at Incarnate Word Catholic Church in New Orleans.

At the time of our marriage Kathy was a secretary for Dictaphone Corporation. I was a young navigator in the Air Force, stationed in California, training to drop the atomic bomb on Russia. A few months later, I chose an assignment as a navigator for transport aircraft stationed at Dover, Delaware. With this assignment I was able to travel to many places in the world. My first landing in Italy was in the region of La Puglia where Luisa Piccarreta was born and lived. Years later I discovered in my personal logs that I landed there on April 23rd, Luisa's birthday! While stationed at Dover, our daughter, Evelyn, was born on November 28, 1965. She was born with spina bifida, which required a five-hour operation when she was 18 months old. Her condition was not so severe as that of many others, and she has done remarkably well with this cross. Evelyn is now 36 and lives in North Carolina.

The question is often asked: "How did you and Kathy get involved with your work on behalf of the Divine Will?"

First of all, Our Lady had to recruit us and then prepare us. I cannot say when She really began her recruitment, but I believe one sure sign of her recruitment plans began in July of 1966. I had just flown over Ephesus in Turkey and landed near the town of Adana, where I received a telegram from headquarters. That telegram would bring about the first change in my life's direction. I was to be reassigned as one of the first navigators for training to fly in one of the hottest fighter jets in the world. I had already turned down an offer by the Air Force recruiter to go to pilot school for the very reason that I get motion sickness even in a rocking chair. Transport aircraft are like civilian, commercial aircraft. Fighter aircraft are another story! I knew I would be unable to undertake the new assignment. After

House of the Divine Will

4451 Iroquois Avenue

Jacksonville, FL 32210

(The House of the Divine Will is a private home. The editor of this newsletter is Mr. Thomas Fahy)

much struggle and humiliation for me over this, the Air Force decided in my favor but took me off flying status. I then chose to return to civilian life in July of 1967 and was given an honorable discharge.

The transition was difficult. I was a natural introvert, and not at all inclined to public speaking. Today, I can laugh at how it seems that Our Lady tricked the devil into training me for public speaking. Upon leaving the Air Force, I got involved for a while in one of those "get rich quick" marketing schemes. Part of the program was training in public speaking. A few years later, I was able to use this training to speak publicly on behalf of Our Lady and the Divine Will. When I came to my senses about the "get rich quick" marketing scheme, I took up normal employment and went to work for the Department of Commerce in Washington, D.C. Within a year I decided to return to school for a master's degree in business. In July of 1970, I went to work for Standard Oil Company in New York City. Kathy, Evelyn, and I rented a home in Princeton, NJ. It took me 1-1/2 hours by train to get to work.

Our Lady now began the second stage of her recruitment project for Kathy and me. Through Her, God gave me the grace of suffering interiorly over the advanced evil I saw in Manhattan. Soon I was reading Bible stories to our daughter Evelyn. I also read a wonderful book on Our Lady of Fatima by Thomas Walsh. With the reading of that book came an incredible grace of deep sorrow and compunction for all the sins of my life. I wept profusely and was given a sign of God's great mercy. The next day I discovered the extraordinary events that happened at Garabandal, Spain, in the early 1960's.

At this point I had definitely been recruited by Our Lady, yet She would be sure that there would be many opportunities for crushing my ego, beginning immediately, as She allowed her little Tom to devote his energies in the service of her Son, Jesus. Garabandal lit a fire within me. I wanted to convert the whole world! I wanted to work for the Church. I even thought of going to Rome to see if there was a job there that I could do for the Church. Our Lady gave me some training time and encounters with wonderful souls who were promoting Garabandal in the New York area. She arranged all the details. All I had to do was remain on fire, study and follow the inspirations God was so benevolent to give to a young zealot. [If one reads Harry Daley's book on Garabandal, one will find his experiences in the first few chapters which were almost exactly my own experiences in New York after learning about Garabandal. My experiences, however, took place one year before those of Harry Daley.]

Then suddenly came the first of a series of necessary humiliations. I lost my high paying job in New York. I had to tell Kathy the news. Several weeks later I was in a "paradise." We were now living on a beautiful, quiet plantation in Thomasville, GA. I had landed a job in Thomasville only to lose it eight months later. But those eight months were wonderful. My spare time was consumed with studying Catholic doctrine and Mariology, and presenting slide shows on Fatima, Padre Pio, and Garabandal. I also got my first dose of reality concerning the state of the Church in the early 1970's. I was naively ignorant of the state of the Church. I had assumed all Priests were very holy and loved the Church, and I had assumed all the nuns were saints and very faithful to Jesus and Mary. No need to go into all the sad things I was to discover, especially in our next location. It is enough to say that it didn't take too long to discover reality in this regard, although it took a lot longer for me to get used to it and keep my mouth shut!

Our next domicile would be St. Petersburg, FL, where I accepted a teaching post for one academic year at the University of South Florida, beginning in September of 1971. St. Petersburg is definitely where Our Lady wanted me. There, I would come into contact with people and circumstances, which would lead our lives into the knowledge of Luisa Piccarreta and the Gift of the Divine Will. I would also have a lot to suffer from those both in the clergy and laity who were not at all sympathetic with my zeal to save souls through the means which had become so dear to me: Fatima, Padre Pio, Garabandal, and then Luisa Piccarreta's writings. In October of 1971, I had the first of two of what I refer to as dream-visions. This dream-vision indicated that something very, beautiful would come into my life and I would have to go across the Atlantic ocean to discover it. The second dream-vision would come on January 1, 1987; but it would be of a very different character. On December 8, 1971, Kathy and I made our formal consecration to Jesus through Mary according to the formula of St. Louis de Montfort. While preparing for this consecration, I was overwhelmed with St. Louis' word about God raising up saints in the latter days

whose holiness would exceed that of most of the prior saints as the cedars of Lebanon tower in nobility over the shrubs along the by-ways. That concept was hard to believe then. Later, that concept became easy to understand when I would be exposed to Luisa Piccarreta and certain other holy persons of the Twentieth Century.

My contract at the University of South Florida ended in June of 1972. Kathy and I were able to go across the Atlantic ocean to Europe and visit "all the shrines and holy places" in July-August, thanks to arrangements made by Vera Calandra, who represented Padre Pio's Cause of Canonization in the USA. [I had met her in St. Petersburg the previous October.] Kathy and I stopped in London, then made our way to Paris and on to Garabandal. A visitor in Garabandal suggested that while we were in Italy we might stay with some Mexican Priests and brothers who had a home in Frascati, just outside of Rome. We awoke in Garabandal on my 33rd birthday, July 22, and went to bed that evening in Lourdes. We drove across southern France and all over Italy, visiting every site where we had read or heard about something wonderful and holy having taken place during the history of the Church in Italy. Some of these places were Padua (St. Anthony's incorrupt tongue), the Holy House of Loreto, San Giovanni Rotondo, Mt. San Angelo, Lanciano, Rome, and many other sites. We did stay with the Mexican Priests in Frascati. An American brother there was assigned to be our 'guardian angel.' From there we drove to visit various living mystics in different parts of Italy.

Then one day, while Kathy and I were at the house in Frascati, there arrived a Priest and two laymen from Milan with a black briefcase. The contents in that briefcase would dramatically affect our lives forever, in time and eternity! But we wouldn't know what was in that black briefcase for another 14 months.

We returned to St. Petersburg, FL. I had no job and had to go on unemployment compensation. In October of 1972, with the help of a friend, we opened a Catholic bookstore. Our consuming desire was to promote authentic Catholicism and save souls. I remained on worker's compensation, while looking for a regular job as the bookstore yielded only about \$64 per month net income. Kathy ran the store. I brought Evelyn to the store after school until closing time. Our Lady arranged for us to live in a little house for free through the charity of one of the Catholic ladies living in the area. We sold our car, paid off the loan, and bought a '63 Chevy for \$185. For the next 14 years we never had to buy a car, as someone always gave us something to drive, until we bought a '77 Chevy station wagon for \$900 in 1986. We drove that vehicle until it died in 1994. We then bought a 1990 Mercury, which is still very nice; but the air conditioning is broken, as well as a few other items. I am thinking of getting another car before long.

The fruits coming from our little Catholic bookstore were good. We seemed to help a lot of people with their faith and even some vocations to the religious life. One of these was a young man, who many of you now know as Fr. Michael Adams, Secretary for the Special Commission overseeing Luisa's cause of beatification.

In September of 1973, I was asked by the pastor of one of the parishes with a school to teach the third grade at his school. I accepted at a salary of \$5500 per year. I basically taught religion all day to those third graders, incorporating religion in every subject. Kathy ran the bookstore and made rosaries during the day. After three years of teaching grade school and four years of operating the bookstore, we left St. Petersburg and moved to the "woods" near Chiefland, FL, about 140 miles north of St. Petersburg.

But what about that black briefcase carried by that Priest and laymen from Milan, who came to Frascati, when Kathy and I were there in August of 1972?! We would discover the secret of those contents in October of 1973. Young Michael Adams had enthusiastically followed my advice to go join the Priests and brother, who had that house in Frascati just outside of Rome. When he arrived there in August of 1973, he soon learned what was in that black briefcase that Kathy and I had seen with the visitors from Milan a year earlier.

In October of 1973, we received a 4-page, legal-sized letter from the superior of the house where the now Brother Michael Adams was living in community. The letter was most beautiful, containing doctrine on the Divine Will taken from the writings of Luisa Piccarreta. The contents of that black briefcase were writings

from Luisa's spiritual diary of 36 Volumes and her other works. Now we knew. I was immediately drawn to these celestial teachings but did not understand them. The understanding would come later.

A few months later, one of the Mexican Priests from the house in Frascati, visited us and spoke about Luisa's doctrine. I still didn't understand it but was getting better prepared. In the summer of 1974, one of the American brothers visited us for a month. He was translating Volume 1 but spoke very little. Yet I was getting better acquainted with Luisa and her doctrine. That same summer, Br. Michael Adams also came home for several weeks. We learned a lot more about Luisa from him.

In March of 1974, young Nelson Darnell left St. Petersburg for Italy to join the community in Frascati. Because of a disease of the colon, he was dispensed from much of the work there and was able to spend a lot of time studying Luisa's writings. The following January, David Sauls followed Nelson Darnell and joined the community in Frascati.

In the summer of 1975, the superior of the house (now in Corato) visited us for several days. He gave me a manuscript in English to print, which contained extracts from the spiritualities of Archbishop Luis Martinez, Luisa Piccarreta, and Conception Cabrera. I began to read the manuscript late at night. While reading an extract from Luisa's writings about Adam and Eve at about 11:25 PM, I received a brilliant illumination about the Gift of the Divine Will. Suddenly I understood it!! It was my 36th birthday. What a wonderful birthday present! At that same time I was also made to understand the sorrow to the Heart of God when Adam rejected this Gift. I still cry at times when I recall the understanding I received that night.

By then we had a small nucleus of souls beginning to learn about Luisa and her most beautiful doctrine on the Divine Will. A lot of excitement began to grow, but also the tests. It seems that everyone will be tested for his fidelity to this unsurpassable Gift. Much happened from the summer of 1975 to the summer of 1976. Then came the Great Test for this budding apostolate on behalf of the Reign of the Divine Will! It seems better not to go into detail about this test, which involved reports of scandal. It is enough to say that half of our group of about 16 persons abandoned their interest in Luisa's doctrine, some of them going to extreme degrees of imprudent behavior. I myself barely passed this Test. Meditating on the "Our Father" preserved me. Thank you God! But passing tests is God's way of strengthening us for future combat and for perseverance in trial.

In January of 1976, I began to read the spiritual diary of Blessed Dina Belanger. This was a very great gift from Heaven for me, because at that time there was almost nothing to read in English of Luisa's life and spiritual doctrine. From 1976 to 1981, although I had more and more exposure to Luisa through correspondence with Michael Adams, Nelson Darnell, David Sauls, and their visits back to Florida, Bl. Dina was my primary teacher (from Heaven) of the lofty spirituality of our times. Her doctrine was very similar to that of Luisa in many ways.

Meanwhile, Kathy, Evelyn, and I had moved to rural Chiefland, Florida. We bought 2-1/2 acres and a small mobile home. Evelyn took her school courses by correspondence. I got a job as an inspector at a nearby plywood mill. In my spare time, I began to build a house. When it was partly finished, we sold the mobile home and moved into our unfinished house, which never did get completely finished while we owned it. Life in the country and woods had its beneficial aspects, however: chickens, goats, garden, and especially being away from the immoral influences of big cities. We named the house "Casa Luisa" and had several meetings for those beginning to learn about Luisa. People came from various places to participate in these meetings.

In the summer of 1977 the management of the plywood mill, where I worked asked me to work on Sundays. I refused to do so and even reminded them of my employment interview during which I had told them that I would not work on Sundays. Nevertheless, they terminated my employment. We had a few thousand dollars from the sale of our house in St. Petersburg; and I went on unemployment compensation and food stamps to keep the family going. Later, I had to work as a freelance carpenter at \$4.50/hour. In the spring of 1979, I took some tests for employment with the federal government and was

offered a low paying but very demanding job on a limited term appointment with the U.S. Department of Labor in Jacksonville, Florida. I accepted this job; we moved to Jacksonville, and I began work on July 1, 1979. There was no hurry to sell our place in Chiefland, nor would it be easy to sell an unfinished house in the woods. So we made weekend trips to "Casa Luisa" and held several meetings there on Luisa's spirituality during the 1980's and early 1990's. I also spent considerable weekend time over those years trying to finish that house in Chiefland, which is located 110 miles southwest of Jacksonville. Christmas came in 1979. We had no Christmas tree, but I found a discarded one on Christmas night, and we put it up for the rest of the season through the Feast of the Epiphany.

Our daughter, Evelyn, completed the eighth grade at a Catholic school in Jacksonville and won a scholarship to the Catholic high school. As a family we went for an interview at that high school. It soon became apparent that I could never let my daughter go there, even on a scholarship. Her faith would be in grave danger there. We were able to send her to a private girls' school on a partial scholarship. Evelyn graduated four years later at the top of her class.

In September of 1980, I met Fr. Gobbi in Inverness, Florida, and gave him an Italian copy of "The Virgin Mary in the Kingdom of the Divine Will." One week later, Fr. Gobbi was in Connecticut and spoke excitedly about the Triumph of the Immaculate Heart of Mary being the fulfillment of the 'Our Father.'

In May and June of 1981, Michael Adams, Nelson Darnell, and David Sauls came home from Italy for an indefinite waiting period at the request of their superior. The community had moved from Frascati to Corato in late 1976. Now they were in the process of relocating. They eventually found a location in the Diocese of Civitavecchia-Tarquinia, northwest of Rome. Michael Adams would return to Italy in 1983 and be ordained there by Bishop Girolamo Grillo in May of 1985. I was privileged to be his altar server.

With the return of the three young men to Florida, I had an opportunity to learn about Luisa and the Divine Will and obtain various extracts of her writings in Italian. I had already contacted an association in Milan, Italy, which was publishing Luisa's writings in Italian. In May of 1981, I began self-studying Italian and translating Luisa's writings. I began one day to translate a passage from one of the books I had gotten from Milan. I was startled and wonderfully surprised at what I was writing as I translated. Right from Luisa's own diary was almost exactly, word for word, what I had been given in that marvelous illumination at 11:25 PM on my birthday 6 years earlier!

In September of 1981 my term appointment with the U.S. Department of Labor, expired. I was offered another job with the federal government in Orlando, which I accepted. But my heart was heavy because the school environment for our daughter did not seem fitting for a good Catholic girl. I returned to Jacksonville, and when I went to my office to clean out my desk, I received a phone call from the Navy about a civilian job at one of the naval air stations in Jacksonville. The job was a very low-paying one, far below my skill level. I thought about my responsibilities as a Catholic parent, and decided to take that job. This way, our daughter could stay at the private girls' school and its good environment. Not only was my new job low-paying and undemanding of my skills, but I had the 'second worst boss on earth.' I say 'second worst boss,' because I figured the 'first worst boss' would have to be somewhere in communist Russia! My real consolation, however, was knowing about Luisa's spirituality and being able to learn more and more about it. Kathy would have to go to work, though. She also went to work for the federal government, but in a different location than I. Our daughter was now in high school and was only home for a short time before her parents arrived home from work.

In October of 1982, David Sauls and I visited the Trappist monastery at Conyers, Georgia. In Rome the Pope canonized St. Maximilian Kolbe while we were at that monastery, and on that day we met a young convert, who had attended West Point Academy. He was at the monastery seeking spiritual counsel about his vocation in life. Our conversations with him led him to fall in love with the spirituality of Luisa. He soon went to Italy to join the community of Priests who were now located in Civitavecchia. He was ordained a Priest by Pope John Paul II in June of 1987.

In February of 1983, Michael Adams, returned to Italy and picked up life again with the community of Priests in Civitavecchia. As mentioned above, he was ordained in May of 1985. The date was May 25th Padre Pio's birthday. He was very happy about this because of his esteem for Padre Pio.

1984: My father, who was such a good Christian example, died on January 4th. In March, I went to Medjugorje with a group of friends. I was there on March 25th, the day when the Pope consecrated the world to the Immaculate Heart of Mary. That same year, the superior of the community in Civitavecchia allowed three of us in Florida to have copies of Luisa's first nineteen volumes in Italian. I was overjoyed, because I was becoming more and more capable of reading her volumes in Italian. It was about that time that we were able to publish the first edition of the Divine Will Prayer Book in English. In October, I met Mr. Pat Valentine and his wife Luana. They would be faithful friends in times both good and bad.

On January 1, 1985, I was in the Washington, D.C. area. I went to the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception and consecrated my life to Our Lady as Queen of the Divine Will, with the intention of doing all I could to know, live, and promote the knowledge of the Gift of the Divine Will. I repeated this consecration at all 12 altars to Our Lady in that Basilica. When the superior of the community of Priests in Italy learned of this, he requested that I not go on my own but remain united with his community and continue the help I had been giving him for the past 13 years. He also appointed me as 'general director' of the Divine Will activities in the United States as far as this concerned the work of his community.

In April of 1985, I was visited by a fine gentleman, living in Georgia, who was 20 years my senior. We became good friends and began to travel together to promote Luisa and her spirituality. We worked hard in union with one another for more than seven years. Later that year we published the first English edition of "The Virgin Mary in the Kingdom of the Divine Will," with the permission of our local Bishop. We had to raise funds for this project. The Knights of Columbus gave us our first donation. It was \$500. Others contributed, and we went to press. We advertised this book in the Catholic press and as a result began getting inquiries about Luisa and the Gift of the Divine Will from all over the country. We formed a non-profit corporation to publish this book and the prayer book and otherwise promote Luisa's doctrine.

In May of 1985, Fr. Michael Adams was ordained as has been mentioned above. In November of 1985, the Priest superior of the community in Civitavecchia, Italy, visited the USA and set in progress a base of operations for his community in America. During the period of 1985 and the following few years, I put out a very primitive newsletter about Luisa and her doctrine. The newsletter was called, "The Divine Will Herald."

On April 23, 1986, John Olin Brown, of Texas converted to the Catholic Church and began pursuing a religious vocation. [I only learned of this a year later.] Sometime that year we were able to publish the first English edition of "The Hours of the Passion of Our Lord Jesus Christ." A friend in Alaska did the typesetting on his computer. Meanwhile interest in Luisa began to grow and grow. In November, a Conference on Luisa's spirituality, sponsored by the community of Priests from Italy, was held near Orlando. It was at that time that I learned that one of the founding Priests of the community in Italy had left the community for reasons of conscience. This was quite a shock.

On January 1, 1987, I had my second dream-vision. It would be far different than the first dream-vision of October, 1971. This time, it was made known to me that I would suffer a great betrayal by the Priest I had helped so much over the past 15 years. I didn't know when this would happen, so I continued as usual.

In March of 1987 John Olin Brown, the convert from Texas, was visiting for a while with the Sisters of Charity in New Mexico. A man named Don Shaw came there and loaned him a copy of the Divine Will Herald. What John Olin Brown read in that newsletter set him on fire! He called me and soon came to see me in Jacksonville. From there we drove to a place near Orlando where the superior of the Priest community from Italy was visiting. Soon John Olin Brown joined that community in Italy and began studying Luisa's writings in Italian.

In July of 1987, some of the Priests of the Italian community, who had already established a base in Florida, traveled around the USA visiting the budding groups of followers of Luisa. Unfortunately, their visits in large part had a negative effect on many people. These unfortunate consequences were due mainly to their promoting their own erroneous opinions about marriage, and other ideas nowhere to be found in the writings of Luisa, but interpreted by listeners as being contained in Luisa's writings. In November came the 'coup de grace' of the betrayal that I had seen in the January dream-vision. I will avoid mentioning the details, but say that I still remained meekly at their service for five more years, since my good friends, Fr. Michael Adams and Br. John Brown were still part of that community; and I also felt a great need to be connected to those who had the momentum with Luisa's writings.

[To be continued next issue]

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The Dignity of the Laity in the Catholic Church

Pope John Paul II and the Role of the Laity in the Church Today

In the history of the Catholic Church, few leaders have done more to recognize the importance of the laity than Pope John Paul II. During the course of his pontificate, he has repeatedly sounded the Second Vatican Council's universal call to holiness. He has beatified and canonized hundreds of lay faithful. Moreover, he has recognized the emergence of new lay movements as a "a motive of hope for the Church and for humankind." He hails them as "a sign of the freedom of forms taken by the one Church" ... which "represent certainly a new reality which has still to be adequately understood in all its positive effectiveness for the Kingdom of God" (*Insegnamenti*, VII/2 [1984], p. 696).

The "universal call to holiness" was one of the major themes of the Second Vatican Council II. In *Lumen Gentium* (*Dogmatic Constitution on the Church*) (November 11, 1964), the Council Fathers proclaimed that all of the baptized—the lay faithful as much as priests and religious—are called to the highest holiness. "All Christians in any state or walk of life are called to the fullness of Christian life and the perfection of charity" (*Lumen Gentium*, Section 40).

Pope John Paul II has continually repeated this call to holiness for the laity. In his 1988 Apostolic Exhortation *Christifideles Laici* (*Vocation and Mission of Lay Faithful*), he wrote:

We come to a full sense of the dignity of the lay faithful if we consider the prime and fundamental vocation that the Father assigns to each of them in Jesus Christ through the Holy Spirit: the vocation to holiness, that is, the perfection of charity. Holiness is the greatest testimony of the dignity conferred on a disciple of Christ (*Christifideles Laici*, Section 16).

Commenting on this universal call to holiness, spiritual theologian Thomas Dubay, S. M., observes that all the faithful—laity as well as priests and religious—are meant "to experience spiritual realities in a mystical manner" (*Fire Within*, p. 215). He also notes that the Church "assumes as obvious that all the faithful are summoned to the summit of mystical prayer" (*Ibid*).

It has been widely observed that Pope John Paul II has canonized more saints (almost 500) and beatified more holy individuals (almost 2000) than all of his predecessors combined, going back to Clement VIII (1592-1605). It is not so well known that more than half of the saints canonized by Pope John Paul II have been lay men and women. Moreover, the lay men and women canonized and beatified by Pope John Paul II have been drawn from every walk of life. Recently, he beatified a married couple, the Quattrocchi's, whose miracle for beatification took place in answer to prayers offered through their joint intercession.

Perhaps the Pope's most original insight into the role of the laity in the Church today lies in his esteem for the many spiritual lay organizations and movements that have sprung up since the Second Vatican Council. In *Christifideles Laici*, he wrote:

In recent days the phenomenon of lay people associating among themselves has taken on a character of particular variety and vitality. In some ways lay associations have always been present throughout the Church's history as various confraternities, third orders and sodalities testify even today. However, in modern times such lay groups have received a special stimulus, resulting in the birth and spread of a multiplicity of group forms: associations, groups, communities, movements. We can speak of a *new era of group endeavours* of the lay faithful (emphasis in original) (*Christifideles Laici*, Section 29).

In his appreciation for lay organizations, especially those oriented toward fostering a growth in holiness, Pope John Paul II recalls the prophetic words of the Servant of God Marthe Robin. In 1936, she foretold that the Foyers of Charity, a lay movement, would be "the expression of the Heart of Jesus to the nations *after* the defeat of materialism and satanic errors." Moreover, according to Marthe, the Foyers would only be part of a much larger movement of lay holiness. She prophesied "a New Pentecost of Love" through which "the Church would be renewed by an apostolate of the laity."

Like Marthe's vision of a "New Pentecost," Pope John Paul II's personal vision of a "new springtime" in the Church and an "era of peace" is inseparable from his vision of a full development of lay holiness, both in individual souls and in lay associations and movements.—(submitted by Hugh Owen)

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From Ven. Conception Cabrera: Jesus said to her one day, "There are priestly souls, who, although without the dignity or consecration of the priest, have a priestly mission because they offer themselves in union with Me to the Father as an immolation that is pleasing to Him. These souls powerfully help the Church in the spiritual arena and will have a special reward in heaven. But for these souls too, their transformation into Me is indispensable."

From Fr. Philipon's commentary on Ven. Conception Cabrera's spiritual writings:

"There is no question here of a type of holiness departing from the Gospel, but rather of a resource taken in view of a new application of this same Gospel."

We are incontestably in a new era of spirituality. What constitutes its newness is:

- 1) a calling of *all*, even of the laity, even of married people, to *the greatest holiness*.
- 2) through *transfiguration of daily life*, the sanctification of the profane, divinization by faith, by love and by the spirit of sacrifice *in ordinary life*.
- 3) *the greatest holiness*, Transcendence of the message of the Cross. Even the most banal actions are made of value to the infinite by the offering of love in union with Christ, in imitation of the last years on earth of the Mother of God, in the service of the nascent Church.."

St. Faustina Kowalska in her diary speaks about souls who are loved by God with a special predilection and how their souls are marked with an indelible mark because of this.

"[T]he Lord gave me to know that, among his chosen ones, there are some who are especially chosen, and whom He calls to a higher form of holiness, to exceptional union with Him. These are seraphic souls, from whom God demands greater love than He does from others... Such a soul understands this call, because God makes this known to it interiorly... In heaven, it will be distinguished from other souls by greater glory and radiance and deeper knowledge of God... This indelible mark of God's exclusive love, in the [soul], will not be obliterated." (Note: The unabridged version of this passage warns of the great responsibility of these souls.)

Editor's Comment: The above insights on the laity bring to our attention that a perfect harmony of missions, respect, and a mutual sense of dignity between the common priesthood and the ministerial Priesthood is the mandated call from Heaven in our times. There is no question of Our Lord's predilection for his ministerial Priests, nor is there a question of His love's perfect providence in gracing members of the laity with divinely animated missions of immense import on behalf of the entire church, for which the ministerial Priesthood can very grateful, just as the laity should be boundlessly grateful to the Priests for the myriad of blessings coming through them, especially the humble ones, whose dignity is naturally and suavely magnified because of their humility.