

On Volume One

*Of the Writings of Luisa Piccarreta
The Little Daughter of the Divine Will*

An Application for the Soul

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VOLUME 1

Scheme of the Development of Themes

The Beginning of the Work of Jesus in Luisa Gradual and Progressive Steps of Purification and Preparation

Introductory Note: Luisa's Volume 1, written, as all the other Volumes, because of obedience and out of obedience, is different from all the others, as it appears to consist mainly in an autobiographical narration of the beginning¹ of her mystical life and of the work of God in her soul, in preparation for her mission, which was then unknown to her. It is also different in the form, since it is not divided into sections or chapters with dates and titles, but is a continuous flow of narration of events, situations and mystical experiences, which took place several years before she wrote them, and in a chronological order which does not always, and not necessarily, correspond to the sequence presented in the Volume². The simple scheme here below has the purpose of identifying and presenting the development of themes which unfold in Volume 1 - not as an index, but as a practical grid which can be helpful for the individual application of the Volume to each soul who desires to live It, as a continuous journey of purification, preparation and disposition for the living in the Divine Will.

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- Initial Prayer
 - To Jesus, her Holy Spouse (for light and consummation of her being in Him)
 - To Mary, Most Holy Virgin and Lovable Mother (for strength and obedience)
 - To St. Joseph (for protection and assistance)
 - To St. Michael the Archangel (for defense against the enemy)
 - To St. Raphael the Archangel and to her Guardian Angel (for guidance)

- 1st and 2nd Excesses of Love in the Incarnation of the Word

THE BEGINNING OF THE WORK OF JESUS IN LUISA:

Gradual and Progressive Steps: 1→2→3→4→5

1. DETACHMENT FROM CREATURES AND THE EXTERNAL WORLD

- a) Stripping her heart and mind of 'the little world'
- b) Learning how to love creatures in Jesus

2. PURIFICATION OF HER INTERIOR

- a) Annihilation of the self. Humility.
- b) No more thinking about the past
- c) Upright operating (eyes fixed on Jesus)

¹ There is, however, another small "Notebook of Childhood Memories", written by Luisa at a later time, in 1926, in obedience to her extraordinary Confessor, St. Hannibal Di Francia, in which she was asked to write about her very first years of life, from her birth up to the age of about twelve.

² As Luisa herself wrote: *'I don't remember it in sequence, but I will say what I can'* (Vol. 1). And we know that what 'she could' is not at all a limitation, but is exactly what Our Lord disposed for her to write, and in that specific sequence.

- d) Charity above everything
- e) Mortification

3. IMITATION OF THE LIFE OF JESUS

- a) The Sea of His Passion
 - “Soul, help Me!”
- b) Tests of privation (lessons)
 - spirit of peace
 - with her pains, consoling Jesus, who suffered so much more
 - multiplication of ‘immediate acts’
- c) The great test of faithfulness
 - weapons for the battle: prayer, obedience, courage
 - long battle against the enemy for three years
 - Jesus teaches her how to defeat him (The Protest)
- d) The state of victim (encouraged by Mary Most Holy, in Torre Disperata)
 - three gradual acceptances
 - misunderstandings in the family

4. VICTIMHOOD - LUISA IS BEDRIDDEN

- Necessity of the priest. Opposition on the part of some (3-4 years)
- Cholera epidemic. It is stopped through the sufferings of Luisa.
- Luisa begins to manifest her interior (with her 2nd confessor, Fr. Michele De Benedictis)
- Jesus asks her to suffer continuously in bed for ‘some time’ (40 days?) – November 1887

Interjection

The ways in which Jesus speaks to Luisa:

1. Intellectual speaking
 - 1a. Her spirit goes out of her body;
 - 1b. Her spirit remains with the body, which feels nothing;
 - High and sublime; less adaptable to the human nature
2. Human type of speaking (with her spirit outside of the body)
 - Easier to manifest for the human nature
3. Substantial speaking
 - Jesus communicates to the soul the substance of His word (e.g. purity, beauty)
4. Natural speaking (spirit inside the body)
 - 4a - Interior locution
 - 4b - Word audible to the ear of the body

5. VICTIMHOOD - LUISA IS BEDRIDDEN (*Cont.*)

- The promise of Jesus to visit her every day

6. NEW WAY OF LIFE – MYSTICAL MARRIAGE; THE MARRIAGE OF THE CROSS

- The confessor is persuaded through a sign: the war between Italy and Africa. Luisa is permanently bedridden (Beginning of 1888)
- Care and attentions of Jesus in preparation for the Mystical Marriage

Digressions

- Description of the appearance and beauty of Jesus
- For the first time Luisa's spirit goes out of her body to travel and stroll with Jesus in Heaven, amid sinners, in churches, at Holy Mass
- The meaning of Holy Mass
- The greatest consolation and highest mystery for a Christian:
 1. The Holy Eucharist
 2. The resurrection of the body

A. **Mystical Marriage** (October 16, 1888)

- Participation of Mary Most Holy and St. Catherine of Siena
- Luisa's visits in Heaven as a new bride. Delight of the Blessed. Communion of Saints.
- Burning desire to go to Heaven. Jesus plays with her, 'pretending' to take her to Heaven on several occasions. Luisa renounces her entrance into Heaven out of obedience and for the salvation of a sinner
- Preparation for the Renewal of the Mystical Marriage
- Jesus speaks of, and infuses, Faith, Hope and Love

B. **Renewal of the Mystical Marriage** in the presence of the Most Holy Trinity (September 1889)

A few days later the Holy Trinity descends to Luisa to form Their dwelling in her heart – real presence, sensibly felt by Luisa

The **GIFT OF THE DIVINE WILL** (Re: Vol. 13 Dec. 5, 1921)

- Preparation for the Marriage of the Cross
 1. Sorrow for sins (*'If I cross the sea, You are in the sea, yet I do not see You; I tread the earth, and You are under my feet. I sinned' ... "Yet I loved you, and at that very moment, I preserved you."*)
 2. Yearning for the crucifixion
- Miracle of the resurrection, by means of Luisa's sufferings, of a sinner from Corato who had been killed by gunshots.

C. Marriage of the Cross

CRUCIFIXION

- Exaltation of the Cross (*“Do you want to be beautiful?... Do you want to be rich?... ”*)
- Finally, complete crucifixion on a new larger cross descending from Heaven in exchange for the old smaller one
- Participation of Mary Most Holy, St. John the Evangelist and the Angels
- Liberation of many souls from Purgatory, conversion of many sinners (*“A day of grace”* Mary M.H.). Communion of goods.
- More crucifixions follow. Different mysteries of the Passion
- Jesus asks Luisa to pray also for her corporal crucifixion (stigmata). (*“I present myself before the supreme throne of God, bathed in the Blood of Jesus Christ, praying Him, by the merit of His most luminous virtues and of His Divinity, to concede me the grace to be crucified.”*) Luisa’s aversion for exterior signs

SORROW FOR SINS - CONFESSION

- Jesus does the office of Confessor
- Comprehension of the ugliness of sin, especially that of pride, and of the pains caused to Jesus’ Heart (example of the king and the worm)
- Confession of about seven hours
- Jesus, as most loving Father, applies the merits of His sorrow in the Garden of Gethsemani, to dispose Luisa to receive the absolution

RESOLUTION

- Promise to sin no more

ABSOLUTION

- Jesus forgives her applying the merits of His Passion (words of absolution exactly like those pronounced by the priest)

PENANCE

- He calls her to make penance by kissing His wounds

SPECIAL GRACE

- He gives her the great grace never to fall again into voluntary venial sin. (*“Be attentive...”*)

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- A new war between Italy and African countries
 - Pride and ‘Satanism’ among the deputies in the Parliament
 - Tears and warning of Jesus

 - 3rd through 9th Excesses of Love in the Incarnation of the Word

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THE SOUL'S VOLUME 1

An Application

A Rosary-Round to live and re-live the continuous beginning of the soul's journey toward and within the Divine Will

The Rosary-Round proposed here below is drawn from the development of themes and topics which is found in Volume 1 of the Writings of Luisa, and which characterizes the preparation and the beginning of her spiritual journey toward the Divine Will as her own life, according to the work which Our Lord disposed and carried out in her soul.

We know that Luisa is absolutely unique, as her mission is unique, and so is the operating of God in her soul. However, at the same time, it is very helpful to consider how Volume 1 of her Writings does not simply narrate the 'story of Luisa', but, behind the historical and contextual circumstances of her life and the beginning of her mission, it reveals a path, a journey of preparation, purification and transformation, which each soul, in her own uniqueness, is called to follow, as she desires to embrace the Divine Will as her life.

Therefore, far from presenting a general model or a common program - because each soul is unique and her spiritual journey toward and within the Divine Will unfolds in an intimate relationship with her Lord - it is indeed possible and helpful to identify some milestones, some necessary steps, some key turning points, and their natural sequence and order - which Luisa lived in her own special path, presented so vividly and dramatically, but also with childlike simplicity, in her Volume 1 - and, from them, to invite and allow Our Lord to write and carry out the Volume 1 of each soul.

How real, how practical, how instructive, how deeply personal, then, becomes Luisa's Volume 1 - it can become the foundation of *The Soul's Volume 1*, to be lived and written within her - and not just once, but continuously and ever more deeply. So, here is the reason for a *Rosary-Round of the Soul's Volume 1*.

- Why a '*Rosary*'? Simply because it can be prayed and recited using the traditional rosary beads. Moreover, it arises as a little child of the Most Holy Rosary of the Blessed Virgin Mary, as Our Celestial Mother guides and accompanies the soul, from the meditation on the mysteries of the Life of Her Son, to an application of the fruits of purification and transformation that can only come from It.
- Why a '*Round*'? Simply because, as any prayer done in the Divine Will, it is a round, a journey, in the acts of the Divine Will Itself. It is true that it is a prayer of preparation and disposition for the Divine Will as life of the soul. But isn't this preparation and disposition God's Will, and the effect of It? Undoubtedly so. Therefore, while always imperfect, and 'a nothing' full of many defects before the Sanctity of God, the soul who sincerely desires to live in God's Will, and to let herself be purified and transformed by It, can begin to do it immediately, in the Divine Will, not only desiring to receive the purifying effects of It, but already starting to unite herself to the source of those effects - the purifying and sanctifying acts of the Divine Will, for her own good and, most importantly, for the individual and universal good of all souls. Does this not become, then, a *Round of the Soul in the Acts of Purification and Sanctification of the Divine Will*?

This Rosary-Round, whose beads mark the steps of the real life of the soul, is divided into five parts, with five decades each - a total of twenty-five decades which can be prayed and lived in many different ways: they can be a prayer concentrated in one day, or a deeper and slower round during five consecutive days, as well as a prolonged journey, a retreat of twenty-five or fifty days, in which each

bead, or day, is meant to be an actualized experience and formation of life toward and within the Divine Will.

How much gentle freedom in God's Adorable Will, how many opportunities, how many ways, to be able to live and re-live, in a continuous beginning, the unique path that Luisa has prepared for each soul who desires to embrace the Divine Will has her life.

From Luisa's last words here on earth:

*"I now see a long, beautiful and wide Road, illuminated by infinite and refulgent Suns;
...Oh! ...yes, I recognize them: they are the Suns of my acts done in the Divine Will.
This is the Road which I must now follow;
It is the Road prepared for me by the Divine Volition;
It is the Road of my triumph;
It is the Road of my glory, to be united in the immense happiness of the Divine Will; ...
...It is the Road which I will reserve for all those souls who will want to live in the Divine Will."*

A Summary of the Five Parts and Twenty-five Decades:

First Part

Emptying and Purification

- 1st Decade – Detachment from creatures and from the world
- 2nd Decade – Annihilation of the self. Humility
- 3rd Decade - No more thinking about the past
- 4th Decade - Upright operating
- 5th Decade - Charity above everything

Second Part

Mortification and the Imitation of Christ

- 6th Decade – Mortification
- 7th Decade – The Sea of His Passion (*“Soul, help Me!”*)
- 8th Decade – A spirit of peace
- 9th Decade – Consoling suffering Jesus
- 10th Decade – Multiplication of ‘immediate acts’

Third Part

Testing and Strengthening

- 11th Decade – Test of faithfulness
- 12th Decade – Holy weapons for the battle: (a) Prayer
- 13th Decade - Holy weapons for the battle: (b) Obedience
- 14th Decade - Holy weapons for the battle: (c) Courage
- 15th Decade – Defeating the enemy

Fourth Part

Learning the way of the Cross

- 16th Decade – Accepting the cross: Resignation
- 17th Decade – Embracing the cross: Abandonment in Jesus
- 18th Decade – Finding contentment in the cross
- 19th Decade – Learning to value the cross
- 20th Decade – Recognizing one’s ‘true cross’ and its purpose

Fifth Part

Enlightenment and Union with Jesus

- 21st Decade – Contemplating Jesus and listening to His word
- 22nd Decade – Receiving the substance of His word: (a) Faith
- 23rd Decade - Receiving the substance of His word: (b) Hope
- 24th Decade - Receiving the substance of His word: (c) Charity
- 25th Decade – Bond of inseparability with God: His Divine Will as life

A Rosary-Round of the Soul's Volume 1

First Part Emptying and Purification

1st Decade – Detachment from creatures and from the world

2nd Decade – Annihilation of the self. Humility

3rd Decade - No more thinking about the past

4th Decade - Upright operating

5th Decade - Charity above everything

1st Decade – Detachment from creatures and from the world

*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, to truly enamoring you of Me. Promise Me that you will be all mine, and I Myself will put my hand in the work. You are right that you can do nothing. Do not fear, I will do everything; give Me your will - this is enough for Me.”*

*...For example, if I let myself be carried away in conversing a little too much with my family, even of indifferent things which were not necessary, the interior voice would tell me: “These discourses fill your mind with things that do not belong to Me; they surround your heart with dust, such as to make you feel my grace as weak, no longer alive. O please! **imitate Me when I was in the house of Nazareth – my mind was occupied with nothing but the glory of the Father and the salvation of souls; my mouth uttered nothing but holy discourses.** With my words I tried to repair for the offenses against the Father, to dart through hearts and draw them to my love – and primarily my Mother and St. Joseph. In a word, everything called upon God, everything was done for God, and everything referred to Him. Why could you not do the same?”*

*...One morning in particular, after Communion, He gave me a light so clear about the great love He had for me, and about the fickleness and inconstancy of creatures, that my heart was so convinced as to be incapable, from that time on, of loving anyone. **He taught me the way how to love people without detaching myself from Him – that is, by looking at creatures as images of God,** in such a way that, 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 my heart would be bound more to God. If then I received mortifications, I was to look at them also as instruments in the hands of God for my sanctification; so my heart would not remain huffy with my neighbor. In this way, it happened that I would look at all creatures in God. Whatever fault 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.*

*When the Divine Master freed me from the external world, then He put His hand into purifying my interior, and through an interior voice He told me: “Now we are alone – there is no one left who may disturb us. **Aren't you happier now than before, when you had to content many upon many? You see,***

it is easier to content one alone. You must consider as if you and I were alone in the world; promise Me to be faithful, and I will pour such and so many graces into you, that you yourself will be amazed.” (Volume 1)

2nd Decade – Annihilation of the self. Humility

*It seems to me that He told me that the first thing which was **necessary in order to purify the interior of my heart, was the annihilation of myself – that is, humility.** And He continued, telling me: “See, so that I may pour my graces in your heart, I really want to make you understand that by yourself you can do nothing. I am very much wary of those souls who attribute what they do to themselves, wanting to make of my graces as many thefts. On the other hand, with those who know themselves, I am generous in pouring my graces in torrents. Knowing very well that they can attribute nothing to themselves, they are grateful to Me, they hold it in that esteem which befits it, and they live with the continuous fear that, if they do not correspond to Me, I may take away from them that which I gave, knowing that it is not something of their own. All the opposite in the hearts which reek of pride. I cannot even enter into their hearts because they are so swollen with themselves that there is no space in which to put Myself. The miserable ones take my graces into no account, and they go from fall to fall, up to their ruin. **Therefore, on this day I want you to make continuous acts of humility; I want you to be like a baby wrapped in swaddling clothes, who can move neither a foot to take a step, nor a hand to work, but expects everything from his mother. In the same way, you will stay close to Me like a baby, always praying Me to assist you, to help you; always confessing to Me your nothingness – in sum, expecting everything from Me.**”* (Volume 1)

3rd Decade - No more thinking about the past

*I had such fear of moving away and of doing worse than before, that I myself cannot express it. When I was with Him, I did nothing but tell Him of the pain I felt for having offended Him. I kept asking for His forgiveness, I thanked Him for having been so good to me, and I said to Him from the heart: ‘**See, Oh Lord, the time I have lost, while I could love You.**’ So, I was unable to say anything but the grave evil I had done.*

*Finally, one day, reprimanding me, He told me: “**I do not want you to think about it. When a soul has humbled herself, 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, because her mind is always trying to roll in the past mud. She also prevents Me from letting her take flights toward Heaven, because she is always with those ideas wrapped within herself, if she tries to think about it. And then, see, I no longer remember anything; I have perfectly forgotten about it. Do you see any rancor or shadow on my part?**”*

And I said to Him: ‘No Lord, You are so good.’ But I felt my heart split with tenderness.

“Well then, 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)

4th Decade - Upright operating

*“Do not fear, little by little we will do everything. I Myself know how weak you are, but it is from Me that you must draw strength.” And He added: “**I want you to be always upright in your operating – with one eye look at Me, and with the other eye look at what you are doing.** I want creatures to disappear from you completely. If you receive a command, do not look at the people, no – but you must*

think that I Myself want you to do what you are being commanded. So, with your eye fixed in Me, you will not judge anyone, you will not look at whether the thing is painful or enjoyable – whether you can do it or not. Closing your eyes to all this, you will open them to look at Me alone; you will take Me together with you, thinking that my gaze is fixed on you, and you will say to Me: ‘Lord, for You alone I do this; for You alone I want to work – no longer a slave of the creatures.’ So, if you walk, if you work, if you speak – in anything you do, your only aim must be that of pleasing Me alone. Oh! how many defects you will avoid, if you do this.”

Other times, He would say to me: “I also want that, if people mortify you, insult you, contradict you, you keep your gaze fixed in Me, thinking that from my own lips I am saying to you: ‘Daughter, I Myself am the one who wants you to suffer this - not the creatures. Remove your gaze from them; but you and I, always – all others you must destroy. See, I want to render you beautiful by means of these sufferings; I want to enrich you with merits, work your soul, render you similar to Me. You will give it to Me as a gift, you will thank Me affectionately, and will be grateful to those people who give you the occasion to suffer, repaying them with some benefit. By doing this, you will walk as upright before Me; nothing will ever again give you restlessness, and you will enjoy perfect peace.” (Volume 1)

5th Decade - Charity above everything

He always added that everything should be done for love of Him, and that the most beautiful virtues, the greatest sacrifices, would render themselves insipid if they did not take origin from love. “Charity”, He said to me, “is a virtue that gives life and splendor to all others, in such a way that, without it, they are all dead. My eye receives no attraction, and they have no power over my Heart. Be attentive, then, and let your works, even the least ones, be invested by charity – that is, in Me, with Me and for Me”. (Volume 1)

Second Part Mortification and the Imitation of Christ

6th Decade – Mortification

7th Decade – The Sea of His Passion (“Soul, help Me!”)

8th Decade – A spirit of peace

9th Decade – Consoling suffering Jesus

10th Decade – Multiplication of ‘immediate acts’

6th Decade – Mortification

He spoke to me about, and made me understand, the necessity of the spirit of mortification.... He said to Me: “I want that all your things, even the necessary ones, be done in a spirit of sacrifice. See, your works cannot be recognized by Me as mine, if they do not have the imprint of mortification. Just as a coin is not recognized by the peoples if it does not carry on itself the image of their king – even more, it is despised and neglected - the same with your works: if they do not have the graft with my cross, they cannot have any value. See, now it is not about destroying the creatures, but yourself – making you die in order to live only in Me and of my own life. It is true that it will cost you more than what you have done; but pluck up courage, do not fear – it is not you who will do it, but I Myself will operate in you.”

So I received more lights about the annihilation of myself. He said to me: “You are nothing but a shadow – as you try to grab it, it escapes you. You are nothing.”

I felt so annihilated, that I would have wanted to hide in the deepest abysses, but I saw myself incapable of doing it. I felt such blushing that I remained mute. While I was in this undoing of my nothingness, He said to Me: “Draw near Me, cling to my arm – I will sustain you with my hands and you will receive strength. You are blind, but my light will serve you as guide. See, I will place Myself in front of you, and you will do nothing but look at Me in order to imitate Me.”

*Then He said to me: “**The first thing I want you to mortify is your will. That ‘self’ must be destroyed in you; I want you to keep it sacrificed as victim before Me, so that your will and Mine may become one. Aren’t you happy?**”*

‘Yes, Lord, but give me the grace, for I see that by myself I can do nothing.’ And He continued, telling me: “Yes, I Myself will contradict you in everything, and occasionally by means of creatures.” And so it happened. (Volume 1)

7th Decade – The Sea of His Passion (“Soul, help Me!”)

*He said to me: “My beloved, the things past have been nothing but a preparation. Now I want to come to facts, and in order to dispose your heart to do what I want from you – that is, the imitation of my Life - **I want you to sink into the immense sea of my Passion;** and when you have understood well the bitterness of my pains, the love with which I suffered them, Who I am who suffered so much, and who you are, a most wretched creature – ah! your heart will not dare to oppose the blows, the cross, which, only for your good, I have prepared. On the contrary, **by just thinking that I, your Master, have suffered so much, your pains will seem shadows to you compared to mine. Suffering will be sweet for you, and you will reach the point of not being able to be without sufferings.**”*

*My nature trembled at the mere thought of sufferings; I prayed that He Himself would give me the strength, because without Him I would use His very gifts to offend the giver. 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 has come to me from that source.** I pictured the Passion of Jesus Christ like an immense sea of light, which wounded me all over with His innumerable rays – rays of patience, of humility, of obedience, and of many other virtues. I saw myself as all surrounded by this light, and I remained annihilated at seeing myself so different from Him. Those rays that inundated me were as many reproaches for me. I heard them say: **“A God so patient - and you? A God humble and submitted even to His very enemies – and you? A God who suffers so much for love of you – and where are your sufferings for love of Him?”** (Volume 1)*

8th Decade – A spirit of peace

*“You were wrong in being so disturbed. Don’t you know that I am Spirit of Peace, and **the first thing I recommend is that you do not perturb the peace of the heart?** When in prayer you are not able to recollect yourself, I do not want you to think of this or that – of how it is and how it is not – because by doing so, you yourself call the distraction. Instead, when you find yourself in that state, the first thing is to humble yourself, confessing yourself as deserving of those pains, placing yourself in the arms of the executioner, like a humble little lamb that, while he kills it, licks his hand. So you - while seeing yourself beaten, disheartened, alone, you will resign yourself to my holy dispositions, you will thank Me wholeheartedly, you will kiss that hand of mine that strikes you, recognizing yourself unworthy of those pains. Then, you will offer to Me those bitternesses, anguishes, tediums, praying Me to accept them as a sacrifice of praise, of satisfaction for your sins, of reparation for the offenses that they give Me. **By doing so, your prayer will ascend before my throne as most fragrant incense; it will wound my Heart, and you will draw new graces and new charisms upon yourself.** In seeing you humble and resigned, all sunken into your nothingness, the devil will not have the strength to get close. And here is how, where you thought you were losing, you will make great gains.” (Volume 1)*

9th Decade – Consoling suffering Jesus

“...With regard to Communion, I do not want you to afflict yourself because you are not able to stay there; know that this is a shadow of the pains I suffered in Gethsemani. What will happen when I make you share in the scourges, the thorns and the nails? The thought of greater pains will make you suffer the minor pains with more courage. So, when during Communion you find yourself alone, agonizing, think that I want you a little bit as company in my agony in the garden. Therefore, **place yourself near Me, and make a comparison between your pains and mine: see, you - alone and without Me; and I too - alone, abandoned by my most faithful friends who are there sleeping; left alone even by my Divine Father; and then, in the midst of most bitter pains, surrounded by snakes, by vipers, by rabid dogs, which were the sins of men – and yours were there too, doing their part - such that they seemed to want to devour Me alive. My Heart was taken by such grips, that I felt It as if It were under a press; so much so, that I sweat living blood. Tell Me, when have you arrived at suffering so much? Therefore, when you find yourself without Me, afflicted, empty of any consolation, filled with sadnesses, with worries, with pains, come close to Me, wipe that blood from Me, offer those pains to Me as relief for my most bitter agony. By doing so, you will find the way to be able to remain with Me after Communion. It is not that you will not suffer, because the most bitter pain I can give to the souls dear to Me is to deprive them of Me; but by thinking that with that suffering of yours you give relief to Me, you will also be content.**” (Volume 1)

10th Decade – Multiplication of ‘immediate acts’³

“...As for the visits and acts of reparation, you must know that 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.... This you will do at all times: with the first thought of the morning, fly immediately 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....**” (Volume 1)

Third Part Testing and Strengthening

11th Decade – Test of faithfulness

12th Decade – Holy weapons for the battle: (a) Prayer

13th Decade - Holy weapons for the battle: (b) Obedience

14th Decade - Holy weapons for the battle: (c) Courage

15th Decade – Defeating the enemy

³ ‘Immediate acts’ or ‘actual acts’ (Re: Vol. 14 May 27, 1922). Jesus: “...Do you know when the soul draws an ‘I love you’ of mine upon herself? **When, fusing herself in Me, she takes on the divine attitude, and dissolving herself within Me, she does everything I do.**” And I: ‘**My Love, many times it is difficult to always maintain this divine attitude.**’ And Jesus: “My daughter, what the soul can not always do with her immediate acts in Me, she can make up for with the attitude of her good will. And I will be so pleased with it as to make Myself the vigilant sentry of each thought, of each word, of each heartbeat, etc.; and I will place them inside and outside of Me as my cortege, looking at them with such love, as the fruit of the good will of the creature. **When the soul, then, fusing herself in Me, does her immediate acts with Me, then I feel so drawn toward her that I do what she does together with her, and I transmute the operating of the creature into divine. I take everything into account, and I reward everything, even the smallest things; and even just one good act of the will does not remain defrauded in the creature.**” (Vol. 12 March 28, 1917)

11th Decade – Test of faithfulness

He repeated to me: **“Are you truly ready for anything I want?”** I saw myself more confused, annihilated, and I said: ‘Yes, I am ready’ – but almost trembling. And He, compassionating me, continued to tell me: **“Do not fear, I will be your strength – it is not you that will suffer, but I Myself will suffer and fight within you. See, I want to purify your soul from every slightest spot which might hinder my love in you; I want to test your faithfulness. But how can I see if this is true, other than by placing you in the midst of the battle? Know then, that I want to put you in the midst of demons. I will give them freedom to torment you and to tempt you, so that after you have fought the virtues with the opposite vices, you may already find yourself in possession of those very virtues which you think you are losing. And then, your soul, purged, embellished, enriched, will be like a king returning victorious from a most fierce war, who, while he thought he would lose what he possessed, comes back more glorious and filled with immense riches. Then will I come; I will form in you my dwelling, and we will be always together. It is true that your state will be painful; the demons will give you no more peace, either at daytime or at night – they will always be in act of waging a most fierce war against you. But you, always keep your aim at what I want to make of you – that is, making you similar to Me – and at the fact that you will not be able to arrive at this, other than by means of many and great tribulations. In this way, you will have more courage to bear the pains.”** (Volume 1)

12th Decade – Holy weapons for the battle: (a) Prayer

“Do not afflict yourself so much; know that I will never allow them to tempt you beyond your strengths. If I allow this, it is for your good. I never put souls in battles so that they may perish; first I measure their strengths, I give them my grace, and then I put them in. And if some souls fall, it is because they do not remain united to Me **by means of prayer; no longer feeling the sensitivity of my love, they go begging for love from creatures, while I alone can satiate the human heart. They do not let themselves be guided by the sure path of obedience, believing more in their own judgment, than in those who guide them in my place. So, what is the wonder if they fall? Therefore, **what I recommend to you is prayer. Even if you should suffer pains of death, you must never neglect that which you are used to doing; even more, the more you see yourself in the abyss, the more you will invoke the help of the One who can free you....**”** (Volume 1)

13th Decade - Holy weapons for the battle: (b) Obedience

“Obedience will be your guide and support to make you reach a safe harbor.”

...Oh! prodigy of holy obedience – you have been everything for me. How many times I found myself clashing with death, so great was the intensity of the pains - and obedience has almost restored my life. May the Lord be always blessed; may everything be for His glory. (Volume 1)

...In my interior I keep saying: ‘But what is this obedience? What is it made of? What is the nourishment that sustains it?’ And Jesus makes His harmonious voice heard to my hearing, which says: **“Do you want to know what obedience is? Obedience is the quintessence of love; obedience is the finest, the purest, the most perfect love, extracted from the most painful sacrifice - to destroy oneself in order to live again of God. Being most noble and divine, obedience tolerates nothing human in the soul – nothing which does not belong to it. Therefore, all its attention is on destroying within the soul everything which does not belong to its divine nobility, such as love of self; and once it has done this, it cares little if it alone struggles and toils for what belongs to the soul, while allowing the soul to rest peacefully. Finally, I Myself am obedience.”** (Vol. 2 October 3, 1899)

“...My daughter, obedience is an unshakable wall, and such it renders the soul. Not only this, but in order to be unshakable, it is necessary for one to be strong and robust, and **obedience communicates divine strength**, in such a way that, in the face of the divine strength it possesses, all things are weak; so much so, that while obedience can move anything, nothing can move it.” (Vol. 7 November 20, 1906)

14th Decade - Holy weapons for the battle: (c) Courage

“The last thing I recommend to you is courage. I want you to enter the battle with intrepidity. The thing that an opposing army fears the most is to see courage, strength, the way in which one confronts the most dangerous fights, without fearing anything. So the demons are; there is nothing they fear more than a courageous soul who, all cleaving to Me, with a strong spirit, goes into their midst - not to be wounded, but with the firm resolve to wound them and to exterminate them. The demons are left frightened, terrified, and would rather flee; but they cannot, because they are bound by my Will, and they are forced to stay, to their greater torment. Therefore, do not fear them, for they can do nothing to you without my Will. And then, when I see that you can no longer resist and are about to fail, if you are faithful to me, I will come immediately, I will put everyone to flight, and I will give you grace and strength. Courage, then, courage.” (Volume 1)

15th Decade – Defeating the enemy

Jesus Christ taught me that **the most effective means so that the soul would remain free of any vain apprehension, of any doubt, of any fear, was to protest before Heaven, the 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, if she can, and 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 the protest will already give her calm; and if the devil tries to disturb her, she will be able to answer that if she had the intention of offending God, she would not have protested the opposite. **In this way, she will remain free of any fear.** (Volume 1)

Fourth Part Learning the way of the Cross

16th Decade – Accepting the cross: Resignation

17th Decade – Embracing the cross: Abandonment in Jesus

18th Decade – Finding contentment in the cross

19th Decade – Learning to value the cross

20th Decade – Recognizing one’s ‘true cross’ and its purpose

16th Decade – Accepting the cross: Resignation

The Most Holy Virgin took Him in Her arms, She drew near me, and crying, She said to me: “Daughter, see how my Son is treated by men - the horrible offenses they commit, which never give Him respite. Look at Him, how He suffers.” And I tried to look at Him, and I saw Him all blood, all wounds, and almost cut up, reduced to a mortal state. I felt such pains that I would have wanted to die a thousand times rather than see my Lord suffer so much. I felt ashamed of my little sufferings. The Most Holy Virgin added, but always crying: “Come closer to kiss the wounds of my Son. He chooses you as victim,

and if many offend Him, you, by offering yourself to suffer what He suffers, will give Him a relief in so much suffering. **Won't you accept?"**

Jesus: "...O please! give Me a relief from so many bitter spasms, and a reparation for so many wrongdoings against Me." And in saying this, He removed the crown from Himself, which did not look like a crown, but all one piece, such that not even a little portion of the head remained free, but it was all pierced through by those thorns. As He removed the crown, **He drew near me and asked me if I accepted it.** I felt so annihilated; I felt such pains because of the offenses that are given, that I felt my heart split. I said to Him: **'Lord, do with me what You want.'**

...**"Your trust must be only in Me. Be resigned, because resignation renders the soul luminous, and it keeps all other passions in their place, in such a way that, attracted by those rays of light, I go into that soul and I transform her completely into Myself, and I make her live of my own Life."**

...my soul was ready to do the obedience, and ready to remain in bed if the Lord wanted it so, because **I had began to experience how good He had been with me, and that true resignation can change the nature of things, turning bitter into sweet.** (Volume 1)

17th Decade – Embracing the cross: Abandonment in Jesus

"Do not want to afflict yourself because of this. What I want from you is that you abandon yourself as though dead in my arms. Until you keep your eyes opened to look at what I am doing, and at what the creatures do and say, I cannot operate freely upon you. Don't you want to trust Me? Don't you know how much I love you, and that everything I allow, either through creatures, or on the part of demons, or directly from Me, is for your true good and serves for nothing other than 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 will come to oppose what I want to do with you. As for creatures, use profound silence, be benign and submissive with everyone; let your life, your breath, your thoughts and affections be continuous acts of reparations to placate my Justice..." (Volume 1)

18th Decade – Finding contentment in the cross

I said to Him: **'Lord, let me share in your pains. O please! if only I could relieve You and free You.'** As I was saying this, those enemies, as if they had understood, came against me – but so enraged; and they began to beat me, to pull my hair, to trample me. I had so much fear; I suffered, yes, but **within me I was content, because I could see that the Lord was given a little bit of respite.**

...The word "poor" which Jesus had spoken to me would not allow me to dare to ask for anything; and I myself would feel ashamed to ask, thinking to myself: **'What will the family say: she has just vomited, and now she wants to eat?'** **So I would remain content with being able to offer something to my dear Jesus.** (Volume 1)

19th Decade – Learning to value the cross

Don't you know that **the most beautiful presents I can give to the souls I love are crosses and pains? You are still a little girl in the way of the cross; this is why you feel too weak. Once you have grown up and have known how precious suffering is, then you will feel stronger. Therefore, lean on Me – rest, for in this way you will acquire strength."**

"...If you knew what good the cross contains within itself, how precious it renders the soul, what a gem of inestimable value one acquires, who has the good of possessing sufferings.... It is enough to

tell you only that, in coming upon earth, I did not choose riches or pleasures, but I cherished as dear and intimate sisters, the cross, poverty, sufferings, ignominies.” (Volume 1)

20th Decade – Recognizing one’s ‘true cross’ and its purpose

“Even the cross can do as much good insofar as it is connected with my Will. Not only this; the cross sanctifies and crucifies part of the person, while my Will does not spare anything; it sanctifies everything, and crucifies thoughts, desires, will, affections, heart - everything. And since my Will is light, It shows to the soul the necessity of this sanctification and complete crucifixion, in such a way that she herself incites Me to accomplish the crafting of my Will upon her. Therefore, the cross and the other virtues are content as long as they get something; and if they can pierce the creature with three nails, they boast of their triumph. On the other hand, my Will, which does not know how to do incomplete works, is not content with just three nails, but with as many nails for as many acts of my Will which I dispose for the creature.” (Vol. 11 November 18, 1913)

“...In my Will do I await souls, to give them the true dominion and the complete glory of each act and pain that they may suffer. The operating and suffering outside of my Will I do not recognize; I could say: ‘I have nothing to give you; what is the will that animated you in doing and suffering this? Get your reward from that one.’ Many times, doing good or suffering, if my Will is not present in them, can be miserable slaveries which degenerate into passions, while it is my Will alone that gives true dominion, true virtues, true glory, such as to transform the human into divine.” (Vol. 15 March 23, 1923)

“...It will not be only for the good of creatures that I want these continuous sufferings, but also for your good. In this state of sufferings I will purify your soul thoroughly, in such a way as to dispose you to form a mystical marriage with Me; and after this, I will make the final transformation, in such a way that the two of us will become like two candles placed on the fire – one is transformed into the other, and they become one. In this way I will transform Myself into you, and you will remain crucified with Me. Ah! would you not be happy if you could say: ‘The Bridegroom is crucified, but the bride also is crucified’? ‘Ah! yes, there is nothing that renders me dissimilar from Him.’ (Volume 1)

Fifth Part Enlightenment and Union with Jesus

21st Decade – Contemplating Jesus and listening to His word

22nd Decade – Receiving the substance of His word: (a) Faith

23rd Decade - Receiving the substance of His word: (b) Hope

24th Decade - Receiving the substance of His word: (c) Charity

25th Decade – Bond of inseparability with God: His Divine Will as life

21st Decade – Contemplating Jesus and listening to His word

Oh! how beautiful He was. With His golden hair, all curly, He seemed to enchain my thoughts, my affections, my heart. From His forehead, serene and spacious, one could admire the interior of His mind, as from within a crystal, and one could discover His infinite wisdom, His imperturbable peace. Oh! how I felt my mind, my heart, becoming serene; even more, before Jesus, my very passions are knocked down and do not dare to give me the slightest bother. I believe, I don’t know if I’m wrong, that one cannot see this Jesus, so beautiful, if one is not in the most profound calm; so much so, that the slightest breath of disturbance prevents one from receiving a sight so beautiful. Ah! yes, at just seeing the serenity of His adorable forehead, the infusion of peace that one receives in the interior is so great, that I believe

that there is no disaster, or war most fierce, which does not appease itself before Jesus. Oh! my all and beautiful Jesus, if for the few moments You manifest Yourself in this life You communicate so much peace, in such a way that one can suffer the most painful martyrdoms, the most humiliating pains with the most perfect tranquillity - it seems to me a mixture of peace and of sorrow - what will it be like in Paradise?

...Ah! yes, that Holy Face, while It is so majestic, It is also so lovable, and that loveliness attracts one so much, that the soul does not have the slightest doubt of being welcomed by Jesus, as ugly and sinful as she may see herself.

...The voice of my Jesus is immensely powerful, it is operative, and in the very act in which He speaks, He already operates that which He says.

...Oh! what a most ingenious teacher Jesus is – in one simple instant He teaches so many things, while to someone else it would take entire years, if he manages at all, because the terrestrial teacher does not have the power of being able to draw the will of his disciple, or to infuse things in his mind without effort and toil. But not with Jesus: His sweetness, the loveliness of His gesture, the gentleness of His speaking, are so great - and then He is so beautiful, that as soon as the soul sees Him, she feels so drawn, that sometimes the speed with which she runs after Jesus is so great, that almost without realizing it, she finds herself transformed into the Beloved, in such a way that the soul is no longer capable of distinguishing her terrestrial being, so much is she identified with the Divine Being.

...Oh! how good is Jesus. He adapts Himself to the learned and speaks to them in a very high manner, in such a way that in order to understand Him, they have to study well what He tells them. And He adapts Himself to the ignorant, pretending to be, He Himself, a little bit ignorant; and He speaks in a low manner, in such a way that no one may remain on an empty stomach from the lesson of this Divine Teacher.

...Oh! how desirable is this speaking of Jesus. As for myself, I would give away everything that is on earth - if I could own it - to have one alone of these words of Jesus. (Volume 1)

22nd Decade – Receiving the substance of His word: (a) Faith

He would speak to me now about Faith, and then He would leave me, and I would feel a life of faith being infused in my soul. As rough as I felt it before, at the speaking of Jesus, I would now feel my soul become very light, in such a way as to penetrate into God; and I would contemplate now His Power, now His Sanctity, now His Goodness, and so on. My soul would remain stupefied, and in a sea of stupefaction, I would say: ‘Powerful God, what power is not undone before You? Immense Sanctity of God, what other sanctity, as sublime as it might be, would dare to appear before You?’ Then I would feel myself descend into myself, and I could see my nothingness, the nonentity of earthly things, how everything is nothing before God. I would see myself as a little worm, all full of dust, climbing up in order to take a few steps, and such that it would take nothing to destroy me but someone who would trample me under foot - and I would be undone. So, seeing myself so ugly, I almost would not dare to go to God, but His Goodness would make itself present before my mind, and I would feel drawn, as though by a magnet, to go to Him. And I would say to myself: ‘If He is holy, He is also merciful; if He is powerful, He also contains full and highest Goodness within Himself.’ It seemed to me that Goodness surrounded Him on the outside and inundated Him from within. When I looked at the Goodness of God, it seemed to me that it surpassed all other attributes, but then, in looking at the others, I would see them all equal among themselves – immense, immeasurable and incomprehensible to the human nature. While my soul would be in this state, Jesus would come back and speak about Hope.

...So, going back to Faith, Jesus would say: “In order to obtain, one must believe. Just as for the head without the sight of the eyes, everything is darkness, everything is confusion, so much so, that if

one wanted to walk, he would stumble now at one point, now at another, and would end up falling completely, the same for the soul without Faith – she does nothing but go from precipice to precipice. **But Faith serves as the sight of the soul, and as the light which guides her to eternal life.** Now, what is this light of Faith nourished by?... (Volume 1)

23rd Decade - Receiving the substance of His word: (b) Hope

...“By Hope. ...In fact, what good comes to man from believing in the immense riches of Faith, if he does not hope for them, for himself? He will look at them, yes, but with indifferent eye, because he knows that they are not his. **But Hope provides the light of Faith with wings,** and by hoping in the merits of Jesus Christ, he looks at them as his own, and he comes to love them.”

“**Hope**”, Jesus said, “**provides the soul with a garment of fortitude,** almost of iron, in such a way that all the enemies with their arrows cannot wound her; not only this, but they cannot cause even the slightest disturbance. Everything is tranquillity in her, everything is peace. **Oh! it is beautiful to see this soul invested with beautiful Hope, all cleaving to her beloved, all distrustful of herself, and all trustful in God.** She challenges the fiercest enemies; she is queen of her passions, she regulates all of her interior, her inclinations, the desires, the heartbeats, the thoughts, with such mastery that Jesus Himself remains enamored, because He sees that this soul operates with such courage and strength - but she draws it and hopes for it all from Him; so much so, that in seeing this firm hope, Jesus cannot deny anything to this soul.

Now, while Jesus would speak about Hope, He would withdraw for a little, leaving a light in my intellect. Who can say what I comprehended about Hope? If the other virtues all serve to embellish the soul, but can make us stagger and render us inconstant - Hope, instead, renders the soul firm and stable, like those high mountains which cannot be moved a tiny bit. It seems to me that it happens to the soul invested by Hope as to certain extremely high mountains, such that all the intemperances of the air cannot cause any harm to these mountains. Neither snow, nor winds, nor heat can penetrate into them; whatever thing might be placed at their top, one can be sure of finding there where it was put, even if a hundred years should pass. Just so is the soul clothed by Hope: nothing can harm her, neither tribulation, nor poverty; nor do all the various accidents of life dismay her for one instant. She says to herself: **“I can do everything, I can bear everything, suffer everything - hoping in Jesus, who forms the object of all my hopes.”**

Hope renders the soul almost omnipotent, invincible, and it administers to her the final perseverance, so much so, that only then does she cease to hope and to persevere, when she has taken possession of the Kingdom of Heaven. Then, she lays down Hope and plunges all of herself into the immense ocean of Divine Love. (Volume 1)

24th Decade - Receiving the substance of His word: (c) Charity

...Now, **what is the substance of this light of Faith, and of this nourishment of Hope? Charity.** All of these three virtues are grafted to one another, in such a way that one cannot be without the other.

...While my soul would get lost in the immense sea of Hope, my beloved Jesus would come back and speak about Charity, telling me: **“Faith and Hope give way to Charity, and Charity connects all the rest of the other two together, in such a way as to make them one, while they are three. And here It is, oh my spouse, veiled in the three theological virtues, the Trinity of the Divine Persons.”**

Then He continued: **“If Faith makes one believe, and Hope makes one hope, Charity makes one love. If Faith is light and serves as the sight of the soul, and Hope, which is the nourishment of Faith, provides the souls with courage, peace, perseverance and all the rest - Charity, which is the substance of this light and of this nourishment, is like that most sweet and fragrant ointment which, penetrating**

everywhere, relieves and soothes the pains of life. Charity renders suffering sweet, and makes one reach the point even of desiring it. The soul who possesses Charity diffuses fragrance everywhere; her works, all done out of love, give off a most pleasant odor. And what is this odor? It is the odor of God Himself. The other virtues render the soul solitary and almost unrefined with creatures; Charity, on the other hand, being substance that unites, unites the hearts. But where? In God. Being a most fragrant ointment, Charity spreads everywhere and with everyone. Charity makes one suffer the most ruthless torments with joy, and one reaches the point of not being able to be without suffering. And when she sees herself without it, she says to her spouse Jesus: "Sustain me with the fruits, which is suffering, because I am languishing with love; and where else can I show You my love other than in suffering for You?" Charity burns, consumes all other things, even the virtues themselves, and converts them all into itself. In sum, it is like a queen who wants to reign everywhere, and does not want to surrender to anyone."
(Volume 1)

25th Decade – Bond of inseparability with God: His Divine Will as life

The Most Holy Trinity: *"Do not fear, pluck up courage, We have come to confirm you as Our own, and to take possession of your heart."* While this voice was saying this, I saw that the Most Holy Trinity descended into my heart, and They took possession of it – and there They formed Their dwelling. Who can say the change that occurred in me? I felt divinized; **it was no longer I who lived, but They were living in me. It seemed to me that my body was like a residence, and that the living God was residing in it, because I could feel, sensibly, Their real presence in my interior....** (Volume 1)

(From Volume 13 Dec. 5, 1921)

*...And I added: 'Tell me, my Life, and who is my family? What is my dowry and yours?' And smiling, He continued: "Your family is the Trinity. Don't you remember when, in the first years of bed, I took you to Heaven, and before the Sacrosanct Trinity we celebrated our union? **And the Trinity endowed you with such gifts, that you yourself have not yet known them; and as I speak to you of my Will, of the effects and value, the gifts with which, from that time, you were endowed, are uncovered.** I do not speak to you of my dowry, because what is mine is yours. And then, after a few days, We, all Three Divine Persons, descended from Heaven, took possession of your heart, and formed Our perpetual dwelling. **We took the reins of your intelligence, of your heart, and of all of you; and everything you did was an outpouring of Our Creative Will over you, and the confirmation that your will was animated by an Eternal Will.***

The work is already done; there is nothing left but to make it known, so that, not only you, but also others may take part in these great goods ...".

THE SOUL'S CONFESSION

A Meditation and Preparation for the Sacrament of Penance

From Volume 1

Introductory Note: In the final pages of Volume 1 of the Writings of Luisa, we find her narration of her confession, which she made, mystically, before the very Person of Our Lord Jesus, acting as her Confessor. For a soul who reads these pages and desires to put them into practice, far from presenting any sort of 'spiritual substitute' for the Sacrament of Penance, they offer, on the contrary, an extremely real, practical and profound opportunity to meditate on the importance, the greatness, the necessity and the sacredness of the Sacrament of Penance. In order to facilitate and encourage this meditation and its application, some passages from the Volume have been separated, and ordered in seven moments, acts and steps. They can be used as a prayer in the form of a chaplet, as a slower and more extended meditation during one day, or as a seven-day journey of preparation for receiving and treasuring the grace of the Sacrament.

Seven Moments, Acts and Steps:

1. Exaltation of the Cross
2. Sorrow for sins
3. Confession
4. Resolution
5. Absolution
6. Penance
7. Special Grace and Attentiveness

1. The Exaltation of the Cross

Jesus: *"My beloved, do you want to be beautiful? The cross will give you the most beautiful features that can possibly be found, both in Heaven and on earth; so much so, as to enamor God, who contains all beauties within Himself."*

... "Do you want to be filled with immense riches - not for a short time, but for all eternity? Well then, the cross will administer to you all kinds of riches - from the littlest pennies, which are the small crosses, up to the greatest amounts, which are the heavier crosses."

... "My beloved, the cross allows one to distinguish the reprobates from the predestined. Just as, on the Day of Judgment, the good will rejoice upon seeing the cross, so even now it can be seen whether one will be saved or lost. If, as the cross presents itself to the soul, she embraces it, carries it with resignation, with patience, and she kisses and thanks that hand which is sending it – here is the sign that she is saved. If, on the contrary, as the cross is presented to her, she gets irritated, despises it, and even reaches the point of offending Me – you can say that that's a sign that the soul is heading on the way to hell. So will the reprobates do on the Day of Judgment: upon seeing the cross, they will grieve and curse. The cross tells everything; the cross is a book that, without deception and in clear notes, tells you and allows you to distinguish the saint from the sinner, the perfect from the imperfect, the fervent from the

lukewarm. The cross communicates such light to the soul that, even now, it allows one to distinguish not only the good from the evil, but also those who are to be more or less glorious in Heaven – those who are to occupy a higher or a lower place. **All other virtues remain humble and reverent before the virtue of the cross, and grafting themselves to it, they receive greater glory and splendor.**” (Volume 1)

2. Sorrow for sins

My dear Beloved, **give me sorrow for my sins**, so that, consumed by sorrow and by regret for having offended You, my sins may be erased from my soul, and also from your memory. Yes, give me as much sorrow for as much as I have dared to offend You. Even more, let sorrow surpass this, so I will be able to draw more intimately close to You.’

I remember that once, while I was saying this, my always benign Jesus told me: “Since you are so sorry for having offended Me, I Myself want to dispose you to feel sorrow for your sins, so that you may see how awful sin is, and what bitter pain my Heart suffered. Therefore, say together with Me: **‘If I cross the sea, You are in the sea, yet I do not see You; I tread the earth, You are under my feet. I sinned’.**” And then, in a low voice, almost crying, Jesus added: **“Yet I loved you, and at that very moment, I preserved you.”** While Jesus was saying this, and I together with Him, I was caught by such sorrow for the offenses given, that I fell flat to the ground; and Jesus disappeared.

Few are those words, but I understood so many things, that it is impossible to say all that I comprehended. In the first words I comprehended the immensity, the greatness, the presence of God in each existing thing, such that not even a shadow of our thought can escape Him. I also comprehended my nothingness compared to a Majesty so great and holy. In the word “I sinned”, I comprehended the ugliness of sin, the malice, the daring I had had in offending Him. Now, while my soul was considering this, in hearing Jesus Christ say “Yet I loved you, and at that very moment, I preserved you”, my heart was taken by such sorrow, that I felt myself dying, because I could comprehend the immense love that the Lord had for me in the very act in which I tried to offend Him, and even to kill Him. Ah Lord, how good You have been with me, and I – always ungrateful, and still so bad. (Volume 1)

3. Confession

At times, I reached the point of saying that only then would I be content, when I would hear Him say, from His own lips: “I remit all your sins.” And blessed Jesus, who can deny nothing when it is for our good, one morning made Himself seen and told me: “This time I Myself want to do the office of Confessor. **You will confess all your sins to Me, and in the act in which you do this, I will make you comprehend, one by one, the sorrows you have given to my Heart in offending Me**, so that, by comprehending what sin is, as much as it is possible for a creature, you may be resolved to die rather than to offend Me. You, in the meantime, enter into your nothingness, and recite the Confiteor.”

On entering into myself, I could see all my misery and my wicked deeds, and I trembled like a leaf before His presence. I lacked the strength to pronounce the words of the Confiteor, and if the Lord had not infused new strength in me, by telling me: **“Do no fear - if I am the Judge, I am also your Father. Courage, let us proceed”**, I would have remained there, without uttering one word.

So I said the Confiteor, all full of confusion and humiliation, and since I saw myself all covered with my sins, at one glance, I saw that the greatest one, which had given affront to Our Lord, was pride. So I said: **‘Lord, before your presence, I accuse myself of the sin of pride.’** And He: **“Draw near my Heart, and place your ear upon It – you will hear the cruel torment that you have caused my Heart with this sin.”** All trembling, I placed my ear upon His adorable Heart – but who can say what I heard and comprehended in that instant? Especially now, after so much time, I will only say something

confusedly. I remember that His Heart was beating so strongly, that it seemed that His breast was going to crack. Then it seemed to me that It was torn to shreds, and was almost destroyed because of the pain. Ah! if I could have, I would have reached the point of destroying the Divine Being with pride.

I will give you a simile in order to make myself understood, otherwise I have no words to express myself. Imagine a king, and at the feet of this king, a worm, which, rising and swelling up, begins to think it is something, and reaches such audacity, that rising, little by little, it reaches the head of the king and wants to remove the crown from him to put it on its own head. Then it strips him of his royal vestments; then it throws him off his throne, and finally, it tries to kill him. But what's more about this worm, is that it itself does not know its own being, so much it deceives itself, and that in order to get rid of it, it would take the king nothing but to put it under his feet and crush it - and so it would end its days. This, truly, would move one to indignation and to pity, as well as to ridicule the pride of this worm, if it could do such a thing. So did I see myself before God, and this filled me with such confusion and sorrow, that I felt, being renewed in my heart, the torment that blessed Jesus suffered.

*After this, He left me, and I felt such pain, comprehending how so ugly this sin of pride is, that it is impossible to describe it. After I ruminated all this thoroughly within myself, my good Jesus came back and told me to continue the confession of my sins. And I, all trembling, continued to make the accusation of my thoughts, words, works, causes and omissions; and when He would see that I was unable to continue the confession because of the pain I felt at having offended Him so much... in fact, I had such a vivid clarity, being in front of that Divine Sun; especially, I could see the smallness, the nonentity of my being, and I was stunned at how I could have such cheek - where had I taken that boldness to offend a God so good, who, in the very act in which I was offending Him, assisted me, preserved me, nourished me; and **if He had any rancor with me, it was for the sin I committed, which He greatly hated, while He loved me immensely, He excused me before Divine Justice, and was all occupied with removing that wall of division, which sin had produced between the soul and God.** Oh! if all could see who God is, and who the soul is in the act of sinning, all would die of sorrow, and I believe that sin would be exiled from the earth. So, when blessed Jesus would see that I could not take any more because of the pain, He would withdraw and leave me, to allow me to comprehend well the evil I had done. And then He would come back again, and I would continue the accusation of my sins.*

But who can say all that I understood, and explain, one by one, the different affronts and the special sorrows which I had caused Our Lord with my sins? (Volume 1)

4. Resolution

*...Then, when I finished the accusation, which lasted about seven hours, lovable Jesus took the aspect of most loving Father. And since I was exhausted in my strengths because of the sorrow - more so, since I saw that that sorrow was not enough to be sorry as it befitted my sins - to encourage me, He told me: **"I Myself want to make up for you, and I apply to your soul the merit of the pain I had in the Garden of Gethsemani. This alone can satisfy the Divine Justice."** After He applied His pain to my soul, then I seemed to be disposed to receive the absolution.*

All humbled and confounded as I was, prostrated at the feet of the good Father Jesus, through the rays He was sending into my mind, I tried to excite myself more to sorrow by saying - though I don't remember everything: 'Great, immense, has been the evil I have done against You. These powers of mine and these senses of my body were meant to be as many tongues with which to praise You. Ah! instead, they have been like many poisonous vipers which were biting You and were even trying to kill You. But, Holy Father, forgive me - do not want to cast me away because of the great wrong I have done to You by sinning.'

And Jesus: “And you - do you promise to sin no more, and to banish from your heart any shadow of evil that might offend your Creator?”

And I: ‘Ah! yes, with all my heart I promise You. I would die a thousand times rather than sin again. Never again, never again.’ (Volume 1)

5. Absolution

...And Jesus: “And I forgive you, and I apply to your soul the merits of my Passion, and I want to wash it in my Blood.”

And as He was saying this, He raised His blessed right hand and pronounced the words of the absolution – exactly like the words that the priest says, when he gives absolution. And in the act of doing this, a river of Blood poured down from His hand, and my soul remained completely inundated by it.” (Volume 1)

*(From Volume 14, November 16, 1922)
Effects of the absolution in the Divine Will.*

...Afterwards, I was receiving absolution, and I said to myself: ‘My Jesus, I want to receive it in your Will.’ And immediately, without giving Me time, Jesus added: “And I absolve you in my Will; and as I absolve you, my Will puts the words of absolution on the way, to absolve whomever wants to be absolved, and to forgive whomever wants forgiveness. My Will takes all, not one alone; but those who are disposed take more than anyone.”

6. Penance

...After this, He said to me: “Come, oh daughter, come to make penance for your sins by kissing my wounds.” (Volume 1)

(From Volume 17, February 8, 1925)

*This morning my sweet Jesus made Himself seen in so much suffering that my poor soul felt consumed with compassion. He had all His limbs dislocated; deep wounds, and so embittered, that Jesus moaned and writhed for the bitterness of the spasm. He placed Himself near me, as though wanting to share His pains with me. By merely looking at Him, I felt His pains being reflected in me; and Jesus, all goodness, told me: “My daughter, I can take no more. **Touch my embittered wounds so as to soothe them; impress your kiss of love upon them, so that your love may mitigate the spasm I feel. This state of mine, so painful, is the true portrait of the way in which my Will finds Itself in the midst of creatures.** It is present in their midst, but as though divided, because, as they do their own will, not Mine, Mine remains dislocated and wounded by creatures. Therefore, unite your will to Mine, and give Me a relief for my dislocation.”*

*I clasped Him to myself; I kissed the wounds of his hands – oh! how embittered they were because of many works, even holy, which do not have their origin in the Will of God. In order to soothe their pain, I squeezed them in my hands, and Jesus let me do everything; even more, He wanted it, and so I did the same with the other wounds; so much so, that He remained with me for almost the whole morning. Finally, before leaving me, He told me: “My daughter, you have soothed Me, I feel my bones in place; but do you know who can soothe Me and rejoin my dislocated bones? **One who lets my Will reign within herself....”***

7. Special Grace and Attentiveness

*...All trembling, I stood up and I kissed His most sacred wounds; and then He said to me: "My daughter, **be more vigilant and attentive**, because today I give you the grace not to fall, ever again, into voluntary venial sin." (Volume 1)*

(From Volume 15, January 5, 1923)

Jesus prays that His Will be one with the will of the soul. The Divine Will must be like the air that one breathes. Attentiveness is the way to knowledge.

*Continuing in my usual state, I could hear my adorable Jesus praying in my interior, saying: "**My Father, I pray You that Our Will be one with the will of this little daughter of Our Volition.** She is a legitimate birth from Our Will. O please! for the honor and decorum of Our Eternal Will, let it be so that nothing may come out of her which is not a birth from Our Volition, and that she may know nothing but Our Will. And in order to obtain this, I offer You all the acts of my Humanity, done in Our adorable Will."*

*Afterwards, He remained in deep silence, and I, I don't know how, felt so transfused in the acts that my Jesus had done in the Divine Will, that I kept following them, one by one, doing my own united with His. This made me absorb so much light, that Jesus and I remained immersed in a sea of light; and Jesus, coming out from within my interior, standing up, with His soles on the place of my heart, and waving His hand which, more than sun, sent forth light, cried out loudly: "Come, come all of you, Angels, Saints, pilgrim souls, all generations - come and see the portents and the greatest miracle never before seen: my Will operating in the creature." At the sonorous, melodious and powerful voice of Jesus, which filled Heaven and earth, the Heavens opened and all ran around Jesus, and looked at me to see how the Divine Will was operating. All remained enraptured and thanked Jesus for such a great excess of His goodness. I remained confused and humiliated to the summit, and I said to Him: 'My Love, what are You doing? It seems that You want to show me to everyone, to let everyone point at me. What repugnance I feel.' And Jesus: "**Ah! my daughter, it is my Will that I want everyone to know and to point at, as new Heaven and means of new regeneration; and you will remain as though buried in my Will.**"*

*My Will must be like the air that one breathes which, while it cannot be seen, can be felt. It cannot be seen, and it gives life; it penetrates everywhere, even into the most intimate fibers, to give life to each beat of the heart. Wherever it enters - into darkness, into the abysses, into the most secret receptacles - it constitutes itself life of everything. In the same way, my Will will be more than air within you, which, coming out of you, will constitute Itself life of everything. Therefore, **be more attentive, and follow the Will of your Jesus, because attentiveness will make you know where you are and what you are doing.** Knowledge will make you appreciate and esteem more the divine royal palace of my Will. Suppose that someone finds himself in the royal palace of a king, and that he does not know that that residence belongs to the king. He will have no appreciation; he might even walk distractedly, talking, laughing; nor will he dispose himself to receive the gifts of the king. But if he knew that that is the royal palace of the king, he would look at things with attention, and would appreciate them; he would walk on tiptoe, speak in a low voice, be all eyes to see whether the king comes out of some room, and would put himself as though in waiting, to receive great gifts from the king.*

*See, **attentiveness is the way to knowledge, and knowledge changes a person, as well as things, disposing him to receive great goods. So, by knowing that you are in the royal palace of my Will, you will always receive, and will take so much as to be able to give to all your brothers.**"*

YEARNINGS FOR SANCTITY

*By Luisa Piccarreta, the Little Daughter of the Divine Will
At the beginning of her mystical life*

Introductory Note: These “*Yearnings*”, ardent prayer filled with longing and trust, were dictated by Luisa to a soul by the name of Rosa, who would go Luisa’s home to learn the art of embroidery at the *tombolo*, and was a little *disciple* of Luisa. Each soul who yearns to live in the Divine Will, the Sanctity of sanctities, is a little *Rose*, who longs for *Living Water* – Sanctity in the Will of her Jesus.

My most sweet Jesus, my Delight and my Life, O please! by your Mercy, make me holy! I pray You, O Jesus, for the sake of each beat of your adorable Heart, make me holy. This is really about your Glory, the loving purpose of your Passion, of your most ardent yearning. If I am saved, will there perhaps not be in Heaven one more soul that sings your praises for eternity? Oh! make me holy then! O my Jesus, make me holy!

I am a member of that Spouse of Yours, the Church, whom You purchased with your Divine Blood. O please, do not suffer in Her a bad daughter like me, poor one; but for love of your Church, make me holy, O my God....

I come often to unite myself to You, ineffably, in that Divine Sacrament of Yours, which is called the Bread of Angels, and the Testament of your Love. O please, do not suffer in me any stain or tepidness, but for love of your Flesh and of your Divine Blood, make me holy, O my God.

O Jesus, by your infinite Mercy, make me holy!

You demand of me to edify my family, my neighbor, my friends; You ask that I make virtue loved, that I draw souls to You. And how can I ever make it, poor as I am, so lacking in fervor, humility and patience? O please, for love of those souls, at least, who cost blood to your Heart, make me holy, O my God, make me holy.

But what need do I have to present to You so many reasons? Are You not infinite Goodness and Generosity? Could You, O beloved of my soul, allow that a daughter of yours, who opens her heart to You, entrusts to You her yearnings, asks You only that she may be holy, would remain prostrated before You without answering her? Would You not listen to her in the greatness of your Mercy?

And even when, because of my constant ingratitude, You would want to reject me, could You deny this grace to your Blessed Mother Mary and mine, who asks You for it on my behalf, presenting all of Her compassion for your sorrows? Could You deny it to my Guardian Angel, who continually offers You His celestial adorations in order to obtain it for me?

O Jesus, by your infinite Mercy, make me holy!

O my Jesus, I confess myself unworthy of any favor, but when I ask You that I may be holy, what do I ask of You, after all, other than that the designs of your Redemption be fulfilled in me, and that your goodness may triumph in my malice, in my rejections and in my reluctance?

O my Love, You are Omnipotent - set me afire, burn me to ashes, consume me in your flames, let it be that I may never again offend You! That I may die to myself; that I may make of this little while of my life that is left one single act of expiation, of gratitude, of adoration and of apostolate – one single act of immolation and of most pure love. O Jesus, may I live all absorbed in You, drawn and genuflected with my spirit, always before your Sacramental Majesty. Even more, may I, O Jesus, truly live of your very Sacramental Eucharistic Life, which is all an affable mystery of hiddenness, of operosity and of love.

O Jesus, by your infinite Mercy, make me holy!

I know... I must do violence to myself in many motions of my spirit, and conquer myself in a thousand ways, on a thousand occasions....

I will need to love prayer, silence, work, mortification.

I will need to operate always and in everything with a live spirit of Faith and of holy fear of God.

I will need to make space, empty of every creature, around me and inside of me.

I will need to keep my heart always up high, keeping it immaculate, adorning it with lilies, with roses, with violets and with hyacinths....

But what is ever impossible for love? O please! You Yourself, O Lord, make me comprehend how easily I can become holy, if only I embrace with love that daily cross which your love offers me; if only I do, as best I can, the daily actions which duty or charity require of me.

Oh, how sublime it is to become inebriated with pain out of love.... How perfect it turns out to be doing everything with a most pure intention, under the most holy gaze of my God, and in union with my Guardian Angel, as if I were to do that action alone; as if, after that one, I were to appear before the Divine Judgment - as if from it alone depended my eternal salvation.

O Jesus, by your infinite Mercy, make me holy!

Instruct me, You Yourself, O my Jesus, like a patient Teacher. Make me - I pray You with St. Thomas - to be without reluctances in my humility, without dissipation in my joys, without disheartenments in my sadnesses, without inconstancy in my piety, without bitterness in my conversations, without laments in my sufferings, without hesitation in my obedience, without preferences in my charity, without artifice in my virtue.

Teach me – I will say to You with Saint Ignatius – to be generous unto heroism, to serve unto sacrifice, to give without measuring, to fight without being afraid of the wounds, to consume myself without lamenting.

O Jesus, by your infinite Mercy, make me holy!

O my Love, who will give me enough to repay You and to satisfy You if not Yourself? O please, reign, You alone, in this heart of mine, so meager. May I love You alone, O Jesus, and may I love You equally, when your love caresses me and when it scourges me. May my spirit rest in You alone, O Jesus. And when the whirlwind of my

passions or the breath of your tests put my soul in agitation, even then, let it be, O Jesus, that each beat of my heart be a praise, a thanksgiving, an adoration for your Divine Heart. Let it be that, any tie being broken, I may once and for all make a generous leap, and immerse myself inside your Crucified Heart, divine center of charity, of zeal, of purity, of annihilation and of most perfect abnegation....

O Jesus, by your infinite Mercy, make me holy!

O Mary, Mother of sweet Hope and of beautiful Love, I hide myself in the pious shadow of your mantle.

Saint Joseph, my dear most perfect example of the highest sanctity, You be my singular protector, and my model in the interior life of holy sorrow and of holy love....

In the midst of your three Hearts, O Jesus, O Mary, O Joseph, I remain secure and will fear no more on my journey.

O Jesus, O Mary, O Joseph, make me holy, I implore You, O please, make me holy!

O Jesus, by your infinite Mercy, make me holy!

Fiat!