

## CHAPTER XII

## DEVOTION PRODIGES GRACES

I feel a special devotion toward the Servant of God because of his virtues and I feel interiorly moved to stimulate this devotion and even a greater one, as well as a trust in the intercession of the Servant of God. To this end, at home and outside it, I ordinarily have with me some holy cards to distribute as the opportunity arises. Because of that interior devotion and trust, many, many times I have gone to his sepulcher and I have requested some object or other used by the Servant of God. I was given a white handkerchief by the Very Reverend Fr. Biagio Valentini which I have divided into several small pieces to satisfy the devotion of some people and to stimulate it in others.

In the course of time which I have spent in Albano, I have managed to see men and women as well as priests and even prelates who have come to that church with a special devotion to the Servant of God. I also have noticed that various priests, because of the devotion that they have toward the Servant of God, have celebrated the divine sacrifice at the altar in front of which the body of the Servant of God was buried. The concourse of every level of people who have come to venerate the body of the Servant of God, I can say, has been quite continuous. That concourse of people, I believe, may have begun because God made known the virtues of the Servant of God by having granted graces through his intercession, as well as prodigies.

I saw that there was a devotion toward the Servant of God among the people of Albano and I have heard that this is so also among the people of neighboring areas. That, too, I have noticed and I have heard that this reputation has become public. Furthermore, I can say that I know that in Rome, in every class of people, there is a devotion toward the Servant of God. Not long ago, Luigi Pellegrini, a jeweler who travels frequently from Rome to Civitavecchia because of his profession, came to me with a letter received from a person living in Civitavecchia. In that letter, there were requests for images of the Servant of God and it is said that in that city a special devotion has grown. A few weeks later, when I was in Rome on the Via degli Angeli Custodi, I met a priest, whom I did not know, and he asked me where images of the Servant of God could be obtained since he had been requested to send a number of them, as many as twenty, to Fabriano where, he said, many graces had been received through the intercession of the Servant of God. Then, too, I know that in other localities, there is a devotion toward the Servant of God.

The indications upon which I base this topic of devotion are the discussions that are had about the Servant of God which express that devotion as well as certain events that likewise express that devotion. I can say that the devotion toward the Servant of God, as I know it to be, not only has not diminished but I believe that I can say that each day it keeps growing and spreading.

With regard to the reputation and the opinions that were held while the Servant of God was still living, to the extent that I knew him and know him, I refer you back to what

I mentioned on a previous occasion. As for the reputation which exists at the present time, God, with miracles and graces that he has worked after the death of the Servant of God, has made known his virtues. Those who had witnessed his virtues, the gifts and the miracles that were worked during his life, which the Servant of God kept hidden, were now, after his death, being freely manifested. So, recently, it happened that some of those people who had been closely connected with him, have spoken out and have related what they knew. His spiritual director has been able to speak more freely as did others who were more or less acquainted with the works of the Servant of God. When they realized that God, after the death of the Servant of God, had shown, through miracles and graces, his virtues, they felt constrained to be fully persuaded of the good spirit that animated the Servant of God.

In speaking of the reputation of a Servant of God, I mean a devout and public evaluation in veneration of the virtues exercised by the Servant of God. Such a reputation is born, may I say, partly by a section of the ordinary people and partly by ecclesiastics, by individuals who are uneducated and those who are literate, upright, virtuous and prudent. In all taken together, there is no well-founded reason for harboring suspicions or seeking personal gains, but something considered as good in the complexity of circumstances. I can say that it is a reputation founded on truth and on the simple spirit of religion. This reputation I know to exist in various locations, among many people and something quite constant. It has not diminished, it has not been interrupted, but gradually is becoming greater and greater. I believe that I can say that it is in that condition because of the reasons I have listed previously.

In addition to what I have mentioned at some time or other concerning the reputation and holiness of the Servant of God, I do not think that I have overlooked anything worthy of remembrance which should be dealt with in this present investigation.

I have heard that, through the intercession of the Servant of God, not a few prodigies have been worked as well as the granting of not a few favors. I also heard that various apparitions of him have occurred and some of them have been accompanied by some prodigious effects. Since I know this only from what has been told to me, I would not be able to point out the required, the necessary circumstances, and so I refrain from doing so. However, I know that by the intercession of the Servant of God some favors have been received and I will relate this as best as I know, when further investigation is done, if that will be necessary.

From time to time, in the church of Spirito Santo, her excellency Lady Barbara of the royal family of the Cerveteri would come to speak to me in the sacristy. This good lady would discuss with me some pious works of charity in which she, with great edification and with tireless zeal, participated in. She modestly expressed the desire to obtain a favor which she made clear would be of great advantage to herself and a fruitful consolation for her husband, the prince. If I am not mistaken, it was then the seventh year of their marriage and she had, as a matter of fact, been deprived of any offspring. Since that privation of offspring meant the lack of a successor for that illustrious and noble family, she was seeking, as a grace, this fruit of their marriage. When I learned of this desire of the princess, I felt moved

to stimulate in her some trust in the intercession of the Servant of God and, to that end, I gave her a small piece of the handkerchief used by the Servant of God. This good lady left the place that I just described and I am not able to give in detail what prayers and devout acts she exercised to obtain the desired grace. However, in speaking to her when she came back to see me at a later time, I am able to say that she had truly developed an efficacious trust in the intercession of the Servant of God and she told me modestly in these or similar words, expressing them with devout joy in her heart: "You know! I believe that Canon Del Bufalo has done something". This turned out to be true when in the month of November of the year 1839, if I am not mistaken, she prosperously announced the birth of a fine, male child, the delight of the royal couple but also the successor for that illustrious family. To show how truly great was the obtaining of this favor through a special grace and even as a miracle, one must point out that even though the princess wanted to nourish the longed-for baby herself, she was unable to do that because of her own natural [596] lack of nourishment and so, with great but level-headed displeasure, she had him nourished by another lady whom she had taken into her home.

To the extent that I know about things presently about the Servant of God, about what he did, what he said, there is nothing that I know or understand about him which in any way can be harmful to the cause of his beatification and canonization. In reference to what might be more favorable to his cause, I can only confirm all that I have said. To add anything else, I would have to recall so many other things, which, at present, I do not remember in detail.