

Alleged revelations circulating among True Life in God Members

I am writing this article in response to requests from True Life in God members to address the matter of members circulating among themselves unapproved messages from this and that individual claiming to receive messages from heaven.

Over the past several decades God and Mary have bestowed upon mankind everything, in fact more than necessary, for each and every one of us to attain salvation and arrive at the very summits of perfection – to live in God and allow the three divine Persons to indwell within us with the same interior union of wills that the saints and angels enjoy in heaven. It may be said that in providing us with ecclesiastically approved prophetic revelations that incorporate and explicate Church teaching, God has given us all the spiritual knowledge we need, e.g., the prophetic messages of Fatima, Cuapa, Akita, St. Faustina Kowalska, Vassula Rydén, Fr. Stefano Gobbi, Mirna of Souffanieh, and more.

In the ecclesiastically approved True Life in God message of April 12, 1997 the Blessed Virgin Mary reveals,

“This is why the earth is in a turmoil and so much innocent blood is shed; but these are also the signs of the times; Satan and his dark dominion are spitting out on the earth their vomit, bringing afflictions into families and divisions too; they are raising false prophets around the world... but this is so that the elect too may fall in their treachery; those false prophets are being poured on you like rain, bringing so much mischief and so much confusion, My poor children words and false oaths fill their mouths and their prophecies are like poisonous weeds that thrive now in the furrows of the Lord’s field; their roots are spreading to bring forth new poisonous weeds; the danger signals echo in your ears, My children, but you do not seem to understand or discern those signals... be warned, lest you be deceived and may God endow your hearts with discernment, so that His Glory given before your eyes, draws you into the Truth;”

In our days there is no shortage of alleged seers bereft of ecclesiastical support who claim to offer new revelations. The promoters of said revelations through social media and assembled gatherings for purposes of spreading the same, have led to some confusion among the Christian faithful. After having read these alleged revelations and compared them to the teachings contained in Sacred Scripture, Tradition and the Magisterium, it is rather clear, as articulated below that the vast majority of these new revelations are not of God.

Mixing falsehoods with the truth

I begin with a word of caution. Those who find it necessary to chase after the latest (unapproved) messages, end up doing to themselves more harm than good. It is far more rewarding to apply oneself to the reading, meditation and internalization of those true prophetic words to which the Church has already appended her approvals, e.g., the True Life in God messages and those noted above. While it is a fine thing to inform the mind of God’s revealed truths, unless the soul experiences quality time to meditate, masticate and assimilate these truths by downloading them from the head to the heart, one falls prey to the distractions of the evil one who seeks to hinder that intimacy with Christ which engenders in us spiritual growth.

It is not uncommon that an unapproved alleged revelation goes on for years unchecked before the Church pronounces upon it a verbal or written negative position. It is also not uncommon that the alleged seer does not have qualified theological guidance or sound spiritual direction. These and more are reasons for caution before chasing after such unchecked revelations.

As for why the vast majority of these alleged seers are not genuine, the answer is found in part in the aforementioned approved message of Mary to Vassula: *“...so that the elect too may fall in their treachery; those false prophets are being poured on you like rain, bringing so much mischief and so much confusion...”* Another reason is the admixture of falsehoods with truth. To better understand this phenomenon that is prevalent among the majority of alleged seers today, look to the Church’s approach to apocryphal literature. After careful review, the Church emphatically denied admittance of all apocryphal books to the canons of Sacred Scripture precisely on account of

the admixture of falsehoods with truths. As the Church chose not to welcome these apocryphal books into its canon of God's inspired Word for reasons of said admixture, so one in good conscience ought not to chase after or welcome unapproved alleged revelations that mix falsehoods with truth.

Such falsehoods are often hidden between fragments of those truths of approved texts, e.g., the Bible, the catechism, approved prophetic literature, etc. I have personally encountered many cases of alleged seers that have known well the Bible, the catechism and/or approved prophetic literature, and who then bring these approved truths, stored in their memory, to personal prayer. In prayer they petition God for a word of knowledge or simply and passively listen and ask him to speak. Though God may communicate himself to anyone to whom he so chooses, their discernment of spirits without proper guidance disposes often them to assume that God is speaking to them directly and in an extraordinary way without interference from the human spirit or from the devil. Unfortunately such alleged seers, inexperienced and unaware of the difference ordinary and extraordinary gifts, fall prey to deception. Among the *ordinary* gifts worthy of mention are "successive locutions"¹ and "formal locutions",² which St. John of the Cross considers quite dangerous without a spiritual director. Among the *extraordinary* gifts noteworthy are "substantial" locutions that are quite rare.³

The end result of such individuals who deem that God is speaking to them, despite their good faith, is a more often than not a copy, paste and rehashing of the Bible, the catechism and/or approved prophetic literature mixed with their own human reflections. It is important to note that the "extraordinary gifts" are not attainable from petitioning God, from entering into a state of recollection, from attuning one's ears to the voice of God or from acquiring perfection in the virtues, but are free charisms that God bestows upon whom he wills, when he wills and why he wills. For this reason the majority of today's alleged revelations, which the recipient falsely attributes to God, are in reality human reflections. Consequently, they fail on several points to meet the criteria set forth by the Church for determining the veracity of a given revelation, which include the following:

a) Sound doctrine: Many of today's alleged revelations often promote teachings that are incompatible with Sacred Scripture as well as Church doctrine and discipline, e.g., denying the validity of Pope Francis' papal election and/or refusing to acknowledge the power of his universal and supreme teaching authority; emphasis on prophecies of doom,⁴ end-of-the-world scenarios and survival; de-emphasis of God's hopeful appeal to return to his mercy, prayer, conversion in times of his mercy; emphasis on hunkering down and saving oneself; de-emphasis on setting out for deep waters to preach the Good News to all the world.

If the message is doctrinally sound, this does not necessarily mean the message comes from God; it may mean that the alleged seer knows his/her catechism or approved prophetic literature. However, when the seer has had little education, it becomes less and less likely that the messages can be sustained without error. When the seer has had little to no education and yet goes on for years without error, it is a positive sign that the messages are indeed supernatural. Such is the case with the ecclesiastically approved True Life in God messages receive by Vassula who had no catechetical training and yet sustained divine messages free of doctrinal error from day one.

¹ Of these successive locutions St. John of the Cross affirms, "***The desire for such locutions and attachment to them will cause these persons to answer themselves and think that God is responding...***" (The Ascent of Mount Carmel, chapter 29, art. 1).

² Of these formal locutions St. John of the Cross affirms, "***A person should pay no more attention to all these formal locutions than to the other kind (successive), for besides occupying the spirit with matters irrelevant to faith... they will make one an easy victim for the devil's deceptions. At times one can hardly discern the locutions spoken by the good spirit or those coming from the bad spirit. Nevertheless, these locutions should be manifested to a mature confessor or to a discreet wise person who will give instructions and counsel and consider the appropriate thing to do***" (Ibid., chapter 30, arts. 1-5).

³ St. John of the Cross describes three types of locutions, i.e., "Successive locutions" (John of the Cross, The Ascent of Mount Carmel, chapter 29, art. 1). "Formal locutions" (Ibid., chapter 30, arts. 1-5) and "Substantial locutions" (Ibid., chapter 31, art. 1). Only substantial locutions constitute an extraordinary gift from God. Very, very few individuals are endowed freely with this gift from God. This gift is not the fruit of mediation, the exercise of the virtues or holiness of life. This gift cannot be asked for nor obtained; it is a free gift that God gives to whom he wills, when he wills and why he wills.

⁴ E.g., the promotion of physical refuges or safe havens, the claim that Antichrist will have the power to hypnotize others, etc.

- b) Immunity from errors in the facts: No errors in facts ought to be present in the messages, which include contradictions.
- c) Sound personal qualities of the subject: The alleged seer ought to possess particular mental balance, honesty and rectitude of moral life, habitual sincerity and the ability to return to the normal manner of a life of faith.
- d) Mental balance: Common sense cautions us to be slow to believe someone who seems to have mental or emotional disorders, e.g., psychic disorders or psychopathic tendencies.
- e) A healthy devotion and spiritual fruits which endure: These include the spirit of prayer, conversions, acts of charity and so forth.
- f) Obedience toward ecclesiastical authority: Ecclesiastical obedience “is not a heteronomy” or a “blind internal impulse,” as some maintain. ⁵ The Church does not advocate blind obedience but an informed obedience. Obedience here signifies that the seer acknowledges that Christ himself put pastors in charge of his flock who are to lead them (Acts 20:28), and obeying legitimate authorities in matters to which the authority extends. If a pastor goes beyond his limits there is no reason to obey him.
- g) Not seeking monetary gain or fame: One cannot claim to be commissioned by God for the pursuit of money, fame or self-aggrandizement. Evident seeking of financial advantage closely connected with the messages is a sign of deception.
- h) Growth in Christian virtue: The seer who is endowed with a special mission from God is endowed with special graces to accompany the mission, and such grace engenders growth in the virtues.
- i) Fulfilled prophecies: This is self-explanatory. I expound more on this in the publication in, *A Theological Review of the Ecclesiastically Approved True Life in God Prophetic Revelations*.

I hope this response has been helpful. Let us remember that the True Life in God messages invite us to be intimate with Christ, to meditate on the infinite riches of his Word and to enter into intimacy with him. I conclude with the following messages from Jesus and God the Father. Jesus reveals,

“I am Holy, but I also want you to understand that I desire to become intimate with you and have Me as your Holy companion” (March 18, 1987).

“Has anybody not yet understood how I cherish your intimacy with Me? what did I say then to Simon who invited Me to his house and was scandalized when he saw Mary being intimate with Me? I said, ‘Simon you have not welcomed Me by pouring water over My feet, but she has poured out her tears over My feet and wiped them away with her hair; you did not kiss Me as I entered your house, but she has covered My feet with kisses all along; you did not anoint My Head with oil, but she anointed My feet with ointment’” (TLIG, Aug. 10, 2015).

The Father reveals,

“My child, lean now on the same Heart which My Son, Jesus Christ, is nearest to... My intention is to draw every soul into a divine and intimate union of love, deifying them in Our one Substance, and in Our one Will...” (Nov. 28, 1998).

Rev. J.L. Iannuzzi, S.T.L, S.Th.D

⁵ Cf. *Gaudium et Spes*, op. cit., nn.17, 79; Encyclical *Veritatis Splendor*, Libreria Editrice Vaticana, nn. 41-42, 1993.