

GIUSEPPE PETRELLI



A BIOGRAPHY
OF A SERVANT OF GOD

TO THE READER

When I became aware that a biography of Brother Petrelli had been written in Italy I was less than enthusiastic about it.

After all, it was a hallmark of Brother Petrelli's ministry to avoid titles, to not seek honor, to remain hidden and to present Christ. I felt certain that Brother Petrelli would not want honors and attention that he studiously avoided in his lifetime.

However, as I read the "biography" I realized that there were important messages in the document. Much of the material is from publications of the brother. The book includes personal correspondence, to and from the brother, which I have not seen elsewhere.

By the Grace of God, I have had the privilege to translate and print nineteen of the brother's writings. Three were individual books written from 1915 to 1935. Four are volumes compiled from Tuesday night lessons and twelve volumes are compiled from the quarterly publication "The Kingdom of God." Translating these volumes has been a great blessing to me and to all who read them. By the Grace of God I am pleased to make Brother Petrelli's "biography" available along with the above publications.

Brother Petrelli was an Apostle and Prophet. He was a spiritual giant whose gift was unique. It was a privilege to know the brother as a personal friend. Now everyone can know him through his writings.

Mary Femino (nee Garippa)
Kearny, NJ

DEDICATION

These pages are dedicated to the devoted and faithful readers who already know but never finish discovering and appreciating the writings of the servant of God. Brother Petrelli's writings are marvelous spiritual treasures drawn directly from "the fountain that never runs dry" (John 4:13, 14).

PREFACE

A living witness, who lived and followed together with her father who was a servant of God, among other things has written to us as follows: "The difficulty of preparing a biography of Giuseppe Petrelli is immense. To me it seems to be almost impossible.

The theme of the life of the brother was: **SEEK TO BE UNKNOWN**. He wrote only and always to exalt the Lord Jesus Christ. In fact, some of his most intimate friends knew nothing of his personal life lived before that marvelous moment in October of 1915 when the brother was baptized with the Holy Spirit.

My advice would be to use the abundant correspondence in your possession that the brother wrote to his collaborators to introduce the readers to the knowledge of Jesus Christ. In my life I have never known anyone who had such an iron will to live day by day renouncing himself as Brother Petrelli lived."

Composing the biography of a man of God, who lived and served Christ in his generation in a hidden life is almost an impossibility if we consider the great apostolic teaching expressed in the words of St. Paul in a letter to the Colossians 3:1-3.

It is a difficult task to compose the biography of the external man even if we had all the information. It is impossible to compose the biography of the internal man without letting him speak himself in his writings which are substantial food for the souls who are attracted by and open to them; they are full of flashes of inspiration and of revelations that allow us

to anticipate, catch a glimpse of and see the reality of the KINGDOM OF GOD and of its KING.

To undertake the biography of a man whose ministry is to portray the Person, the unique theme of all of the Scriptures, is an oceanic undertaking. To identify the one who hid himself in the other is almost impossible (John 14:8-11; Revelation 22:8-9) and almost beyond human capacity.

That which is written in Matthew 11:25, 26 is true, that there are things that are hidden and things that are revealed. The written Word clearly says, in the same verses, who the receivers of heavenly revelations are—"Even so, Father: for so it seemed good in Thy sight"—according to the testimony of the Son (verse 26).

In writing about a man of God who is faithful to the mission received, it is to be expected, almost without being aware of it, that Another is being presented (John 14:8-11). A mirror cannot give its image, because it reflects that of another.

John, that disciple whom Jesus loved, has left written: "And there are many other things which Jesus did, the which, if they should be written everyone, I suppose that even the world itself could not contain the books that should be written."

We recommend that the devout reader examine closely with a loving soul the themes transmitted by means of the writings. In this way he will know indirectly the biography of the servant, of the KING JESUS and of HIS KINGDOM.

Only the Lord can give the biography of the servant, as likewise it is true that only a faithful servant can give the portrait of his Lord (Galatians 3:1).

Those who were friends of such a man of God gathered fruits of glory. Those who still follow the invisible, multiplied footsteps of this ministry know how to understand the conditions imposed by Elijah upon his son Elisha: "...if thou see me when I am taken from thee, it shall be so unto thee; but if not, it shall not be so." (2nd Kings 2:10).

The visible ministry of the prophet Elijah was transported into the invisible territory. Elisha was called to see more and more.

Thus was also the destiny of the disciples of the Lord Jesus after the glorious ascension. Sufferings hang over these solitary pilgrims wherever they are.

May our weak attempt to compile the biography of the dear Brother Petrelli, whose life moved between Heaven and earth, be appreciated without prejudice and partiality.

Jesus is the fulfillment who fulfills everything in all things.

CHRONOLOGY

1876

GIUSEPPE PETRELLI is born on December 27 in Noepoli (Potenza) Italy, to Pasquale Petrelli and Egiesia Santomartino (as reported in his passport no. 2027 issued to him in Lagonegro (PZ) on August 25, 1905). His family was a rich and perhaps noble family who were very devoted to the Catholic faith. Brother Petrelli was born an invalid and his mother made a vow to God that, if He would heal him, she would consecrate him to Him. The Lord granted her request and she fulfilled her promise. Then his mother died while he was still very little.

1893

He graduated at a very young age and began a brilliant career as a lawyer journalist and for several years collaborated as a journalist in one of the most important newspapers of Italy, "Il Corriere di Napoli." An event happened during the time he practiced law that changed the course of his life. While trying a case before the tribunal of Rome, defense lawyer Petrelli witnessed a profound injustice perpetrated by the representatives of the law. He left the tribunal profoundly disturbed and upset and, while returning he heard preaching coming from a church whose doors were open since it was summertime. With regard to this we quote him himself: "Allow me a personal testimony. The first evangelical message that I heard, I heard from an old Scottish pastor, in the Italian language. The subject was the resurrection of Lazarus. The impression that I had, while he was repeating the words: "*Jesus is the Resurrection and the life,*" was that the one who was repeating them sincerely believed them. Whatever my judgment of the message itself may have been

at that time, I was convinced of the sincerity of the one who was presenting it. Only a soul who is convinced can be used to convince others. Pronouncing great things with a false voice is the greatest enemy of the truth. High-sounding talk does not become the foolish person.

As a consequence of this experience, he began to frequent a Baptist Church, embracing the faith in Jesus Christ (he had been instructed in this from a young age). In this period he left his profession of lawyer and journalist in order to answer to his heavenly calling.

In the first years of his ministry, he donated his vast and considerable inheritance to charity for the poor and needy, beginning a life of faith and abnegation.

He was issued the passport mentioned above, valid for three years with New York as the destination, after which he sailed for the United States of America, where he resided until his death.

1900-10

He writes and publishes his first book **“Cristo per fede.”**

1905-15

He was entrusted with the ministerial chair in one of the largest Baptist Churches of New York and one of the largest among the Italian ones in America. In this period, serving with ability and benefit, and with teachings of the Sacred Scriptures (Doctor), he will write his first three books: **“Cristo per Fede,” “Simon Pietro”** and **“Davide Peccatore e Penitente,”** (which will then be published in installments in the monthly periodical **“Il Re ed il Regno,”** in

1929-30). In this period he meets and marries the sister in Christ, **Isabella**. Two holy and beautiful daughters are born to them. The daughters were the light of their life, but unfortunately died at a young age.

1911

On the 8th day of February Brother Petrelli is healed of paralysis.

1915

On October 20 a fundamental event of his life takes place: The Lord baptizes him with the **Holy Spirit**. After a certain time he enters the Pentecostal movement, where he will offer his services for more than forty years to many churches of the United States and Canada; **however, he never assumed the pastorate of any church, keeping himself always free and independent from compromises**, in order to better fulfill his ministry.

The first book that he wrote after his baptism, was "**Il Figliuol dell'Uomo.**"

1916-17

For three months he suffered from a severe bronchitis that seriously impaired his life and from which he was healed by the Lord.

1920-21

He was a missionary in **Argentina** and in **Brazil**. Upon his return from these voyages, among many other services, he teaches Bible classes in Belleville and Jersey City on Tuesday and Wednesday evenings for about twenty years in

English. Some of these were translated into Italian and published in "Il Granel de Senape."

1929-31

He publishes a monthly periodical in the Italian language entitled "**Il Re ed il Regno**" which also becomes bilingual (Italian and English) in 1930.

(Address, 336 Wood Street in Bristol, Pennsylvania, U.S.A.)

1929

He writes "**La Chiesa di Cristo**," and its publication is announced in "Il Re ed il Regno" of that year. The proceeds of the publications and of the books written by Brother Petrelli were given to charity.

1930

The book, "**Il Figliuol dell'Uomo**," is published as announced in "Il Re ed il Regno."

On October 23, on the occasion of the loss of one of their two daughters, Sister Isabella writes in her Bible (kept by our staff) these words: "...a day of great calamity and of great darkness for me. Psalm 92:19."

1932

He returns to Brazil.

1945

In the U.S.A. (Trenton, New Jersey) he begins publication of the monthly periodical "**La Differenza**" (bilingual, Italian-English) that will be sent also to Italy because of the insistent request of many brethren.

1945-46

He begins a voluminous and useful correspondence with **Sister Aida Chauvie** of Torre Pellice (Torino, Italy). A deep spiritual bond was established between them and a singleness of aims and of ideals that will lead to the birth of the editorial work in Italy that continues until today by means of the periodical "**Il Granel di Senape**" and the printing of his books, in order to send them to many readers who request them.

1947

In a letter dated May 14, he writes to Sister Aida Chauvie that he has the manuscript of the book "**Il Redentore**" ready and that he has begun to dictate the book "**La Chiesa, la Invisibile.**" (Both are also in English language).

March 1947

His beloved wife Isabella dies. After this painful event, he is lovingly brought to the home of Pastor G. Grinelli, in Belleville, New Jersey, where he remained until his death.

1948

The publication of the monthly periodical "**Il Regno di Dio**" begins in Italy under the direction of Sister Aida Chauvie (Torre Pellice, Torino) with contribution of manuscripts sent by Brother Petrelli.

December 26, 1953

The brother experiences death and resurrection which profoundly influenced the last years of his life and will lead

to a new direction and a new vision in his ministry led by the Holy Spirit.

October 1954

His book "**Him-His**" ("Lui e la Sua dottrina—Lui e i Suoi") is published.

February 13, 1957

In the early hours of the morning, he leaves this earth to join his beloved Lord Jesus Christ in the Heavenly Home. As we will describe further on, his death was celestial and glorious. He leaves as his spiritual heir (although never having met her in person), Sister Aida Chauvie, his faithful collaborator in the ministry of the printing of the periodical and of his books, authorizing her, by means of correspondence, in the publication of the same. He answered a French sister who asked him for the authorization to translate and publish his writings in the French language thus: "**...the writings are not mine, but of the Lord, except for the poverty of the composition...therefore, they can be translated.**"

1957

The last books that he wrote were "**Come in Cielo**" and "**Dalle tenebre alla luce—dalla podesta di Satana a Dio,**" these last ones being published shortly after his death.

**Continuation of the Work
of printing the manuscripts and the
books of Brother Giuseppe Petrelli**

August 1957

After a time of collaboration and trial, in agreement with Brother Petrelli and both having had the revelation, **Brother Antonio Bernabei** was received into the home of Sister Aida at Torre Pellice as a collaborator in the work, being confirmed himself that this was from the Lord.

1959

“Il Regno di Dio” continues, for respect to Brother Petrelli, under the new title: “**Il Granel di Senape,**” while its twelve years of publication will be collected and printed in four volumes of three years each under the title: “**Gli annuali de Il Regno di Dio.**”

August 1962

After a long and serious illness that for four years was undermining her health, the servant of the Lord, Sister Aida Chauvie, leaves this earth to be received in Heaven by her beloved Lord. One among the brothers present in her room testifies that, shortly before the sister expired, she saw Brother Petrelli in a vision who turned to her saying: “Aida, prepare yourself as we are going...”

1962 Until Today

Brother **Antonio Bernabei**, the adoptive son of Sister Aida (Antonio Bernabei Chauvie), picks up the precious spiritual heredity that Brother Petrelli had already consigned to the “daughter and devoted disciple” Aida (as he affectionately

called her); that heredity that continues until today to comfort, illumine, edify and restore the many souls that, in Italy and in various parts of the world, feel attracted to these writings that are clearly inspired by the Holy Spirit.

End of the Chronology

Note

Brother Petrelli's books have been translated into the German language (one or two) by Sister Marta Lehner (now with the Lord) and at the present time this work in the German canton of Switzerland continues by means of Sister Elisabeth Widmer of Granichen.

Some books had already been translated in the Spanish language before the brother's death (translated in Argentina by the "Assemblea Cristiana" and published by the Editorial Nazaret) ("Messaggio di San Paolo agli anziani di Efeso"). In recent years translation has been resumed and the following have already been printed in Argentina: "Il Figliuol dell'Uomo," "Il Redentore," "La Chiesa, la Invisible," and in preparation at the present time "La Chiesa di Cristo."

The brother wrote seven books in the original English language: "The Son of Man," "The Redeemer," "The Church, the Invisible," "Abraham, John, Thomas," "Heavenward," "Him—His," and "The Law of the Spirit." All of the twenty-eight books written by the brother can be read in Italian, those that were written originally in Italian and those translated into Italian from English. In addition to

having the great heavenly gift of writing under the anointing and inspiration of the Holy Spirit, the brother was a very cultured and studious man. He knew Italian naturally, his native language, and English, his language of residence, and he knew six other languages well: French, Spanish, Portuguese, Latin, Hebrew and Greek. These last two in particular permitted him to access the literature and direct translation of the Sacred texts in the original language (Hebrew for the Old Testament and Greek for the New Testament).

BIOGRAPHY

As we have said in our preface, it is a difficult task to compile a biography of the physical man and we have tried to do this with the help of the Lord even though briefly and with the information in our possession, in the preceding chronology.

The spiritual man, however, his doctrine, his convictions, his humanity and love for his Lord and for the souls emerge in a clear and bright way from his marvelous and inspired writings, the books, the meditations and the voluminous correspondence that this man of God, this Apostle of the 20th century, marvelous gift of God that He gave to His Church, had with many brothers and sisters in various parts of the world.

His writings, devoid of sectarianism, have edified, drawn near and drawn near again to God men and women of every **profession of faith.**

For this purpose we cite passages of letters written to us by brothers:

“...Petrelli had the gift of **transmitting** the teachings among the lines of his writings. A very elevated personality, not only humanly speaking, but above all spiritually, who works in various fields, Roman Catholic among them, has said that the writings of Brother Petrelli spring from an “**Autoillumination**”; that is, from having the King and the Kingdom in the heart, and this (so to speak) only by smelling his books.”

* * *

The Catholics like Brother Petrelli (the Catholic director of the magazine to which I also contributed years ago, was enthusiastic about his writings, so much as to heartily recommend that they should be read), “because his high mystical theology knows the itinerary of the great souls who work in the bosom of that religiosity.”

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“...You know very well that, also for me, the writings of Brother Petrelli have been and still are like “a lamp unto my feet,” they have the spiritual power to light the Path that leads to the Summit. But, once here, one passes from the Lamp to the brightness of the Sun at noontime.”

* * *

Often Brother Petrelli, in recounting events, spoke in the third person as if he were speaking or writing of others, while instead it was of himself that he was speaking or writing. With regard to this we cite the passage that follows:

Let us imagine a few readers that, now one, now the other, observe: “Must I bless the Lord who made me an orphan of my mother at a tender age, putting me under the discipline of a harsh and cruel stepmother, by which I had an infancy under beatings and privations?” Another, perhaps the same one, will say: “Must I bless the Lord, that I do not remember

even one day of good health of my tender age, weakened by one illness after another, often in danger of falling down dead, and many times fainting?" And another: "And how even if I wanted to make my way in society, always hindered by my fragile health." And another: "When with difficulty I was about to reach an envied position, strange events interfered?" And another: "And even in serving the Lord, so little compensation?" And others: "And only I had to have an unfortunate family? This is a benefit?" Such a one, whose name should not be mentioned has testified that, after a day of agitations, during the night, in a sleep full of anguish, there appeared to him one of the other world, like an angel, and said to him: "Don't you know that by means of these things, God has blessed you and is blessing you! Benefits...? Yes—but of Him."

"He has taken away your mother, of whom you were an idol; He has placed you under a discipline of iron, rendered poor in health, hindered in your earthly relations, and more, because he has wanted to attract you to Himself, preparing you for the trials of today. Remember that the love of God is quite different from that of man, because he leads you through an arid and desolate desert—in order to do good to you—at the end."

* * *

On July 21, 1956 he wrote this letter to a dear sister in Italy containing some biographical notes: "...For almost 79 years, I can say that I have not had true medical care, except that when I was about ten years old, when devoured by fevers of malaria, I was almost moribund."

"I have had mortal experiences, from all of which the blessed Lord has delivered me, on condition that I serve Him. But, alas—how imperfectly I have served Him!"

“The last, most serious one, was that of **December 26, 1953**, on the eve of my 77th birthday: after a short agony, when the death-rattle of the moribund finished, my arms fell down inert and I gave my last breath. They called the authorities in a hurry—and policemen and the town doctor came to declare me dead. Affectionate souls almost undressed me, shaking me and rubbing me from the feet on up; however they were working on a cadaver, oh marvel! While the group of authorities was entering, I returned to life.” “And not to speak of other occasions: I was healed of paralysis on February 8, 1911 on the third day, reading, half crippled, not with my voice, Psalm 103:1-5. It was read to me from Above; each word was light that irradiated me, and at the end I was healed.”

“And in 1916-17 I was healed from a severe bronchitis with continuous fevers for three months. I was not able to sleep, obliged to stay on a carpet because my back felt like it was breaking open. I did not take a single pill, sweet or otherwise; I took only a little food in order not to see my sister and my poor wife crying. Then, every day at 5:00 P.M., I would ask for my clothes and they would dress me, while the members of the household were reprimanding me calling me “proud.” My sister, not yet firm in the faith, was attending a church whose pastor was a young skilful doctor who became famous later on. He wanted to take care of me, warning my sister that there was still time to avoid pleurisy, which would have ended in tuberculosis or galloping phthisis.”

“After more than two months, in which I was always answering that I would rather die in the hands of God and not live in those of men (but within me, without me even asking for it, there came a determination and a gigantic faith).”

“On a day at the end of the third month, wanting to take the elevated train (I was in New York), my sister wanted to accompany me against my will. As soon as I went out, at a certain point I felt like I was dying, and even thus, I was moving staggering toward the elevated station, two long blocks away. Someone took me by my right side and a heavy mass moved in my back. I was healed instantly.”

“My sister, rebellious against the baptism with the Holy Spirit was converted instantly. I omit so much more. **I have been weak all my life, so that I should lean on the Strong One.** And a certain subtle pride had found its way in me. Last March I foresaw something new—transported into another ministry. On April 2 I was commanded by those of the house. I did not quite know what I was suffering, because various symptoms have fallen upon me all my life and I was used to it. “Submit!” a voice thundered to me on the evening of the 1st of April. A very famous surgical doctor—extraordinary—came on the morning of April 2. Hospital, he said: prostate. I heard: submit yourself and go. They found a place the same day; on April 9 I had the operation.”

“That which I saw, revealing a new world to me, is too long. I saw Jesus nailed, and then the cross lifted up, and made to fall forcefully into a prepared hole (and one told me that’s what happened to those viscera thus violently suspended in an instant).”

* * *

In another letter, dated December 12, 1948, he wrote thus of himself:

“I am, by nature, resentful, dignified to the point of pride, or subtly arrogant, and of a cutting language and way of

writing. But I have had to decide: either the meek and humble Jesus, or the entangled ecclesiasticism.”

“We are embarked in an **ocean of glory**, but, full of fog, rocks and submarines. Only divine Love and divine Wisdom can make us navigate safely. We are in a **sure, elevated doctrine**, but difficult and, therefore misunderstood. **Patience in the spirit.**”

* * *

Letter of August 5, 1948: “I know myself. I have a resentful and impetuous character but, by grace, gifted with a sense of justice that allows me to search for the rights of others and my faults, to the extreme. And I conclude: if we are right in 999 points, and wrong or doubt of being wrong in one, we must humble ourselves for that one, even if others, of the 999 points, remain impenitent. On the other hand, recognize 1/1000 of good in others in the midst of the 999 black points. **I am severe with myself and with those who are close to me.**”

* * *

“Personally, I have a reserved and melancholy character, of very few words.”

“...As for us, we do not despise the day of small things. I have received good even in Catholicism. And now, I recommend to those who honor me by listening to me or reading me, that they should not speak evil of anything.”

“My program is: to not enter into the government and programs of the Churches and, in my little place, to receive those whom the Lord sends.”

* * *

“I am not at the head of any group, and desire precisely that no one mentions my name, but that Jesus only be uplifted (Mark 9). There is a danger that even one man alone, if he is not careful, can organize and create a denomination, and make himself “A Little Pope.” But **I DO NOT WANT IT!** Oh, if I would be able to write and to preach, without having to be seen, or that anyone should know of this poor broken reed!”

* * *

Of the Baptism of the Holy Spirit

Two recollections. One personal: A few years before I was baptized with the Holy Spirit, a holy man visited us in our Church (I was a Baptist pastor), and he said to me among other things: “If you are not baptized with the Holy Spirit, you are not the Church,” and he said even more than this. I had heard from others that I would not be part of the “Body,” of the “Bride,” etc.

During that time I supposed that I had been baptized, but I did not contradict, and I have never persecuted the brethren. Rather, I felt a secret communion in the spirit, although I did not approve of all of their words. I remained calm before the “you will be” or “you will not be” and an inner voice spoke to me: “Fear not. You love Me without any secondary aim; as for what you must be or receive, you will receive all that which I have for you.”

Ah, dear readers, let us guard against the mercenary spirit, because even thinking and saying, “This for this” is a mercenary spirit. May it be given to us to love Him—the Three—for Him, for Himself, and not for that which we expect, although it is right also to expect. *But—but everything*—truly for the glory of God. *For the glory of God.*

It is not out of place to insert a parenthesis. Let us read John 5:44, trembling:

“How can ye believe, which receive honor one of another, and seek not the honor that cometh from God only?” I cried reading it, and years before I was to receive the Holy Spirit.

Another: A missionary whom the Lord has used greatly, and I think that nobody in these last fifty years has been—at least for extending the churches and number of members—as much as he, used to repeat to me that he never had special services for seeking the Baptism with the Holy Spirit, but that many were baptized during the preaching services.

In a small measure, we have also seen that, on very few occasions, while we were speaking, someone has been baptized with the Holy Spirit. In Acts 10 there was the laying on of hands by St. Paul. In Acts 10, in the case of Cornelius, there was neither a special meeting, nor the laying of hands: “while Peter was speaking.”

If a counsel can be given, we venture to say that the servant of Christ be first himself not only clearly baptized with the Holy Spirit (alas, I fear that not all are, although they pretend to be)—but that he be under the *control* of the Holy Spirit who guides him—and not theories of men or intentions—who are we to observe to the contrary? Who can limit the Lord or suggest to Him how He must work?

* * *

“Permit us a personal recollection: it will be good for someone. For two or more years, the one who writes felt a distressing void growing in him. Others were praising his ministry, but he was not satisfied; he felt an inexplicable need of an immense Reality; and yet he was blessed, and yet

he was being used. The Merciful One uses who and how He wants.”

Hearing about the Baptism with the Holy Spirit, he was boasting of having it. But one day he met a holy man, a Swedish Pentecostal minister, who without arguing, fixing his eyes on me, with profound seriousness asked: “But are you thirsty for Jesus?” “Oh, yes!” answered the other, and it was a yes that came from the heart. The other smiled with a loving smile, as if to say: “No discussion is necessary, you will receive.” And I did receive! And what a baptism of the Holy Spirit and of fire, the evening of October 20, 1915, between 7:00 and 8:00 P.M. in a certain place, in a certain house! Oh! It is an event that is eternal. And then the Three became One. Then a new beginning.

The important thing is that the souls be attracted to the Lord. This is also a work: and how! of the Holy Spirit... And then one feels the emptiness, “orphans.” And in a flash the Comforter comes. Discussing? It is a waste of time, rather damaging.

* * *

To a dear sister in Italy he writes: “In 1915, after the Baptism with the Holy Spirit (and of fire—they saw fire in my room) I had some clear visions and revelations. One was that I found myself on a narrow path between two abysses. I was alone and in order to reach a single solitary tree, I had to drag myself in the dust.”

* * *

Vision for His Ministry

The one who writes remembers a clear and important vision. It was night and he was climbing a very high mountain, meeting snakes at every step that were hurling themselves at

him to bite him, but they did not succeed in touching him, because they were biting a cushion that he had in his hand.

In the calmness, then, the Lord explained that he had to receive the attacks of others, demonstrating the true meekness of Jesus Christ. The vision continued.

He reached the top of the mountain, at a point where the narrow path ran between two abysses, without any protection, neither of a wall, nor of a tree, and not even a bush. The straight path was between two precipices and ended at a tree. The one who writes had received the inner command to reach that tree and to embrace it. But the danger was great; the path was narrow, unprotected, between two chasms, and heights made him dizzy.

“Throw yourself to the ground, and go ahead dragging yourself, without looking either to the right or to the left” the Voice said to him. He did so, and at the end, after much difficulty, with clothing and hands lacerated, he reached the tree and embraced it. And the Lord warned him: “Guard yourself from forming parties with anyone. The Christian goes ahead between two abysses; in order to not precipitate, he must keep himself humble, and drag himself in the dust.”

* * *

Of Religious Sectarianism

For some years we have been meditating on some methods of some Churches and sects. Be it far from us to judge people and motives. The Churches have the fiercest enemies precisely among those whom they want to benefit materially and dominate spiritually. A special grace is needed to do good, and to know how to do it. The one who writes regretfully remembers something of the past.

In a certain meeting place, every Saturday evening, a lot of very poor people were gathering. They were sad times. In a large room, well-intentioned evangelists were striving to announce the Good News, concluding with the usual Appeals—"Who wants...?" Hands were lifted up and voices saying "Pray for me." Alas, many times they were the same voices, Saturday after Saturday, while tired and annoyed eyes were looking at the great clock, as if to say: "When will he finish?" And this was because in the large room next to it, pious and well-intentioned women, elegantly dressed, were active in preparing coffee and other things. That crowd of beggars who had finished listening to the speaking inflicted upon them, would pass from one place to the other for a piece of bread.

The one who writes had no part in that work, but was protesting, saying: "Let bread be given to the hungry but do not do so on condition that they first listen to the preaching. They will hate the religion."

I remember other methods, also in times of cold, rainy weather and of scarcity of work. Some hungry and ragged ones would come seeking a little money in order to not sleep out in the open, and would say: I am from that church—I...I... Poor ones, let us not judge them. Cold and hunger are hard and bad counselors.

But we remember, and we bless God for answers like this: "Oh my brother, you have the right to a piece of bread and a refuge as a creature of God, even if you are Mohammedan. Take it in the Name of Jesus Christ, and you are not obligated to remain or to come to our services, except if God should guide you."

One day thousands of poor, tired, and hungry people were fed by those blessed hands. Jesus did not inflict a sermon on them to form creeds as a condition of receiving as much bread and fish as they wanted. He prayed and wanted them to be comfortably seated and to have abundance. The discussions came the following day when He did not even seek for them, but some of them ran after Him. And they were not then given bread and fishes.

Alas, in applying this painful subject close to us, it is right to observe that some of us, only because we have had, without any merit of our own, the great privilege of living in a privileged country, and to manage a little money, we think we have the duty or the right to regulate churches in the missionary fields. Many of the places have more understanding than us, and know the Sacred Scripture better than us. But we ... we are the great ones, who must also regulate their churches.

In *Italy* there were, there are, persons of good hearts and minds, before whom we are almost nothing. And we humble them with our behavior. There is a word that says much: Snobbery! It's a display of superiority.

* * *

Leading (taking care of) the Souls

A remembrance: One of the saintliest men that I have known edified me by the love that he nourished for the souls, and for his rare patience. I don't know if I have ever met anyone who lived in the realm of the Spirit at his level and understood the Scriptures. He knew the letter of the Word—and knew also how to read it (Luke 10:26). But there was a "But" in his ministry, and someone made me notice it. And it was that he—similar to a weak and inexperienced mother—kept

his spiritual children as in a glass cage, so that no outside influence would reach them. His preaching was very simple, and he avoided pointing out the reefs of false doctors and false doctrines.

That saint has gone with the Lord, but the people gathered by him with tears and sacrifice has not remained united. And I do not add anything else.

We must exhort and warn, but cannot impede souls from going where their soul is tending. There are experiences that nobody accepts from others. Forcing "Creeds," threatening or caressing persons leads to a superficial work, and often generates hypocrisy.

But the God of all Grace uses various means and men to work even with one soul. Some will remain proud and stern, like the elder brother, and will be scandalized by that which they consider excessive mercy. Others, like the prodigal, will go into a far country. But they will return from exile and will know, by means of sorrows and disappointments, their misery, and the greatness and the Love of God.

Poor us that we often want to take possession of souls as if they were objects, but they will run out of our hands like water, often without our being aware of it. And we pray: Lord, help us to work faithfully, with love and diligence and with faith, knowing that the souls are yours, and that Thou hast begun your work in them.

Thou alone—how—when—Thou knowest—Thou alone will bring it to completion. Amen.

Carnal Emotionality

It is unpleasant to have to touch on some subjects. The Lord admonishes us that we should be babies in malice, and men accomplished in wisdom. A remembrance: In a great meeting place, someone went on the platform and began to dance...; David had danced during the transport of the Ark! Often, some enthusiastic person exhorts the congregation to shout and to clap their hands, basing this on a few verses in the Psalms. I remember that one evening, after a moving message, we were on our knees; no one was praying; we were under a cloud that kept us in a subdued silence, interrupted lightly by sighs. Such a one entered, and noting that silence, began to shout: "What's the matter? Nobody gives glory to God—give glory to God. Shout." Nobody obeyed him, but we felt like we had been wounded. The Holy Spirit, delicate Dove, was disturbed.

There are gratuitous counselors who afflict pious souls with reprimands or exhortations that they must do this or that other work for the Lord, and they do not know that each one must obey that which The Lord entrusts to them and will go on commanding, each time, by means of the Holy Spirit. In fact, the work of Heaven is divided, to whom one thing, and to whom another.

* * *

It is not the much that serves God, but the "little," moved by the Holy Spirit. 1st Corinthians 10:31—We note that **THE GLORY OF THE INCARNATION REDUCED ITSELF TO THE MANGER—THE TRANSFIGURATION REDUCED ITSELF TO THE VALLEY—AND THE RESURRECTION TO PREPARING FOOD ON THE SHORE OF THE LAKE.** The proud man looks for the spectacular—but the Glory is in the faithfulness—even in the little things.

Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together
(Hebrews 10:25)

This is one of the scriptural passages most frequently cited and most difficult to be understood with serenity and justice.

A little of the confusion happens by not reading as it is in the text, and then by not harmonizing it with the rest of the Epistle, and finally by not taking into account that the Christian life is a continuous school, by which we pass from one station to another, and as written in the text of Psalm 84:7, by which the words "from strength to strength" also mean from "company to company."

The words in the text are: "NOT FORSAKING THE ASSEMBLING OF OURSELVES TOGETHER (coming together among us).

The principal aim of the epistle to the Hebrews is to exhort the Hebrews who had accepted Jesus and were tempted to return to Judaism. The text warns that the Christian needs comfort and strength and to remain in the communion of the saints. Woe to the one who is alone. The Christian must be alone and must be in company. But the text does not speak of "congregations" as we understand them. It says only that we must be together with other Christians.

It is an echo of that which is written in Malachi, that those who feared the Lord and thought on His Name spoke one to another (Malachi 3:16).

If this, without growing weak, can come about in the same place where we heard the first messages, so much the better, it being understood that the people and leader grow

simultaneously in knowledge—and the Lord develops gifts and ministries. But if the motive is not legitimate, if the place is lacking other ministries and gifts, it is unjust to want to keep back a scholar always in the same class. In conclusion, the assembling together is not done by man, but by the Holy Spirit.

Some of our readers were in other Churches before hearing and accepting that there is the Baptism with the Holy Spirit. But the Baptism with the Holy Spirit is not the final terminal. There is a continuing toward the Kingdom of God—and edification of the Body of Christ.

The wine of the Spirit is in continuous fermentation. By that one cannot pretend that one should remain always in the same place. We should sooner say that every servant of Christ should pray that the Lord would develop him in a way as to be able to serve those whom God entrusts to him, and to pray that the souls may be guided by God and not lorded over by anyone or misled.

A remembrance: I was Pastor in a numerous and esteemed Church—and a few were leaving me. To those who were insisting with me that I should make an effort to detain them I answered: “And if they find that which I cannot and don’t know how to give them—so much the better!” Ah, let us convert ourselves to the Lord.

* * *

*Various Correspondences
Remembrances—Teachings*

A remembrance of when I was on a mission in a foreign country.

If we are not in intimate communion with the Lord, how, and where, when and as much as He wants us, the enemy forces have power over us. We must assure ourselves each time that we are dwelling in Jesus, and that we are moved by Him and for His glory.

Permit us a remembrance that goes back many years to a mission in a foreign country; I am a witness. A disturber was appearing in a certain meeting place. He was a demoniac that, according to us was beyond any possible help; he had gone beyond the measure by which one could pray for him. It was a truly miserable case. By this I do not intend to say what the final word is which the Lord may have reserved for him, because we do not like to extend ourselves beyond that of which we are assured, leaving the future in the blessed hand of the Lord.

The demoniac was coming around for the purpose of disturbing. He tried many times to kill a servant of the Lord, but he did not succeed. He would lie in wait armed with a rifle near where the servant had to pass, in somewhat solitary places; but he could never see him alone, or when he would see him it seemed to him that the servant was accompanied by a multitude of armed people. In a meeting in which there were a lot of people, he came one day and tried to disturb the order: he stood up and began to speak using a language above any human ability. The presiding elder commanded him to be silent; but he was shouting louder and then there was the insistence that he should stop, and was commanded

in the Name of Jesus; he did not obey, but became more arrogant and used a lion-like voice with frightening roaring.

The congregation began to sing a song that remembered the Blood of the Lord. Nothing availed.

The eyes of the presiding elder and of the congregation, all frightened, were fixed on a poor missionary, sick and seated, even he was discouraged. The latter prayed in secret, approximately like this: "Lord, the demon is stronger than I, and I feel weak in everything and I am also sick. If you do not invigorate and command me, I cannot rebuke that monster." And then an extraordinary vigor came down from heaven and the missionary felt his bones being hardened. He stood up on his feet; he felt a vigor that made him remember the supernatural strength of Samson, and he could even have broken hard objects. He began to walk slowly but firmly toward the demoniac; he spoke not even one word, but, lifting his arm, made a vigorous sign with the hand, indicating the door. The demon knows the power of God, and when it is God who moves he trembles: in fact he began to tremble, becoming agitated like one who is mortally wounded. Then, as if an invisible hand lifted him bodily, he was thrown out, and he went out shouting and running.

But there was another occasion in which the same missionary had the opposite experience. One evening, at the end of the meeting, he called together various elders, and the demoniac also presented himself. That servant began to rebuke him in the name of the Lord, but the other not only did not obey him, but became more arrogant and threatening: then, that servant remembered that it was he who had rebuked and he had used the "In the Name of the Lord," and not the Holy Spirit; he fell on his knees asking forgiveness and praying that the Lord would deliver them. The Lord delivered them casting out the disturber. We want to say that

the enemy forces are frightening and are beyond our strength, and do not yield to our rebuking, or to songs, or to verbal commands given, even pronouncing the Blessed Name. *He* is needed: Jesus Christ, by means of the Holy Spirit.

Now we can understand better the incident recorded in Acts 19:13-16.

* * *

Another remembrance: I remember two deeds of which I was an eyewitness. A Servant of the Lord was speaking of the return of Jesus, and a man of the world was present; we say world, not to condemn the outsiders, but speaking of the spirit of the vanity of the world. That certain one, happy according to the flesh, began to say in a scornful tone that there would be a great feast at that encounter. But the man of God, becoming severe, answered: A feast, but not for you. For you, the other. The other became pale and trembled. It was the message that was needed.

A servant of Christ was speaking of a great miracle that happened to him, and the hearer was laughing, as if mocking. Let us not profane the great things of heaven, presenting pearls where we should not, but may the Lord always guide us.

* * *

Teaching: No one can deny that many contradict each other, and—alas often—they tear each other to pieces, each insisting on his special point of doctrine. This is not new. Many know the long and obstinate struggle, never conclusive in favor of only one side, between “Predestination and Free Will” and in our times, between “Accomplished work and progressive work,” and many other subjects too numerous to enumerate. Often they are good men with holy intentions

who contradict each other, and this causes harm to the sheep, because while the shepherds are litigating, the wolf kills them.

On the one hand we should not extend ourselves into doctrinal trifles because of intellectual satisfaction. God feeds us giving us daily bread; necessary food in the right measure and time. Another remedy is to not make the Bible something to quarrel about or a gallery of curiosity. Only the One who has dictated it has its key, and gives it only when and as much as is needed. **Never define the Word in an absolute sense, because it is of great extension, which is that it enlarges in the measure that we grow.**

We must never depend on our logic, because that of Heaven is different from that of man. We should accept all the Counsel of God, and not one part, and understand that the Truth is in the Sum (Harmony) and not in a part of the Word.

* * *

A personal remembrance: We allow ourselves a personal remembrance of about thirty years ago.

One morning, a sister communicated to me weeping that the previous night, in a dream, the Lord had told her (referring to her father who was old and very sick): "I WILL NO LONGER FORGIVE HIM BECAUSE HE HAS HARDENED HIMSELF. I WILL SEND THE SERGEANTS TO ARREST HIM." And she was crying bitterly, imagining the case of the man of whom she was the favorite daughter. She did not ask me to pray, as the sentence appeared to be absolute, irrevocable.

Without promising anything, because I had no light, especially since the dream had been repeated at dawn, and was remaining alive and insistent in her, I went to close

myself in the meeting place, and began to ask for an explanation. I was confirmed that the Lord had truly spoken to her. I asked why the Lord had given the announcement precisely to the favorite daughter who really loved the parent, and why she had come to communicate it to me. I had this answer: So that you and she may pray, in order that it may be granted to this man, up to now indifferent, to repent and to have a spirit of penitence; otherwise—I understood thus—otherwise, if that notification was irreparable, it would have been a useless cruelty.

Strengthened in hope and conscious that because I had been informed, I was responsible, I invited the daughter to pray with faith. The Lord answered us: the father surrendered to the Lord with tears and received the grace of penitence. He died a holy death.

Uriah the Hittite: Behold, they pushed him under the enemy walls, and then they abandoned him. The Lord presented this picture to me in 1921, when for defending an oppressed elder, I was abandoned by the oppressed one and by those who were debating for my intervention. *And the Lord, in a night of travail, said to me: Do not follow voices of people or appeals by whoever it may be if you do not see my Son before you: Follow Him.*

* * *

April 19, 1947—This is my position in the work. I came afterward and was not one of the founders. I have never had a truly ecclesiastic ministry, of great enthusiasm. **I am like a solitary person, attracted to contemplation and to the study of the Person of Jesus Christ—and of the Invisible Church.** I am not suited to truly ecclesiastic work.

* * *

July 23, 1947—I am working on “The Redeemer” and “The Church, the Invisible.” These are bold works and will attract persecution to me.

* * *

September 17, 1948—I explain briefly my relation to the work. All the groups have tried to have me with them. I receive invitations from many Churches, and apparently pathetic appeals from individuals. And those who exhort easily are not lacking: “See, there are many beautiful souls there that desire you, etc., etc.” And the flattering voices: “There is need of you there!” And I smile because there is need everywhere; but the Lord can work without us.

It is His condescendence if He uses us, often having to adjust the misdeeds of useless servants. At best we are “useless servants.” Having put down (finally) every importance of my own “I”, I remain serene in the midst of the shouting of various notes, in which ridicule is not lacking; but if it is He who commands, then—oh then... And I say: Lord, make me faithful. I have been a warrior, and I have thrown myself into the fire to lend a hand to others; but in my afflictions, help came to me only from Above, by means of obscure persons that I neglected at one time.

And on one memorable occasion I had to understand the episode of Uriah the Hittite (2nd Samuel 11:15), a hero among heroes, thrust under the enemy walls, and then abandoned there and allowed to die there. Jesus had groups and people more than us. He knows how and by means of what circumstances, to lift up those who have fallen, to save. Don't be upset! Move only at His assured command. These words are from one who has been neither crude nor indifferent, but who has seen and understood much.

* * *

March 26, 1948—For years I have been a dead person who comes to the work, moved only by superior forces that do not suffer tiredness (Isaiah 40:31). When I move a step, write a line or say a few words according to my own judgment, I become immediately inept. Everything must be from Above, and in His time. I am saddened for not having gathered the records of my illnesses—mortal—from the 3rd year and up, besides the state of an *always* very weak organism. A power to which I can't resist keeps me in the work of God, often against my emotional will (I keep the inner will and spirit tied to Heaven, otherwise I would have been put out of the sanctuary).

* * *

Let us try to imitate Jesus who from a very bad, at times vulgar, incident, raised Himself up to the spheres of Heaven, this being an index of a mind attracted to the Above, because trivial things cause the greatest heights, whereas there or those who are carnal who drag down incidents that are elevated and inspirational. Physically, always flourishing; and also in the work, the Lord helps me with an energy extraordinary even in a young man; but outside of feverish activity I am a shadow. I have always been living and acting as if in a dream. It has been over thirty years that I have not received medical care.

In 1911, I became paralyzed, and I was then healed reading Psalm 103:4-5. Every word—in silence—was coming to me from Above and was bringing light.

A Hebrew doctor who was coming to my Baptist meetings, loved me. One day, without my having asked for it he ran X-rays and saw that my heart was quite enlarged.

What it has cost me—always—to go around, reading in public (the Scriptures), the Lord knows. At times, I do not

even see the people, but I am like one who is daydreaming. And meanwhile, one who sees and hears, thinks or says: what health! But now I feel that I am at the end; or if a miracle of miracles happens, and in several lines—to a new beginning. And now I say with Dante: More I do not tell you, and more I do not answer to you. Shakespeare, speaking of Julius Caesar, said (I cite from memory), that his speaking or acting or answering, were like the sparks of the flint stone, rapid and luminous, but “soon it is cold”; that is, not indifferent, but like withdrawing in himself.

* * *

October 21, 1948—My lines are brief; but they contain a logic of iron and experience. I cannot write volumes on every line. Do not put weights on yourself if God does not put them on you. My back is scarred, and in part bleeding, because of “too much.”

* * *

April 19, 1949—The work of the Holy Spirit cannot be circumscribed in “Creeds” and human Regulations. The Lord shakes the earth and also the heavens. If you like the periodical, read it. If you do not like it, don’t be alarmed, because we have no intention at all, except to be of inspiration and comfort to those whom the Lord wants to comfort by means of us.

* * *

In one of his books he writes of his personal relation with one of his old uncles as follows: A personal remembrance:

When I was a student in college, I was very far from being humble of mind, because I imagined that I understood much and could speak on almost any subject; I was ready to use high-sounding words like these: science, evolution of man, antiquity of the creation of man and so on.

An old man, mature in wisdom and of a long mental discipline, said to me one time, patting me lightly on the back with a paternal smile: "my son (incidentally I will say that this old man—very learned—was my uncle), don't be too sure of yourself, but wait. Life will teach you to doubt everything except God."

As for religion—he continued—"I have reached the conclusion that, if I were to give free reign to my mind, I would end in skepticism or in desperation. I do not discuss; I believe in God my Father, in Christ, the revealer of the Father, and I have found rest. I no longer reason starting from scientific affirmations in order to reach religion, but reason from the fact that I have found rest in Christ in order to reach problems of the mind."

"We cannot know everything; we must accept God, the cause of all the causes." With the passage of more than half a century, I still see the kind face and hear the sweet voice of the old man. His words have left an impression on my life.

I have had to conclude a long time ago that the human mind, with its thoughts and speculations, needs an authority that controls and makes it stable. I have found this authority in Christ.

* * *

July 13, 1949 - The hardest work is not to have people, but men who are capable of feeding them. Many times, I must insist, now on the right, now on the left, with my noble brothers (they are noble), that they do not let themselves be allured by the songs of the ecclesiastical sirens.

* * *

To a rare and elevated soul, he writes thus:

February 15, 1950—I am by disposition and culture a subtle and obstinate dialectic. Do not think that I have an even-minded temperament. I have rages that run through me like extremely rapid currents! But—But, God!

Let us keep in mind the advice of St. Augustine: “Fortifer et Soaviter” (with strength in the thing, but softly in the method). Do not answer immediately: imitate Jesus, who when He was provoked in Himself, kept silence and went to the sepulcher.

* * *

March 14, 1950—A saintly old man, who had been a spiritual balm to me and who went with the Lord in 1923, often used to cite to me Zechariah 12:3—to warn me, in that delicate and wise way, not to be quick to take on other weights outside of those that are imposed on each one of us by the Lord. He used to say that one who overloads himself with Jerusalem, will be crushed (I say: “crippled”) as by a heavy stone.

There is an energetic English expression: “Hands off”. And I, poor man, unhappy in various relations, a solitary man of books, had neither social nor ecclesiastic experience.

Many of the woes were precisely the effect of transgressing Zechariah 12:3. Now I have learned my lessons, and before presenting counsels, I tremble and say: “Hands off.” – The second letter of the brother is full of enthusiasm that we must not quench. At most we can only moderate things slightly, following, as God teaches us in nature (where the curve predominates—not the straight, cutting line) the line of least resistance.

* * *

May 19, 1950—Beloved sister, why are you afflicted? What is so bad, what? They baptize (I use their word) the baby. Eh! Eh! It takes time for souls to become rooted (1st Peter 5:10).

Do you know that the family of Sister Petrelli took in an unhappy woman in Brazil and then offered money to her to “baptize” the baby, telling her that the good had not been done to her for the purpose of proselytism. She did not accept.

You have not yet understood in the mind (you have in the spirit) the great manner of dealing of Christ. Have faith in God (Matthew 24:35). Throw the seed and trust in God. Times, storms - why should we look at them? Let the souls go where they want, free, etc. — The Lord will get the elect back from countries between Egypt and the North. Oh, how little we understand the work of Christ! The leaven of proselytism lasts in everyone, but read Psalm 127. You are sad for those who are alone. But the treasurer remained alone (Acts 8)—and also the Shulamite—and the other one in the desert (Hosea 2:14. 15). Can the enemy be stronger than Christ? Let us take care of that which He puts before us day by day (Psalm 90:12 and Matthew 6:34).

They baptize the babies: men confuse the souls! What great woes! But God is on His Throne, and knows how to reach precisely those souls (Psalm 76:10). But we want immediate results. One who loves Jesus Christ is not afraid of the Princes. Brother Petrelli always supported this child until the end of his studies. After a few years, having now become a man, he went to see Brother Petrelli who was ill and said to him: “What can I do to repay that which you have done for me?” And Petrelli answered: “Do for others that which has been done for you,” citing Matthew 7:12.

His declaration regarding his writings: These writings have been done by means of sacrifices. If you believe that they uplift the Son of God, you also should participate. Begin now: pray for those who want to serve the Lord. We desire that they reach many.

Pray for those who will read them. Pray also for those who are working for their distribution. Distant souls will be able to receive a benefit. Do you want to be a part of it? Ask the Lord and He will tell you how. Thus it will be also your work. It is necessary to aspire to be among those who bless and help every good work. That which is done in the Name of Jesus Christ, and for His glory, will bear its fruit.

* * *

Two remembrances: Permit us to remember a few thrusts of the sword that have not helped the work of the Lord.

Having returned to Italy, after a long absence, I noticed one who was selling copies of the Gospels in the compartment in which I was traveling. In order to make his work easier, without letting him know who I was, I also bought a few copies. The bystanders, seeing that I, in silence, was looking intently at those little volumes, also bought. Upon descending, I invited the fellow traveler to come with me to some of my relatives, to whose home I was going.

Having arrived there, I presented him as a servant of the Lord who was selling evangelical books. To the fellow traveler I said: "These my relatives are truly pious souls according to the light they have received," and I mentioned their Church.

The zealous fellow traveler, looked at me and those who were with me, and, as if scandalized, began to shout: "And how can they be pious souls, if, and if... They are not..." Grabbing his small suitcase, he left without saying goodbye, while one of my relatives, a true gentleman, was thinking of inviting him to take a bite with us.

I remained as I remained; that violent one (not violent to grasp the Kingdom for himself) had destroyed the patient work of others. This happened a long time ago.

More recently: Three brothers in Christ were traveling in an auto toward a certain place when we noticed a man who was carrying a suitcase traveling on foot. We invited him to come into our car. He accepted gratefully. One of us noticed that he was an intelligent and diligent worker, but of those who declare that they do not believe anything, and I began to bring to his attention that even he had found himself on the road traveling on foot, as other means of transportation were lacking.

A sweet and gentle conversation was beginning, when one of our group asked him point-blank: "Are you saved?"

The one who had begun the conversation that seemed distant, but had a kind purpose (showing "*consideration and gentleness to all men,*" Philippians 4:1-9), felt a wound in his heart at that importunate or hasty question and saw the pilgrim answer with a smile and scornful gesture; then, he said that he had to leave, and he left...

Ah! Brothers; people must be helped to see for themselves the Truth in general, and in the particulars. Wanting to impose our views on them, even if they are right, is to want to be lords over them. Deep down, the soul recognizes only one Lord. Jesus Himself, in the days of His humiliation, gave

the message, waiting for the people to be persuaded themselves.

* * *

A remembrance: In the first year of ministry, I met a young man who related a personal experience to me, stating in advance that he had never before then accepted any form of religion. He said, in a tone between serious and emotional, with tears in his eyes, that he had been without work for some time, and one morning he decided to commit suicide. With the aim of gaining something for his family, he planned to slide under a heavy public vehicle, and end up under the wheels.

He lay in wait, expecting the vehicle to come. In the moment that he had proposed to slide down, he discovered a piece of money by his feet. A light flashed in him telling him: "It is Providence." He collected the money, took heart, and it was a new beginning. He was speaking emotionally! But, oh, human gratitude!

Some years afterward I met him in an anarchical room where I found myself for a debate on the existence of God. Alas, at that time I was accepting invitations to debates... Among the most arrogant and bold faces, I discerned his. I fixed my eyes on his face in order to make him feel ashamed. Is God without witnesses? Oh, NO. He loves all creatures.

* * *

Permit me a dutiful testimony. I do not accuse anyone: But the great God wants us to give our testimony without condemning us, when He has forgiven and does not condemn.

I had decided to run away from active ministry, deceiving myself that it is possible to flee from men and remain always

faithful to God. It is not possible. It was then that a man came forward, a saint, not so much full of years, as much of sorrows. He had more tears than words. I remember how that saint took me by the hand on a certain occasion and said to me: "Steady, steady; God loves you, God loves you. These things that you are going through are trials. Take courage."

More than the words, it was that illuminated face and that voice that said to me that God Himself was caressing me and was drawing me to Him. And that face remains, and presents itself to me often, years later. The holy man is no longer on the earth; the good has remained.

* * *

What I must submit to is clear to me, because precisely on this conflict between a misunderstood ministry, and the rigor of the rigorists, the most sorrowful problems of my life were centered.

Some of us must become harder, others a little less hard. Sufferings and disappointments help. Paul was hard toward John Mark (Acts 15:37-39), but as an old man, in prison, he had to rethink himself (2nd Timothy 4:11). The rigorist is in error, because those who are out of order must not be driven away (1st Thessalonians 5:14). Jesus is King, Priest and Prophet. Some show a tendency to the royal line (command) not tempered by the priestly one of Aaron who put himself between the living and the dead (Numbers 16:48). I have suffered because of excessive pity (mine) and sometime (but rarely) because of excessive rigor. Now I find myself closer to equilibrium (Isaiah 11:2).

Some of us have the high honor of being restorers of ruins, and find ourselves in the process if Isaiah 61:3, 5, a misunderstood ministry (Luke 15:1, 2). But we also make

mistakes, because at times, even we must know how to say "No."

* * *

Dear brother—I do not feel—nor am I worthy to answer adequately to your letter, that has moved me even before I opened it. Listen, oh you whom the Lord has put before the one who has the grace and the light to see it. Listen: God has put you in the work as a sign of praising Him and encouraging in Him, precisely when it is you who have need of courage and comfort. The second part of chapter 24 of Ezekiel is before me; I cite it to you as an illustration. Your case is beyond any comparison and remembrance. In 1916 in... I was guided to visit a poor woman, imprisoned in bed, so that she could not even turn herself without being moved. A sickness that appears only after centuries, had made her swell up--forming big shoulders—the neck, the joints of the arms, the fingers and other parts. She was a good Catholic and looking at me with an expectant smile, would say to me: *"Little brother, you don't say anything to me."*

I could not speak. Finally, the Lord opened my mouth and I said (I was not crying, but my eyes were burning, from hidden tears of fire): "I am not here to teach or to comfort you—but to learn how great is the grace of God that has brought you not only not to despair or to curse, but to be sweetly resigned—and to wait for one word from the mouth of Jesus." I said more that I do not remember. Her husband and children, when they reappeared home were making fun of her and shaking the bed would say to her: When will you die? I was going every Wednesday between 2 and 3 p.m., and she was waiting, looking at the door. The last visit came. When I entered she shook her head: "Little brother, you (using the familiar version of "you") are going away." And I: "Jesus is not going away."

The following year when visiting ... I asked about her, imagining that she had died and it was told me: "in the County hospital." I went, and while I was crossing the vast courtyard I heard the noise of a wheelchair that was coming upon me, almost hitting me. I turned around, and she, smiling (she was seated, and maneuvering the wheelchair easily): *Little brother!* I no longer saw swelling in her neck, elbow and wrist and between her fingers.

Great God! I learned, not from her, that her husband who was a vigorous man had died. Oh my brother, what can I tell you? Pray for me, a weak and sick servant. And I thank you—in the Lord—that you have always edified me through your writings.

* * *

A friend and I, from the top of a hill, were contemplating a vast farm on the other side of the river belonging to one of the wealthiest of this world. We were speaking of the danger of riches: that they corrupt, and that one is more likely to fall when there is prosperity than when there is need. I said: "If we were the owners of that territory, we would be worse than he."

The gentleman, who listened to me smiling, replied: "We would not be as good as he, a great philanthropist."

It is not given to many to remain calm and equilibrated when they have riches, not even in the religious field.

I remember one who used to pray: "Lord, I ask Thee for the gifts of the Spirit (he already had the gift, that is, the baptism of the Holy Spirit). "I ask Thee for the gifts of the Spirit, but more than anything, give me its fruit. Rather, if you do not give me the fruit, do not even give me the gifts."

It is impossible for us to get lost when we have the fruit of the Spirit, but it is easy to fall with the gifts. The gifts are given **in order to serve others**; the fruit refers to that which, by Grace, God has made us, and how He keeps us.

* * *

Who knows how many times, oh reader, you and I, imagining to do good, stubborn in seeing and working in our own way, have harmed or made more difficult the already difficult work of others. Some sad recollections crowd the memory of the heart.

I know of some who have recommended to intimate ones that they should not defend them, that they should not speak in his favor; and some have done precisely the contrary, so that misunderstandings have been multiplied, among which this: "he demonstrates charity and gentleness, but he is a hypocrite because he instigates others." And alas, someone has reported this incident.

In a group where there were some who suspected him, he was trying to explain that a certain one was a true servant of Christ, but that he had acted in a moment of temptation, above all on the basis of appearances. The atmosphere began to clear up, when all of a sudden, one of the company, precisely the one closest to the charitable man, came out with these words: "That certain one (he mentioned the name) always wants to be the dictator, etc..." The kindly man felt as though he were crushed. His friend gave him more trouble than all the adversaries. Those who belong to the family are not all enemies; some truly love us. But there are those who wound us in the hands, in the arms.

May you and I, reader, ask the Lord for grace to do His work, in His ways and methods. Amen.

* * *

No Prejudice—No Partiality

Even the most saintly must tremble at this warning, because no one, unless he receives grace, is immune from prejudice and partiality.

Prejudice: that is, conclusions of already formed opinions.

Partiality: the tendency to support only those who are dear to us.

The territory of the subconscious is vast and profound. Read again attentively the last verses of Psalms 19 and 139.

Let us consider a few practical examples: a few days ago I had the privilege of receiving a visit from a brother advanced in years and experience. He said to me, among other things, that it is useless to discuss with some people, because they are fixed in their opinions. If they are faced by someone for whom they have a little respect, they do not speak; but their silence is not persuasion, because at the first opportunity they repeat always the same things.

* * *

Obstinacy and Pride

In the parliamentary history of Italy, this incident is registered: one of the deputies spoke energetically for the abolition of the death penalty, whereas, in other times, he had insisted not to abolish it.

An adversary sneeringly observed to him: "You have changed your opinion!" To which he responded: "Only beasts do not change their opinion!"

Firmness in faithfulness to the Lord is necessary; but as for us we must ask for grace to receive that wisdom that is from Above, which is easy to be entreated, that is *disposed to see what is right in others*, if it exists, *and wrongs in ourselves*, if there are any (James 3:17).

Obstinacy? It is the weakness of small minds, said a great writer. I remember having read, in some place, of a conversation between a philosopher and a poor old Christian. At first the philosopher was ridiculing the testimony of the other; but the latter, with patient meekness, continued to testify. At a certain moment the wise one of the earth surrendered to the wise one of Heaven. "You have conquered," he said to him. "No—answered the Christian—you have conquered because you have had the grace to suffocate pride, and to yield to the word of a poor man like me!" The philosopher became a Christian.

* * *

Helping Rather Than Being Helped

If people are under slavery, they obey and sacrifice themselves; if they are given liberty, they abuse it. When I was called as pastor in America, the poor congregation that I found, agitated by parties and spoiled, was held together because the previous pastors, in order to give reports, were not so much administrators of the Gospel, but business agents, getting jobs for some and help for others.

The Missionary Society, at least at that time, helped many. *But I rebelled against the systems that render the souls like so many beggars.* I have been subjected to a discipline of iron from a young age. Someone of the church approached me saying that he had influence and was able to lead (or rather, *to bring*) a number of people to the meetings...etc. I

don't remember what I answered. Almost all of them were waiting outside.

The years from 1906 to 1920 were truly poor. I posted a notice inside the door announcing that I was inviting the souls to the *sacrifice of helping, and not of being helped*. It goes without saying that that congregation disappeared, but many others came, persons who were cultured. The Church became a Missionary Church. We were helping others. You know the name that that Church had.

Another remembrance: In ... a small number of people was meeting in one of the poorest quarters. A German sister, a pious soul, was paying the rent. When I visited, I protested that one person alone—*who was known*—had to pay the rent. I said: "No, *the Lord* pays the rent. Put a box at the door. Each one will put what he feels: they had to yield. You know of the extension in

Another example: In 1919 I went to Argentina as a missionary; there was great poverty at that time. Some poor women had to wash their poor dress at night for the next day. The missionary of that time said: "They are poor (such they were)." I said: "Box at the door"—and I preached 1st Corinthians 16:10 etc. Even the barefoot, emaciated children were bringing their "*Testoni Centavos*". Certainly, without letting myself be seen, I was putting (and I was able to) in the box.

The conditions changed, even in the homes, work came, they dressed themselves, the work in ... became gigantic—it became—and is, a missionary work. *Trees and men grow in the storms, in the sacrifice.*

REMEMBRANCES OF THE MISSION IN SOUTH AMERICA

I remember my first voyage to South America in January of 1920. There had been a strike: we barely obtained a place in third class (at that time) on a mediocre steamship, constrained to be under a stairway, we were afflicted even by continuous rains.

I turned to Him, *in whose Name* I was traveling, and afterward I saw a strange phenomenon. There was rain before and behind the wake of the ship, but the ship was always under a dry sky.

* * *

*Start of the Missionary Work in Argentina,
Related by the Elder (Pastor)
Gaetano Mingrino (Son)*

We report the account (translated into Italian) of the start of this Work, precisely as published in the bimonthly periodical ("Voz") of the churches of the "Asamblea Cristiana" (Christian Assembly) in Argentina, in the issue of November-December of 1992, preceded by the announcement of the publication in the Castilian (Spanish) language of one of Brother Petrelli's books:

In the month of December 1992, the book "The Son of Man," written by Brother Giuseppe Petrelli, will be published in Spanish.

This inspired work, of incalculable spiritual value, has been desired for a long time by those who knew some of the Italian publications and translations into Castilian by the same author; among them the late Elder Domingo Marino, who appreciated their value and favored the translation of the

books of Petrelli, beginning from the first years of the seventies, with the edition in Castilian of the great little volume "The Message of St. Paul to the elders of Ephesus," and other passages.

The publication of this book and of those that will be published in the future has been encouraged by the Elder Antonio Bernabei, heir of the publications of Petrelli. For a better understanding of the ties of friendship that Bro. Petrelli had with the "Assemblea Cristiana," the following note proceeding from Buenos Aires is transcribed signed by the Elder Gaetano Mingrino (son):

"To the brothers who are Elders of the "Assemblea Cristiana" in Argentina: Grace and peace be multiplied to you. Since many have tried to put in order the history of the things that have been **very sure** among us, thus as we have been taught by those who, from the beginning, saw them with their eyes and had been ministers of the Word, it has seemed even to me, after having diligently investigated all things from their origin, to write it from the beginning for you, oh beloved brothers.

First Part: Beginning of the Work of the Lord 'Assemblea Cristiana' in Argentina, Via Nuova York, Capitale Federale (Buenos Aires), date of November 2, 1916.

Second Part: On this date there came to Argentina the brothers Narciso Natucci and Francesco Anfuso from the United States; the latter had relatives here in Argentina, who belonged to the Mingrino family, which was composed of: Cayetano, Pablo, Jose, Rosalia Anfuso. All of these accepted Christ on November 12, 1916 and were baptized with the Holy Spirit. Part of this data is handwritten directly by the Brother Cayetano Mingrino, at the end of 1917, which are in my possession, Brother Cayetano Mingrino (son).

Third Part: The Work continues to grow in a special way, the Lord was working in the lives of these new brothers with miracles and great wonders and with the pouring forth of the Holy Spirit. They were four years of blessings until the month of February, 1920 in which Brother Giuseppe Petrelli came from the United States. He was a servant who was well known in the churches of the North and of Brazil, author of many books which are a truthful teaching in order to know the Doctrine of the Lord even in our days. We mention some of these books: 'The Son of Man,' 'The Church of Christ,' 'The Holy Spirit,' 'Ecce Homo,' 'Receiving the Kingdom' and also many others.

Fourth Part: Up to the year 1920, there was no established brother and the Church needed anointed servants, because of which Brother Petrelli, guided by the Holy Spirit, resolved to anoint Brother Cayetano Mingrino as Elder of the Church of Villa Devoto, Brother Pablo Mingrino for the Church in the locality of Ranchos (Buenos Aires) and Brother Angel Mingrino for the Church of the province of Mendoza. The work of the Lord began to extend thus in all of Argentina, until today, in which the Church consists of thousands of brothers, thanks to the powerful hand of the Lord.

Fifth Part: In January of the year 1922, Brother G. Petrelli felt the need to return to the United States, thus leaving Argentina in the hands of the Omnipotent God.

Signed *Cayetano Mingrino (son)*

* * *

Remembrance: When I was in Argentina (1920 and part of 1921) there was an indescribable poverty, especially in the large cities. People were naked and reduced to skin and bones by hunger. They were almost all Sicilians. But, precisely in that difficult field (and anything but well guided

by others; because we servants are either *too gentle*, or *too severe*, often saying 'I'), precisely in that field the Lord indicated some jewels to me (diamonds are found in the most barren places), and I had the honor of approaching a man who was more unique than rare—a worker, impoverished because of sickness and poverty of his family, who at the death of his parents (after a long and heart-rending sickness of his mother) remained with a bunch of little orphans. He was the first-born.

I could write a book about this man; I want to be brief and precise. Although he was illiterate, when he made appointments he was punctual to the minute in keeping them. I would not exchange him for the best Americans, Germans and others whom I have had the honor to know (and yes, I have seen many, and I have admired several).

I say this to affirm that everywhere there are rare souls; but we do not know them immediately.

* * *

Letter written to Sister Aida: I remember just now that which a capable American missionary said to me in Buenos Aires; according to appearances she did not demonstrate any tangible results. She said to me: "Wherever you go may this be your greatest care—to leave behind you a true witness (she meant to say, another just like yourself).

In thinking of you, the word "disciple" presents itself. Jesus had success by means of the disciples (greater works). Paul recommended to Timothy to teach others, who in turn would teach. Elijah, so to speak, was multiplied in Elisha. I have written that this is one of the greatest works of your life (an intense life). I was commanded to write to you.

* * *

An incident taken from the records of a missionary: He was traveling in a train toward the Argentinian pampas. And was seated on the last bench of the long car when I saw a tall man of imposing stature enter, carrying a valise.

At every station, the man carrying the valise would get off, and holding a few cards in his hand would face the people repeating to each one: "they are the last." They were lottery tickets, and many that he approached, dominated by his bold conduct and fascinating look, would buy. At every station he repeated the same maneuver. Then, moving from the front of the car, valise in hand, he took out other little objects, fixing his eyes on every traveler; he was selling and selling.

The missionary, seated at the back, crossed his arms and was in communion with God, while the man of the lucid look was coming nearer. When he found himself before the missionary this happened: two eyes met two eyes; the magician felt a shock. He remained with his hand lifted up and disturbed, taking a step backward. Two opposite forces had met, and there are similar examples.

* * *

Another remembrance: While on a long nocturnal voyage across the Argentinian Pampas, a servant of God was approached by a stranger, a Mohammedan, who also had been urged by a supernatural guidance to travel on that train. The Mohammedan said to the missionary that when he entered the compartment, someone had touched him and said: "Go and speak to that man."

They were the only two passengers in that compartment. There was a conversation about Jesus Christ. The Mohammedan was convinced that this scene had not been arranged by man; filled with emotion, he accepted, and

wished to confess his past (sad past) but with true repentance. He offered money to the missionary many times: the Mohammedan was a rancher who had much property and had become rich raising cattle.

But the servant of God had been warned: "Do not make any plans concerning this man; do not correspond with him; do not accept gifts; leave him to Me. I will use him: you will no longer see him on this earth."

The servant refused many times while the other, almost offended, was resenting it, but the words were these: "My Lord has commanded me not to take anything, not even a cup of coffee..." Arriving to Buenos Aires, they separated from each other, and never saw each other again.

Anoint and flee. Who knows how many scandals that man may have seen after that day. But the image of that servant who spoke to him with love under a special anointing, and who refused gifts, shall have been the means, the witness of Heaven, of the Reality of the eternal things. Anoint...and flee!

* * *

During my mission in Buenos Aires, many times an oppression would come down on everyone, in such a way that we could not even sing freely. And behold, a very simple brother who was one of the poorest, would stand up, and would walk up and down the aisle, puffing as if he were seeing someone. Then he would rebuke in tongues, looking around. His visage, little by little, became calm, and he would turn to the congregation in a loving way.

At first there was someone who did not like this action and wanted to stop him; but, we, invaded by a holy fear of God, exhorted that no one should dare to contrast what could be

one of the methods of the Lord. There are ways that are strange to man but that answer to the plan of God.

The result was that the oppression and the sense of suffocation would disappear, leaving a tranquil atmosphere, as if a wind had truly swept away the pestiferous miasmas, and brought a sense of restoration, an odor of peace.

Oh, the breath of the Omnipotent! The life of the first man is connected to it. Has God stopped infusing in us, from time to time a little of His Breath? (2nd Thessalonians 2:8).

* * *

When the brother was a missionary in Argentina, he was called to a church to give an opinion on a couple who had already been judged by a church, that is, that they should not live in the condition in which they found themselves. I was not able to contradict them according to the Letter, and I felt very afflicted as I was leaving that church and, turning my eyes to the starry sky, I heard these words: "Don't lay a hand on this case, because it has already been resolved before the Throne and they have been found innocent."

* * *

From a letter during his mission in Brazil: ...Now, as you see, we find ourselves in another place, a three-day trip from Rio de Janeiro. These trips are somewhat uncomfortable, because at times it is necessary to wait in a hotel several days for another means of transportation before continuing the trip. We do not know how long we will stay here. I am in this place mainly to witness to my brother. He has accepted the Gospel and comes to visit us in the evening because we live, by our own choice, in a little house away from him; he comes to pray and his soul is stirred, and he even reads the Gospel and has memorized some of the verses. The Lord has truly touched his heart.

We are receiving mail here, and then, as I expect, the Lord will make us know where to go. Meanwhile, results can be seen of the testimony given in Rio de Janeiro, both to the persons to whom we have written and to more than one.

One of my brother's servants is showing an interest. The other day he showed me the chapters of the Gospel that he has read. I do not feel to say anything else for now.

* * *

TEACHINGS
SECTS—PROSELYTISM

-Sequel of the preceding letter-

I see that the main thing that the Lord wants from His servants is that they lose the hastiness to form meeting places quickly; it is certain that in time meeting places are needed, and the Lord forms the groups by one means or another. But the most important thing is that they receive a good testimony as a base. And if that first word is given by the Holy Spirit, it will fall into their heart like a seed of fire, from which either in one way or another, they are not able to free themselves.

We are saying that when the word is sent to them by the Lord (Isaiah 55, last verses) it must have a result; when—the Lord knows. At times it is dangerous to form groups immediately, because there will be churches without the proper guidance and lack of teaching, and it is worse because by that group calling itself a church, and not having the requisites that a church must have, it becomes a scandal for both those who are outside and those who are inside. I don't

know if the Lord will give me some assistant in this area, or not, if He wants to form groups or not, causing someone to come from the same groups, or bringing someone from outside. We are working in several places, a little by our presence and a little by letter, and are waiting that the Lord should guide what follows.

Revelation 22:3: "And His servants shall serve Him." At times we have missed out on teachings because we have considered the word as applying only to the future. This verse seems to be for that time of the New Jerusalem, when we shall have passed into the beyond. That is so, but it is also for this time, because the Word is verified in us in the spirit before it is put into practice. Thus, the Lamb was slain in the spirit, before being crucified in reality, in the flesh.

The book of Revelation represents not only a book of revelation of Jesus and of prophecy, but it also represents that the Christian must grow in the Apocalyptic stature; that is, to enter into the spirit which is said in the book. This is a vast subject, and would require much time to meditate it, but to spiritual souls a hint is enough.

Returning to the subject of chapter 22:3, what does it mean that His servants will serve the Lord? Is this only for Heaven? It seems to be an excessive language, but many times God's wisdom is not understood to be wisdom. One could ask: "If they are servants of God, is it not certain that they serve God, because He Himself calls them servants? If it were otherwise they would not be called servants at all." But it seems to us to read as if the Lord were saying: "there will be a place where the servants will serve the Lord." Just as this last book is called Revelation of Jesus, and yet there have been preceding revelations; so all the things in this last book are seen at the end, or last fulfillment.

There have always been servants, but not all, not even the most faithful, have always served Him (ONLY HIM). We are speaking of those who are servants, and not of the false ones. They are His servants, but they have not always served the Lord, or only the Lord. But a day will come, and it must begin here, that the servants will serve the Lord. This means to say the perfect type of service.

The first meeting is not about the things of the Lord, but to the Lord Himself. BEFORE SEEING US RUN FOR HIM, HE WANTS US TO RUN OFTEN TO HIM.

He is more important than all the things we can do while we think we are serving Him, just as it was more important that Mary, on that occasion, should stay at those blessed feet, than it was for Martha to work more than that which was necessary.

With regard to this, the subject of Mary and Martha must be considered moderately if we are to occupy ourselves of such a subject, because Mary, Martha and Lazarus are three aspects of the church and all three are needed. But in that moment, the Soul that would listen was needed more than the feet that would run. In the right measure all three are needed.

In this work we have not served ALWAYS and only the Lord. We have *also* served the Lord, but *not always only* the Lord. There has been a little to the vanity of being able to immediately grasp proselytes, in order to enlarge our group and a little to the opinions of one another. And why? Is it because we have been false? No, the scripture does not authorize us to say this. We were servants, but not yet those of Revelation, the last final revelation of the Lord. And because of their childish stature the time had not arrived to be able to receive the lessons of Revelation.

Now, I would advise one not to discuss this subject unless it is entirely clear to him. At times years are needed to really understand a subject, and after having understood it, time is needed in order to give it to others. At times there has been scandal and damage caused by having imitated or repeated words, without having digested them for a long time. At times one word may be lacking and the thing is misunderstood, and also it may not be ripe for others, and the Lord had given it for ourselves. So, dear ones, pay attention to this point; we will cause harm if we do not.

Some time ago I wrote a letter in California about the "SERVANT in Revelation," and the servant in other parts of the scripture. We must never put one apostle above another. This would be a serious error. Paul entered into the deepest mysteries, no less than another apostle.

But at the stature of the Church of the Corinthians, and for that time and circumstances, it was needed that Paul also should recount his sufferings, and it was good. But in the first chapter of Revelation, John was guided not to recount anything of himself, but to get off with few words, without speaking either of cold, or of heat, of prison or of fasting. St. Paul, many times, was the same. Thus let us understand one another not to compare the apostles with one another, but only to examine the spiritual lines.

In one of the epistles, St. John acts in an energetic manner and a little of his character can also be seen, when he speaks of Diotrephes. It is necessary to distinguish times and opportunities.

The servant of Revelation serves only the Lord and cannot even be occupied to speak of himself, as would have been necessary in other times. Even in the relations with the same

people, the servant cannot always act in the same manner. When the people are more in the beginner stage, it is almost necessary that they even see us a little, and hear about us, and so on; but with the passing of time, the people must lose the dependence on the servant, and *remain more only before the Lord*, therefore the servant must have few words about himself, and *center the attention entirely on Jesus*.

I recommend meditating attentively the first chapter of Revelation. That chapter is the key of the whole book. And this key is a servant who has fallen like one who is dead, and the Lord who is glorious.

Now, may the Holy Spirit enlighten this subject in me and in everyone, and only He can, because it seems to me that the more I say, the less I say in comparison to that which continues to be discovered. I ask for prayer.

We are all poor disciples, and wait for the Lord to strengthen the entire Body. In the general blessing we shall be, each one of us, blessed even more...

I have written to you because when I begin writing I don't know what will come. Therefore, when there is something, it is in common to all of us.

Regards with a holy kiss of the love of God from us of the home and church, and to those whom you meet.

* * *

We are happy to hear that it seems that the Lord wants to work in another quarter of the city. May God bless and prosper you giving you the grace to do an entirely new work, according to the heart of God, and according to the times in which we live. We have the impression that the Lord wants to work in a special way, that is, in a small way, occasional

and scattered, without gatherings, as had been done in the past, in which thorns and tribulations have sprung up.

The Lord Jesus went around announcing the Kingdom and doing good. He did not give appointments to people, nor did He have a formal place for meetings, with established hours. He spoke to everyone as the Father guided Him, wherever and however the occasion presented itself.

For our part we are perfectly convinced that the Church of the last days will be like this. The past is past, now we have entered into another phase of the last dispensation; whoever does not want to understand it by kindness will understand it by force, and by means of sorrows, risking even losing the Kingdom.

May God help us to understand the times in which we are living, and to know how to give food in its time. The world has need of the salt and of the light, and the Lord has said that His followers are the salt and the light of the world, as such therefore to be intermixed with the world without being of the world.

We should live Christ, without sects, without parties, without fanaticism and rumbling of the flesh. Pray also for us. We know now that if one should begin a new work today it would be along the lines that we have mentioned.

* * *

Go slowly in making a change—no buildings—except when the time of God shall have come. And go slowly in honoring men. The old Adam does not manifest itself immediately, but it manifests itself even in those who seem to be the most saintly (Psalm 139:15-16). Take courage. It costs to serve God, but there is much good and consolation. What does it

pay to speak of "Organizations, no Organizations," etc.? They are useless words.

It is necessary that we present Jesus Christ, guided by the Holy Spirit, rather, that we be guided by the Spirit in everything, leaving the rest to Him.

* * *

They come around, but we are learning to say NO. It is necessary to avoid building on another's foundations. We must cultivate our own with firmness and Charity, and those who act as such. Only in this way can the program of being in the "Invisible Church" go ahead; without saying the words because they would bring laughter.

It's a good idea to discipline people to make economic sacrifice. An old pastor, when I was called to be a pastor of a Baptist Church in 1906, advised me—and it was good advice—that I should never administer the money of the people. They should select a "treasurer," and if money "is given" for the building, the names should be registered with their offerings, little or much, in order to pay back the money if the construction does not happen. An advice: Foresee when and how much is possible.

Foreseeing the evils is worth more than trying to cure them. We should have wisdom and prudence "in everything" and with everyone. Amen.

* * *

I almost do not know the Italian Movement in Italy, and little do I know of that of the United States, but that little that I have seen, sensed, and reports that I have heard of some luminous and profound revelations, has shattered many illusions.

Even a brief examination of the religious movements of every age, especially of the mystics, concludes that true spirituality is rare, and that **in general, all the churches have had more of proselytism (Matthew 23:15) than of uplifting Jesus Christ.**

* * *

Noah was found Just (and served) in his *generation*. Two mature Christians worked together for a time, and then they separated. Both who were capable and charitable had two different lines. John Wesley was a great organizer, and prepared the future (the Methodist Movement); Whitefield, instead, a famous preacher, was intent on the "Present" and was against forming an ecclesiastical heredity.

My sympathies are for Whitefield, although I myself have been persistent for years and of the right character to foresee, adjust, etc., etc. Funerals and disappointments are needed in order to be truly free, serving in our generation, praying and trusting in the Lord for a spiritual heredity.

With the passing of years all the Movements become corrupted. Wesley and St. Francis of Assisi saw changes in their most intimate ones, before they passed from this world. *We do not know men*, except (and only a little) by means of the sword that pierces (Luke 2:34-35). We do not even know ourselves because we do not know how we would act under other conditions, or if we should suffer dizziness. Watch and pray.

It is forty years that I am in this work (although from December 26, 1953, in a sense I am not there), and I have seen much, much. I have seen groups who *seemed to be angels*, churches that *appeared to be indestructible*, and then I have seen some who were *black angels*, and groups that were broken apart.

For years I have protested and admonished against every form of "organization;" there are indirect organizations. Abram and Lot separated from each other when they became prosperous.

I have neither strength nor desire to speak to you of many religious Movements, fervent in the beginning, and then they became a 'sterile' form, SUBMITTING IN ORDER TO AVOID LITIGATION, and the spiritual progress has become *rachitic*. Like the Temple of Jerusalem, thus the meeting places become idols. Let's not deceive ourselves.

* * *

We cite now a few significant passages from the correspondence that Brother Petrelli had with a future young minister from 1923 until his death and to whom he was spiritually bonded.

May the Lord bless you and watch over you. May He prepare you as he prepared John the Baptist, who lived a life of solitude and prayer, until he began his ministry. Then, when he showed himself, it was only one voice...**but what a voice. His was a voice not of uncertain sound,** and was the height of the imprint of God in his heart. If our voice must be used for God, it must stop producing our melodies or those of the world.

Let us train ourselves in the presence of God, since this is the secret of the victory. Let us not bind ourselves to anything and to no one. Let us consider things and persons through Him and in Him. Nothing else counts. Let us be united! Let us be patient! Let us forgive one another.

* * *

Let us avoid dreaming of great things. *God can serve Himself of a worm to bore through a mountain!* Be

submissive; be a servant, **love to be hidden** and make it your aim. *Be unknown*. Hide yourself in Christ, **put Jesus before the ideal of your ministry**. Meditate the Song of Solomon 1:6.

Before taking care of the vines of others, allow Him to cultivate YOUR vine. Be plowed...cultivated...prepared; then, in His time, the little will bear much fruit. Yes, my brother, the Divine Nature...the "crown" (Revelation 22:11)...that is Holiness in the inner life... comes when we, in Jesus, enter into one field after the other of His promises. And there are so many that must be fulfilled in us. With the passing of time, you will discover something less in yourself, but more purity in your heart.

The human energy must be subdued.

* * *

Here are a few admonishments of a general nature for all the *young servants*; since I have no authority to give exhortations to servants who were before me in this work:

1. The times in which we have entered into the work have passed. A New Movement is about to show itself...until we enter into the Kingdom of God (Hebrews 12:29). **SOMETHING NEW** is necessary...*a deeper consecration*.
2. Avoid, like a plague, the spirit of the Nicolaitans... that is, to want to be bosses over the heredity. THE AUTHORITY and the POWER must come from the presence of Jesus in us. Only He encourages the just one and puts the SEED in the hearts in God's time. *Only He can do it.*
3. *Be cautious and prudent in opening new places.* The little work is the best. First comes the Servant... a man with the GIFT... and then the Movement. To

each man his duty. The Church of the last days will not be a great multitude.

4. *Investigate the Scriptures*, not for pride of knowledge, but in order to be able to uplift Christ, because THEY testify of Him (John 5:39; Luke 9:27). We must be accurate and precise in citing the Scriptures. Many times, a shadow or a doubt falls upon a good message because of an incorrect or mistaken quotation.
5. *Sobriety*. Each one must know his own limits. Do not make yourself higher than your own stature. It is better to start very close to the earth, like an airplane, and then fly with a good motor, than to appear like lightning, only to end by trembling like the flame of a kitchen match.

* * *

Dear one, counsel and exhort the people gathered by the Holy Spirit, to seek a reciprocal edification, to NEVER ORGANIZE. This revelation was given to me years ago by the Holy Spirit and it cannot be changed. We must love to serve the Lord directly, and ONLY the Lord...not the brother... and only in the line that He prepares and confirms.

In every good undertaking, there is a certain opposition. The role, the destiny of the one who is converted consists precisely in this, to resist to the dangers, to the oppositions, as well as the praises.

* * *

OF THE WORK IN ITALY

We will transcribe a few extracts of letters that Brother Petrelli wrote to Sister Aida Chauvie:

I know that if the Lord does not call me home (and yes, I long to go)—He is showing me a bold work in three fields: in Italy, in Argentina (where I have been a missionary and where they are translating my books); and in the United States (in English).

* * *

Your suggestion to have a periodical in Italy seems wise to me. Perhaps we should return to the old name “Re e Regno”: (“King and Kingdom”).

If the Lord keeps me alive, I would be able to send you some manuscripts. Some pages of the books could be published. You certainly will write. **It is necessary that such publication or monthly pamphlet be independent.**

* * *

With or without my discernment, I know that it was—is—the Lord *who has opened our correspondence*, therefore there is work in common; therefore there is *a singleness of ideals*. And in this conviction of the spirit, I could never stop explaining myself always better, trusting in your honesty. The things of Heaven are not grasped by logic, but by *intuition* of the spirit (Psalm 51:6).

You yourself must acquire for yourself some companion of work—*some Elisha*. Oh, Elisha! (2nd Kings 2).

* * *

I do not desire that you accept my (!) theology, except as much as the Holy Spirit confirms to you, not in moments of emotion, but firmly and slowly, hearing the *Prophet*, who speaks *morning* after morning (Psalm 46:6-7, Proverbs 6:22 and Daniel 9 in which Jeremiah is quoted).

Only that doctrine—*His doctrine*, which is surely confirmed, becomes ours (1st Corinthians 3: last verses), and even we shall speak with authority (inner certainty), and not as the Scribes; that is, even repeating great truths, but which have not become ours by means of sufferings and revelation. *There is a great future work in Italy, and you will have a part in it.*

Dear sister, the Lord has given you (us) a great work in Italy, if we have wisdom with understanding (measure).

If we stay far from everyone, we shall be close to everyone, and a blessing to everyone (that is to all those who are called by God, because only He knows everyone). If we mingle we shall be misunderstood and will become a “sect.”

* * *

Regarding the Work in Italy, we transcribe here below the answer that Sister Aida Chauvie gave about the continuation of “Il Granel di Senape” which is a continuation of “Il Regno di Dio” in Italy, since the writings of Brother Petrelli have diminished.

...However, I feel the duty to specify—and this for your benefit, knowing you to be an honest and well-intentioned man, so that, having knowledge in respect to this, will cease from your judgments—that Brother Petrelli, since 1948 prophesied that after his departure, perhaps I, going above the difficulties and oppositions, would have continued the publication of the periodical when his writings would have diminished.

But THEN I did not believe this was possible, and even less when I had to make the decision to begin the “Granel di Senape,” because I was struck with endless and mortal illnesses, and was preparing only to die; and just in that time

the precise command came to me, confirmed then by other servants.

When the presiding elder of the church of N.Y. learned of the continuation of the periodical, he wanted to disinterest himself, but one night Brother Petrelli appeared to him and said that the continuation of the periodical in Italy was useful and necessary. Others also have had the revelation that this publication was in the Will of God and there have been other confirmations and encouragements.

* * *

In confirmation of the preceding letter, we quote three passages taken from three letters that Brother Petrelli sent to Sister Aida:

October 6, 1948—When I shall be dumb and have become entirely unable, then perhaps this periodical entrusted to your hands will cease, except if you, rising above everything, make a decision to continue.

June 23, 1952 – Except for your cooperation, or rather of your work in Italy, I am not able to continue any interest—direct or indirect—for the publication in Italy. If you leave the periodical, for me it is finished, rather than putting it into the hands of someone I do not know.

December 23, 1956—Beloved sister, I write to you dictating from my bed.

I am ill. I feel that I am either at my end, or at the end for a new beginning. **I am convinced, confirmed, that the work in Italy will go ahead, whatever happens to me.** This great and miraculous work is not of man.

Until my last breath, the Lord keeps me interested in the work in Italy. I am so tired, that I do not have the strength to

add much to what I insisted on through the years. You have arrived at a great height.

God has prospered us while we have tried to serve everyone without joining ourselves to anyone. All the great revivals fell when they allied themselves with already established churches.

If this letter from me, who knows, may be the last to you, keep sacred my resolute recommendation. If then the Lord prolongs my days, He will guide us as in the past in this state of things.

* * *

Two significant letters, written to Brother Antonio Bernabei, by witnesses who have known Brother Petrelli:

The content of the message that I heard by the servant of God Giuseppe Petrelli for the first time was this: "Do not call anyone on this earth your father, because one alone is your father, that is, He who is in the heavens."

Much time would be needed in order to explain the meaning of this message that has been and will be in me until the Lord will call me out of this mortal body.

With God's help, I want to share with you the holy result that this message brought in my life. Glory be to God. Truthfully, dear brother, the first time that I attended the holy gathering, that message caused me to stumble, because I interpreted it badly, thinking that my children would not have to call me father, and was thinking in myself that I must speak to "that man" to ask him questions.

God heard me. Certainly, it was not possible for me to have the opportunity to speak with that holy man, but God heard me.

That same night, not being able to rest, about 1:30 a.m., I sat with my eyes closed on the bed, the room being dark as we did not keep a light on in the night, I opened my eyes, and behold there was a vision before me on the wall: "There was a rather large picture, of a golden color, with a line going down the center. On one side there were the questions that I had in mind to ask the servant of God, on the other, the answers."

I was a little frightened, and we began to pray at that hour of the night, and at five o'clock in the morning we were still in holy communion with God. My salvation came precisely in that night.

* * *

I have here on the table several writings, received by me from the same address, of your Mother, whom I believe was the administrator of all of the meditations of Brother Petrelli.

I met Brother Petrelli for the first time in a church of Jamaica. It was Sunday; he came from New Jersey and, when he would come, other servants would come together with him.

I was invited by a brother to go to this church where the brother was and I went in order to meet him. The church was full to capacity; there was no more room for anyone. Before the testimonies, the presiding elder said: "This morning we have many servants among us, among which there is also the Brother Curcio, who has not been in this church for a long time. The testimony is only for the servants."

The members of this church were testifying on the Wednesday night. Nobody was getting up. Everyone was waiting that Brother Petrelli should get up. There was a moment of silence, and nobody was moving. Brother

Petrelli, seated on the first bench, stood up and said: *“Brothers, why do you tear my heart? Why is there so much reverence for Brother Petrelli? Who am I that you expect to hear from me that which you have also received? Get up and don’t look at man.”*

We were all listening and waiting that someone should get up to give the message. No one was getting up. Petrelli asked: “Who is Brother Curcio?” I raised my hand, and the brother said to me: “Why don’t you get up and come forward to give the message for the church?” I said: “Brother Petrelli, I have come in order to learn,” and he: “We also are here to learn. Come forward and do not be embarrassed.”

Brother Antonio, consider how I felt in that moment, not having prayed or meditated on the Word of God, being unexpectedly called to give the message. I didn’t know what to do. A brother began to sing a song, and during the singing I had the time to pray that God would illumine me. The Holy Spirit intervened in my life and said to me: **“SPEAK! ALL WAS ACCOMPLISHED ON THE CROSS WHERE JESUS RENDERED THE SPIRIT.”** I got up without opening the Bible, feeling a little timidity in the first moments, but then God invaded me, and I no longer thought that Brother Petrelli or anyone else was there.

I was under the anointing for about three-quarters of an hour when the same Petrelli never preached more than twenty minutes, because he would say that long messages put the listeners to sleep; but that morning he was impressed by my modest ministry.

When I finished, Petrelli did not want to say even one word. He said only: “God has spoken, let us go on our knees.” While we were kneeling down he said to me: “Don’t go away after, I want to speak to you.”

The enemy was tempting me during the prayer, making me think that I had erred, and that the brother wanted to rebuke me, but it was not so. When I asked the brother what he desired to tell me, he asked me if I frequented or presided in another church. When I responded affirmatively, he asked me for the address and promised to come to visit me. I told him that he would always be welcome, and he looked at me for a few seconds and said to me: "If there are sincere men in the world, you are one of these. You have received a volcanic and instant inspiration from the Lord that not all present here have. Be faithful to the Lord. Live in communion with the Lord and be careful to hold on to this anointing." He visited the Church many times and was always of help to me where I could not succeed.

* * *

We quote now a letter that seems significant to us in summarizing his vision on being Christians and the various stages of maturity.

You and I and others have gone through various experiences that are impossible to repeat today. The Lord has commanded and permitted them, for the purpose of God's Providence, and they have been necessary steps to where we are today, or have been permitted in order to make us understand His plan toward perfection—the "not I, but Christ," etc.

The Shulamite had been in a Church, and then she had to feed the kids beside the shepherd's tents. Permit us to point to Chapter 38 of the book "The Church—The Invisible." Some must move, act, etc. as they do, otherwise they would lose their way completely. We can no longer do so, although for years we have acted like so many; however we have never had that solid confirmation of which we read in 1st Peter 5:10. Thanks to God we now have it, but we are in

danger of *expecting* that others should understand or follow us or, in order to make them happy, to yield to acts and ways that are no longer for us.

The appeals are many, and are alluring, and our zeal is also great to want to make others understand that which we have barely begun to see clearly after many years. *We must follow the method of Jesus, who began with the synagogues and multitudes, terminating with very few, and then ending on the cross.*

We must love everyone; they are creatures of God, even if they are not the elect. They are responsible according to the light (St. John 1:9). *But the elect are elect.* That is, the elect that Jesus has elected (that is, the confirmed elect, Acts 14:22). We no longer succeed in imitating the Churches even if for a time we have succeeded. For the "Shulamite" there came the "Enough" and a new walk. Even the elect must undergo many personal experiences, and we err *claiming to be "Many Teachers"* (St. James 3:1). Each one must be reached by God. Many, and they are sincere, enjoy the state in which they find themselves. That is from Above, until they receive a special visitation. Those who are *the confirmed* in the Kingdom, (Proverbs 12:28-29; Psalm 2), Zion, are imprisoned, as if in a circle of iron, each one in that in which the Lord has (finally) brought them.

Being faithful at such a stature requires an *identification* with the Crucified-Resurrected One, now at the Throne. There is an absolute communion and a pity toward everyone...by which one never becomes bitter or proud, but likewise *never yielding*—an absolute, but firm NO, like the words of Peter in Acts 3: I HAVE NOT—and yet I Have. The crowds, the buildings are no longer for us; nor the running, nor the too much explaining, etc. We are limited to Zero (zero in us) but to the Infinite in God.

It has taken half a century in order to write today, in a sure way, that which I am writing.

* * *

We report now, by way of a letter of the brother, a more detailed description of his death-resurrection experience of 1953.

For a time I had been pensive about whether or not I should leave the fixed meetings that I was attending. About December 20, 1953, I heard in me: I will give you "*such a sign*" that you will not be able to doubt. December 26, 1953 was a Saturday, and in the two meetings in Arlington I was sick, tired and like a stranger.

I had the grace to preach in both meetings. That evening, at home, there was the entire family of V.L., and the mother of Laura. They had prepared a cake for my birthday. I sat at the table tired and distracted.

At a certain point my eyes began to see LIGHTS and lights and, excusing myself, I sat down at the desk. I felt sleepy—sleepy. Then I do not remember anything else, except that when I opened my eyes, there were policemen in the house with oxygen (which I did not breathe) and a doctor came. BUT I had been brought back to life, WHILE they were coming in. Those of the house know the rest, and I began to sweat all over, a bath. Then the death RATTLE, then it stopped, and then there was a last sigh, and the arms fell,—and the eyes remained open, without light, like glass. Victor was shaking a dead person. Then, then—the *Resurrection*.

Now I must remain calm and wait for guidance. I ask for prayer. We kiss all of you.

* * *

Three among the last of his letters that came to Sister Aida:

May 8, 1956—Letter dictated to and written by Brother Pagano:

I write from Brother Petrelli's room. The case is serious, but most say that this sickness is not unto death, but for a plan of God. Letters arrive to him from Italy, to which he found pleasure in answering. But if he has understood well, the Lord has a new plan in his life, whatever it may be. However he, the brother, with tears, today has felt that he cannot abandon the interest for the travailed ones that write to him with sacrifice.

It came to his mind to ask me who writes to you to insert a note in the Periodical, more or less like this: "Because of circumstances beyond any good will, we are obligated to suspend the correspondence. However we exhort, to the one who feels to do so, to formulate a brief and concise request for prayer."

Such requests can, if you agree, be inserted in a brief column of the Periodical, or be transmitted to us here. We do not promise answers to anyone, except if the unknown Providence wants, case by case, to reveal it. But the brother has felt, with tears, that he cannot abandon *those of Italy* who ask for prayer.

The brother says that certain decisions are hard for him to make, but that he must cut many *good ties*, considering them as *buried in Christ*.

In that which is new to him who is fragile, but more inspired than before, the Lord will make clear, and he, trusting in the Lord, will continue, step by step.

There is in the Kingdom of the Spirit a fourth dimension to which one is brought by means of intimate crucifixion.

Let us leave everyone free, praying only that Grace will transport us from one stature to another. The brother says: "*I see* a past world far, far away, and from time to time a powerful presence of the Lord.

(Pagano is writing from dictation): Oh! sister, it is vain to fight, to argue, to demonstrate. Let each one stay in his own class (1st Corinthians 7:20), classes from which *only One can promote*. We have wasted much time, but God has used it to do work in us. Great God!

If I could write that which has been revealed to me of the crucifixion of Jesus, of the physical and moral horrors, and how he, the Infinite One, touching the finite, has always remained Himself; if I could speak of Him as I would like, I believe that even the stones would cry.

Today, with tears, sweet tears, I have asked Him for grace to be able to *truly* say: "Lord, I thank You." At times it seems that the Infinite crushes me, and I do not know how to ask for anything, not even healing. I am as if absorbed in another world.

I have no light on the future, but you have been very much before me. Our responsibility moves toward the Infinite. God loves you. He loves everyone, but do not think that we know men. From one experience to another, many disappear; love them, bless them, but do not seek for them. Much has

disappeared from me, and only a little of the past is transported into the new.

Dear sister, here I am to do that which our dear brother has dictated to me, having felt the leading to call me.

Let them say what they wish about him. The reason of this accumulation of suffering and discovering is with God. The silences of Jesus.

The brother extends his hand and my hand and blesses you, and blesses me. I tell you that the touch of his hand on my hand has completely shaken me and I am sure that the vibrations will reach you.

Best regards in Christ, Brother Pagano

* * *

May 16, 1956—Dear sister, I have received many letters that I have not been able to read.

The work of Italy has remained transported in the spirit into the new Dimension of the Reality of God, and you are present.

There are many who are as if from another world. As I have asked you by means of Pagano, I feel that the Lord wants me to be spiritually interested in those of Italy who write to me; but I cannot correspond except with you. If it seems good to you, a small column in the Kingdom of God can be entitled: "Requests for prayers." And you, if you are able, will make a brief, concise list for me, and I promise in the Lord (because I feel the leading) to present such requests to the Throne.

* * *

May 18, 1956—In 1953 I felt the presentiment of a new work, no longer systematic. The Lord warned me that He would give me a sure sign; and there was, on December 26, 1953, what I can qualify as “Death without pain or agony.”

For some months I felt that the visits at home and meetings, were becoming somewhat systematic, and I had the presentiment for something new. Here is what I can say: “Agony without death.” The trouble erupted where I did not imagine it, whereas the heart had resisted. The Lord surprises us with the unknown—the unexpected.

* * *

On the day of February 13 of 1957, in the first hours of the morning, Brother Giuseppe Petrelli passed away in a glorious way (as described, in one of the following letters, by Pastor Grinelli, eyewitness), leaving a void and a deep sorrow in many persons who knew him, esteemed and loved him.

IN MEMORIAM

In 1957, after the departure of the Brother, the editorial staff of “Il Regno di Dio,” which then became “Il Granel di Senape,” reported as follows:

To the SPIRITUAL FAMILY of the readers of “IL REGNO DI DIO,” who are mourning for the departure of the beloved Brother and spiritual father, author of the periodical, we would like to share with them a few passages from letters written to us by the Brother himself, some time before his return Home:

August 16, 1956. You are before me with loving insistence since yesterday, seeming to me that I am close to the sunset.

And I have like a holy haste to prepare myself for a special encounter with the Lord, which I hope will be the departure from this body.

* * *

November 15, 1956. It is my duty to communicate to you that, for about one month, my condition is growing worse with rheumatism in the legs and the back, and food does not appeal to me. On December 26 it will be three years that I died and returned to life, and on December 27 I will be—if I am still here—at the limit of Psalm 90:10.

I remember the three days mentioned in Luke 13—that Jesus had to walk three days, and then reach His end. Days often represent years. I feel a great attraction for Heaven—but I always add that I am happy to serve here below for as long as He wants. I do not comment, limiting myself to say that either I am in the last stage for the end, or for a new beginning. I am in peace. God makes no mistakes, and it is good either to remain or to go. And after? Ah! *Each one can serve only in his generation.* The effects are IN—FROM—FOR HIM.

* * *

The following are passages of letters from brothers and sisters that refer to the period during the sickness and to the decease and funeral of the Brother:

Clairsville, Ohio, December 30, 1956. The Lord has granted me the privilege of visiting our dear Brother months ago, convalescing from his serious operation. He said to me: “Sister, the infirmities that I have experienced and the pains and sorrows are so dear to me that I would not exchange them for all the riches of the world.”

Still at present I believe that you know how he is detained in bed with strong pains in his back, and he cannot move, yet he preaches to all those who visit him. Oh, the true servants of Christ are His imitators! C.P.

* * *

Elizabeth, January 3, 1957. Last night I went to visit the Brother, who is in the hospital, under observation. He suffers much, but in silence; even seeing him in the condition in which he finds himself, he inspires courage and faith and hope in me. The Hand of the Lord is more evident; his speech is with more authority and love. I am certainly blessed to have known such a gifted person in my life. For me he is like Elihu was for Job—the last messenger, the last message.
C.P.

* * *

Belleville, February 13, 1957. While the dear Brother was very sick, the Lord sent a great revival in the Church (Belleville, New Jersey), baptizing with the Holy Spirit and with great manifestations. The Brother said that the Lord was sending this manifestation because *He was calling him Home* and that, when he shall have departed, such a manifestation would stop. So it was. The Holy Spirit confirmed his departure.
S.V.

Vision of a sister in Italy. On New Year's Eve, while I was praying for the Brother with a few sisters, I saw him in a vision on his bed, in extreme weakness. All of a sudden Heaven opened and a beam of light came down as from a powerful searchlight that enveloped him; then many people who were running. We did not understand the meaning of the vision, if it should be the touch of healing or if The Lord were taking him away from us.

The event demonstrates that the sister I.S. saw the passing away of the Brother in advance. In fact, it was described thus to us in a letter from one of the family: "he suffered much; his departure has been that of a saint; his face was illuminated."

* * *

Belleville, New Jersey, February 24, 1957. Dear sister, the God of all grace be praised, because it has been His infinite mercy that has sustained us in this trial, that has been very difficult. We can truly say that God has honored us by the presence of His Servant in our house, not only by his life, but also by his departure, which has been **glorious**.

When the Brother had reached his last hour, something happened: seven of us were in his room, and we felt the presence of Jesus with all the Angels. Shortly before he expired, he said: "WHAT A SONG!" A very faithful sister was in an upstairs room; she is not Italian and did not understand Italian. While the Brother was saying: "WHAT A SONG!" this sister heard a chorus that was singing, and believed that God had performed the miracle of healing, and that we were singing for joy. But when she came into the room, we were not singing, and we told her the words that the Brother was repeating many times: "WHAT A SONG!" then he fell asleep sweetly; shortly afterward he expired.

When he expired, his face was transformed: it was immediately illuminated. **It seemed to be the face of Jesus**, so much so that we were stupefied, and we could not even speak. It was something that we can *never, never, never* forget.

When he was laid out in the coffin, he looked like a prince, and appeared to be much younger. All who came to see him were touching him and kissing him; young and old *were all*

crying. So many people came that they had to wait outside in the street.

A young man from our Church, recently baptized with the Holy Spirit by the Lord, was taken by the power of the Holy Spirit during the night of the wake and he, who does not speak Italian, spoke in a perfect Italian, and said many things about the dear Brother. With a mournful voice he said: "The Saint of the EARTH HAS ENTERED INTO THE PALACE OF THE KING" and the Lord manifested Himself with a great power.

The life of the Brother truly manifested Jesus Christ. He never spared himself during his illness, but was receiving all those who went to him in order to hear a word from Heaven, although speaking exhausted the very little strength that still remained to him. The young people loved him very much because he understood them. On certain evenings from twenty to thirty young people would come to see him in order to receive something from his mouth. Only God can make you know what he was.

L. Grinelli

* * *

Montreal, February 16, 1957. It is impossible to describe to you how emotional the funeral of the Brother was, more so than any I have ever attended, nor do I believe that there can ever be another similar one. There was an enormous concourse of grieving people of all ages embracing, crying around the coffin. Men like such a servant are rare. He suffered much, and yet he never lamented. We thank God for such servants.

* * *

Montreal, February 21, 1957. While I write, my heart is crying for such a separation. I can testify that in the many times that I have had difficult problems before me, the Lord

has always used the Brother to help me with holy words and with his writings. I have seen him few times, but the Holy Communion that I felt with him is unforgettable. David and Jonathan were bonded in the Spirit, and I feel more affection for him than for an earthly father.

I am not discouraged, because God is faithful and after Moses, He provided Joshua and, after Elijah, Elisha. *Such servants are rare, who draw the souls close to the Lord and not to themselves.* May the Lord be praised and thanked for Jesus Christ. Amen. G.M.

* * *

Rome, February 21, 1957. "Know ye not that there is a prince and a great man fallen this day in Israel?" (2nd Samuel 3:38). I cannot tell you how much the news of the departure of our very beloved Brother this morning saddened me; even knowing, with increasing gratitude, of the fight that he has victoriously fought, of the course he has finally finished, of the faith that he has so loyally and devoutly kept. There is an assurance in my heart of his present happiness "with Christ;" I am deeply moved.

For the moment we have lost *a father in the faith, a brother in Christ, a wise and spiritual counselor, a teacher sent by God, an apostle of Jesus Christ.* Now those holy writings and books of divine wisdom and celestial doctrine that he has so generously left us, will become more precious than ever.

Many times, in reading those holy words, I have sent him a smile across the continents and oceans; a warm inner thankfulness; an emotional handshake; even if I have not had the privilege, in the flesh, to see him face to face. But I believe that he understood me, even as I feel to have

understood, in a small part, his greatness of soul and of mind.

No, his work will never die; he is not dead, our very dear Brother. He lives with Christ, and will live with us, when we will continue to read and to apprehend (a little at a time), the precious truths, taught to him by the Holy Spirit, and so lovingly given to us.

We remember the words of Paul and try to cling to the model of the sound words that we have heard from our very dear brother: "That good thing which was committed unto thee keep by the Holy Ghost which dwelleth in us" (2nd Timothy 1:14). To you, my dear sister, I entrust the burden of writing to my brothers and sisters in America, and of informing them of my sorrow and, at the same time, joy for that which occurred in the translation of the dear and esteemed Pastor and our very beloved Brother.

W.R.Thomas (Pastor of the Chiesa Apostolica)

Florence, February 22, 1957. Dearest sister, now I know that the Brother is no longer with us. He has been, and is, the hand of the blessing of God to my heart. Humanly I am grieved. At the same time the will of God does not displease me and I also believe that this is the right time that He has established, even if I don't see it.

Oh, may the service of the Brother still continue to spread the blessing of God. And if he is no longer among us, that every one of his lines, guided by the Spirit of God, can still reach us for teaching and blessing! Glory to God for all the facts regarding the life of His Servant: even the last, that of the death! Dr. Luciano Monti

* * *

Domodossola, March 7, 1957. I learn, through the tears, of the disappearance of the Brother, and I keep repeating to myself: the Brother deserves to be read, because all of his writings have been inspired by the Lord. As things are at present, he has left us a treasure. I truthfully desire a holy life, full of ardor and contemplation.

Through his writings I have discovered, in part, his life. I feel poor and insufficient, and that saddens me but, behold, I look to the Redeemer.

I wish to say also that, the Lord, through the Brother, has done a glorious work in Italy. May God be thanked.

F. Bertolino

In order to conclude this brief biographical homage dedicated to the holy memory of the servant of the Lord, we include his obituary that appeared in the Belleville Times, New Jersey, where he was living.

THE BELLEVILLE TIMES—NEWS
February 22, 1957

Rev. Giuseppe Petrelli, of 85 Charles Street, died February 13, at the age of 80.

Rev. Petrelli began his career as a brilliant lawyer at the age of seventeen. After several years he gave up his practice as a lawyer and journalist of one of Italy's largest newspapers, Il Corriere di Napoli, to enter the ministry. The religious call weighed heavily upon him, for at his birth, his mother, who

died shortly thereafter, made a vow to God that if He would spare her sickly son, she would dedicate him to the ministry, which she did.

Coming to America at the turn of the century, he became a Baptist minister of one of the largest Italian Churches in America. After ten years in the Baptist Church, serving in several capacities as pastor, bible teacher, and writer of several books, he entered the Pentecostal Movement. During the forty-odd years among the Pentecostals, he never assumed pastorate of any congregation, but offered his services to many churches throughout the United States and Canada. He was also a missionary to Argentina and Brazil.

Aside from his many engagements, he held weekly bible classes in Belleville and Jersey City for about twenty years. He was also a voluminous writer. His books in Italian number more than a score. His English works include "The Son of Man", "The Redeemer", "The Church—the Invisible", "Abraham-John-Thomas", "Heavenward", "Him-His", and "The Law of the Spirit." Acclaimed as Christian classics by religious leaders of many faiths, these works have reached the four quarters of the globe. A religious monthly, "Il Regno di Dio", has been circulating throughout Italy for ten years, and has received praise even among Catholic theologians for its absence of sectarianism and clear presentation of the truth. An English periodical, "The King and the Kingdom", appears quarterly here in the United States. A forthcoming publication, "From Darkness to Light," is expected to appear in April of this year.

Rev. Petrelli's life can be summed up in a few words: He lived Christ. Like his Divine Master, he was always concerned with the needs and welfare of all regardless of race or religious affiliations.

He shunned all earthly honors and titles, preferring to remain obscure in order not to attract praise to himself. Early in his ministry he gave away his vast inheritance to the poor and needy, and embraced a life of faith and self-abnegation. He left no earthly heirs, but those who are privileged to have known him are a living memorial of the imprint his saintly life and ministry has had on them.

The funeral was held February 15, at the Arlington Italian Pentecostal Church. Ministers and friends, both near and far, attended. Interment took place at the New York Bay Cemetery in Jersey City.

END

Comment by the Editorial Staff

We could have written much more, the literary work of Brother Petrelli being vast, and the result would have been a bigger volume; but we have kept to the essential points, believing to have been guided in this way.

A good part of the present little volume has been taken from correspondence, manuscripts, meditations and testimonies jealously preserved by our editorial staff, but the reader will be able to find and discover much more in his manifold and marvelous books, that were inspired by the Holy Spirit in order to edify the Body of Christ, His Church.

*Antonio Bernabei Chauvie
and his collaborators*