

AUTHOR'S FOREWORD

With this third volume of the writings of Venerable M. Bartolomea Capitanio, all the material for publication is fully compiled. It contains all that could be found from the good deal that she habitually wrote for her own spiritual progress.

This volume is divided into two parts. Part One, bearing the heading *Spiritual Notes*, comprises sentiments and resolutions which she noted day by day throughout her Annual Retreat or on her monthly Day of Recollection, together with the findings of her examinations of conscience, which she marked every day, in particular, any thoughts of pride or even the tiniest failure in observing the Method of Life she had prescribed for herself.

Part Two covers Practices for a Life-of-Perfection which she had set herself for every day or for certain periods of time, together with the vows and self-offerings through which she consecrated herself ever more closely to the Lord.

Some readers may not be quite happy about publishing certain defects the Servant of God noted down about herself, defects that sound exaggerated, as will be noted where they appear. However, apart from the fact that, to be true to history, biographers should faithfully record everything that she left in writing, we rather believe that this very thing can be edifying to all. In fact, when we realize that even Saints have been subject to the common lot of human frailty, we will not consider it so arduous to follow in their footsteps along the steep and narrow path of perfection. As the shaded parts in a picture, their defects make their virtues stand out in a more luminous manner because these are seen as the fruit of the assaults of a rebellious nature constantly overcome.

This, it seems to us, has been, in fact, the most striking feature of the holiness of M. Bartolomea: the prodigious energy and constancy with which she kept up the struggle day by day against her natural defects so as to let divine grace prevail in every area of her short lifespan. Her minute daily examinations of conscience are an evident proof of that. But, God willing, we shall give ample evidence of this in the biography that we have already got ready for the Press.

And so, we do hope that the printing of this third volume of her writings will, indeed, make the figure of the Venerable Servant of God shine out more brightly as well as encourage readers to follow the path traced out by her.