

THE "CRUCIFIX"

Venerated in the Church of St. Mary Magdalene, in Rome

Foreword by Fr. Bruno Brazzarola

On the occasion of the printing of the image of the crucifix venerated in the chapel of the same name in our church of St. Mary Magdalene, I wanted to review the documents concerning the alleged relations between this image and our holy founder. Not only to write in the v. of the image the exact words attributed to the crucifix, but also to know with certainty of information the events that accompanied those words and to write a monograph.

I have adopted the method of the Historical Section of the Congregation for the Causes of Saints. In this Section, under the direction and supervision of Msgr. Giovanni Papa, for the past three years, I have been working on the construction of the Positio in the Historical Process of the Servant of God, Sr. Maria Domenica Brun-Barbantini, foundress of the Congregation of the Ministers of the Infirm, of St. Camillus.

According to this method, each historical source--or Document--will be critically examined,-date, author, exegesis--and finally, the study of comparison and synthesis of the found Documents will be carried out.

In addition to the examination of the Documents regarding the alleged vision and allocution of the crucifix, a special study will be devoted to the problem of identification: whether the crucifix venerated in our church is the crucifix discussed in the Documents, the subject of our examination.

FIRST DOCUMENT (year 1614).

LIFE - OF Fr. CAMILLO DE LELLIS - Founder - OF THE RELIGION DE CHIERICI - Regular Ministers of the Infirm - briefly described by Fr. Santio Ciatelli - Priest of the same Religion

General Archives of the Ministers of the Infirm, 116, f. 43.

CRUCIFIX APPEARS TO CAMILLUS

Confirming it in good purpose

Ch. XX

The same evening Camillus having gone to bed all full of regret for the above-mentioned prohibition, after having consumed a good part of the night in that tedious thought, in the end tired of thinking about it any more he fell asleep. In which sleep it seemed to him to see the same Holy Crucifix of the Oratory brought in the evening to his room, who moving his most sacred head gave him cheer, consoling him and confirming him in the good purpose of establishing the Company. Seeming to him to say to him: do not fear pusillanimo walk on ahead, for I will help you and be with you, and I will derive great fruit from this prohibition; and this saying disappeared the vision. Aroused then he found himself the most contented and consoled man in the world with so firm a purpose to stand firm in the enterprise begun, that not even all hell seemed to be able to distract him any longer from it. Having then rendered infinite gratitude to H.D.M. that he had thus consoled him in the morning for time he also consoled and confirmed his frightened companions. Who for still being new soldiers in Christ's militia seemed to have for the past prohibition utterly dejected and scattered. Resuming, therefore, all hearts for the divine promise, they began again to congregate together, not openly in any particular Oratory, but secretly within the little Church of St. James the keys of which Fr. Francis Prophet held as Chaplain of that one. Where (in the manner of the ancient Christians of the primitive Church when they fled persecution) they secretly made their orations. And when all the others of the house slept and rested, they in return for sleep and rest said the Letanies, et made themselves discipline.

Description, author and date of the Document

The text occupies the whole of f. 43 and part of f. 44 of the manuscript paper codex of total (written) folios: XVI-398. The manuscript is preserved in the general archives of the Ministers of the Infirm (Camillians), marked: 116 (Rome, Piazza d. Maddalena 53)¹

Author is Fr. Santio Ciatelli (1550-1627)², as is evident-as well as from the heading-from a comparison of this manuscript with the "Life of Fr. Camillus... described by Fr. Santio Ciatelli...," published in Viterbo in 1616 (see Document Two); the two texts, in fact, agree ad litteram.

Fr. Sanzio Ciatelli³ joined the Society or Congregation of the Ministers of the Infirm in 1589, received in Naples - his homeland - by the founder, Fr. Camillus de Lellis. He professed religious vows on Dec. 8, 1591 - one of the first professed of the Order - . he was provincial superior of Milan in 1605; consular general in 1608; provincial superior of Rome in 1614; superior general of the Order from April 1619 to May 1625; he died in Naples on June 19, 1627. "Versatissimo e di felice memoria ne' racconti memorabili

¹ Cf. Description of the code in Fr. Mario Vanti, Storia dell'Ordine dei Chierici regolari Ministri degli Infermi, Rome, 1943-1944, vol. II, p. 124, note 22. The numbering of the sheets adopted in the study corresponds to the numbering marked by Fr. Alfredo Colombo - restorer of the mnsr., on September 1, 1968. The mnsr. It will be cited with the abbreviation: vms.

² Cf., in this regard, FIORENTINO DALLAGIACOMA, Ciatelli is then the author of the life of St. Camillus written by...Ciatelli?, Domesticum, Camillian Chronicle Bulletin, 2 (1920) 17 ff. In the article, Dallagiacoma claims Ciatellian authorship of the Vms. Against the opinion of P.d.T. (Pietro de Tot), who in the publication: I Padri Ministri degli Infermi o "del Bel Morire" in Firenze (Florence 1914), following an opinion attributed to Barzizza, considered the author of the Vms "anonymous."

³ Vd. GULLEILMUS MOHR, Catalogus Religiosorum, vol. I, n 17 (typescript in the General Archives of the Ministers of the Infirm); COSMA LENZO, Annalium Relig. Cler. Reg. Ministrantiu. Infirmis, Neapoli, Typis Secundini Roncalioli, MDCXLI, p. 445; DOMENICO REGI, Memorie Historiche del Venerabile P. Camillo de Lellis. E de' suoi Chierici Regolari Ministri degl'Infermi, Naples, MDCLXXVI, p. 216, ff.: 220-229; P. MARIO VANTI, Storia dell'Ordine (op.cit.), pp. 173-314.

et historici"⁴, with "devout, filial, but not blind admiration"⁵ wished to preserve in writing the founder's memoirs, at first for personal devotion, then, after Fr. Camillus's death (1614) for the edification of the brethren. In the manuscript's preface directed "Alli Padri e Fratelli della Religione"⁶, in addition to confirming the intentions referred to above, Cicutelli sets out the criteria adopted in drafting his notes. Premising that "having gone observing some things of his life (of Fr. Camillus)" he had felt it his duty to stick to and concern himself with "three things, namely, truth, simplicity and brevity... Of truth (he explains) writing only the clarity and candor of things just as they happened, as they were done and operated, not adding anything of my own...(reporting) things in the same way that I saw them, that I handled them, that I heard them, or true from the same Camillus or Curtio, or Fr. Francesco Profeta, or Biasio⁷, or of the other ancients of the Congregatione worthy of faith." Claiming to have encountered some difficulty "in extracting" from Camillus's mouth news "that could redound to any of his praise," he specifies that the research he carried out with the "ancients" concerned events that took place before his entry into the Company, and from that time onwards he reports "most" of the news "as a witness of sight."⁸ Concerning the criterion of "brevity," he assures that he avoided the "soverchie essagerationi, et ogni altra cosa superflua dodivando particolarmente le molte lunghe parafrasi che si sogliono mescolar per dentro." It must be acknowledged that, by and large, Cicutelli remained faithful to these criteria. The style is lively, lively, elegant to the point, measured in his use of adjectives, brief in his comments. A merit, this, that he must be credited with, especially in comparison with contemporary hagiographers, fanciful, stuffed with pimply and scattershot concepts. Lingering in him, unfortunately, is the omnipresence of Satan: a commonplace and convenient explanation for not a few writers of saints' lives. But this - and some rare pomposity - does not undermine the substantial fidelity to the three principles of truth, simplicity and brevity, professed by him.

Because of his quality as a witness de visu and audientis ex videntibus, because of the directness and sobriety of his style, and because of the trustworthiness acknowledged to him by his contemporaries-as is amply evident in the course of the Trials, Ordinary and Apostolic, on the life and virtues of Fr. Camillus-Cicutelli is to be considered a substantially truthful and faithful writer.

Concerning the event described in this First Document, it should be noted that Cicutelli had information about it directly from Camillus himself, as is evident from the testimony given by Fr. Alessandro Gallo on March 20, 1622, during the Ordinary Informative Rogatorial Trial in Naples⁹: "...et questo [says Gallo] me lo dittò d.o. P. Camillus in the presence of Fr. Santio Cicutelli al presente nostro Generale." It should be noted - regarding the event itself - that Fr. Gallo's testimony agrees with the text of the present Document under review (see below).

The date of the manuscript, written in its present form, is to be placed between the death of Fr. Camillus and the approval given by Fr. General Nigli for the printing of the life written by Cicutelli: between July 14, 1614 and October I of the same year (see Document Two).

Examination of the text

The reported event took place over the years: October 1579 - early September 1584, during the period of Camillus's third stay in the Arcispedale di S. Giacomo degli Incurabili, in Rome¹⁰; exactly: in the second half of 1582.

⁴ DOMENICO REGI, op. cit., p. 219

⁵ P. MARIO VANTI, History of the Order (op. cit.), p. 252.

⁶ Vms. f.1.

⁷ Fr. Biagio Oppertis (1561 - June 17, 1624); Cf. Mohr, Catalogus, vol. I,n.3 (see, here, bibliography); Ermenegildo Balbinot, Schedario del Domesticum (vol. typed by E.B. in 1941), pp. 130-141; Fr. MARIO VANTI, History of the Order (op. cit. "the generalate of Fr. Biagio Oppertis (1607-1613)", pp 1-57.

⁸ Sc. Mohr, Cicutelli was a companion of Fr. Camillus in Bucchianico in 1600, in Florence the same year, an associate in Nola also in 1600, with Fr. Camillus of Livorno in Genoa in 1603. In the year of Fr. Camillus' death, Cicutelli was provincial superior in Rome.

⁹ "Romana seu Theatina Canoniz. Servi Dei Camilli de Lellis Relig. Cleric. Regul. Ministrantium Infirmis Fundator - Processus Remissorialis fabricatus in Civitate Neapolitana" (public copy apostolic process, f. 357, AGMI, 3.

¹⁰ Cf. P. MARIO VANTI M.I., S. Giacomo degl'Incurabili di Roma nel Cinquecento - Dalle Compagnie del Divino Amore a S. Camillo de Lellis, Rome, 1938, p. 67.

Permanently dismissed from the Capuchin religious, Camillus returned to St. James for the third time, in October 1579. Through the good offices of Nob. Virgilio Crescenzi he was appointed by the four Lords Guardians of the hospital, Master of the House, in December of the same year¹¹. Zealous, conscientious, he feels growing in himself "every day more and more charity toward the sick"¹² and goes by observing the behavior of the "serventi mercennarij" regretting the disservice caused by their behavior and convincing himself at the same time, that "it could not be better remedied than by freeing the infirm from the hands of those mercennarij, and in return for them to establish a Company of men pij, and da bene, who not for mercede, but voluntarily and for the love of God would serve them with that charity et amorevolezza that mothers are wont to do toward their own infirm children."¹³. Caught up in that thought that no longer gave "sleep or rest to his eyes," Camillus confided his motherly idea to "certain Officers and servants of the same Hospidale, whom he for more of his confidants and spiritual ones kept to him." The idea and proposal are accepted by "Bernardino Norcino of the Matrice Guardarobba, Curtio Lodi Aquilano Dispensiero, Lodovico Aldobelli Untionario, Benegno semplice servente et ultimo di tutti il P. Francesco Profeta Sciciliano di Randazzo allora Cappellano di S. Giacomo."¹⁴ The group gathered in the evenings, at the end of the workday, in a room used as an oratory; they recited litanies, gave each other discipline, engaged in prayer, and listened to Camillus' words. In the oratory was an altar and a crucifix, given to Camillus by "some of his devotees." A certain "certain malicious man of the same Hspidale outraged that Camillus had not also called him to the Oratory" put "that gathering of theirs under suspicion as if it inspired them to take possession of the Hospidale" and reported the matter to the Lords Guardians, incredibly, the latter accepted the denunciation of the delator and ordered the group not to meet "together anymore."

This is the moment immediately preceding the event described by Document One.

The literal form of the text is clear and perspicuous and requires no special explanation. Although the expressions: sleep - seemed to him to see - seemed to him to say, require clarification.

What is the real value of these expressions? For an objective hermeneutic answer it is to be seen whether other times in the same manuscript the A. recalls the event and with what literary form. The event is recalled twice. The first, in the conclusion of chapter 23, entitled, "Camillus having no patrimony to order himself finds one who gives him for the love of God" (ff. 48-49). Here, after describing Camillus' state of mind following the offer of 600 scudi made to him by Fermo Calvi - as the patrimony required to gain access to priestly ordination - Ciatelli writes: "that d'ahora avanti (Camillus) pigliò sempre più animo di camminare avanti nella incominciata impresa tenendo sempre sempre scolpita nel cuore la divina promessa fattagli dal Santissimo Crocifisso."

¹¹Cf. P. MARIO VANTI M.I., S. Giacomo degl'Incurabili (op. cit.) p. 63; see also Petro de Angelis, *l'Arcispedale di S. Giacomo in Augusta*, Rome, 1955, pp. 16-17: De Angelis says that Camillo was appointed Master of the House "five years after" 1575.

¹² Vms. ch. 17, ff. 38-39

¹³ Sc. Vms, Camillus' intuition would have been born "the year 1583 which was the eleventh of the Pontificate of Gregory Xij concerning the Most Holy Assumption of Mary ever Virgin of August" (f. 39); this is a lapsus memoriae, because in the printing of Fr. Camillus' life (1615) Ciatelli, and after him concordantly the historians, assigns the date of that intuition to August 15, 1582, the tenth of the Pontificate of Gregory XIII. the exemplification of charity in maternal love toward one's own child, as a typology of Camillian commitment to care for the sick, is established by Camillus himself in Rule XXVII of the "Rules of the Company of the Servants of the Infirm" (cf. Fr. MARIO VANTI M.I., *Writings of St. Camillus de Lellis*, Rome, 1965, p. 67); moreover, it is contained in the Bull "Ex omnibus" of Sixtus V (1586) approving the Society or Congregation of the Ministers of the Infirm, where it is said that Camillus and his associates proposed to exercise care for the sick "non minori affectu quam mater erga quem unice educavit filium" (see. PETRUS KRAEMER, *Bullarium Ordinis Clericorum Regularium Ministrantium Infirmis*, Veronae, 1947, p. 8; for possible relationship between this formula and the doctrine of Br. Louis of Granada see ROSARIO MESSINA, *charity for the sick in St. Camillus de Lellis*, Naples, 1968, p. 113).

¹⁴ Vms., ch.18, ff. 40-41. On Bernardino Norcino (+ August 16, 1585) cf. Lorenzo Benzi, Br. Bernardino Nordino, in *Domesticum*, 10 (1929) pp. 141 ff.; on Br. Curzio Lodi (+ March 4, 1603) cf. G. Mohr, *Catalogus* (op. cit.), Vol.I, n 47; on Fr. Francesco Profeta (+ April 19, 1601) cf. Mohr, Vol. I, n 2; for all cf. Mario Vanti M.I., S. Giacomo degl'Incurabili (op. cit.), pp. 101-104. Ludovico Aldobelli and Benigno would not follow the group; Ludovico would become prior of the Hospital of St. John Lateran, Benigno would later leave the hospital of St. James "for just cause" (Vms. f. 53). Sc. the testimony of nurse Filippo Bigazzi and Fr. Luca Antonio Catalano, other "servants of the Hospedale" joined the group in the oratory retreat. Bigazzi attests thus, "I said that while he was house master of the Hospidale di S. Giacomo, he exerted Charity toward the infirm et he wanted us other ministers to exert it too, and he with his own hands governed the impiegati even the most filthy... et because of him many Gentilhomini concorrevano a l'Hospitale per servijij dell'infermi molti Gentilhomini, e noi altri del luogo si riunirsi ogni sera in una stanza, o vero oratorio, dove si dicevano le Litanie, et altre orationi" (Romana seu Theatina Canoniz.is Servi Dei Camilli de Lellis Relig. Cleric. Regul. Ministrantium Infirmis Fundator - Processus Romae fabricatus - public copy apostolic process, f. 43, AGMI, 17). Fr. Luca Antonio Catalano attests, "...the year 1581 he instituted a Congregatione ? which and many other servants of the Hospedale retired to a room to do mental oratione, and vocal all together, doing spiritual exercises and many disciplines, and then went out to serve the sick with great fervor and charity" (Romana seu Theatina Canoniz. Servi Dei Camilli de Lellis etc. - Processus Remissorialis fabricatus in Civitate lanuensi- public copy apostolic process, f. 35, AGMI, 3583).

The second time the event is mentioned at the beginning of chapter 27, entitled: "Camillus takes his Crucifix from the Hospitale and brings it to the Madonnina" (f. 54). In the previous chapter it is mentioned that Camillus, with Bernardino and Curtius, had moved to live in the premises attached to the church of the Madonnina dei Miracoli, starting the Company on September 15, 1584¹⁵. Now, in the twenty-seventh chapter, Camillus returns to St. James and takes the crucifix to carry it, with great devotion, to the Madonnina. The chapter begins with the words, "I do not want to pass under silentio in this place a pious actione that Camillus made toward his Most Holy Crucifix that had appeared to him on the night of his tribulatione in St. James, consoling, et confirmandolo in the good purpose."

According to Ciatelli, therefore, it was a real and dynamic divine promise made to Camillus by the Most Holy Crucifix, such that it remained engraved in his heart, because that Most Holy Crucifix had appeared to him and had consoled and confirmed him in the good purpose.

If we add to these expressions what is said in the same text under review, "and this saying disappeared the vision," it must be inferred that, according to Ciatelli, the vision and the words of the crucifix constituted a real and well-determined event, not illusory or purely dreamlike in nature.

The "sleepy" situation, the perception of the movements of the crucifix head, and the hearing of the words, lead to the psychological examination of the subject Camillus¹⁶.

It is well known that the phenomena of vision, ecstasy, and "supernatural" allocution have, at times, similarities with phenomena of nervous origin, such as neurasthenia, hysteria, etc. The subjects of these nervous disorders present symptoms of known, unknown or ill-known diseases, and are, most of them, abulic, hyper-exalted, unstable, unable to realize themselves in a situation except through pathological simplifications. Their alleged visions, "supernatural" hearings, ecstasies, etc., correspond to hallucinations from a "deficiencia de l'attention volontaire, ou plus exactement, de la substitution d'une mode particulière de l'attention automatique à l'attention volontaire devenue impossible" (Max Nordau)¹⁷.

The psychological examination of the subject in itself and in the situation, of fundamental importance, is required by theologians as a prerequisite to ascertaining the nature of the mystical phenomenon (Maréchal, Pinard de la Boulaye)¹⁸.

That day Camillus had been summoned by the Lords Guardians as the "leader of the others et inventor of that novelty."¹⁹; he had been ordered to "undo" the oratory and, with ill-concealed irony, had been shown the solution to his personal case: if he and his companions wanted to pray they could do so in as many churches in Rome. The group, however, was coagulated not around a program of prayer, but of hospital welfare reform; reform, for that matter, which had achieved extremely positive

¹⁵ Sc. Vms (Ch. XXVI, f. 53), Camillus on the day of the Nativity of the Blessed Virgin (Sept. 8) is said to have started the Company by cladding Bernardino and Curtius in special clothing ("putting on them black petticoats and cloaks as long as half a leg"). Vanti notes that both Ciatelli in the editions of Fr. Camillus' life, as well as Lenzo, assign the date of the vesting to the 15th of the same month and year (cf. MARIO VANTI M.I., San Camillo de Lellis (1550-1614), Turin, 1929, p. 94, note 25).

¹⁶ The psychological examination of Camillus in the situation described by the text is dealt with by FIORENTINO DALLAGIACOMA, *Il Crocifisso che parlò a San Camillo (documenti storici e criteri di credibilità)*, Domesticum, 5 (1922) pp. 96 ff.; 6 (1922) pp. 140 ff.; MARIO VANTI M.I., S. Camillo de Lellis (1550-1614) Turin, 1929, p. 79; CYRIL CHARLES MARTINDALE, *San Camillo*, Milan, 1947, pp. 85-87; these authors (especially Dallagiacoma) analyze some psychological elements without examining the situation in depth, concerned to exonerate Camillus from any form of hallucination ("iron head," indicating the firmness and positivity of Camillus' character); moreover, they refer to the second vision, accumulating the two visions in a single study sample.

¹⁷ In A. FONCK, *Mystique (Théologie)*, DTC, X,2,2651.

¹⁸ Cf. *Ibid.*, 2601-2602.

¹⁹ The examination begins in ch. XIX of the Vms, entitled: "Li Signori dell'Hospitale prohibiscono a Camillo e compagni che non si congregino più insieme." The names of the Signori Guardiani are marked in the closing of the chapter: it was allora detto Signori Guardiani Monsignor Cusano (che po fu Cardinale), Alessandro de Grandis, Ciantares de Leone, and of the other the name is not remembered. The exact names are: Fernando Quadrado, Ciantares de Leon, Tarquinio Vipera de Bonatti, Alessandro de Grandi (cf. P. MARIO VANTI M.I., *S. Giacomo degli Incurabili*, op. cit., p. 64). Vanti himself notes that these names of the three Guardians appear united together in 1582, and that, therefore, it must not have been Msgr. Cusano, as Vms asserts, but Msgr. Antonio Maria Salviati; Cusano succeeded Salviati, made Cardinal, in December 1583 (for Salviati see PIETRO DE ANGELIS, *Il Cardinale Antonio Maria Salviati* (1536-1602), Rome, 1952).

results²⁰. On the easy mouth of those Lords Guardians everything was dissolved and mocked. But was the transignification of such evangelical and humanitarian signs in a power-grabbing operation possible? Conscience bore witness to Camillus that he had not "machinated anything against the Hospitale." The accumulation of injustice, bullying, and irony made him "bitterly tempted that time to abandon said place et andare a servir in un altro." At a later time, however, Camillus renounced nullifying the obstacle by fleeing; he decided to remain at the center of the situation by accepting its impact with all the consequences, to save "that little bit of good seed" scattered by him and his companions. In the evening, in bed, sleep tarried; all the elements of the conflict, words, attitudes, acts, reactions surfaced and fermented in an oppressive and exhausting sequence.

Upon waking, the picture had changed. During sleep, the crucifix brought into the room the night before had, mysteriously, communicated to Camillo that it was close to him - a faithful friend in the midst of hostile men - and that it was what Camillo had thought and wanted. And that message had entered Camillo as an element of certainty; an element he had failed to self-administer, necessary, however, for the resolution of the conflict. From the clearly acquired certainty had come hope, strength, and patience. The comrades already "bewildered," "dejected and lost," found themselves and returned to the first decision.

From this time until his death, for thirty-two years, Camillus and his Ministers of the Infirm would remain steadfast and anchored in this certainty.

Camillus' reaction, therefore, follows a clear and basically controlled line. The unalterability of the realistic interpretation of the crucifix' words are evidence of Camillus' normal, non-morbid temperament. As with any mystical experience²¹, there was a fact of extrasensory origin-clearly received and believed-that entered Camillus' psychological process as an element of certainty, resolving the conflict.

Corollary

(a) the expressions "sleep" and "it seemed to him" are not lacking in the wording of mystical phenomena. The approximation of literary terms used by the subjects of the phenomenon, come from the vivid feeling of the mystic's personal "nothingness" before God - who, in that very phenomenon, becomes the "all" -. Hence, the great difficulty, or impossibility, of drafting in usual and exact words the mystical fact²².

(b) The results of this exegesis will have to be combined with the exegesis of the documents examined in the course of the study. In these, a second vision and hearing of the crucifix will be discussed, similar to this first one, drafted, however, in a different literal form.

SECOND DOCUMENT (year 1615)

²⁰ cf. Fr. MARIO VANTI M.I., S. Giacomo degli Incurabili, (op. cit.), pp. 95-109, the testimonies about the results of Camillus's reform work in S. Giacomo by Virgilio Crescenzi, Patrizio Patrizi, Alessandro de Grandis, Sebastiano Torello, Dr. Francesco Ginnasio, nurse Filippo Bigazzi. Camillus's work was appreciated by Msgr. Salviati and Cusano; thus states Fr. Luca Antonio Catalano; "I do not remember having known Fr. Camillo de Lellis in the time that he was a layman, however I have heard from the Most Illustrious Gentlemen Cardinals Salviati, and Cusano... who were Protectors of the Hospedale di S. Giacomo di Roma dell'Incurabili, that d. Father Camillus had met him the first, and second time, and the first time, that he served the aforesaid Hospedale, the Master of the House after having made many corrections sent him away, particularly because he played cards, and the second time he came back all changed, attending the Most Holy Sacraments a lot, and doing with great charity all the servitij of piety towards the sick, serving them with his own hands, and having them served by others, for which things he was made Master of the House of the said Hospedale and stayed there for about 6 years, and in the year 1581 he instituted a Congregazione..." (as note 14, same f. 35). With some emphasis, PIETRO DE ANGELIS writes in l'Arcispedale di S. Giacomo in Augusta (op. cit.), p. 16: "But the true hero of charity, who made S. Giacomo the prodigious arena of his titanic struggles for the physical and moral health of the sick, was Camillo de Lellis."

²¹ Further examination of the phenomenon of psychic perception of an essential presence nullo interposito medio, is to be seen in A. FONCK, (op. cit.), pp. 2658-2659.

²² It is to be seen, concerning the mystical phenomenon of transverberation, the report written by St. Teresa of Jesus (life, ch. 29), the expression "parevami" referring to the description of the fiery point of the dart wielded by the angel. See, also, for the same mystical phenomenon, the letter written on August 21, 1918 by Fr. Pio da Pietrelcina where it is said, "very long sheet of iron with a very sharp point and that it seems from it point that fire was coming out" (Fr. P. PIO DA PIETRELCINA, Epistolario, vol. I, S. Giovanni Rotondo 1973, 2nd ed. p. 1065). For the authenticity and variety of forms of communication of supernatural vision (intellectual, sensory, imaginative), cf. FEDERICO RUIZ SALVADOR, St. John of the Cross, Rome, 1968, p. 634 ff.

LIFE - OF Fr. CAMILLO DE LELLIS - FOUNDER - Of the Religion of Clerics Regular -
MINISTERS OF THE INFIRMS - Decribed - BY Fr. SANTIO CICATELLI - Priest of the same -
Religion.

IN VITERBO - appresso Pietro et Agostino Discepoli - M.DC.XV

p.25

Camillus in a dream is consoled and confirmed by the Lord in the good purpose of establishing the congregation.
- Chap. X

The same evening Camillus having gone to bed all full of regret for the above-mentioned prohibition, after having consumed a good part of the night in that tedious thought, in the end tired of thinking about it any more he fell asleep. In which sleep it seemed to him to see that that same Crucifix brought into his room in the evening, moving his most sacred head, gave him spirit, consoling him and confirming him in the good purpose of instituting the Congregation; seeming to him to say the following words to him: do not be afraid pusillanimous, walk ahead, for I will help you, and I will be with you; and this saying disappeared the vision. Awakened then he found himself the most contented and consoled man in the world, with so firm a purpose to stand firm in the enterprise begun, that not even all hell seemed to him that he could more distract him from it. Having then rendered infinite gratitude to H.D.M. that he had thus consoled him, as soon as the day appeared he also consoled and confirmed his frightened companions, who, for still being new soldiers in the militia of Christ at the first sound of the past prohibitions, seemed to have been utterly dejected and lost.

Author and date of the Document

The author and date of printing of this first life of Fr. Camillus, are included in the title of the book: Fr. Sanzio Ciatelli, in 1615. The text must have been ready for printing as early as Oct. 1, 1614 - two and a half months just after Fr. Camillus' death - as shown by the license "ut typis mandetur," issued by the superior general of the "Religion of the Clerics Regular Ministers of the Infirm," Fr. Francesco Antonio Nigli²³. The book is dedicated "To the Most Blessed Father, and Universal Pastor of the Church Pope Paul Quintus."

Of the author and the literal form of this book, what was said above applies, in the examination of the First Document, with which it agrees ad litteram. Ciatelli's work was successful, and "was greeted with joy and met with much acclaim."²⁴

Examination of the text

Despite the ad litteram concordance of the text of this edition with the Vms, there are two differences to be noted:

the first, concerning the words of the crucifix, the second, concerning the behavior of the hospital orderlies following the order given by the Wardens to "undo the Oratory."

This edition lacks the last sentence (present instead in the Vms) of the words of the crucifix: and I shall draw great fruit from this prohibitions." Otherwise the two editions agree ad litteram.

With regard then to the behavior of the attendants, it should be noted that (not in the present chapter x^o [under consideration] but in the previous one) this edition adds the following episode to the Vms: "and because he (Camillus) was going somewhat late in dismissing the Oratory, the execution of this was ordered to some other servants of the same Hospitale, who promptly obeying

²³ Cf. P. ENDRIZZI MANSUETO, *Bibliografia Camilliana*, Verona, 1910, p. 51.

²⁴ P. MARIO VANTI M.I., *History of the Order*, op. cit., p. 252.

lifted at a stretch the Altar, et the Crucifix, which for then was placed on the ground behind a door. Then Camillus entered the said room, and finding everything underneath, especially seeing that Most Holy Crucifix almost thrown behind the door, so much sorrow assailed him, that kneeling down on the ground he warmly commended to him this his travail: removing it then from that place, he took it the same evening to his room."

The two variants do not substantially affect the wording of the two texts. The episode of the dismantling of the oratory, adds a note to the picture of the conflict Camillus suffered on that sad day: it accentuates and enlivens the contrasts and highlights Camillus' suffering and patience.

p. Bruno Brazzarola, in C.I.C. 1975 No. 61 - Year V, pp. 24-38

Original text in Italian language.

English, French, Spanish, Portuguese, German translation done with DEEPL.