

How the Orthodoxy of Maria Valtorta's Work Shines Even More Brightly and Exposing How the Methodological and Theological Errors of Anselmo de la Cruz is Dangerous & Unacceptable for Catholics: A Complete Refutation of Anselmo's Flawed Anti-Valtorta Article Entitled "Poem of the Man-God: Dangerous & Unacceptable for Catholics"

Theological Errors and Incompetency, Methodological Flaws, Distortions and Misrepresentations, Lack of Objectivity, and Ignorance on the Subject He is Writing About: How Anselmo de la Cruz's Anti-Valtorta Article Lacks Substance and Credibility and Stands Completely Refuted

By Stephen Austin, January 2016 (Updated July 2016)

As will be demonstrated in this refutation of Anselmo's third article, every single supposed example and "proof" he has given in his articles attempting to demonstrate errors against faith and morals in Valtorta's writing have all proven to be false, based on methodological flaws, or are a clear distortion, misrepresentation, or misinterpretation of the text (or, in some cases, is based on his ignorance and incompetency in certain theological areas such as his arguments concerning Original Sin).

All of the supposed "proof", "evidence", and arguments that Anselmo has posited in all of his articles to try to substantiate his groundless and often unsubstantiated subjective accusations against Valtorta's work has been entirely and thoroughly refuted, and he is shown for what he is: a critic who has theological incompetency in many areas, makes poor arguments and commits many methodological flaws, makes faulty presumptions, who distorts and misinterprets Valtorta's text, brings in an obvious unsubstantiated subjective bias and a lack of objectivity, makes unsubstantiated, sweeping, generalizing statements, and in several places displays a type of methodology and procedure that reminds one more of the Pharisees or someone unhealthily paranoid rather than a good theologian.

I want to note that I am pleased that Anselmo wrote his articles because, having a chance to analyze his strongest arguments against Valtorta, it can now be seen that even this supposedly "trustworthy" traditional Catholic blogger and vehemently anti-Valtorta critic cannot satisfactorily provide objective valid evidence to indicate that Maria Valtorta's work should not be read by contemporary faithful Catholics. This further substantiates that traditional Catholics are justified in sharing the sentiments and theological opinion of SSPX seminary professor Fr. Ludovic-Marie Barrielle, FSSPX, whom Archbishop Lefebvre called "our model spiritual guide," the former of whom declared, "If you wish to know and love the Sacred Heart of Jesus, read Valtorta!"¹ Fr. Barrielle's position is also shared and substantiated by leading pre-Vatican II theologians who are more learned than most priests and layman (including this critic), especially in the areas needed to judge mystical writings, and who furthermore studied it in much further depth (not to mention that many of them actually personally knew, investigated, and communicated at length with the author of the work in question). These theologians also exhibited a healthy open mind free of

presumption and prejudice, humility, and a healthy understanding of and balance in the area of emotions and affections, all of which served to make their theological examination of the author and her work all the more credible, trustworthy, and objective.

It is well known that the saints and the Church have historically more clearly explained or defined Church teaching when presented with objections of skeptics, critics, or heretics – thus making the truth shine even more brightly. In like manner, I am pleased to use this critic’s objections to more clearly show the strength of the Valtortian position and that it is worthy of faithful Catholics of good will to read her work, to benefit from it, and not only recognize that it is free of error in faith and morals, but also has accordance with Sacred Scripture and tremendous spiritual benefit for Catholics for generations to come. God works all things together for good. Just as God uses heresy to bring about a greater clarification of true doctrine, so God can take the misguided conclusions of critics to show forth the truth of the complete orthodoxy of her work and its great benefit to souls of good will.

The Pharisees and scribes rejected Christ because they did not want to know the truth. They did not want to be “confused with the facts.” I hope my e-book will serve humble, honest Catholics of good will who *want* to know the truth about this private revelation and this great gift of God for our generation. Heaven indeed did not waste its time in giving this great gift! “[Extinguish not the Spirit. Despise not prophecies; but test all things, and hold fast that which is good.](#)” (The Great Apostle St. Paul to the Thessalonians, 1 Thessalonians 5: 19-21)

A Spanish translation of this refutation is available [here](#).

Refutation of the First Half of His Article

Anselmo begins his article with several quotes from an excerpt in the *Poem* and then he claims that this passage demonstrates that Valtorta wrote that Jesus said that He has within Himself the seed of evil coming from original sin. This is absolutely false and his false claim is based on his misinterpretation of the text, failure of distinctions, and failing to take into account the relevant context as I will demonstrate.

It is significant that Fr. Corrado Berti, O.S.M., analyzed these same exact statements and provided commentary on them. Before we analyze these statements in further depth, I think it is important to relate what he wrote about this, especially considering that he was a distinguished theologian.

Fr. Corrado Berti, O.S.M., was a professor of dogmatic and sacramental theology of the Pontifical Marianum Theological Faculty in Rome from 1939 onward, and Secretary of that Faculty from 1950 to 1959. He is one of the three priests who had an audience with Pope Pius XII about the *Poem of the Man-God* wherein Pope Pius XII commanded him to publish the *Poem of the Man-God* “just as it is”. Fr. Berti is also the one who supervised the editing and publication of the critical second edition of the *Poem* and provided the extensive theological and biblical annotations that accompany that edition and all subsequent editions. Fr. Berti wrote in his [signed testimony](#) on

December 8, 1978: "I read and annotated (by myself from 1960 to 1974; with the help of some confreres from 1974 on) all the Valtorta writings, both edited and unedited."²

Fr. Berti was an extremely learned and traditional/orthodox scholar who thoroughly analyzed Maria Valtorta's writings and provided more than 5,675 scholarly footnotes and appendices for her work, including for difficult passages that critics have or could potentially criticize. This averages about 568 footnotes per volume and averages slightly more than one footnote per page throughout the whole 5,264 printed pages. In 1961, the second critical Italian edition of the *Poem of the Man-God*, published by Knight Michele Pisani's son Emilio Pisani, contained these scholarly footnotes and appendices by Fr. Berti. The subsequent editions, including the current fourth edition released in 2001, have many of these footnotes.

Fr. Gabriel Roschini, Consultant of the Holy Office, stated in 1961 that the new critical second edition of Valtorta's work "was not to be considered to be on the *Index*, because it was totally renewed, conformed in all to the original, and provided with notes that removed any doubt and which demonstrated the solidity and orthodoxy of the work."³

In order to show you his footnotes for the particular passages in question, it is necessary to quote the excerpt where the footnotes were referenced so that you know which sentences the footnotes apply to in context. I will quote the excerpt from Maria Valtorta's writings that are quoted by Anselmo (with surrounding context) and highlight Fr. Berti's footnote markers in yellow in the excerpt, and then Fr. Berti's full footnotes will be given following the excerpt. Here is the excerpt from Valtorta's writings:⁴

[Jesus speaking:] « [...] But I have come for men. To make angels of men.

Man was the perfection of creation. He had the spirit of the angel and the full beauty of the animal, complete in all its animal and moral parts. There was no creature equal to him. He was the king of the earth, as God is the King of Heaven, and one day, when he would have fallen asleep for the last time on the earth, he would have become king with the Father in Heaven. Satan tore the wings off the angel-man and he replaced them with the claws of a beast and with intense yearning for filth, and lured him into becoming a being which is better described as a man-demon, rather than simply a man. I want to eradicate the disfigurement worked by Satan, as well as the corrupted craving of the contaminated flesh. I want to give back to man his wings, and make him once again king, coheir of the Father and of the Celestial Kingdom. I know that man, if he is willing, can do what I say, to become once again king and angel. I would not tell you things you could not do. I am not one of the rhetors who preach impossible doctrines. I have real flesh, so that through the experience of the flesh, I might learn which are the temptations of man. »

[Judas Iscariot:] « And what about sins? »

« Everyone can be tempted. Sinners are only those who want to be such. »

« Have You ever sinned, Jesus? »

« No, I *never* wanted to sin. Not because I am the Son of the Father. But because I wanted and I want to prove to man that the Son of man did not sin because He did not want to sin, and that man can, if he wants, not sin. »

« Have You ever been tempted? »

« I am thirty years old, Judas. And I did not live in a cave upon a mountain. I lived amongst men. And if I had been in the loneliest place in the world, do you think temptations would not have come to Me? We have everything in us: good and evil.⁷ We carry everything with us. And the breath of God blows on the good and vivifies it like a thurible of sweet-smelling holy incense. And Satan blows on evil, thus kindling a furious blazing fire. But diligent good will and constant prayer are like damp sand on the hellish fire: they suffocate it and put it out. »

« But if You have never sinned, how can You judge sinners? »

« I am a man and the Son of God. What I might ignore as a man and judge wrongly, I know and judge as the Son of God. After all!... Judas, answer this question of Mine. Will one who is hungry, suffer more by saying: "I will now sit down at the table" or by saying: "There is no food for me"? »

« He suffers more in the latter case, because the simple thought that he is without food, will bring back to him the pleasant smell of food and his bowels will be tortured by biting desire. »

« Right: temptation is as biting as that desire, Judas. Satan makes it more intense, more real, more alluring than any accomplished act. Further, the act satisfies, and at times nauseates; whereas temptations do not subside, but like pruned trees, they grow stronger and stronger. »

« And have You never yielded? »

« No, never. »

« How did You manage? »

« I said: "Father, lead Me not into temptation". »

« What? You, the Messiah, You work miracles and You ask Your Father for help? »

« Not only for help: I ask Him not to lead Me into temptation.⁹ Do you think that I, simply because am I, can do without the Father? Oh! no! I solemnly tell you that the Father grants everything to His Son, and that the Son receives everything from the Father. And I tell you that everything the Father will be asked for in My Name will be granted. But here we are at Gethsemane, where I live. The first trees can be seen beyond the walls. You live beyond

Tophet. It is getting dark already. You had better not come up as far as that. We will meet again tomorrow at the same place. Goodbye. Peace be with you. »

Now, here are Fr. Berti's footnotes corresponding to the sentences marked above with footnote markers (highlighted in yellow):⁵

Footnote #7: Re-read paragraphs 5 and 6 and note that the evil temptations did not originate with Jesus, from within [Him] (see: Heb 4:15), but from without [i.e., "outside of Him"] (see Mt 4:1-11; Mk 1:12-13; Lk 4:1-13). In light of this, therefore, we should understand the expression: "I am 30 years old..." and what follows: "We have everything in us: the good and the evil...conquers it" [or "puts it out"], *cannot* therefore refer *also* to Jesus, but only to Judas and to all members of humanity contaminated with original sin. The brief discourse of Jesus to Judas is therefore an exhortation, which is humble and not humiliating, to lead him to be convinced that, despite divine trials and diabolic temptations, if a man *wills* [*wants to*] and asks help from God, he can overcome the trials and not succumb to temptations.

Footnote #9: Re-read paragraph 2 and reflect that in and with the sixth petition of the "Our Father", we do not only ask God that He not tempt us to evil (see: Jn 1:13-15; Eccles 15:11-21; Prov 19:3; Rom 7:7-13; 1 Cor 10:11-13), but that He keep us from trials that are too heavy for us to bear, like the one God Himself subjected Abraham to (see: Gen 22:1-19), and like what Jesus Himself experienced in the Garden of Olives, which is recounted in these references (see: Mt 26:36-46; Mk 14:32-42; Lk 22:39-46; Heb 4:15 – 5:10).

We will first analyze the sentence corresponding to footnote #9 and then afterwards analyze the sentence corresponding to footnote #7.

To start out discussing the sentence corresponding to footnote #9, I want to point out that if you interpret that phrase in Valtorta rigidly without any reference to any context or without any intelligent understanding of the different definitions or modes of interpretation of sacred text or mystical writings, you could be *equally scandalized* by this sentence in Scripture:

"After these things, **God tempted Abraham**, and said to him: Abraham, Abraham. And he answered: here I am." (Genesis 22:1)

(Devil's Advocate Arguing:) Are you serious? How can God Who is perfect and abhors sin and doesn't want man to sin, tempt man!? Only unholy things like the devil and evil passions can tempt towards sin!

A footnote in a Douay-Rheims Bible for that passage reads: "God tempted: God tempteth no man to evil (*cf.* James 1:13); but by trial and experiment maketh known to the world, and to ourselves, what we are, as here by this trial the singular faith and obedience of Abraham was made manifest."⁶

Notice how that footnote cleared up this seemingly troublesome and seemingly erroneous sentence in Scripture which less informed or ignorant Catholics could easily misinterpret. Likewise, Fr. Berti's footnotes clear up any potential misunderstanding of the sentences of Valtorta under examination.

In the sentence corresponding to footnote #9 ("I not only [ask the Father] for help: I ask Him not to lead Me into temptation"), Fr. Berti explained what the Council of Trent says regarding the phrase of the Our Father "lead us not into temptation". We need to see what the Catechism of the Council of Trent defined for what it means regarding the possibility of God to lead someone into temptation in accordance with the phrase "lead us not into temptation". The Catechism of the Council of Trent relates:⁷

"Lead us not into Temptation"

We are said to be led into temptation when we yield to temptations. Now this happens in two ways.

First, we are led into temptation when, yielding to suggestion, we rush into that evil to which some one tempts us. No one is thus led into temptation by God; for to no one is God the author of sin, nay, He hates all who work iniquity; and accordingly we also read in St. James: Let no man, when he is tempted, say that he is tempted of God; for God is not a tempter of evils.

Secondly, we are said to be led into temptation by him who, although he himself does not tempt us nor cooperate in tempting us, yet is said to tempt because he does not prevent us from being tempted or from being overcome by temptations when he is able to prevent these things. In this manner God, indeed, suffers the good and the pious to be tempted, but does not leave them unsupported by His grace. [emphasis added]

The Council of Trent is explaining that God never leads anyone into temptation by means of God Himself being the author of what tempts us, but only by "not preventing us from being tempted or from being overcome by temptations when He is able to prevent these things." *That* is how God is able to "lead us into temptation" which we ask Him not to do in the phrase of the Our Father "lead us not into temptation".

Note also that the Catechism of the Council of Trent says that God suffers "the good and pious" to be thus tempted, and hence also God the Father allows Jesus to be thus tempted, as even Scripture relates (Hebrews 4:15, Matthew 4:1). Hence, in the sentence corresponding to footnote #9 (when Jesus says, "I not only [ask the Father] for help: I ask Him not to lead Me into temptation"), Jesus is showing us that by being true man, He had to have this humble disposition, this *humility* to always ask the Father for His Grace. Since Jesus was subject to temptations (*cf.* Hebrews 4:15, Matthew 4:1), it was only right – in His unparalleled humility – as man to ask the Father to be supported by His grace (even though His will would never consent to sin regardless). This is the same reason why the Humanity of Jesus asked the Father for His daily bread even though, since He as the Son of God was also God, He could theoretically provide this bread for

Himself. It was fitting for His humanity to ask the Father for His necessities as a man, including all types of grace, including those types of grace needed to reject temptations and endure trials/sufferings/afflictions.

Jesus always teaches and leads by example. Throughout Valtorta's writings, Jesus clearly specifies that His Mother and Him never sinned and are without any guilt and never had disordered passions since they were perfectly ordered to His soul and reason because in Christ and Our Lady there always was order and harmony between the flesh and the spirit. However, it was fitting for Him in His humanity to ask the Father for the grace to not be without the Father's grace in the midst of His trials. Jesus *can* pray "Lead Me not into temptation" in accordance with what the Council of Trent says about this phrase because in praying this Jesus is asking the Father to never allow His humanity to endure trials beyond the strength of His humanity. This is what Fr. Berti was relating in his footnote, when he writes:

Footnote #9: Re-read paragraph 2 and reflect that in and with the sixth petition of the "Our Father", we do not only ask God that He not tempt us to evil (see: Jn 1:13-15; Eccles 15:11-21; Prov 19:3; Rom 7:7-13; 1 Cor 10:11-13), but that He keep us from trials that are too heavy for us to bear, like the one God Himself subjected Abraham to (see: Gen 22:1-19), and like what Jesus Himself experienced in the Garden of Olives, which is recounted in these references (see: Mt 26:36-46; Mk 14:32-42; Lk 22:39-46; Heb 4:15 – 5:10).

Therefore, it is not heretical or against faith or morals for Valtorta to write that Jesus prayed to the Father to not lead Him into temptation. It is, in fact, very instructive and enlightening for us because it shows us Jesus' humility as a man. Jesus makes this even more clear in the *Poem* right after the phrase in question when He said:

Do you think that I, simply because am I, can do without the Father? Oh! no! I solemnly tell you that the Father grants everything to His Son, and that the Son receives everything from the Father. And I tell you that everything the Father will be asked for in My Name will be granted. [emphasis added]

Jesus is making it clear that He not only depends on the Father to be able to breathe and live, but also to have the grace to (1) endure and resist all temptations (both those that are ridiculously easy and require no effort to smash like Satan's unsuccessful temptations towards impurity and those temptations that are more difficult for the humanity of Christ such as what occurred in the Agony in the Garden of Gethsemane or perhaps things such as what prompted Christ to exclaim, "Get behind Me Satan" to Peter (Matthew 16:23)) and (2) to be able to endure all trials that the Father allows Him to undergo: even the Passion. This is not heretical, but remarkable!

In effect, Jesus saying, "I ask Him not to lead Me into temptation" could be interpreted as "I ask Him not to subject My human nature to trials [or suffering] that exceeds its capabilities." Jesus' human nature, being a creature (created by Himself), did have limitations (because He willed it to have limitations for He was a true man and like us in everything but sin (*cf.* Hebrews 4:15)), while His divine nature (which was not created, but is the Creator) did not have limitations.

Here is what Scripture states:

“For we have not a high priest, who cannot have compassion on our infirmities: but one **tempted in all things like as we are, without sin.” (Hebrews 4:15)**

If the Father allowed Jesus to be subjected to temptation in all things as Scripture relates, then it is not unfitting for Jesus to say, “I ask Him not to lead Me into temptation”. Remembering the definition of this phrase elicited in the Catechism of the Council of Trent, it becomes clear that it is not unfitting, not because He would ever sin, but because, in His unparalleled humility, “possessing the form of God, did not regard this equality as a prize to be seized upon, but humbled Himself, taking on the form of a slave, and, in becoming like men, He appeared as a simple man” (Philippians 2:5-8) asked God to not subject His human nature to trials (or suffering) that exceeds its capabilities. This is not only not heretical, but very profound and an enlightening instruction for us in humility!

Now we will move on to the other phrase under question which Anselmo particularly focused on: “We have everything in us: good and evil”. For this phrase, not only is Fr. Berti’s footnote available, but a shortened version of Fr. Berti’s footnote was provided in the English translation of *The Poem of the Man-God*. The footnote in the English version states:⁸

Chapters 5 and 6 of this book should be read once again. It will then be clear that the evil temptation did not come to Jesus from inside (see Hebrews 4:15) but from outside (see Matthew 4: 1-11; Mark 1: 12-13; Luke 4: 1-13). In such light, therefore, is to be understood the expression: “I am thirty years old...” What follows: “We have everything in us: good and evil... put it out” cannot be referred also to Jesus, but only to Judas and all the members of mankind stained by the original sin. Jesus' short speech aims at convincing Judas that man, if he wants, and asks God for help, can overcome all trials and temptations.

Regarding the above statement that Anselmo objected to which corresponds to Fr. Berti’s footnote #7, David Webster, M.Div., provides commentary which also refutes Anselmo’s objection:⁹

Jesus speaks of the need of completely subduing the flesh in order to belong to the supernatural. It is obvious that Judas falls into periods of depression and despair and has contemplated suicide, since Jesus brings up the subject. He explains that pride is the root of such a state. Jesus speaks of man as the highest order of creation, having been given the spirit of an angel and also the full beauty of animal.

Jesus speaks about His temptations and that He not only had not ever sinned but *He never wanted to sin*. He says the reason He came in human flesh was to prove to all the rest of humanity that if they do not want to sin they won’t either. [...] When Jesus says to Judas, “we” have everything within “us,” both good and evil, He cannot be including Himself if by evil He is referring to concupiscence, or actual *inordinate desires*. What Jesus meant by evil was only the potential for evil, or the mere desires of the flesh that only if allowed to reign over the spirit by a *willful choice*, become sin. [NOTE: Those who wish to use Jesus’ words here to

throw doubt on this revelation show no interest in understanding what Jesus was trying to teach Judas nor even to Jesus' own clarification. Jesus tells Judas plainly, "I *never wanted to sin.*" That is clearly a claim there was no evil within Him and that all temptation therefore had to be from without [external temptations rather than internal temptations (*cf.* Hebrews 4:15, Matthew 4:1)]. Jesus spoke to Judas, who was in need of knowing that His temptations were very real, *essentially* the very same as his own [except in Jesus He had only *external* temptations, not any temptations from His internal faculties], and that therefore Judas had no excuse for yielding to sin. It does not take the fallen human nature or concupiscence *within us* to be fatally tempted or to sin as [once innocent] Adam and Eve proved to us, nor does concupiscence within us prevent us (with the help of God) to live without conscious sin! Jesus absolutely did not want to define this issue in a way that would give Judas another excuse to think he was at some disadvantage in attaining a holy life [and therefore, give him any reason to use the excuse that what Jesus preaches is impossible and that the only reason why He is sinless is because He was never tempted]! Chapters 5 and 6 leave no doubt about this matter.]

Fr. Kevin Robinson, FSSPX, wrote:¹⁰

With Valtorta, as with the canonical Scriptures, there are difficulties that are easily resolved by distinction from Thomistic philosophy such as: general vs. specific, strictly vs. broadly, properly vs. allegorically, *in fieri vs. in facto esse, ad esse vs. ad melior esse, simpliciter vs. quodammodo.*

It is obvious from the context that when Jesus said, "We have everything in us: good and evil," He was referring to mankind in general (excluding the privileged two exempt from sin: Himself and His immaculately conceived Mother). He was speaking generally and not specifically. Therefore, this passage is not heretical or against faith or morals when properly understood and interpreted within its context. Anselmo is purposefully looking for faults and so he misinterprets it in the most negative way possible, while neglecting the relevant context in which it is clearly indicated that Jesus does not have evil in Him nor does He sin nor did He want to sin.

To illustrate what Anselmo is doing, let me give a poignant example of a similar case with a passage in the canonized Scriptures which can be easily interpreted incorrectly and is often misinterpreted and abused by opponents of Christianity.

A non-Catholic can walk up to you and ask, "Am I right in saying that if you are anathematized from the Church by your own free will, or if you are cut off from Christ, that you are in sin and risk going to hell?" You would respond, "Yes, that is correct." The non-Catholic could then say, "Ha ha! Well, look at the blasphemous statement your beloved St. Paul wrote in your supposedly infallible Scriptures: 'I have great sadness, and continual sorrow in my heart. **For I wished myself to be an anathema from Christ, for my brethren, who are my kinsmen according to the flesh.**' (Romans 9:2) He wished to be an anathema from Christ! That is a mortal sin and yet you claim this Scripture passage is infallibly pure!"

You would have to explain to him that you must understand that statement from St. Paul in the light of verses 38/9 of the previous chapter, and the rest of Chapters 9, 10, and 11. Within the context, it is 100% fine. You may need to consult some trustworthy scriptural commentaries to understand how, but objectively it is fact that it is not blasphemous.

In the same way, when Jesus was obviously referring to humanity in general when saying, “We have everything in us: good and evil”, Anselmo shouts “blasphemy”, but when you read the surrounding context, it is clear that Jesus was referring only to Judas and all the members of mankind stained by the original sin and that Jesus' short speech aims at convincing Judas that man, if he wants, and asks God for help, can overcome all trials and temptations and that Judas cannot use the excuse that rejecting temptation is impossible on account of the false idea (and Judas *did* try to use this excuse before) that “what Jesus preaches is impossible and the only reason why He is sinless is because He was never tempted.” In saying the phrase in question, Jesus was not ascribing evil to Himself specifically, but to humanity in general, of which He is a notable exception among them in being sinless but yet still tempted: “For we have not a high priest, who cannot have compassion on our infirmities: but one tempted in all things like as we are, without sin.” (Hebrews 4:15). “For in that, wherein He Himself hath suffered and been tempted, He is able to succor them also that are tempted.” (Hebrews 2:18)

It is important to remember that even before they committed the first sin and hence were still in the original state of justice and grace, Adam and Eve *still were able to be tempted*. Likewise, Jesus was sinless and did not have the effects of original sin (including a disordered concupiscence), but yet, He could still be tempted by *external* factors (not internal factors).

I could easily find a dozen or more quotes in the *Poem* where Christ specifically reiterates in His words that He is sinless. In one of His dialogues, Judas asks Jesus, “And have You never yielded [to temptation]?” Jesus replies, “No, never.”¹¹ (*Poem*, Volume 1, Chapter 69, pp. 358-359). In another instance:¹²

But among the many people who have approached Me, with hatred or with love, who can say that he saw Me commit sin? Who can say so truthfully? Where are the proofs to convince Me and those who believe in Me that I am a sinner? Which of the ten commandments have I infringed? Who can swear before the altar of God that he saw Me violate the Law and customs, the precepts, traditions, and prayers? Who amongst all men can make Me blush, having convinced Me of sin with definite proofs? No one can do that. No one amongst men, no one amongst angels. (*Poem*, Volume 4, Chapter 505, p. 577)

There is a very strong continual affirmation in Valtorta's work that Jesus never committed sin and is sinless.

Critics might object: “you shouldn't need to read the whole context to understand the meaning, significance, or nuance of individual phrases.”

If you are forbidden to account for relevant context to understand the meaning, significance, or nuance of individual phrases, then can you explain to me this phrase in the canonized Scriptures

without reference to any context? (Note that I will play a bit of the role of a “devil’s advocate” counter-objector in this example to make a point):

“O Daughter of Babylon, doomed to destruction, happy is he who repays you for what you have done to us – he who seizes your infants and dashes them against the rocks.” (Psalm 137:9)

Is this an advocating for infanticide? The same God who tells us to forgive our enemies and to not seek revenge is saying happy is the one who revenges himself by smashing innocent infants against rocks? Are you kidding?

I could go on with more examples, but I think it is quite clear that it is false that “you shouldn’t need to read the whole context to understand the meaning, significance, or nuance of individual phrases” considering that oftentimes you have to do so for the canonized Scriptures themselves and many other approved mystical writings.

The sentence under question in Valtorta’s work has a footnote and this footnote clears up any potential misunderstanding of less informed Catholics and shows how this passage is to be understood correctly and that there is nothing against faith, morals, truth, or Tradition in it. Someone could then object: “Fine, context is a legit consideration when interpreting individual phrases, but something shouldn’t be so confusing as to need a footnote.” That also is ridiculous because there are many Scripture passages that absolutely need footnotes. Open up any Catholic Bible and it is *loaded* with footnotes, and they are there for a reason!

The three Scripture passages quoted earlier (Romans 9:2, Psalm 137:9, Genesis 22:1) are excellent examples of why we need footnotes. Below are four more examples among many others that could be found that need footnotes (or for which footnotes are a very helpful and a desired component). Note that I will play a bit of the role of a “devil’s advocate” counter-objector in these examples to make a point:

“And about the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice, saying: Eli, Eli, lamma sabachthani? that is, My God, my God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?” (Matthew 27:46)

What in the world!? The only way to be forsaken by God is to commit sin. Christ was sinless! How in the world was He forsaken by God? Not only that, Jesus is both God and man due to the Hypostatic Union. How could He be forsaken by God?

“But of that day or hour no man knoweth, neither the angels in heaven, **nor the Son**, but the Father.” (Matthew 13:32)

How in the world can this be since Jesus knew everything being God? How can He not know the hour? As a side note, this matter is in so much need of a footnote or explanation that some Church Fathers (St. Athanasius, St. Gregory of Nazianzus, St. Cyril of Alexandria) did indeed ascribe ignorance to Christ’s soul. However, most other Church Fathers generally acquitted Christ’s human soul of ignorance and error (*Fundamentals of Catholic Dogma*, Book 3, Section 2, §23, #4). If

Church Fathers disagreed with each other about it, how much more is a footnote or explanation needed for lay faithful!

“For there is one God, and **one mediator** of God and men, the man Christ Jesus.” (1 Timothy 2:5)

It says here that there is **one** mediator between God and men: Jesus Christ. Therefore, it is blasphemous idolatry for Catholics to call Mary and saints mediators! And how absolutely absurd that they even call the mother of Jesus Mediatrix of All Grace! Catholics are going against the Scriptures! Obviously, they don't know how to interpret the Scriptures because it can't be written *any more simpler or plainer*: “**one** mediator.”

“And going a little further, He fell upon His face, praying, and saying: My Father, if it be possible, let this chalice pass from Me. Nevertheless not as I will, but as Thou wilt.” (Matthew 26:39)

Why would He pray that, when as God the Son and possessing the plenitude of all knowledge (omniscience), he *knows* that “if it be possible” is absolutely *not* possible? He even said it Himself multiple times earlier in the canonized Gospels that the prophecies foretell He will undergo His passion and the Scriptures *must* be fulfilled. “From that time Jesus began to shew to His disciples, that He **must** go to Jerusalem, and suffer many things from the ancients and scribes and chief priests, and be put to death, and the third day rise again.” (Matthew 16:23) There's no way around it. He knows. So why would He say “if it be possible let this pass from Me”? That seems contradictory.

“And God seeing that the wickedness of men was great on the earth, and that all the thought of their heart was bent upon evil at all times, **it repented Him that He had made man on the earth**. And being touched inwardly with sorrow of heart, He said: I will destroy man, whom I have created, from the face of the earth, from man even to beasts, from the creeping thing even to the fowls of the air, **for it repenteth Me that I have made them**.” (Genesis 6: 5-7)

How can God repent if He can not only never sin, but also never err nor make any mistakes? It is a well-known famous saying: “God never repents of His gifts.” Taken literally, the phrases above contradict Catholic dogma.

“And **the Lord sent a very evil spirit** between Abimelech and the inhabitants of Sichem: who began to detest him.” (Judges 9:23) “But the spirit of the Lord departed from Saul, and **an evil spirit from the Lord** troubled him.” (1 Samuel 16:14)

How can God send an evil spirit!?

Thus can you see the need for footnotes, scriptural commentaries, and explanations for difficult, troublesome, and seemingly contradictory passages in Scripture?

Therefore, it is completely hypocritical and a “double standard” for someone to (1) claim that a phrase or passage in Valtorta’s writings shouldn’t need a footnote to be understood correctly, (2) to claim “since the critic’s objection to this or that phrase was expressed in one or two sentences, you should be able to answer it in one or two sentences,” or (3) to claim every single statement of mystical writings needs to be 100% clear on face value without need of any explanation whatsoever to such a point that even the “village idiot” understands it.

I believe I have demonstrated above that if you analyze the statements Anselmo objects to in context and with the proper understanding, it is shown to be perfectly orthodox and that there is nothing against faith, morals, truth, or Tradition in them. Perhaps this is why Fr. Gabriel Roschini, Consultant of the Holy Office, stated in 1961 that the new critical second edition of Valtorta’s work “was not to be considered to be on the *Index*, because it was totally renewed, conformed in all to the original, and provided with notes that removed any doubt and which demonstrated the solidity and orthodoxy of the work.”¹³

Perhaps this is why Bishop Roman Danylak, S.T.L., J.U.D., stated: “I have studied *The Poem* in depth, not only in its English translation, but in the original Italian edition with the critical notes of Fr. Berti. I affirm their theological soundness, and I welcome the scholarship of Fr. Berti and his critical apparatus to the Italian edition of the works. I have further studied in their original Italian the *Quaderni* or *The Notebooks* of Maria Valtorta for the years from 1943 to 1950. And I want to affirm the theological orthodoxy of the writings of Maria Valtorta.”¹⁴

Perhaps next time Anselmo should do his homework and check the footnotes of Fr. Berti and other publications by theologians more learned than him and who have studied this work in greater depth (such as Fr. Roschini’s 395-page Mariological study of her writings) before attempting to discredit or slander this holy victim soul’s writings in a blog.

Going back to what Anselmo said, he writes: “We note here that Christ is presented as a man, who has within himself the seed of evil coming from Original Sin.” If you analyze the context (as well as read the footnote that emphasizes this context), it is apparent that Christ is not being presented as one who has within Himself the seed of evil coming from Original Sin. Like I said, He was speaking generally and not specifically. If a Catholic in ordinary conversation with another Catholic were to say something like, “Man is evil” or “Man is a sinner”, the listener would understand that the speaker would not be ascribing evil or sin to Jesus (who also is a man) because it is understood from the context that the person was speaking generally, and not specifically about every single last man or woman who has ever existed. This is the same use that Jesus was using in His conversation with Judas.

Anselmo writes:

Our Lord supposedly continued, describing the sexual temptations of every man, including himself:

“When you are hungry ... the simple thought of being without food will bring back the pleasant smell of food that makes your mouth water. So, the temptation is as strong as that

desire, Judas. Satan makes it more intense, more real and more alluring than the accomplished act. Further, the act satisfies and at times nauseates; whereas temptations do not subside, but like pruned trees, they grow stronger and stronger."

Right here Anselmo is making a flat-out **academic lie**. He makes two false claims that are clearly false when you actually read what is written in context.

False Claim #1: That Jesus is specifically describing "sexual temptations" (as opposed to the concept of temptations in general)

False Claim #2: That Jesus is ascribing this supposed description of sexual temptations to Himself

Here is the full original context of the statement Anselmo quoted and distorted (this is the official English translation):¹⁵

« And what about sins? »

« Everyone can be tempted. Sinners are only those who want to be such. »

« Have You ever sinned, Jesus? »

« No, I *never* wanted to sin. Not because I am the Son of the Father. But because I wanted and I want to prove to man that the Son of man did not sin because He did not want to sin, and that man can, if he wants, not sin. »

« Have You ever been tempted? »

« I am thirty years old, Judas. And I did not live in a cave upon a mountain. I lived amongst men. And if I had been in the loneliest place in the world, do you think temptations would not have come to Me? We have everything in us: good and evil [remember Fr. Berti's footnote and our discussion earlier]. We carry everything with us. And the breath of God blows on the good and vivifies it like a thurible of sweet-smelling holy incense. And Satan blows on evil, thus kindling a furious blazing fire. But diligent good will and constant prayer are like damp sand on the hellish fire: they suffocate it and put it out. »

« But if You have never sinned, how can You judge sinners? »

« I am a man and the Son of God. What I might ignore as a man and judge wrongly, I know and judge as the Son of God. After all!... Judas, answer this question of Mine. Will one who is hungry, suffer more by saying: "I will now sit down at the table" or by saying: "There is no food for me"? »

« He suffers more in the latter case, because the simple thought that he is without food, will bring back to him the pleasant smell of food and his bowels will be tortured by biting desire. »

« Right: temptation is as biting as that desire, Judas. Satan makes it more intense, more real, more alluring than any accomplished act. Further, the act satisfies, and at times nauseates; whereas temptations do not subside, but like pruned trees, they grow stronger and stronger. »

« And have You never yielded? »

« No, never. »

Nowhere in this entire chapter did a discussion of sexuality or sexual sins come up and therefore, it is clear from the context that Jesus was speaking about temptations in general and not specifically sexual temptations. The only one who was obsessively focusing on sexual temptations was Anselmo because he wants to read this into the text to try to misrepresent Valtorta's writings.

Not only was Jesus not speaking of sexual temptations specifically, but what Jesus described is a basic lesson on the nature of temptations in general which is not only true and real, but also not against faith or morals. Even if you were to apply what Jesus said about temptations to Himself, it is not against faith or morals if you actually intelligently look at what He said. In this quoted excerpt I quoted above, I summarize what Jesus said:

1. Jesus never sinned.
2. Jesus never wanted to sin.
3. Jesus was tempted. Even if He lived in a cave upon the mountain, He would be subject to temptations because of Satan (who seeks to tempt every man, particularly if he appears to be holy). [As a side note: the other reason Jesus would still be subject to temptation even if He lived a solitary life is because the Father purposefully allows Him to be subject to temptation to gain merit for the salvation of man and to provide us a living example of resisting temptation.]
4. Humanity in general (excluding Jesus and Mary) has the potential for good and evil in them. Humanity is subject to temptations.
5. Temptation can elicit responses in the person that is as biting as the hunger for food. Satan exasperates this by trying to make the desired end or object more alluring. Temptations have the propensity to grow stronger and stronger like one who is hungry who sees food that he cannot have.

Here is my commentary on the above excerpt and the above points: Nothing above is heretical or against faith or morals. In fact, it is quite instructive. First, let's examine what the Church teaches about temptations, merit to be derived from them, its effects, etc.

What is temptation? The Catechism says, "It is an incitement to sin which comes to us from the devil or the wicked or our passions." *It is an incitement.* If it incites to sin, then, that is a sign that *it*

is not a sin in itself. No, it is not a sin. Rather, it is a means to grow in justice and augment our merits by remaining faithful to the Law of the Lord.

Who does temptation come from? From the devil, the wicked, and the passions. It comes, then, from external factors and internal factors. Jesus could be tempted by the devil and the wicked (external factors), but He could not be tempted by His passions (internal factors), which were perfectly ordered to His soul and reason because in Christ there always was order and harmony between the flesh and the spirit. However, like I said, Jesus could still be tempted by external factors which Scripture itself even explicitly affirms in many places in many different books of Scripture.

Here is what Scripture states: “For we have not a high priest, who cannot have compassion on our infirmities: but one **tempted in all things like as we are**, without sin.” (Hebrews 4:15)

Jesus was both God and man. As God, He could not be tempted. As man, He could be tempted.

“Then Jesus was led by the spirit into the desert, **to be tempted by the devil.**” (Matthew 4:1)

Was Jesus subject to temptations to impurity? St. Paul affirms that Jesus was tempted. And St. Paul didn't say that He was tempted only in some things, but he says “in all things”, and this would include Satan trying to tempt Him (woefully unsuccessfully) with impurity (the type of temptation that is the most effective of his arsenal in ensnaring the vast majority of men).

Jesus' complete indifference to these temptations and absolute and perfect rejection of these temptations only infuriated Satan and increased Jesus' merits. When Satan tried to tempt Christ to impurity, because Christ was perfect in His will and inclinations, He wasn't affected or moved in any unholy way by such a temptation. It was like a rain drop against a granite wall. It splattered on the granite without causing any harm. It was like an ant trying to move a mountain.

Jesus has affirmed this many times in the dialogues in the *Poem of the Man-God* as well as in other dictations. Satan did try to tempt Him to impurity – as he did with all men – including innocent Adam and Eve – but it didn't do anything except arouse in Christ disgust over sin. As Christ said to Valtorta:¹⁶

I, Jesus, never consented to sin. I never felt disturbance because of sin. The only – remember this – the only disturbance that the stench of evil, being done around Me, could cause Me, was *[My] loathing, [My] disgust for a sin*. I preferred to draw near lepers dying of this disease rather than a healthy man covered with the scabs of vice and stinking of lust, especially if he was impenitent. My infinite love for sinners, who were to be saved, always made Me overcome the nausea caused by their spiritual stench. My Father, my Father alone, knows what sort of prolonged passion it was for Me to have to live enveloped in the whirlpool of temptations and the muddy wave of the sins streaming over the earth, doubling over and knocking down men. To have to live and see the shipwreck of so many, without being able to imprison the Beast, because the time to do so had not yet come. It still has not. And it heads

on, with its hellish breath fuming out, sowing its poison, and is followed by the ever-growing wave of ever-increasing sins.

I want to include an excerpt that Maria Valtorta wrote where Christ is addressing some priests who were discussing the vision where Satan unsuccessfully tries to tempt Him to impurity:¹⁷

[...] Finally, I would have wanted this because it would have witnessed to me concerning the state of your intellect, free from what creates confusion and haze for the truths so clearly visible in my pages demonstrating the constant perfection of Jesus Christ the God-Man in all the circumstances of his mortal life, in all his actions, words, and even silences. For there are silences which speak more than all words and teach more than all doctrine.

And *this* episode, at the *point* which you do not want to accept, calling it “inappropriate,” speaks to you precisely with the magnificent lesson of my silence, set against this impure part of Satanic temptation. My silence and my *complete* indifference to the titillations of Satan should have articulated for you the glorification of Christ. Instead, in your view, they articulated something else: the degradation of Christ. Christ's being tempted by impurity gives you the impression that Christ's dignity was damaged. You *are getting the attempt mixed up with the result*. A result would have meant damage. Glorification is the failure of the attempt. Weren't you able to consider this difference? You were not able to read the truth which was silenced, but clearly visible in the vision and the dictations.

To be able to read! Not all are able to do so, and do so with precision. To be able to, and to do so with precision, one must have sight purified of internal flames and external obscurity. If your spiritual sight – that is, your thought – is clear and pure, you see things as they are. In this case, involving Christ's glorification. But if your thought is obscured or enveloped in the smoky flames of human knowledge and the pride of having to be the only ones to know, or, worse, by impure fires, then it is *your* reflection that tinges what you contemplate with tones opposed to the real ones and turns a chaste, innocent episode into a sensual, sinful one. Place the episode once again far from *your* lights, though, *in its true light*, and it will go back to being what it was: witness to a heroic chastity and innocence which are dishonored in vain.

Now, if you cast the reflection of *your* humanity upon the episode because you cannot admit that someone may not feel internal disturbance over an external temptation, because you cannot admit that not even the Christ, the Holy One of God, may have been tempted from outside without undergoing internal disturbance, then it is you that are giving that coloring to the episode. But you must not say, then, that this episode testifies to an inappropriate disturbance in Christ, a disturbance which truly may not be admitted out of respect for the dignity of the Lord Jesus, since, in reality, in Christ there always was *order and harmony* between the flesh and the spirit, both of them always submissive and perfect in giving glory to their Creator. Say, then, if your opinion differs from what appears not at all doubtfully in the episode in question, that it is you that are casting upon this point in the episode what is churning in yourselves when you make “suppositions,” as you call other elements of yours, suppositions which *nothing in the episode authorizes or justifies any one to suppose or believe*.

So now we return to the fifth point of my summary of the excerpt Anselmo quoted. Namely:

Point #5: Jesus explained to Judas that temptation can elicit responses in the person that is as biting as the hunger for food. Satan exasperates this by trying to make the desired end or object more alluring. Temptations have the propensity to grow stronger and stronger like one who is hungry who sees food that he cannot have.

It is clear from Valtorta's writings that Jesus never experienced in Himself any of the "biting hunger" of temptations when it came to Satan's woefully unsuccessful temptations to impurity. This is because Jesus could be tempted by the devil and the wicked (external factors), but He could not be tempted by His passions (internal factors), which were perfectly ordered to His soul and reason because in Christ there always was order and harmony between the flesh and the spirit.

However, Jesus *did* experience suffering from some temptations (similar to the suffering stomach of a famished person wanting food) when it came to deprivations or desire for things that are ordered to a perfect body and soul that is free from the effects of original sin, such as hunger and Satan's temptation to turn stones into bread, the natural desire of the body to not want to undergo the torture of the Passion, suffering in missing His Mother, sorrow at the betrayal and calumny of relatives and friends, etc. Recall in Scripture that Satan tried to tempt Jesus to make stones bread after Jesus fasted for 40 days in the desert (Matthew 4:3). Most certainly Jesus was suffering keen hunger for food which Satan tried to allure Him to accept and this is not improper since even Adam and Eve would experience such hunger before the Fall in their sinless, perfect bodies if they had fasted for 40 days. It is possible that Satan's temptation increased Jesus' pain of hunger by making the bread appear even more pleasing and palatable, but Jesus resisted turning the stone into bread because it would be a sin for Him to do so for other reasons. Jesus' humanity and what St. Thomas Aquinas calls His "will of sensuality" did not want to undergo the torments of the Passion, as Scripture relates: "Then He saith to them: My soul is sorrowful even unto death... And going a little further, He fell upon His face, praying, and saying: 'My Father, if it be possible, let this chalice pass from Me.'" (Matthew 26: 38-39) Yet, Jesus obeyed the Father. Do you think that Jesus wasn't suffering temptation from Satan to abandon His mission to undergo the Passion (*cf.* Matthew 16: 22-23)?

St. Thomas Aquinas relates in his *Summa Theologica* (III, Q. 18, Art. 5, ad. 3):

Reply to Objection 3: Christ was at once comprehensor and wayfarer, inasmuch as He was enjoying God in His mind and had a passible body. Hence things repugnant to His natural will and to His sensitive appetite could happen to Him in His passible flesh.

St. Thomas Aquinas also relates (*Summa Theologica* III, Q. 18, Art. 5):

I answer that, as was said (AA[2],3), in Christ according to His human nature there is a twofold will, viz. the will of sensuality, which is called will by participation, and the rational will, whether considered after the manner of nature, or after the manner of reason. Now it was said above (Q[13], A[3], ad 1; Q[14], A[1], ad 2) that by a certain dispensation the Son of God before His Passion "allowed His flesh to do and suffer what belonged to it." And in like manner

He allowed all the powers of His soul to do what belonged to them. Now it is clear that the will of sensuality naturally shrinks from sensible pains and bodily hurt. In like manner, the will as nature turns from what is against nature and what is evil in itself, as death and the like; yet the will as reason may at time choose these things in relation to an end, as in a mere man the sensuality and the will absolutely considered shrink from burning, which, nevertheless, the will as reason may choose for the sake of health. Now it was the will of God that Christ should undergo pain, suffering, and death, not that these of themselves were willed by God, but for the sake of man's salvation. Hence it is plain that in His will of sensuality and in His rational will considered as nature, Christ could will what God did not; but in His will as reason He always willed the same as God, which appears from what He says (Mat. 26:39): "Not as I will, but as Thou wilt." For He willed in His reason that the Divine will should be fulfilled although He said that He willed something else by another will.

As St. Thomas Aquinas explained, when it came to non-sexual temptations, Jesus sometimes *did* experience what He (Jesus) described to Judas regarding temptations in general; namely, He sometimes felt in His humanity a type of suffering that was sometimes exasperated by temptations that pertained to things that can be experienced by a perfect body and soul not subject to the effects of original sin (i.e., hunger and Satan's temptation to turn stones into bread, the natural desire of the body to not want to undergo the torture of the Passion, suffering in missing His Mother, sorrow at the betrayal and calumny of relatives and friends, etc.) However, nowhere in that quoted excerpt that Anselmo quoted (nor anywhere else in Valtorta's work) does she ever write or indicate that Jesus suffered internal disturbances as a result of Satan's failed temptations to impurity. In fact, Jesus explicitly made it known that:¹⁸

I, Jesus, never consented to sin. I never felt disturbance because of sin. The only – remember this – the only disturbance that the stench of evil, being done around Me, could cause Me, was [My] loathing, [My] disgust for a sin. I preferred to draw near lepers dying of this disease rather than a healthy man covered with the scabs of vice and stinking of lust, especially if he was impenitent. My infinite love for sinners, who were to be saved, always made Me overcome the nausea caused by their spiritual stench. My Father, my Father alone, knows what sort of prolonged passion it was for Me to have to live enveloped in the whirlpool of temptations and the muddy wave of the sins streaming over the earth, doubling over and knocking down men. To have to live and see the shipwreck of so many, without being able to imprison the Beast, because the time to do so had not yet come. It still has not. And it heads on, with its hellish breath fuming out, sowing its poison, and is followed by the ever-growing wave of ever-increasing sins.

Therefore, Anselmo's whole argument and out-of-context quoting and baseless, biased insinuations are thoroughly refuted. In examining in its full context the incomplete quote Anselmo gave, it is very clear that these suppositions and claims of Anselmo are absolutely false:

False Claim #1: That in the excerpt Jesus is specifically describing "sexual temptations" (as opposed to the concept of temptations in general)

False Claim #2: That Jesus is ascribing this supposed description of sexual temptations to Himself

First, Jesus was not describing any specific type of temptation (sexual or non-sexual) in the excerpt in question. He was describing temptation *in general*. Second, Jesus was explaining to Judas that temptation can elicit responses or increase sufferings in a person that is as biting as the hunger for food and that Satan exasperates this by trying to make the desired end or object (or relief from suffering) more alluring. He also added that temptations have the propensity to grow stronger and stronger like one who is hungry who sees food that he cannot have. Jesus was not ascribing this common sense description of general temptation to Himself in particular, *but even if He was*, it would only extend to the types of exasperation of sufferings from temptations in Jesus that were possible in someone who has perfect order and harmony between the flesh and the spirit, namely, the types of reactions that St. Thomas Aquinas describes in *Summa Theologica* III, Q. 18, Art. 5, ad. 3, such as the natural desire of the body to not want to undergo the torture of the Passion. As far as sexual temptations, the only response Jesus indicated anywhere in Valtorta's writings that He had was *nausea, disgust over sin* (the same exact response that Adam and Eve would have had to temptations to impurity before they fell from grace while their reason still had dominion over their senses).

Therefore, the excerpt in question in Valtorta's writings is completely in line with faith and morals. Anselmo is basing his entire argument on misinterpretation of the text, academic lies, groundless suppositions, failure of distinctions, and lack of taking into account the relevant context. The only way honest readers could ever fall into believing his claims is if they (1) never read the full context themselves, (2) don't know the difference between temptation and consent and its effects, or (3) fail to critically think and question whether what he says is true. I'm pleased to properly examine what he says and expose his arguments, academic falsehoods, and suppositions for what they are. Continuing on, Anselmo wrote: "In this episode, there are three issues to consider, in addition to what has already been said on the impeccability of Christ, which made Him unable to be sexually tempted (see Article 2)."

Anselmo is ignorantly mixing up the attempt with the result and failing to make the distinction between external and internal temptations, and makes a logical fallacy by reasoning, "Since Jesus did not have disordered concupiscence, therefore Satan could not have given Him an external temptation/suggestion to impurity."

I have already thoroughly refuted his Article 2, and this refutation can be viewed [here](#). Just like the present article, in that article, Anselmo affirms that Jesus and Mary "were not and could not be tempted to do evil." It is true that God the Son and the Mother of God were/are without original sin. It is also true that God the Son and the Mother of God are free from the inclinations towards evil that afflicts the rest of the sons of Adam because in Our Lady and in Christ there always was and is *order and harmony* between the flesh and the spirit, both of them always submissive and perfect in giving glory to their Creator. However, Anselmo's statement "Therefore, they were not and could not be tempted to do evil" is false and this conclusion does not follow from the first two premises of his argument that he gives in his article to substantiate his theological error/heresy. He must distinguish between temptation and consent and its effects. Theologians who know how to do correct theology and who are honest and thorough always make sure to make proper distinctions in their writing.

What is temptation? The Catechism says, "It is an incitement to sin which comes to us from the devil or the wicked or our passions." *It is an incitement.* If it incites to sin, then, that is a sign that *it is not a sin in itself.* No, it is not a sin. Rather, it is a means to grow in justice and augment our merits by remaining faithful to the Law of the Lord.

Who does temptation come from? From the devil, the wicked, and the passions. It comes, then, from external factors and internal factors. Jesus could be tempted by the devil and the wicked (external factors), but He could not be tempted by His passions (internal factors), which were perfectly ordered to His soul and reason because in Christ there always was order and harmony between the flesh and the spirit. However, like I said, Jesus could still be tempted by external factors which Scripture itself even explicitly affirms in many places in many different books of Scripture.

Here is what Scripture states: "For we have not a high priest, who cannot have compassion on our infirmities: but one **tempted in all things like as we are**, without sin." (Hebrews 4:15)

St. Paul affirms that Jesus was tempted. And St. Paul didn't say that He was tempted only in some things, but he says "in all things".

Jesus was both God and man. As God, He could not be tempted. As man, He could be tempted. "Then Jesus was led by the spirit into the desert, **to be tempted by the devil.**" (Matthew 4:1)

It is important to remember that even before they committed the first sin and hence were still in the original state of justice and grace, Adam and Eve *still were able to be tempted.* Likewise, Jesus was sinless and did not have the effects of original sin (including a disordered concupiscence), but yet, He could still be tempted by *external* factors (not internal factors).

As St. Paul indicates, of course Satan could try to tempt Jesus also with temptations to impurity. However, because in Jesus there always was and is *order and harmony* between the flesh and the spirit, both of them always submissive and perfect in giving glory to their Creator, such temptations always miserably failed and to resist such temptations was ridiculously easy and required no effort on His part to smash. That is why Satan gave up on that type of temptation and proceeded to other ones with Jesus. Anselmo is ignorantly mixing up the attempt with the result and failing to make the distinction between external and internal temptations, and makes a logical fallacy by reasoning, "Since Jesus did not have disordered concupiscence, therefore Satan could not have given Him an external temptation/suggestion to impurity." Of course he could but he would never be able to succeed or cause even the most infinitesimal disturbance in Christ apart from the holy disgust Christ had for sin.

Anselmo writes an unsubstantiated falsehood when he writes in his earlier article, "Valtorta also affirms that, throughout their lives, both Our Lord Jesus Christ and the Blessed Virgin suffered terrible sexual temptations, which they had to overcome through hard struggle." Nowhere in Valtorta's text does she write or indicate that Jesus had a "hard struggle" against any temptations to impurity! The contrary is true and her writings actually show and demonstrate how Jesus gave a witness to a heroic chastity and innocence in which Christ was perfect in His will and inclinations

and wasn't affected or moved in any unholy way. She shows how temptations were like a rain drop against a granite wall. It splattered on the granite without causing any harm. It was like an ant trying to move a mountain.

My [article](#) goes into further detail demonstrating the above and not only refutes Anselmo's article as a whole, but exposes his false claims and arguments, his theological errors, his methodological flaws, his unsubstantiated, sweeping, generalizing statements, and brings to light indications of a bias, lack of proper scholarliness, and lack of objectivity.

Now continuing on with the analysis of his third article, Anselmo writes:

1. Valtorta distorts the Gospel. In none of the Four Gospels do we read about additional temptations other than the ones Our Lord experienced in the desert, let alone any words about sexual temptations.

Valtorta does not distort the Gospel. Archbishop Carinci (who was the Secretary of the Sacred Congregation of Rites from 1930 to 1960, in charge of investigating pre-Vatican II causes of beatification and canonization, visited Maria Valtorta multiple times, wrote dozens of letters back and forth with her which have been published, and analyzed her case in depth) praised Maria Valtorta and the *Poem*, writing in 1952:¹⁹

"There is nothing therein which is contrary to the Gospel. Rather, this work, a good complement to the Gospel, contributes towards a better understanding of its meaning... Our Lord's discourses do not contain anything which in any way might be contrary to His Spirit."

Anselmo presents as "proof" to his accusation/thesis/claim that Valtorta distorts the Gospel the fact that we do not read about additional temptations that Our Lord experienced in the desert other than the three mentioned in the canonized Gospels. There are two things to consider here:

1. Is it possible that Satan spoke additional words beyond the very few recorded in the canonized Gospels? Is it possible that in the temptations Christ suffered, that there were other aspects or nuances to them?

2. Could Satan have given Jesus an external temptation/suggestion to impurity?

I will start with addressing the first set of questions. Anselmo seems to suggest in his article that it is not possible that Satan spoke additional words beyond the very few recorded in the canonized Gospels and he seems to suggest in his article that it is not possible that in the temptations Christ suffered, that there were other aspects or nuances to them. I believe this is false and the evidence suggests otherwise.

If you were to accept Anselmo's presumption and argument at face value, the same exact argument Anselmo gave could be used to claim that Venerable Mary of Agreda "distorted the Gospels" in her *Mystical City of God* because she elaborated certain Gospel scenes and provided details that the canonized Gospels never presented. Moreover, her *Mystical City of God* has

proven to be highly scientifically and historically inaccurate in various points and has multiple contradictions to Scripture and yet it was promulgated by the Magisterium and two Popes granted an Apostolic Blessing to readers and promoters of it. Blessed Anne Catherine Emmerich and Therese Neumann could also be accused of the same thing by the theologically ignorant. Anselmo is writing as if the canonized Gospels provided every single tiny word and syllable ever spoken by Jesus and that therefore, if there is anything revealed to a mystic of historical visions that is not in the canonized Gospels, it must necessarily then be a distortion or false. This is naive and represents a faulty and immature understanding of Church teaching on Scripture, private revelations, and mystical writings.

Blessed Gabriel Allegra, O.F.M., a very learned and world-renowned exegete, theologian, and missionary priest in the Order of the Friars Minor, wrote:²⁰

The Gospels report the Discourses of the Lord not in their entirety, but in their substance; at times they only give the subject matter. All the Words of the Lord reported in the four Gospels can be conveniently recited in less than six hours. Now it is unthinkable that the Divine Master, following in the wake of the prophets and even of His contemporary rabbis, had not spoken at greater length as regards the manner of structuring His Discourses. What St. John says at the end of his Gospel ("the whole world could not contain the books to be written!" – John 21:25), is valid not only for the actions of the Lord, but also for His Words.

The Apostles themselves admitted they did not narrate the entirety: "This is that disciple who giveth testimony of these things, and hath written these things; and we know that his testimony is true. *But there are also many other things which Jesus did; which, if they were written every one, the world itself, I think, would not be able to contain the books that should be written.*" (John 21: 24-25) Also: "Many other signs also did Jesus in the sight of His disciples, *which are not written in this book.*" (John 20:30)

The infallible Scriptures contradict Anselmo's groundless presumptions when St. Paul writes: "For we have not a high priest, who cannot have compassion on our infirmities: but one **tempted in all things like as we are**, without sin." (Hebrews 4:15) St. Paul affirms that Jesus was tempted. And St. Paul didn't say that He was tempted only in some things, but he says "in all things". It is obvious to any Scripture scholar worth his salt that Jesus was most likely tempted with more temptations than the limited few mentioned in the canonized Gospels just as Jesus said more words and performed more miracles than the relatively few recorded in the canonized Gospels (*cf.* John 21: 24-25, John 20:30)

To illustrate this last point, I want to include here a dictation which Maria Valtorta reports Our Lord gave her on this subject:²¹

When I reveal to you unknown episodes in My public life, I already hear the chorus of difficult doctors saying, "But this fact is not mentioned in the Gospels. How can she say, 'I saw this?'" I respond to them with the words of the Gospels.

“And Jesus passed through all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues, preaching the Gospel of the Kingdom, and healing all the weakness and illnesses,” Matthew says. (Matthew 4:23, 9:35)

And, in addition: “Go and tell John what you see and hear: the blind see, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead rise again, and the good news is announced to the poor.” (Matthew 11:4-5, Luke 7:22)

And, in addition: “Woe to you, Chorazin; woe to you, Bethsaida – for if in Tyre and Sidon the miracles worked in your midst had taken place, for a long time now they would have been doing penance in sackcloth and ashes... And you, Capernaum – will you be exalted to Heaven? You will descend to hell, for if in Sodom the miracles worked in you had taken place, it might still exist.” (Matthew 11:20-24, Luke 10: 13-15)

And Mark: “... And many people followed Him from Galilee, Judah, Idumaea, and beyond the Jordan. Many people, having heard what He was doing, also came to Him from the surroundings of Tyre and Sidon...” (Mark 3:7-8)

And Luke: “Jesus went through the cities and villages, preaching and announcing the good news and the Kingdom of God, and with Him were the twelve and some women who had been freed from evil spirits and infirmities.” (Luke 8:1-3)

And My John: “After this, Jesus went beyond the Sea of Galilee, and a great crowd followed Him because they saw the miracles worked by Him among the sick.” (John 6:1-2)

And since John was present at all the miracles of whatever nature – which I worked for three years – the beloved one bears Me this unlimited witness: “This is the disciple who has seen these things and has written them. We know that his testimony is true. There are, moreover, other things done by Jesus, and, if they were to be written one by one, I believe the world could not contain the books which would have to be written.” (John 21:24-25)

So? What do the doctors of quibbling say now?

If My goodness – to relieve a woman who loves Me and bears My cross for you... to awaken you from the lethargy in which you are dying – makes known episodes in this ministry, would you like to turn this into a reproach for that goodness?

You won't indeed want to think that in three years I worked the few miracles narrated? You won't think that the few women mentioned were the only ones healed, or the few miracles mentioned were the only ones worked? If the shadow of Peter served to heal (Acts 5:14-15), what must *My* shadow have done? Or *My* breath? Or *My* glance? Remember the woman suffering from bleeding: “If I manage to touch the hem of His robe, I shall be healed.” (Matthew 9:20-22, Mark 5:25-29, Luke 8: 43-48) And so it was.

The power of miracles issued from Me continually. I had come to take people to God and open the dikes of Love, closed by the day of sin. Centuries of love expanded like waves over

the little world of Palestine. [This was] all God's love for man, which could finally expand as He desired, to redeem men first with Love, rather than with Blood.

What is written in the canonized Gospels about Jesus' temptations in the desert does not contradict what Valtorta wrote nor did the canonized Gospels ever claim or state that there were no more words of Satan spoken in his temptations than what is briefly recorded and summarized in the canonized Gospels. Apparently, according to Valtorta, the single phrase in Scripture "And the devil said to him: If thou be the Son of God, say to this stone that it be made bread" (Luke 4:3) not only included a temptation to perform a miracle to make a stone bread, but also included an *unsuccessful* attempt by Satan to first tempt Jesus to a desire of impurity (which is the most common and the most ordinary progression of temptation that Satan takes with souls). Does Anselmo honestly think that Satan was some kind of a prude and would refuse to try to tempt the man he suspects is the Christ to impurity? To think so is rather naive! St. Paul says that Christ was "tempted in all things" (Hebrews 4:15) and hence temptations to impurity were also thrown at Him, but it was completely unsuccessful, like an ant trying to move a mountain. How was Jesus moved by such temptations? He explains it unambiguously and very clearly to Valtorta:²²

I, Jesus, never consented to sin. I never felt disturbance because of sin. The only – remember this – the only disturbance that the stench of evil, being done around Me, could cause Me, was [My] loathing, [My] disgust for a sin. I preferred to draw near lepers dying of this disease rather than a healthy man covered with the scabs of vice and stinking of lust, especially if he was impenitent. My infinite love for sinners, who were to be saved, always made Me overcome the nausea caused by their spiritual stench. My Father, my Father alone, knows what sort of prolonged passion it was for Me to have to live enveloped in the whirlpool of temptations and the muddy wave of the sins streaming over the earth, doubling over and knocking down men. To have to live and see the shipwreck of so many, without being able to imprison the Beast, because the time to do so had not yet come. It still has not. And it heads on, with its hellish breath fuming out, sowing its poison, and is followed by the ever-growing wave of ever-increasing sins.

I repeat here what Our Lord replied to some priests of Valtorta's day who were having discussions on this subject:²³

Is Paul perhaps a heretic in saying in his epistle that I was "tempted in every way, tested in every way, as a man among men," with flesh, blood, intellect, and will, like you? Was Paul a heretic in writing to the Philippians, "Have the same sentiments in yourselves as Christ Jesus, who, possessing the form of God, did not regard this equality as a prize to be seized upon, but humbled Himself, taking on the form of a slave, and, in becoming like men, He appeared as a simple man"? [Hebrews 4:15; Philippians 2:5-8] Don't you think that in this "humbling Himself" of the Son of God there are found not only the opprobrious death on the cross, but also the wretchedness of being treated as a man by Satan and the world, that assailed Me with an ongoing siege and surrounded Me with temptations, bringing Me suffering? Don't you think that great beauty and justice reside in not regarding my equality with God as a prize to be held on to, but wanting to be Man, the Man of reparation, the Man of expiation, the Man of redemption, treated as a man and showing Himself to be God by daily acts of heroism?

[...]

I have replied to you with the words of my apostles, joined to mine, for you find it hard to accept the words which [Maria Valtorta] conveys to you as holy. You cannot find it hard to accept those of my apostles; they cannot prompt doubts as to their supernatural authority. You read them at the altar, comment on them from pulpits, and teach them from magisterial chairs. You thus regard them as words of truth.

And these words support my thesis, not yours – that, since I was Man, it was natural for Me to be tempted; that temptation is not inappropriate for Christ; that Christ does not emerge degraded therefrom, but even more glorified, for the high priest, who had to feel compassion for the weak and those led astray, having been tested, like them, and having been surrounded by infirmity, like them, was able to keep Himself holy, innocent, immaculate, and separate from sinners as regarded imitating them in evil, but remained their merciful Brother in order to say to all, “Come to Me, you that are afflicted and weary, and I will console you.”

[...]

Tell me, you that are scandalized by reading that I suffered *that* temptation, did I perhaps damage my divine and human Perfection because I was approached by the Tempter? What was altered in Me? What was corrupted? Nothing. Not even the most fleeting thought.

Continuing on, Anselmo writes:

2. She tries to convince the reader to accept these sexual temptations of Christ by recalling the final words of the *Our Father*, which Jesus taught to His disciples when they asked Him how they should pray. In it He said *to lead us not into temptation*, as if the “us” in the petition also included Christ. The Lord's Prayer contains petitions appropriate for men, but not for Christ, who is God and man.

This is just a repeat of the same argument Anselmo gave earlier in this same article which I already analyzed in depth and refuted. Quoting the theological commentary of Fr. Corrado Berti, O.S.M., for the passage in question and what the Catechism of the Council of Trent said regarding what is meant by the phrase “Lead us not into temptation” in the Our Father, I already refuted Anselmo’s incomplete and erroneous theological analysis, his false presumptions and suppositions, and failure of definitions and distinctions regarding this phrase. I already showed how what Valtorta actually wrote is not only not heretical or against faith or morals, but very profound and an enlightening instruction for us in the humility of the humanity of Jesus, who depended on the Father for everything even though as the Son of God and as the Son of Man, He would never commit sin.

Anselmo wrote:

3. Throughout the work of Valtorta one observes a sinuous intent to make Christ appear as a mere man, subject to the miseries of man – including that of the flesh – at the expense of His Divinity.

There is no sinuous intent to make Christ appear as a mere man at all! Maria Valtorta's work contains both a very strong affirmation of the divinity of Christ as well as His humanity. In fact, I wish to refer my readers to someone of much greater learning and authority (and I daresay, greater balanced open-mindedness) who affirmed the very contrary to Anselmo's rash and groundless accusation:

Camillo Corsánego (1891-1963) was national president of Catholic Action in Italy, Dean of the Consistorial Lawyers, and a professor at the Pontifical Lateran University in Rome, and he wrote:²⁴

Throughout my life, by now fairly long, I have read a very large number of works in apologetics, hagiography [saints' lives], theology, and biblical criticism; however, I have never found such a body of knowledge, art, devotion, and adherence to the traditional teachings of the Church, as in Miss Maria Valtorta's work on the Gospels.

Having read those numerous pages attentively and repeatedly, I must in all conscience declare that with respect to the woman who wrote them only two hypotheses can be made: a) either she was talented like Manzoni or Shakespeare, and her scriptural and theological learning and her knowledge of the Holy Places were perfect, at any rate superior to those of anyone alive in Italy today; b) or else "*digitus Dei est hic*" ["*God's finger is here*"].

Obedient as I am (and as, with God's grace, I intend being all my life) to the supreme and infallible Magisterium of the Church, I will never dare take its place. Yet, as a humble Christian, I profess that I think the publication of this work will help to take many souls back to God, and will arouse in the modern world an apologetic interest and a leavening of Christian life comparable only to the effects of the private revelation [of the Sacred Heart] to St. Marie Alacoque.

It has been said that the Work lowers the adorable Person of the Saviour. Nothing could be more wrong: Christians, I believe, usually after having affirmed faith in Jesus Christ, God and man, always forget to consider the humanity of the Incarnate Word, Whom He is regarded as the true God, but rarely as true Man, frustrating the invitation to many ways of sanctification, which is offered to us by the exemplary human life of the Son of God.

Anyone who reads [even] a limited number of these wonderful pages, literally perfect, if he has a mind free of prejudices, cannot not draw from them the fruits of Christian elevation.

Bishop John Venancio was the bishop of Fatima from 1954 to 1972, was a learned theologian who taught dogmatic theology at a pontifical university in Rome, and was the one who provided important evidence about the Third Secret of Fatima by holding the envelope of the Third Secret

up to the light to observe how many lines of text and sheets of paper it was before handing it over to others, as described [in this Fatima.org article](#). The famous John Haffert, who was the co-founder and former head of the Blue Army of Our Lady of Fatima of 25 million members, in his booklet *That Wonderful Poem!* testifies to Bishop John Venancio's support of the *Poem*:²⁵

I happened to be in Rome with the Most Rev. John Venancio, the Bishop of Fatima, when he sought out a special bookstore to purchase the ten volumes of the Italian edition [of the *Poem of the Man-God*]. It had been recommended by a highly esteemed friend in Paris, the celebrated author-editor, Abbé André Richard.

Years later, after Bishop Venancio retired, whenever I visited him our conversation seemed to turn to the *Poem*. In his last years *the Bishop read from it every day*. He must have read all ten volumes over and over. *I began to wonder what could be so special about it*. The Bishop was widely read and had a sizable library. He had been a professor of dogmatic theology in Rome before becoming the Bishop of Fatima. Yet now, when he had ample time to read anything he wished, he seemed to spend all his time on this one book... Having struggled – like millions before me – with the mystery of the dual nature of Jesus, I said one day to Bishop Venancio, before I myself had begun to read the *Poem*: "Does it help you to understand Jesus at once as God and man?"

The holy bishop (and let it be remembered he was a learned theologian who had taught dogmatic theology at the university in Rome) seemed to be looking into the Divine Light, as he sighed: "*Oh, more and more!*"



Above: Most Rev. John Venancio, Bishop of Fatima, with John Haffert.

So we have a learned theologian who taught dogmatic theology at a university in Rome (Bishop Venancio) and a pre-Vatican II national president of Catholic Action in Italy, Dean of the Consistorial Lawyers, and a professor at the Pontifical Lateran University in Rome (Camillo Corsánego) who affirm that the representation of both Jesus' humanity and divinity in Valtorta's

writings are not only completely in line with faith, morals, Tradition, Scripture, and dogma, but above-average insight into this mystery and tremendously helpful for souls.

Anselmo's affirmation that Valtorta's work "make[s] Christ appear as a mere man, subject to the miseries of man – including that of the flesh – at the expense of His Divinity" is without foundation, and every single point he has ever brought up in his articles to try to substantiate this accusation has been thoroughly refuted in my refutations. Therefore, this statement of Anselmo's stands refuted.

As far as Anselmo's phrase "subject to the miseries of man – including that of the flesh", it is unclear from this ambiguous phrase what Anselmo was trying to insinuate. However, I advise him to actually look up what the Catholic Church teaches regarding the dynamics of the humanity of Jesus instead of making rash, ambiguous suppositions and accusations based on his theological ignorance and incompetency, such as when St. Thomas Aquinas relates in his *Summa Theologica* (III, Q. 18, Art. 5, ad. 3):

Reply to Objection 3: Christ was at once comprehensor and wayfarer, inasmuch as He was enjoying God in His mind and had a passible body. Hence things repugnant to His natural will and to His sensitive appetite could happen to Him in His passible flesh.

See also: *Summa Theologica* III, Q. 18, Art. 5
Anselmo wrote, referring to Valtorta's work:

... the tortuous and even at times sarcastic style is an artifice generally employed by enemies of Christ. Mockery is evident, under the guise of sentimental fantasy and sickly sweetness.

We have here three aspects to Anselmo's statement:

1. Anselmo is making a subjective judgement about Valtorta's work that is contradicted by many very learned and balanced theologians who have expressed a contrary judgement to the one Anselmo posits. Anselmo's accusations and subjective opinions are not supported by relevant and irrefutable proofs, let alone by clear, unmistakable moral and theological criteria, as is shown throughout my refutations of all of his articles.
2. Anselmo is making a sweeping generalizing statement. The specific examples he brings up to try to "prove" his unfounded thesis fails to support his thesis when examined properly. If Anselmo de la Cruz was prosecuting Valtorta's work in court, the judge would have grounds to declare mistrial. Anselmo makes statements about Valtorta's text that are factually incorrect and cannot be substantiated when the text is examined closely. An examination of the actual text shows that these affirmations are false and their affirmation in his article can be classified as academic dishonesty. Anselmo not only often leaves out relevant context in his articles, but also fails to include the necessary theological principles and distinctions necessary to correctly analyze what Valtorta actually wrote. Thus, his article twists and misrepresents Valtorta's writings and is not a fair and valid objective analysis of what is actually written. When her writings are read in their proper context and all of the aspects are properly considered, the passages are always morally and

theologically correct, and have been declared as such by many competent theologians and ecclesiastical authorities who are far more learned than Anselmo and who employ an honest, thorough, and correct methodology in analyzing her work, with a scholarly level leagues above Anselmo's article.

3. Despite the fact that it is clear from the original handwritten manuscripts and by numerous trustworthy eyewitnesses including theologians, bishops, priests, nuns, family members, her live-in companion, and university-educated laymen that Maria Valtorta is the sole author of her work, without utilizing outside help, Anselmo is making a rash supposition that enemies of the Church are behind the writing up of her work without providing any evidence to back up his accusations and suppositions except for his deficient theological analysis, his unsubstantiated false claims and arguments, his methodological flaws, and his obvious bias and lack of objectivity. According to Catholic theology and the teaching of the Church, charity demands that you don't make accusations unless you have undeniable proof or some high level of probability, and Anselmo lacks this proof. Therefore, his suppositions just make him come off as unnecessarily and unhealthily paranoid and presumptuous, not to mention, possibly guilty of objective acts against justice, including calumny. In charity, I presume that he is of good will and that his "witch hunt" against Valtorta is merely because of wrong information, lack of research, or perhaps innocent and unintended intellectual blindness or incompetency. We will see. One must be mature, open-minded, and interested in the truth to find the truth, but unfortunately, many people are not, including among traditional Catholics.

In order to counterbalance Anselmo's claim that the style is "tortuous" and "sarcastic", I want to give the opinions of leading authorities and theologians who have studied Valtorta's work in depth who give a contrary conclusion.

Archbishop Alfonso Carinci, Secretary of the Sacred Congregation of Rites from 1930 to 1960, fully approved Maria Valtorta and the *Poem*, writing in 1952: "There is nothing therein which is contrary to the Gospel. Rather, this work, a good complement to the Gospel, contributes towards a better understanding of its meaning... Our Lord's discourses do not contain anything which in any way might be contrary to His Spirit."²⁶

Archbishop Carinci also stated: "...it seems impossible to me that a woman of a very ordinary theological culture, and unprovided with any book useful to that end, had been able on her own to write with such exactness pages so sublime. [...] Judging from the good one experiences in reading it [i.e., *The Poem*], I am of the humble opinion that this Work, once published, could bring so many souls to the Lord: sinners to conversion and the good to a more fervent and diligent life. [...] While the immoral press invades the world and exhibitions corrupt youth, one comes spontaneously to thank the Lord for having given us, by means of this suffering woman, nailed to a bed, a Work of such literary beauty, so doctrinally and spiritually lofty, accessible and profound, drawing one to read it and capable of being reproduced in cinematic productions and sacred theater."²⁷

If the conversations in the *Poem* were "tortuous" and "sarcastic" as Anselmo gratuitously claimed, I very much doubt the pre-Vatican II Secretary of the Sacred Congregation of Rites (of distinguished repute) would call this book "so sublime" and affirm "Our Lord's discourses do not

contain anything which in any way might be contrary to His Spirit”, referring to it as “a Work of such literary beauty, so doctrinally and spiritually lofty, accessible and profound.”

Nor would the illustrious Mariologist, Fr. Gabriel M. Roschini, O.S.M. (considered by many to be one of the greatest and most learned Mariologists who ever lived), write about the *Poem*:²⁸

No other Marian writings, not even the sum total of everything I have read and studied, were able to give me as clear, as lively, as complete, as luminous, or as fascinating an image, both simple **and sublime**, of Mary, God's Masterpiece. [emphasis added]

If the writing in the *Poem* was “tortuous” and “sarcastic” as Anselmo gratuitously claimed, I very much doubt Msgr. Hugo Lattanzi, Professor of Fundamental Theology at the Lateran Pontifical University in Rome, would write:²⁹

...these are truly splendid pages both in thought and in form; descriptions of psychological situations worthy of Shakespeare, dialogues conducted in a Socratic manner worthy of Plato, and descriptions of nature and the environment worthy of the most imaginative writer.

Or, as Msgr. Maurice Raffa, Director of the International Center of Comparison and Synthesis, wrote:³⁰

...I found therein incomparable riches...Wanting to express a judgment on its intrinsic and aesthetic value, I point out that to write just one of the many volumes composing the work, it would need an author (who today does not exist) who would be at once a great poet, an able biblical scholar, a profound theologian, an expert in archaeology and topography, and a profound connoisseur of human psychology.

If the writing in the *Poem* was “tortuous” and “sarcastic” as Anselmo gratuitously claimed, I very much doubt Camillo Corsánego, former national president of Catholic Action in Italy, Dean of the Consistorial Lawyers, and a professor at the Pontifical Lateran University in Rome, would write:³¹

Throughout my life, by now fairly long, I have read a very large number of works in apologetics, hagiography [saints' lives], theology, and biblical criticism; however, I have never found such a body of knowledge, art, devotion, and adherence to the traditional teachings of the Church, as in Miss Maria Valtorta's work on the Gospels...Having read those numerous pages attentively and repeatedly, I must in all conscience declare that with respect to the woman who wrote them only two hypotheses can be made: a) either she was talented like Manzoni or Shakespeare, and her scriptural and theological learning and her knowledge of the Holy Places were perfect, at any rate superior to those of anyone alive in Italy today; b) or else “*digitus Dei est hic*” [“*God's finger is here*”]. Obedient as I am (and as, with God's grace, I intend being all my life) to the supreme and infallible Magisterium of the Church, I will never dare take its place. Yet, as a humble Christian, I profess that I think the publication of this work will help to take many souls back to God, and will arouse in the modern world an apologetic interest and a leavening of Christian life comparable only to the effects of the private revelation [of the Sacred Heart] to St. Marie Alacoque. It has been said that the Work

lowers the adorable Person of the Saviour. Nothing could be more wrong: Christians, I believe, usually after having affirmed faith in Jesus Christ, God and man, always forget to consider the humanity of the Incarnate Word, Whom He is regarded as the true God, but rarely as true Man, frustrating the invitation to many ways of sanctification, which is offered to us by the exemplary human life of the Son of God. Anyone who reads [even] a limited number of these wonderful pages, literally perfect, if he has a mind free of prejudices, cannot not draw from them the fruits of Christian elevation.

Cardinal Giuseppe Siri praised the manuscript of the *Poem* that he read in 1956, stating in a signed letter on March 6, 1956:³²

"...my impression from reading the typescript is excellent... I would willingly read some more. A larger volume would further substantiate a judgment, even if it be as modest as mine."

I now end with a quote from a professor who read the *Poem* in depth who employs an honest, thorough, and correct methodology in analyzing her work and hence displays quite a bit more credibility than Anselmo.

Prof. Leo A. Brodeur, M.A., Lèsl., Ph.D., H.Sc.D., wrote:³³

Theologically: Valtorta's writings exude a great, all-encompassing breadth of knowledge and a clear-mindedness and loftiness of concepts worthy of the greatest theologians, of the Church Fathers, and of the greatest mystics... Furthermore, she had never studied philosophy or theology either at school or on her own. The only education she had received was the average education of upper-middle class Italian girls of the early 1900s. How could she have composed her lofty writings?

Spiritually: Valtorta's writings are outstandingly practical, drawing the reader to practice the Faith in everyday life. They are not in the least dry theological textbooks. They bring spirituality alive, they bring it home, to the reader's heart, by showing us Jesus intimately, personally. Many a reader has exclaimed that reading *The Poem* is like living with Jesus as the apostles did. As depicted in *The Poem*, His character – the perfect blend of warmth and reason, of mystical outlook and practical attentions, of holiness and love – has helped many a reader to reform a life of sin, to increase love for our Lord, to become holier. Jesus is portrayed in *The Poem* as in perhaps no other mystical work. It is quite doubtful that Valtorta could have produced such an uplifting portrait on her own, when she was the first to admit her "nothingness" and ascribed everything to Jesus.

Even scientifically: Valtorta's *The Poem of the Man-God* exhibits an uncanny accuracy with regard to the archeology, botany, geography, geology, mineralogy, and topography of Palestine in Jesus' time, an accuracy commended by various experts in those fields. Yet, given her lack of education and reading in those fields, and given the fact that she never traveled to Palestine, how could she have given accurate descriptions of places she never went to and never read about in any detail?

Finally, from the literary point of view: Valtorta wrote on the spur of the moment, without preliminary plans, without rough drafts. She wrote fast – over 10,000 handwritten pages in three years – with great consistency of thought and purpose, in masterly Italian combining the highest achievements of the Florentine style of the 1930s with the vividness and spontaneity of common folks when they are quoted. Few writers throughout the history of humanity have been that good and that prolific in that short a period of time; perhaps none of these wrote without rough drafts. Yet, she was bedridden and subjected to frequent physiological crises and down-to-earth interruptions by her relatives or neighbors. How then could she have written so well, when most writers crave solitude to be able to write?

When one ponders the theological and spiritual loftiness of Maria Valtorta's *The Poem of the Man-God*, as well as its scientific and literary remarkableness, in the light of her average education, lack of health, and in the light of her speed, accuracy and greatness of achievement, how could one seriously entertain the thought that she accomplished all that without supernatural help? When one also ponders her personal lifestyle as a generous victim soul who practiced the virtues heroically, when one also ponders the sufferings which she daily offered to the Lord, then with all due respect, how could [anyone] casually dismiss her claims to supernatural visions and dictations without a full-fledged investigation into her case?

Now, returning to what Anselmo wrote:

... the tortuous and even at times sarcastic style is an artifice generally employed by enemies of Christ. Mockery is evident, under the guise of sentimental fantasy and sickly sweetness.

Dozens of bishops, renowned theologians, professors, and hundreds of thousands of Catholics have found her work absolutely phenomenal. As Archbishop Nuncio Apostolic Monsignor Pier Giacomo De Nicolò said in his homily on October 15, 2011, for the 50th anniversary of Maria Valtorta's death:³⁴

Our docile and humble response to the engaging impulse of the Spirit of the Lord has brought us here today, in this glorious Basilica of the Most Holy Annunciation, which has been the Marian heart of Florence for centuries, to deepen our Christian vocation through prayer. This happy occasion is presented to us on the 50th anniversary of the day Maria Valtorta was born into Heaven, whose hidden suffering offered to the Divine Spouse, brought to perfect completion, the earthly and eternal fruit of salvation to many people over the decades...

...the work of Maria Valtorta – which is free from error of doctrine and morals as noted by multiple parties – recognizes for more than half a century, a wide and silent circulation among the faithful (translated in about 30 different languages) of every social class throughout the world and without any publicity in particular. The grandeur, magnificence, and wisdom of the content has attracted numerous good fruits and conversions: even people immersed in the whirlwind of life and far from the Christian Faith, but nevertheless yearning to get in touch with solid truths, have opened their hearts to a meeting with the Absolute, with God-Love, and they have found full confirmation of the 2,000-year-old teaching of the Church.

They have not found her work “sentimental fantasy” or “sickly sweetness”. Nor have they or I found any mockery. Anselmo has yet to validly and objectively demonstrate these subjective accusations to be true. He has heretofore only shown deficient theological analysis, methodological flaws, unsubstantiated, sweeping, generalizing statements, and evidence of bias, lack of proper scholarliness, and lack of objectivity.

Now we go to read Anselmo’s sole supposed “proof” that “mockery is evident, under the guise of sentimental fantasy and sickly sweetness” in Valtorta’s writings, when Anselmo writes:

For example, for Christ to call the Blessed Virgin – “mummy” (in the English translation) and “*mamacita*” in the Spanish – is at the least tasteless and lacking in due reverence. We repeat, it is a kind of mockery of Our Lord and Our Lady.

The groundlessness, subjectivity, and ignorance of language in this argument of Anselmo’s is almost laughable! Are you serious?

First off, Anselmo fails to make the *very* relevant and necessary qualifier that in the English translation it is the 9-month-year-old infant Jesus who says “Mummy” to His Mother in the scene where the Holy Family has to flee to Egypt to avoid Herod’s soldiers. Without qualifying that it is a 9-month-year-old infant Jesus who is saying this, readers could easily be misled to think that it is the adult Jesus who is calling His Mother “mummy”, which, in fact, never happens in her work, since, in the English translation, the adolescent and adult Jesus always refers to her as “Mother”. If I was a vehement anti-Valtorta critic and was writing an anti-Valtorta article, I would at least have the integrity and honesty to make this very relevant and important qualifier, lest I mislead my readers, but it seems that Anselmo “conveniently” leaves this relevant fact out.

Now, let’s analyze the one scene in the English translation where the 9-month-year-old infant Jesus refers to His Mother with the word “mummy”. Here is the relevant passage:³⁵

Mary bends down and in that position, looking through the cradle, as if for protection, she smiles and cries at the same time, while the Child prattles, uttering words which are not the words of all little children; among them the word « Mummy » is repeated very clearly. He looks at her, surprised to see her crying. He stretches one little hand towards the shiny traces of tears and it gets wet while patting her face.

The original Italian word is “mamma”. The English translator chose to translate “mamma” as “mummy” in this one instance in Valtorta’s work. This word (“mummy”) is a commonly used affectionate word spoken by many healthy infants when referring to their mother, particularly in various cultures. It is not only not tasteless or lacking in due reverence as Anselmo gratuitously claimed, but is very realistic and proper within the actual context (which, as I said, he “conveniently” leaves out). I have discussed this with both priests and laity, and they agreed with me: this word is absolutely fine and a non-problem. It seems to me that Anselmo is making yet another unsubstantiated and weak argument in a desperate attempt to try to prove his unfounded thesis.

In fact, to be thorough, I contacted Giovanna Busolini, a native Italian who knows the Italian language from birth. She wrote to me about this question:

“In Italian nowadays (and certainly also when Maria Valtorta wrote *The Gospel as Revealed to Me / The Poem of the Man-God*), mamma is the only name we use to call our mother. It was not a question of confidence or of age. So it is absolutely right that Jesus calls His Mother ‘mamma’, also when He is an adult. That is the English equivalent of ‘mom’ (American English) or ‘mum’ (British English), not ‘mummy’. The translation for ‘mummy’ could be ‘mamma’. Valtorta says that when Jesus was near to death, He called her ‘Mum’ not ‘mummy’. The big cry of the Gospel was the beginning of the word ‘Mamma’, which is the name Jesus usually used when speaking in private with His mother. On the other hand, Valtorta’s work is using the Italian used in the 1940s and not an ancient Italian when the mother was always called ‘mother’ (madre) also in private rather than ‘mom’. The difference in the English translation may be the cause of confusion for some people who are ignorant of language. Jesus used the word ‘Madre’ when speaking of her with His Apostles and also when speaking with her in front of others, as a form of respect, but definitely not in private.”

If you observe the original Italian of Valtorta’s work, you will see that Jesus does indeed refer to His Mother as “Madre” when speaking of her in the third person in front of crowds, but that when He addresses her directly, He uses the word “mamma” (translated as “mom” in American English). Does Jesus ever refer to His Mother in the *Poem* as “mamma” (which would be the English equivalent of “mummy”)? I asked Giovanna, “Does the *Poem* ever have Jesus refer to His Mother as ‘mamma’?” She replied, “Only Marjiam used the word ‘mamma’ in chapter 170, but Jesus (even in those episodes in the *Poem* when He was an infant) never calls her ‘mamma’ but only ‘madre’. No little child in Italy would ever say ‘mamma’ unless a bit more grown up past infancy, as Marjiam already was. This is because no mother would ask little babies to call them ‘mamma’: it would be too difficult for them to pronounce.”

Hence, we have a native Italian speaker who consulted the original language that Valtorta’s work was written in, who completely refuted Anselmo’s falsehoods, insinuations, and poor research.

I want to include a portion of a [refutation](#) that I wrote against Horvat, where, like Anselmo, she gratuitously accused the scene of Our Lady and Our Lord fleeing to Egypt as sentimental. It is below:

Horvat also makes the untenable assertion that Our Lady was being sentimental! That is ludicrous and unfounded. For those who want to try to criticize Our Lady weeping, keep in mind that the Holy Family is fleeing from their home and homeland as fugitives because someone is trying to kill Jesus (which reminds Mary of what the prophets foretell His future fate will be – “a sword shall pierce your heart”, Luke 2:35), they are losing most of their belongings, no longer being able to be around family and friends, etc. It is not sentimentalism. It is *realism*! The Church approved the Seven Sorrows devotion about which Our Lady had appeared to many Church-approved mystics, and one of these famous Seven Sorrows is “The Flight into Egypt”.

With regards to Mary's loving, motherly comments to the baby Jesus, those are not only not sentimental in a bad sense, but very edifying and holy! It furthermore represents normal and natural words that are the common experience of mothers who have nursing infants. Ask any balanced mother who had a normal relationship with their baby and they'll most likely enlighten you on the reality that what was described was perfectly normal and typical of a healthy mother. Also, perhaps Horvat has not considered the fact that our modern 20th/21st century culture is also (in general) much more reserved and less openly demonstrative than the first century Hebrew culture; so she shouldn't project her subjective, biased, personal, unfounded assertion that the showing of love and sentiment as expressed in the *Poem* is sentimental in a derogatory sense of the term. Ironically, the best refutation of Horvat's argument is a dictation of Jesus Christ Himself given at the end of the *Poem of the Man-God* when He gave the reasons for this work and His concluding remarks. Even if you doubt whether this comes from a divine origin or not, just consider the argument in and of itself:³⁶

Jesus says:

« The reasons that have induced Me to enlighten and dictate episodes and words of Mine to [Maria Valtorta] are, in addition to the joy of communicating an exact knowledge of Me to this loving victim-soul, manifold.

But the moving spirit of all of them is My love for the Church, both teaching and militant, and My desire to help souls in their ascent towards perfection. The knowledge of Me helps to ascend. My word is Life.

I mention the main ones:

[Note: I am skipping reasons #1-3 in this present excerpt and jumping to reason #4 below because it is the most relevant for this section]

4. To reinstate in their truth the figures of the Son of Man and of Mary, true children of Adam by flesh and blood, but of an innocent Adam. The children of the Man were to be like Us, if our First Parents had not depreciated their perfect humanity – in the sense of man, that is of a creature in which there is the double nature, spiritual, in the image and likeness of God, and the material nature – as you know they did. Perfect senses, that is, subject to reason even in their great efficiency. In the senses I include both the moral and the corporal ones. Therefore total and perfect love both for Her spouse, to whom She is not attached by sensuality, but only by a tie of spiritual love, and for Her Son. Most loved. Loved with all the perfection of a perfect woman for the child born of Her. That is how Eve should have loved: like Mary: that is, not for what physical enjoyment her son was, but because that son was the son of the Creator and out of obedience accomplished His order to multiply the human race.

And loved with all the ardor of a perfect believer who knows that that Son of *Hers*, is not figuratively but *really* the Son of God. To those who consider Mary's love for Jesus too affectionate, I say that they should consider who Mary was: the Woman without sin and therefore without fault in Her love towards God, towards Her relatives, towards Her spouse,

towards Her Son, towards Her neighbor; they should consider what the Mother saw in Me besides seeing the Son of Her womb, and finally that they should consider the nationality of Mary. Hebrew race, eastern race, and times very remote from the present ones. So the explanation of certain verbal amplifications, that may seem exaggerated to you, ensues from these elements. The eastern and Hebrew styles are flowery and pompous also when commonly spoken. All the writings of that time and of that race prove it, and in the course of ages the eastern style has not changed very much.

As twenty centuries later you have to examine these pages, when the wickedness of life has killed so much love, would you expect Me to give you a Mary of Nazareth similar to the arid superficial woman of your days? Mary is what She is, and the sweet, pure, loving Girl of Israel, the Spouse of God. The Virgin Mother of God cannot be changed into an excessively morbidly exalted woman, or into a glacially selfish one of your days.

And I tell those, who consider Jesus' love for Mary too affectionate, to consider that in Jesus there was God, and that God One and Trine received His consolation by loving Mary, Who requited Him for the sorrow of the whole human race, and was the means by which God could glory again in His Creation that gives citizens to His Heavens. And finally, let them consider *that every love becomes guilty when, and only when, it causes disorder, that is, when it goes against the Will of God and the duty to be fulfilled.*

Now consider: did Mary's love do that? Did My love do that? Did She keep Me, through selfish love, from doing *all* the Will of God? Through a disorderly love for My Mother, did I perhaps repudiate My mission? No. Both loves had but one desire: *to accomplish the Will of God for the salvation of the world.* And the Mother said all the farewells to Her Son, and the Son said all the farewells to His Mother, handing the Son to the cross of His public teaching and to the Cross of Calvary, handing the Mother to solitude and torture, so that She might be the Co-Redeemer, without taking into account our humanity that felt lacerated and our hearts that were broken with grief. Is that weakness? Is it sentimentalism? It is perfect love, o men, who do not know how to love and who no longer understand love and its voices!

And the purpose of this Work is also to clarify certain points that a number of circumstances has covered with darkness and they thus form dark zones in the brightness of the evangelic picture and points that seem a rupture and are only obscure points, between one episode and another, indecipherable points, and the ability to decipher them is the key to correctly understand certain situations that had arisen and certain strong manners that I had to have, so contrasting with My continuous exhortations to forgive, to be meek and humble, a certain rigidity towards obstinate, inconvertible opponents. You all ought to remember that God, after using all His mercy, for the sake of His own honor, can say also "Enough" to those who, as He is good, think it is right to take advantage of His forbearance and tempt Him. It is an old wise saying.

I think that this more than adequately refutes Horvat's objection that Mary was a "sentimental Mother" (in the derogatory sense of the term that Horvat was using). There are far, far too many extremely learned and trustworthy clerics, authorities, experts, scientists, and pious lay faithful

who approve what is written in the *Poem* and do not find it sentimental in a derogatory sense (among them Pope Pius XII, St. Padre Pio, Fr. Gabriel Roschini, the authority during Maria Valtorta's lifetime in charge of causes of saints, and many others). For further analysis and refutation of this claim, see the subchapter of my [e-book](#) entitled "*Analyzing and Refuting Some Critic's Arguments that it Appeals Too Much to the Sensitivity or Presents a De-Supernaturalized Christ Because it Contains So Many Details of the Human Side of Our Lord's Life*".

Continuing on, Anselmo wrote:

It seems to us disrespectful to continue transcribing the stories of the temptations of the flesh that Valtorta attributes to Christ and the Blessed Virgin, falsifying the Gospel, as when she pretends Our Lord was tempted by a retinue of scantily clad women, who were told by Annas to lasciviously approach the Lord during His stay in his house during the Passion.

It is not disrespectful to transcribe fully developed excerpts from Valtorta's work. However, it is disrespectful to mutilate and misinterpret sentences and imply heretical and erroneous things as Anselmo does. Valtorta has not falsified the Gospel. It is Anselmo who is falsifying Valtorta's work and does not properly understand the canonized Gospels himself, such as with his heretical claim in his second anti-Valtorta article that Jesus and Mary "were not and could not be tempted to do evil" which contradicts not only Church teaching but multiple instances of Scripture, "For we have not a high priest, who cannot have compassion on our infirmities: **but one tempted in all things like as we are, without sin.**" (Hebrews 4:15) Anselmo fails to distinguish between temptation and consent and its effects. Anselmo is ignorantly mixing up and failing to distinguish between the attempt and the result and failing to make the distinction between external and internal temptations, and makes a logical fallacy by reasoning, "Since Jesus did not have disordered concupiscence, therefore Satan could not have given Him an external temptation/suggestion to impurity." Of course he could but he would never be able to succeed or cause even the most infinitesimal disturbance in Christ apart from the holy disgust Christ had for sin. Theologians who know how to do correct theology and who are honest and thorough always make sure to make proper distinctions in their writing.

Regarding Anselmo's reference to the scene where some of the wicked of Jesus' day *unsuccessfully* tried to tempt Him with immodest women and an immoral lady *unsuccessfully* tries to tempt Him, not only are those chapters not heretical or against faith or morals or in any way improper, but they actually show and demonstrate how Jesus gave a witness to a heroic chastity and innocence in which Christ was perfect in His will and inclinations and wasn't affected or moved in any unholy way. She shows how temptations were like a rain drop against a granite wall. It splattered on the granite without causing any harm. A result would have meant damage. Glorification is the failure of the attempt and a failed temptation is a means to grow in justice and augment our merits by remaining faithful to the Law of the Lord. Someone wrote against another critic rehashing the same outdated argument of Anselmo:³⁷

...those passages are not immoral, because they purport to blame evil and extol redemption. If the critics are still not satisfied, perhaps they could explain why there are some rather filthy

passages in the Holy Scriptures, namely various stories of rape, incest, sodomy, [child sacrifice], and adultery?

See my [refutation](#) of Anselmo's second anti-Valtorta article for complete details on why his insinuation that those scenes are bad or improper is groundless.

Anselmo "conveniently" fails to mention the fact that in the scene where a prostitute was sent by the Pharisees to try to tempt Jesus to sin, not only did she fail to lead Him to commit any sin, but Jesus *converted her* by His words/preaching, by His chastity, by His purity, and by His perfectly chaste and spiritual love for her diseased soul. Catholics like Anselmo should recall the numerous examples in Church history of cases where prostitutes or lascivious people were sent to saints to try to tempt them to a sin of impurity, but just like Jesus in Valtorta's work, they not only did not sin, but by their preaching, they converted the prostitute or tempter. If canonized saints – who were born with original sin and suffered from the concupiscence that all sons of Adam suffer from (except for Jesus and Mary) – could resist the temptation and convert the prostitute, how much more could the sinless and perfect Christ do so in whom there always was/is order and harmony between the flesh and the spirit? And, isn't it interesting that biographies of these saints mention scenes like this without any hesitation as an example of heroic virtue, whereas Anselmo hypocritically cites the scene of the same exact situation and outcome with Jesus as if it was a problem! If you were to go by Anselmo's deficient and hypocritical reasoning, then apparently the many renowned biographers of various saint's lives were wrong in writing about the impure people or prostitutes sent to tempt the various saints (such as the prostitute sent to St. Thomas Aquinas to try to tempt him which is recalled in almost every biography about this saint's life)! Anselmo's argumentation is so non-objective, flawed, and impotent.

Anselmo wrote:

These falsifications of Scripture abound in the *Poem*, making it a real danger for those ignorant of the Scriptures.

Anselmo has yet to demonstrate any instance in which Valtorta's writings "falsify Scripture". Every instance he gives to try to "prove" this has been thoroughly refuted. Instead, I trust more in what Archbishop Carinci (Secretary of the Sacred Congregation of Rites from 1930 to 1960 and in charge of investigating pre-Vatican II causes of beatification and canonization) stated in 1952 after studying her work in depth:³⁸

"There is nothing therein which is contrary to the Gospel. Rather, this work, a good complement to the Gospel, contributes towards a better understanding of its meaning... Our Lord's discourses do not contain anything which in any way might be contrary to His Spirit."

Archbishop Carinci also stated:³⁹

"...it seems impossible to me that a woman of a very ordinary theological culture, and unprovided with any book useful to that end, had been able on her own to write with such exactness pages so sublime."

I trust more in the in-depth, decades-long evaluation of her writings by a world-renowned theologian and biblical scholar whose exegetical work had the blessing and acknowledgement of successive Popes from Pius XI to Paul VI (Blessed Gabriel Allegra, O.F.M.) who stated:⁴⁰

What amazes me more is that Valtorta never falls into theological errors; on the contrary, she renders revealed mysteries easier for the reader, transposing them into a popular and modern language.”

“In this work I find so many 'revelations' which are not contrary to, but which instead complete the Gospel narrative...”

“The Mercy of the Lord in the *Poem* is never separated from the demands of the Divine Justice, as also all the revelations—which He makes—not only do not contradict the Gospel, but harmonize perfectly with the economy of the Faith in which those saved should live, and which constitutes the framework of the whole Bible and especially of the New Testament.”

“*The Poem*, when completed, makes us better understand the Gospel, but it does not contradict it. I still do not know how to explain to myself, and perhaps I will never know, how the Lord had ever shown His earthly life to a soul of the 20th Century, but I believe in the Love which can do all. And I think also that this Omnipotent Love never asked such a sacrifice of a poor, sick woman for herself alone, but asked it for all the faithful.”

“This sick woman, with only the natural gift of a facile pen, though one cultivated also by studies of medieval literature, in less than four years writes a Work of ten volumes in which she brings to life again the religious, political and cultural ambient of the first century, and what frightens the specialists themselves all the more, she recounts in proper order—but this order is recognized and established after the visions have ceased—she recounts in proper order the life of Christ, completing the Gospels without ever contradicting them.”

I trust more in Camillo Corsánego (1891-1963), National president of Catholic Action in Italy, Dean of the Consistorial Lawyers, and a professor at the Pontifical Lateran University in Rome, who wrote:⁴¹

"Throughout my life, by now fairly long, I have read a very large number of works in apologetics, hagiography [saints' lives], theology, and biblical criticism; however, I have never found such a body of knowledge, art, devotion, and adherence to the traditional teachings of the Church, as in Miss Maria Valtorta's work on the Gospels."

Valtorta's writings are not a danger to those ignorant of Scriptures in the least! Fr. Kevin Robinson wrote:⁴²

With Valtorta, as with the canonical Scriptures, there are difficulties that are easily resolved by distinction from Thomistic philosophy such as: general vs. specific, strictly vs. broadly, properly vs. allegorically, *in fieri* vs. *in facto esse*, *ad esse* vs. *ad melior esse*, *simpliciter* vs.

quodammodo. **These distinctions are usually not needed for the simple faithful as the context gives them the truth without danger.** [emphasis added]

For the hundreds of thousands of Catholics around the world and the dozens of bishops and esteemed theologians who have analyzed Valtorta's writings, the context is sufficiently clear to avoid interpreting her writings in a way that is against Church teaching or faith or morals (so long as the person reading is (1) honest, (2) possesses basic critical reading skills and common sense, and (3) doesn't wrench quotations out of context or pollute and distort what they read by lack of objectivity or bias). These three aforementioned criteria seem lacking in many Valtorta critics, including Anselmo. For those relatively few passages in Valtorta's writings that need a footnote, a footnote is available (especially among Fr. Berti's 5,675 scholarly footnotes and appendices in the Italian edition), but generally speaking, the context (as well as common sense) is sufficient. I hope that the discussions in my e-book will also serve many Catholics in explaining and clarifying the most common objections or concerns about particular passages or excerpts. The canonized Scriptures can be interpreted in an equally or even more divisive way to the ignorant, but the Church doesn't thereby teach that the Scriptures should be kept from the people because of the possibility that some ignorant or theologically incompetent Catholics or non-Catholics would misinterpret these passages, such as:

"O Daughter of Babylon, doomed to destruction, happy is he who repays you for what you have done to us – he who seizes your infants and dashes them against the rocks." (Psalm 137:9)

"I have great sadness, and continual sorrow in my heart. For I wished myself to be an anathema from Christ, for my brethren, who are my kinsmen according to the flesh." (Romans 9:2)

"After these things, God tempted Abraham, and said to him: Abraham, Abraham. And he answered: Here I am." (Genesis 22:1)

And the Lord sent a very evil spirit between Abimelech and the inhabitants of Sichem: who began to detest him." (Judges 9:23) **"But the spirit of the Lord departed from Saul, and an evil spirit from the Lord troubled him."** (1 Samuel 16:14)

"For there is one God, and *one mediator* of God and men, the man Christ Jesus." (1 Timothy 2:5)

(Remember how the Protestants misinterpret this above verse to say that Catholics are blasphemous when they call the Mary, the Mother of Jesus, a mediator and, what's worse, the Mediatrix of All Graces?)

I believe my point is thoroughly made and Anselmo's unsubstantiated accusations stand refuted. As Bishop Kureethara wrote in his [signed letter](#) about Valtorta's work: **"No flaws in theological or moral matters are seen. On the contrary, I see this as the best work to study more deeply, understand, and interpret the Gospels."**

Refutation of the Second Half of His Article

Anselmo writes:

In addition to the numerous falsifications of Scripture, Valtorta adds new facts – for example, that the last word of Christ on the Cross was “mummy” [...]

Actually, what Anselmo wrote above is a flat-out falsehood! Like I wrote earlier, the only instance in Valtorta’s work where Jesus refers to His Mother with the term “mummy” was when He was a 9-month-year-old infant (which, as is obvious, is entirely proper, realistic, and not against faith or morals). Here is what Valtorta actually wrote for the passage in question that Anselmo refers to:⁴³

There is silence again. Then the supplication pronounced with infinite kindness, with fervent prayer: “Father, into Your hands I commit My spirit!” [...] The body is all bent; in the last of the three contractions it is a drawn arch, which vibrates and is dreadful to look at, and then a powerful cry, unimaginable in that exhausted body, bursts forth rending the air, the “loud cry” mentioned by the Gospels and is the first part of the word “Mother”...

Do you see the word “mummy” in the above passage? I don’t think so. By the way, in my e-book, I have already thoroughly analyzed and refuted the objection or claim that this excerpt contradicts Scripture or is false. You can easily read this refutation by searching my e-book for the words “Apparent Contradiction? The Last Words of Christ” and it will jump you directly to the section where this is discussed. My e-book can be downloaded [here](#).

As is shown by the above refutation, the objection of this critic about Christ’s last words is shown to be without foundation and an invalid and insufficient argument to reject Valtorta or to portray it as contradicting Scripture or being historically inaccurate.

Anselmo wrote:

there are doctrinal questions that follow the heretical pattern of Vatican II. They include the following: Misconceptions about the nature of the priesthood;

Many renowned theologians have read her entire work and provided detailed commentary on it. None of these renowned and highly learned theologians were able to find a single statement against faith or morals or against the teaching of the Church, including those parts of the text that discussed the nature of the priesthood. Anselmo presumes that the reader should “take his word for it” that there are misconceptions about the nature of the priesthood, but considering that every single supposed example and “proof” he has given in his articles attempting to demonstrate errors against faith and morals in her writing have all proven to be false, based on methodological flaws, or are a clear distortion, misrepresentation, and misinterpretation of the text (or, in some cases, is based on his ignorance and incompetency in certain theological areas such as his arguments concerning Original Sin), the only reasonable action for the honest reader with common sense is to not take Anselmo’s “word for it” and to hold his claim in suspicion and as

most likely false until it can be proven otherwise (which, I'm sure, can't). Perhaps this is why Anselmo doesn't refer his readers to any excerpts in her writings which supposedly demonstrate this.

Anselmo wrote:

They include the following: [...] Errors regarding the words of Consecration that Valtorta puts in the lips of Christ, different from the formulae dogmatically pronounced by the Holy Church for the realization of this Sacrament;

In actual fact, none of the words that Maria Valtorta wrote are in contradiction to the dogmatic formula of the Holy Catholic Church. Furthermore, it is a well-known fact among biblical scholars that if you investigate the canonized Gospels themselves, you would see that the translations of the Scriptures that we have today are not all perfectly phonographically in agreement in every single word of Jesus in the words of consecration among the different books of Scripture (Matthew, Mark, Luke) and so it would be hypocritical for Anselmo to accuse the words of consecration in Valtorta's work not perfectly phonographically matching the words in one of the canonized Gospels when you realize that the various books of the canonized Gospels themselves contradict each other between themselves on the actual words that Our Lord used at the Last Supper. I'm actually pleased that Anselmo brought up this objection because it not only shows his ignorance in these subject matters (thus reinforcing the truth that it is right to call into question many of his other arguments as well wherein he betrays the same level of ignorance, poor theology, and methodological flaws), but also shows the hypocrisy of this particular line of argument if he were to consider the canonized Scriptures as infallible (which he and I both do of course).

To start out this discussion, I direct readers to an exact quote of Canon Gregory Hesse, S.T.D., J.C.D., S.T.L., J.C.L. (whom Anselmo and Tradition in Action most probably hold in high esteem), where in one of his talks he says:⁴⁴

“In Revelation you will even find apparent contradictions. It is sufficient to remember the different versions we find in Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John about the *actual* words that Our Lord used at the Last Supper for consecrating bread and wine.”

In the canonized Gospels there are the apparent linguistic contradictions between the actual words Our Lord used at the Last Supper for consecrating bread and wine which are well known to knowledgeable Scripture scholars (Matthew 26: 26-29 vs. Luke 22: 17-20 vs. Mark 14: 21-25; John's Gospel omits the account of these words). There are words in these verses that are undeniably phonographically different as they are written or are omitting key words! Yes: they have the same general theme, but you cannot possibly claim that the translations of the Scriptures we have today are all perfectly phonographically in agreement in every single word of Jesus in some of these sentences. For example, here are two different accounts of the words Jesus used at the Last Supper:

Luke says:

In like manner the chalice also, after He had supped, saying: “This is the chalice, the new testament in My blood, which shall be *shed for you*.” (Luke 22:20) [emphasis added]

Mark says:

And He said to them: This is My blood of the new testament, which shall be *shed for many*. (Mark 14:24) [emphasis added]

Which is it? Did He say “for you” or “for many” or both? There are other linguistic contradictions which I will get into shortly, but first I want to elaborate on an important fact.

A person commented on a Catholic forum:⁴⁵

“The Council of Trent said that [the Latin Vulgate] contains no error of faith, not that it is a flawless translation or that further discoveries and scholarship into the original sources can contribute nothing. And after all, if the ‘Vulgate in 1546’ were the ultimate expression of Holy Writ, then what was the need to revise it and issue the Sistine Vulgate (1590) and Clementine Vulgate (1592 with subsequent editions)?”

A scholarly article, written by a trustworthy expert and originally published in 1938, relates (concerning the decree of the Council of Trent) “In declaring the Vulgate to be authentic, the Council of Trent does not exclude minor mistakes from it, but presupposes it to be free from *substantial* errors, at least in matters pertaining to faith and morals...the Church guarantees in general the fidelity and the trustworthiness, but not the philological accuracy, of the Vulgate. She guarantees its reliable argumentative force in matters pertaining to faith and morals. In other matters the Vulgate possesses no other authority than that of a good old translation.”⁴⁶ [emphasis added] In other words, it does not deny that minor errors do exist in the Latin Vulgate. It is because of such minor errors that the Church, by means of many Popes issuing commissions, has sought to continuously revise the Latin Vulgate over the years, using further discoveries and scholarship into the original texts used by St. Jerome and others during the first centuries of the Church.

Therefore, the idea that there are minor errors – including perhaps even a word missing or mistranslated in a phrase of Scripture in modern translations of the Bible – including in the Latin Vulgate and translations based on the Latin Vulgate, such as the Douay-Rheims – is not a huge shock, but very reasonable. Hence, it is true that in some verses, the translations of the Bible we have today might not even be phonographically exact in comparison to the original manuscripts! So if even the translations of the canonized Bible we have today aren’t always perfectly historically phonographically exact, why would you be more merciless toward a private revelation not being apparently perfectly historically phonographically exact?

Let me give another example of a translation error (a phonographic error) in the translations of the Bible we have. Notice how Matthew 20:23 states, “My chalice indeed you shall drink”, while Mark 10:39 says, “You shall indeed drink *of* the chalice that I drink of...” [emphasis added]

Jesus says to Maria Valtorta in a dictation:⁴⁷

« Make the following sentence very clear: “...you will certainly drink *of My chalice*.” In translations you read: “My chalice”. I said: “*of My chalice*”, not “My chalice”. No man could have drunk My chalice. I alone, the Redeemer, had to drink all My chalice. My disciples, My imitators and lovers, are certainly allowed to drink *of that chalice* from which I drank, with regard to that drop, sip or sips, that God’s predilection grants them to drink. But no one will ever drink all the chalice as I did. So it is right to say “*of My chalice*” and not “My chalice”. »

Even if you doubt whether this dictation comes from a divine origin, it cannot be denied: the translations based on the Vulgate (such as the Douay-Rheims Bible) has Matthew 20:23 stating, “My chalice indeed you shall drink”, while Mark 10:39 says, “You shall indeed drink *of the chalice that I drink of...*” [emphasis added] And this difference of a word is of no small significance theologically and linguistically so it’s not like some petty insignificant nuance that can be ignored!

So now let’s delve into an intelligent and thorough analysis of the statements in question.

In Maria Valtorta’s work, for the words of consecration at the Last Supper, she writes:⁴⁸

Jesus takes a loaf still entire and places it on the chalice that has been filled. He blesses and offers both, He then breaks the bread and takes thirteen morsels of it, and gives one to each apostle saying: “Take this and eat it. This is My Body. Do this in remembrance of Me, Who am going away.” He gives the chalice and says: “Take this and drink it. This is My Blood. This is the chalice of the new alliance in My Blood and through My Blood, that will be shed for you, to remit your sins and give you the Life. Do this in remembrance of Me.”

That is entirely coherent with the words of the Last Supper in the canonized Gospels. It is as coherent with the words of the Last Supper in the canonized Gospels as the words of the Last Supper in the various books of the canonized Gospels are coherent among themselves: namely, in none of the works in question (Maria Valtorta, Matthew 26: 26-29, Luke 22: 17-20, or Mark 14: 21-25) do the words exactly match each other! So if you criticize Maria Valtorta’s written words for the Last Supper, then you need to criticize these facts as well:

Matthew says “Take ye, and eat” but Mark only says “Take ye” and Luke doesn’t have any of those words.

Luke says “Do this for a commemoration of Me” but Matthew and Mark don’t have any of those words.

Matthew says “Drink ye all of this” after Jesus takes the chalice but Luke says that Jesus said, “Take, and divide it among you” instead and Mark doesn’t have any of those words.

Matthew and Mark say “For this is My Blood of the New Testament” but Luke says “This is the chalice, the New Testament in My Blood”.

Luke says that Jesus said, “...My Blood, which shall be shed for **you**” whereas Mark says “My Blood...which shall be shed for **many**” and Matthew says “My Blood...which shall be shed for **many** unto the remission of sins”.

Luke says, “For I say to you, that I will not drink of the fruit of the vine, till the kingdom of God come” whereas Matthew says “I will not drink from henceforth of this fruit of the vine, until that day when I shall drink it with you **new** in the kingdom of my Father” whereas Mark says “Amen I say to you, that I will drink no more of the fruit of the vine, until that day when I shall drink it **new** in the kingdom of God.” Notice that besides the different wording, Luke omits the adjective “new” (bolded) that the other two canonized Gospels include.

Every single phrase of Maria Valtorta’s words ascribed to Christ at the Last Supper is in the canonized Gospels themselves. The only seeming changes are different wordings of some phrases that are no more different than the different wordings we observe among the various books of the canonized Gospels themselves! Therefore, Anselmo’s objection breaks down and stands refuted and is proven to lack substance and credibility.

Anselmo continues:

They include the following: Falsehoods about the doctrine of salvation and sanctification, because she asserts that Our Lord revealed to her that “the Commandments alone suffice to sanctify.” This opposes the doctrine that a man must belong to the Catholic Church in order to be saved, and she pretends that the gifts of the Holy Spirit that produce holiness can be given outside of the Church;

This argument is absurd! Taking an isolated phrase out of context and trying to say it affirms heresy is one of the most unscholarly and dishonest tactics at one’s disposal.

“For therefore we labor and are reviled, because we hope in the living God, **who is the Saviour of all men, especially of the faithful.**”

If one were Anselmo and were to read the above statement and reason like Anselmo does, the person would scream:

HERESY! The above sentence promotes universal salvation because it says “who is the Saviour of **all men, especially of the faithful**”! It can’t be interpreted according to Catholic dogma because you have to be “of the faithful” to be saved (*cf.* Mark 16:16) and yet the above statement implies that others who are not even “of the faithful” can be saved because it says “God, who is the Saviour of all men, **especially of the faithful**”. This promotes universal salvationism!

If that above statement was in Valtorta's writings, it would not surprise me one bit if Anselmo would take that sentence and throw it in an anti-Valtorta article to use as "proof" that Valtorta promotes the heresy of universal salvation. But guess where that sentence comes from? It is from the infallible Holy Scriptures: Timothy 4:10 (Douay-Rheims)

What about this statement:

Because in Him [Jesus], it hath well pleased the Father, that all fullness should dwell; And through Him to reconcile all things unto Himself, making peace through the blood of His cross, both as to the things that are on earth, and the things that are in Heaven. (Colossians 1:19)

You better not quote this Scripture around Anselmo or else, because of his method of interpretation of things, he might accuse you that you are promoting universal salvationism because he might say that you saying that Jesus has "reconciled all things unto Himself, making peace through the blood of His cross" might give the impression that he has reconciled all men to Himself and hence they are all saved.

Would Anselmo conclude this is universal salvationism:

"For God hath concluded all in unbelief, that he may have mercy on all." (Romans 11:32)

If this was in Valtorta's writings, I could see Anselmo saying, "God can only have mercy on repentant sinners because, while He offers everyone mercy, they cannot receive it unless they are repentant. Obviously, not everyone is repentant. Therefore, the above statement that God 'has mercy on all' is heretical!"

I would like to be able to intelligently analyze the sentence Anselmo was referring to, but because he failed to provide any reference whatsoever (volume, chapter, page number, etc.), I do not know the full quote from which he took his isolated partial sentence from. However, I am very confident that whatever quote he took it from – when you analyze the full sentence and the full context – it will prove to be in line with faith, morals, truth, realism, and the teaching of the Church, as many renowned, highly learned theologians have affirmed, including those who have combed through every single sentence of Maria Valtorta's work in the original Italian for decades, among them Fr. Corrado Berti, O.S.M., a professor of dogmatic and sacramental theology of the Pontifical Marianum Theological Faculty in Rome from 1939 onward, and Secretary of that Faculty from 1950 to 1959, who thoroughly analyzed Maria Valtorta's writings and provided more than 5,675 scholarly footnotes and appendices for her work, including for difficult passages that critics have or could potentially criticize. This averages about 568 footnotes per volume and averages slightly more than one footnote per page throughout the whole 5,264 printed pages.

I have read Maria Valtorta's work and am also quite familiar with the dogmas of the Catholic Church concerning salvation, the dogma "Extra Ecclesiam nulla salus", and the gifts of the Holy Spirit, and I assure you that she never presents any falsehoods about the doctrine of salvation and sanctification or contradicts any of these dogmas. In fact, I would say that her revelations help us

to more fully appreciate and understand these dogmas, as Fr. Gabriel Roschini noted, “in eodem sensu eademque sententia” – “In the same sense and along the same line of thought”.⁴⁹

Nowhere does she affirm anything that contradicts the dogma and doctrine of the Church. I would be more than happy to analyze any attempted demonstration that Anselmo or another Valtorta critic can try to write up to try to demonstrate this and then offer a full refutation. Pope St. Pius X said: “God’s works have no fear of opposition. Opposition implants them more deeply” (*Pie X*, Jérôme Dal-Gal, Paris, Éd. St. Paul: 1953, p. 412). The more flawed and groundless attacks that are made and refuted, the more clearly the strength and orthodoxy of her revelations shine forth.

Anselmo wrote:

They include the following: Errors on the nature of the Church, with the claim that Christ told her that everyone is part of the same people of God, both believers and non-believers. This notion of “people of God” [...] [favors] the Masonic theory of the equality of religions.

This time Anselmo is not even giving a partial quote of a single sentence, but merely paraphrasing in his own words what Valtorta wrote without providing a reference whatsoever (volume, chapter, page number, etc.). Without a reference and the context, I cannot analyze the particular statement or excerpt that he claims is a problem. Anselmo presumes that the reader should “take his word for it” that there is some heresy or error against faith or morals under question, but considering that every single supposed example and “proof” he has given in his articles attempting to demonstrate errors against faith and morals in her writing have all proven to be false, based on methodological flaws, or are a clear distortion, misrepresentation, and misinterpretation of the text (or, in some cases, is based on his ignorance and incompetency in certain theological areas such as his arguments concerning Original Sin), the only reasonable action for the honest reader with common sense is to not take Anselmo’s “word for it” and to hold his claim in suspicion and as most likely false until it can be proven otherwise (which, I’m sure, can’t). Perhaps this is why Anselmo doesn’t refer his readers to any excerpts in her writings which supposedly demonstrate this.

Like I wrote earlier, nowhere does Valtorta affirm anything that contradicts the dogma and doctrine of the Church. I would be more than happy to analyze any attempted demonstration that Anselmo or another Valtorta critic can try to write up to try to demonstrate this and then offer a full refutation. Pope St. Pius X said: “God’s works have no fear of opposition. Opposition implants them more deeply” (*Pie X*, Jérôme Dal-Gal, Paris, Éd. St. Paul: 1953, p. 412). The more flawed and groundless attacks that are made and refuted, the more clearly the strength and orthodoxy of her revelations shine forth.

As part of Anselmo’s article, he pastes a painting of Christ’s face drawn by Lorenzo Ferri and then adds the caption underneath it “A sketch of an occult and whining Christ by artist Lorenzo Ferri, who was directed by Valtorta”.

This is a very weak, unsubstantiated subjective argument which is easily refuted and only reinforces again Anselmo’s lack of scholarliness and objectivity.

First off, the orthodoxy, doctrinal soundness, and literary value of Maria Valtorta's description of Christ's Face in her work can in no way be judged by *someone else's* personal drawing of Jesus based on a description in her works! Go and ask ten different skilled artists to draw Christ's Face based on the description of it in Maria Valtorta's writings and you'll end up with ten different renditions with very different nuances and "feels" to it. Maria Valtorta even said herself: "I am convinced that a human hand cannot recreate that Face."⁵⁰ The ludicrousness of judging her writings based on one artist's personal portrayal or rendition formed from his own imagination is like trying to judge the worth of the canonized Gospels based on one artist's paintings of the Gospel scenes and Gospel characters. That is ludicrous!

Nowhere in Maria Valtorta's descriptions of Jesus and His Face can you find anything which is "occult" or "whining", an unsubstantiated distortion tantamount to lying.

Second, I disagree with his opinion that the picture shown is "an occult and whining Christ". I don't believe that Christ actually looked like that picture nor do I believe it perfectly captures the description of Christ's Face in Maria Valtorta's descriptions (it is one artist's attempted portrayal of Christ). However, I personally find the image a well done painting and do not find it objectionable in the least. I have asked many others and they think/feel the same way concerning this painting. It seems to me that Anselmo was reading into things too much in a desperate attempt to try to find fault where there is none to match his unfounded thesis. If one were to apply the subjectivist method of Anselmo in a similar fashion, you could paste a picture in an article of the much-revered icon of Our Lady of Czestochowa or other famous, highly approved icons and paintings of Our Lord and find subjective derogatory adjectives to put underneath the painting to try to portray it in a bad light as well. For example, if I were an anti-Catholic trying to write against the Catholic Church, and I were to apply the weak and calumnious subjective argumentation tactic of Anselmo, I could paste the icon of Our Lady of Czestochowa below in an article with the following caption:



**A sketch of an occult and distorted alien-looking
Madonna revered by Pope Clement XI and Pope Pius X**

I need not elaborate further on the groundlessness and weakness of this type of subjective, calumnious argumentation by Anselmo.

Third, do you want to know what picture Maria Valtorta testified was the most accurate picture of Jesus' Face as she saw It and described It? It wasn't the rendition given in Anselmo's article, but another picture. Maria Valtorta wrote:⁵¹

In all the art and religious article shops I have looked for a Face of Jesus like the one I saw [by supernatural means]. But I have never found one. On one there was the oval, but not the gaze. On another, the gaze, but not the mouth. On still another, the mouth, but not the cheeks. I am convinced that a human hand cannot recreate that Face... I have often dreamed of Jesus, after that occasion, and He always had that Face, that stature, and those Hands. For some time I have been having something more than a dream... [visions] And I always see Jesus with that Face, that stature, those Hands. When you gave me that book, Father, on the **Holy Shroud**, it shook me, for, though it was altered by the sufferings undergone, **I saw that Face, along with that stature and those Hands...** [emphasis added]

The actual author of the work in question (Maria Valtorta) testified that the best illustration of Jesus' Face as she saw Him and described Him is the Shroud of Turin. I doubt Anselmo would gratuitously call the Shroud "an occult and whining [picture of] Christ".

Anselmo's insinuation with the illustration of one artist's portrayal of Christ is not only unfounded, but quite frankly highly unscholarly and even calumnious.

Anselmo writes:

A more comprehensive refutation of the *Poem of the Man God* – a significant title since it signifies that the life of Christ is imaginative poesy and not history – would call for a large, much heavier to read volume.

In this excerpt, Anselmo criticizes the title of the first editions of this work. This is an old, outdated argument that has already been sufficiently rebutted and addressed. See the beginning of my refutation of Marian Horvat's article for this refutation. However, I will repeat here some basic facts. Regarding the use of the term "Man-God" in the title "Poem of the Man-God", you should note that many saints have used the term "Man-God", and there is no actual or implied heresy in using that term instead of "God-Man" when referring to Jesus. You should note that Maria Valtorta's work contains both a very strong affirmation of the divinity of Christ as well as His humanity. Furthermore, this title was chosen by the publisher (not Maria Valtorta), is now being replaced with a new title in the newest editions, and has nothing to do with Maria Valtorta or the doctrinal integrity of the work itself. The actual title given by Maria Valtorta herself for her own work when she was still alive was "The Gospel of Our Lord Jesus Christ as it was revealed to Little John". A similar title to this, "The Gospel as Revealed to Me", is now being used to replace the older title "The Poem of the Man-God" for newer editions of her work. This new title is already incorporated in the Italian, French, and Spanish translations, and recently now in the English second edition of her work released in 2012.

However, I agree that the former title “The Poem of the Man-God” is a poor title, and I like the new title better as it more accurately reflects the true nature of these revelations. Prof. Leo A. Brodeur, M.A., Lèsl., Ph.D., H.Sc.D., agrees, and relates concerning the title:⁵²

The Poem of the Man-God: A Bad Title for a Wonderful Work

The English translation (1986-[2012]) of Maria Valtorta’s Life of Jesus was published under the lame, provisional title of *The Poem of the Man-God*.

What a faulty title! It’s not a poem, it’s prose; and it would have been better to have *God-Man* instead of *Man-God*.

(To the best of our knowledge, that title was not the translators’ fault. It was not really the publisher’s fault either, though he unfortunately trusted another Italian whose knowledge of English was quite rudimentary).

The Gospel as it was Shown to me: That’s the title that the Maria Valtorta Research Center would have chosen for Maria Valtorta’s Life of Jesus.

Fortunately, the new title “The Gospel as Revealed to Me” is now being used to replace the older title “The Poem of the Man-God” for newer editions of her work. As mentioned earlier, this new title is already incorporated in the Italian, French, and Spanish translations, and recently now in the English second edition of her work released in 2012. Personally, I put much more stock in the numerous bishops and renowned theologians who have approved the *Poem of the Man-God* in editions that had this title over critics who have exhibited numerous theological incompetencies, methodological flaws, and oftentimes make ridiculous, unsubstantiated subjective accusations, the fretting about this title being only one of them. I don’t like the old title either, but considering many saints explicitly used the term “Man-God” in their writings, I don’t let that stop me from reading this profound work of theology, exegesis, and Mariology, and it hasn’t stopped countless others.

Anselmo writes:

It is our hope that the Catholic sense of the faithful may be awakened by our short criticism of the perversity of Valtorta's revelations. The purpose of this commentary has been to warn those of good faith, who are enthused by these sentimental accounts of the life of Christ, from falling inadvertently into the trap that constitutes this work.

As I have demonstrated in my refutations of Anselmo’s articles, there is no perversity in Valtorta’s revelations. If there is perversity, it lies in Anselmo’s dishonest insinuations and mutilation of Valtorta’s text.

Maria Valtorta received a dictation in which Our Lord said:⁵³

To be able to read! Not all are able to do so, and do so with precision. To be able to, and to do so with precision, one must have sight purified of internal flames and external obscurity. If your spiritual sight – that is, your thought – is clear and pure, you see things as they are ... But if your thought is obscured or enveloped in the smoky flames of human knowledge and the pride of having to be the only ones to know, or, worse, by impure fires, then it is *your* reflection that tinges what you contemplate with tones opposed to the real ones and turns a chaste, innocent episode into a sensual, sinful one.

Prof. Leo A. Brodeur, M.A., LèS.L., Ph.D., H.Sc.D., wrote:⁵⁴

Let us return to the alleged dogmatic or moral errors which some opponents of the *Poem of the Man-God* claim to find in it. The alleged errors result from the opponents' own doing: they rarely present complete quotations, they mutilate them; they wrench the quotations out of context, when only the context gives them their proper meaning; they sometimes even go so far as to falsify certain texts. Also, the testimony of those opponents often is not credible because of their lack of knowledge in mystical theology, their ignorance of Valtorta's work, or their prejudice against it. Some have even gone so far as to declare publicly that they had not read it and did not intend to in the least.

Anselmo repeats again his groundless claim that it is "sentimental". This is a derogatory term that cannot in any way be validly applied objectively to Valtorta's text. Any attempts that Anselmo or other critics have ever used to try to demonstrate this have been refuted. As Bishop Williamson wrote, "The *Poem* is for any sane judge, in my opinion, neither sentimental nor romanticized."⁵⁵ For further refutations of Anselmo's claim, see the subchapter of my [e-book](#) entitled "*Analyzing and Refuting Some Critic's Arguments that it Appeals Too Much to the Sensitivity or Presents a De-Supernaturalized Christ Because it Contains So Many Details of the Human Side of Our Lord's Life*".

Anselmo wrote:

Clearly the *Poem* is a great help for the post-conciliar progressivists. This cannot be denied. It includes their doctrines, theories and heresies and favors religious Judaism.

Actually, Valtorta's work includes doctrines that are perfectly consistent with Catholic dogma, doctrine, faith, morals, truth, realism, and Scripture, and favors the true Catholic Faith. Nor is the *Poem* any help for post-conciliar progressivists. All of the supposed "proof", "evidence", and arguments that Anselmo has posited in all of his articles that were given to try to demonstrate this has been entirely and thoroughly refuted, and he is shown for what he is: a critic who has theological incompetency in many areas, makes poor arguments and commits many methodological flaws, is quick to make faulty presumptions, who distorts, misrepresents, and misinterprets Valtorta's text, brings in an obvious unsubstantiated subjective bias and a lack of objectivity, makes unsubstantiated, sweeping, generalizing statements, and in several places displays a type of methodology and procedure that reminds one more of the Pharisees or someone unhealthily paranoid rather than a good theologian.

Antonio Socci, author of the acclaimed *The Fourth Secret of Fatima*, and a leading Italian journalist, TV show host, author, and public intellectual in Italy, wrote about the *Poem of the Man-God* in 2012.⁵⁶

For twenty years, after having laboriously stumbled through trying to read hundreds of biblical scholars' volumes, *I can say that – with the reading of the Work of Valtorta – two hundred years of Enlightenment-based, idealistic, and modernist chatter about the Gospels and about the Life of Jesus can be run through the shredder.*

And this perhaps is one of the reasons why this exceptional work – a work which moved even Pius XII – is still ignored and “repressed” by the official intelligentsia and by clerical modernism.

In spite of that, outside the normal channels of distribution, thanks to Emilio Pisani and Centro Editoriale Valtortiano, the Work has been read by a sea of people – every year, by tens of thousands of new readers – and has been translated into 21 languages.

What Antonio Socci wrote above completely contradicts the unsubstantiated, groundless accusation by Anselmo that the “post-conciliar progressivists” are using Valtorta’s work to spread heresy. It is good to be savvy, to not be naive, and to be “wise as serpents and simple as doves” (Matthew 10:16). However, there is a reason why Our Lord said in the Gospels when, in His parable, He was asked whether He wanted His servant’s to pull up the cockle: “No, lest perhaps gathering up the cockle, you root up the wheat also together with it.” (Matthew 13:29) In Anselmo’s, Horvat’s, and TraditioninAction.org’s “witch hunt” against Valtorta, based on their faulty presumptions, poor theology, and – I might daresay – unsubstantiated paranoia that Valtorta’s writings are some sort of anti-Catholic conspiracy – I’m afraid that they are guilty of the same exact thing that some of the pre-Vatican II Holy Office officials were guilty of in wrongly condemning and censuring St. Padre Pio five times prematurely based on bad information (i.e., attempting to uproot “true wheat”): they are attempting to discredit an authentic private revelation of an authentic mystic and victim soul because of their own methodological and theological incompetency and whatever other elements may be involved with them that are typically involved in deluding man from the truth (for example, pride, close-mindedness, trusting in one’s own emotions or “gut reaction” too much instead of reason, falling into presumptions and assumptions instead of sound reasoning and mature inquiry, lack of interest in the truth, lack of fact checking, lack of thorough scholarly research, etc.) Irrespective of what elements are involved, what is important is that the truth is made known to inform those most deserving of this revelation (the humble, open-minded people of good will interested in the truth) and this is accomplished in these refutations. Anselmo’s accusations and articles stand completely refuted.

I want to note that I am pleased that Anselmo wrote his articles because, having a chance to analyze his strongest arguments against Valtorta, it can now be seen that even this supposedly “trustworthy” traditional Catholic blogger and vehemently anti-Valtorta critic cannot satisfactorily provide objective valid evidence to indicate that Maria Valtorta’s work should not be read by contemporary faithful Catholics. This further substantiates that traditional Catholics are justified in sharing the sentiments and theological opinion of SSPX seminary professor Fr. Ludovic-Marie

Barrielle, FSSPX, whom Archbishop Lefebvre called “our model spiritual guide,” the former of whom declared, “If you wish to know and love the Sacred Heart of Jesus, read Valtorta!”⁵⁷ Fr. Barrielle’s position is also shared and substantiated by leading pre-Vatican II theologians who are more learned than most priests and layman (including this critic), especially in the areas needed to judge mystical writings, and who furthermore studied it in much further depth (not to mention that many of them actually personally knew, investigated, and communicated at length with the author of the work in question). These theologians also exhibited a healthy open mind free of presumption and prejudice, humility, and a healthy understanding of and balance in the area of emotions and affections, all of which served to make their theological examination of the author and her work all the more credible, trustworthy, and objective.

It is well known that the saints and the Church have historically more clearly explained or defined Church teaching when presented with objections of skeptics, critics, or heretics – thus making the truth shine even more brightly. In like manner, I am pleased to use this critic’s objections to more clearly show the strength of the Valtortian position and that it is worthy of faithful Catholics of good will to read her work, to benefit from it, and not only recognize that it is free of error in faith and morals, but also has accordance with Sacred Scripture and tremendous spiritual benefit for Catholics for generations to come. God works all things together for good. Just as God uses heresy to bring about a greater clarification of true doctrine, so God can take the misguided conclusions of critics to show forth the truth of the complete orthodoxy of her work and its great benefit to souls of good will.

The Pharisees and scribes rejected Christ because they did not want to know the truth. They did not want to be “confused with the facts.” I hope my e-book will serve humble, honest Catholics of good will who *want* to know the truth about this private revelation and this great gift of God for our generation. Heaven indeed did not waste its time in giving this great gift! “Extinguish not the Spirit. Despise not prophecies; but test all things, and hold fast that which is good.” (The Great Apostle St. Paul to the Thessalonians, 1 Thessalonians 5: 19-21)

Anselmo wrote:

It is said that a priest ordered her to write her autobiography; if it were written and published, it would be interesting to read such a work.

It is a well-known and easily searchable fact that her autobiography is readily available in several languages (including in Anselmo’s language: Spanish). For English readers, the information on Maria Valtorta’s autobiography is the following:

ISBN-13: 9788879870689, 442 pages, 47 photos, hardcover, publication date: 1991

The fact that Anselmo outright admitted that he didn’t even know that one of the most important primary documents for assessing Valtorta’s case (her autobiography) is available only reinforces the fact that Anselmo is highly ignorant and unqualified for the subject matter he presumes to write about.

I have read her autobiography, and personally, I have found it to be one of the most enlightening and powerful books on the spiritual life I have ever read. It is similar in style to St. Thérèse of the Child Jesus' autobiography, *Story of a Soul*, as well as St. Augustine's *Confessions*. She finished her autobiography less than a month before she started to receive her revelations which comprised the *Poem of the Man-God* and her other mystical writings. It is significant that Blessed Gabriel Allegra, O.F.M., wrote a short review and commentary on her autobiography, which can be read online here (at the bottom of this link):

<http://www.bardstown.com/~brchrys/Gablegra/Allegra2.html>

Anselmo continues:

We lack much of the data needed to have a complete picture of the motivations of someone who so faithfully foretells the doctrinal guidelines of Vatican II.

First, her writings do not foretell, espouse, promote, nor are associated with anything against faith or morals or heresy (including the controversial non-infallible, non-binding statements in Vatican II that Anselmo unsuccessfully tries to link her writings to) as I already discussed earlier and in particular in my [refutation](#) of his second article. Second, we do not lack the necessary data to investigate her case and her writings in depth. I merely need to refer readers to the subchapter of my [e-book](#) entitled, "*A Detailed Analysis of Maria Valtorta and Her Writings According to the Traditional 1912 Catholic Encyclopedia's Thorough Criteria for Assessing Private Revelations*". In that subchapter, I go through the criteria that the Church has laid out for assessing new claims of private revelation and I refer to the numerous and very thorough evidence, testimonies, and documentation that does allow us to have a complete picture of the mystic and victim soul Maria Valtorta and her writings. It is, in fact, a lie that we lack much of the data needed, and this, in fact, betrays (that is, exposes) Anselmo's ignorance on the topic he is writing about. This is all the more apparent that this is based on his ignorance because he was so unfamiliar with Valtorta's case that he didn't even know that her autobiography is published (a simple Google search could reveal this within less than a minute) and he neglected to consult Fr. Berti's 5,675 scholarly footnotes and appendices in the Italian edition that other scholars, including Bishop Roman Danylak, S.T.L., J.U.D. (who issued an official letter of endorsement of the English translation of the *Poem of the Man-God* in 2001) consulted extensively, as well as Fr. Gabriel Roschini, Consultant of the Holy Office, who stated in 1961 that the new critical second edition of Valtorta's work "**was not to be considered to be on the Index, because it was totally renewed, conformed in all to the original, and provided with notes that removed any doubt and which demonstrated the solidity and orthodoxy of the work.**"⁵⁸ He also neglects mentioning some of the leading pre-Vatican II authorities of Valtorta's day who analyzed her case and writings in depth including Archbishop Alfonso Carinci, Secretary of the Sacred Congregation of Rites from 1930 to 1960, Fr. Gabriel Roschini, O.S.M., Camillo Corsánego (1891-1963), and many others. In fact, as a result of the findings of my research, I can provide you with the following facts:

At least 28 bishops have approved, endorsed, or praised the *Poem* (bishops representing 11 different countries).

Those who have approved/endorsed/praised the *Poem of the Man-God* include Pope Pius XII, 4 cardinals, 14 archbishops, 10 regular bishops, 24 extremely learned clerics or Doctors of Theology/Divinity/Canon Law, 7 Members or Consultants of the Holy Office/Congregation for the Causes of Saints, 7 Saints/Blesseds/Venerables/Servants of God, 31 doctors and university professors, and 2 famous television show hosts/media personalities.

Anselmo strangely never mentions any of these authorities, bishops, and theologians. He is apparently ignorant of them. Therefore, his assertion that “We lack much of the data needed to have a complete picture” only reinforces his ignorance and incompetency on this subject that he presumes to write about (and passing himself off as someone knowledgeable and trustworthy on) and is quite naive, false, and ignorant.

Anselmo continues:

Obviously, the numerous quotations from the Council cited by commentators on the work in footnotes suffice to demonstrate that the work of Valtorta is a boost to the heresies of Vatican II and the later teachings that emanated from it.

Anselmo’s argument about the footnotes in the Spanish edition tries to discredit Valtorta’s writings via the fallacy of the false alternative. I already addressed a similar statement by his in the refutation of his first article where his claims about this are thoroughly refuted and which also serves to refute this current statement as well. Click [here](#) to jump to the part of this refutation where this is refuted.

Anselmo wrote:

God willing, these pages will open the eyes of those with good faith and eager for spiritual reading, who seek a nourishing food, but will find nothing here, except a deftly spread poison that will break down faith in Jesus Christ, true God and true Man.

Anselmo makes these accusations based on his thoroughly refuted articles wherein every single supposed example and “proof” he has given in his articles attempting to demonstrate errors against faith and morals in her writing have all proven to be false, based on methodological flaws, unsubstantiated subjective impressions contradicted by those of greater learning and authority, or are a clear distortion, misrepresentation, and misinterpretation of the text (or, in some cases, is based on his ignorance and incompetency in certain theological areas such as his arguments concerning Original Sin). The only reasonable action for the honest reader with common sense is to proceed with categorizing Anselmo in the first of four categories listed in the Arab proverb below:

He who knows not and knows not he knows not: he is a fool – shun him;
He who knows not and knows he knows not: he is simple – teach him.
He who knows and knows not he knows: he is asleep – wake him;
He who knows and knows he knows: he is wise – follow him.

Instead, when discussing the topic of the fruits of Valtorta's work, I refer readers to the testimony of Archbishop Nuncio Apostolic Monsignor Pier Giacomo De Nicolò, who said in his homily on October 15, 2011, for the 50th anniversary of Maria Valtorta's death:⁵⁹

Our docile and humble response to the engaging impulse of the Spirit of the Lord has brought us here today, in this glorious Basilica of the Most Holy Annunciation, which has been the Marian heart of Florence for centuries, to deepen our Christian vocation through prayer. This happy occasion is presented to us on the 50th anniversary of the day Maria Valtorta was born into Heaven, whose hidden suffering offered to the Divine Spouse, brought to perfect completion, the earthly and eternal fruit of salvation to many people over the decades...

...the work of Maria Valtorta – which is free from error of doctrine and morals as noted by multiple parties – recognizes for more than half a century, a wide and silent circulation among the faithful (translated in about 30 different languages) of every social class throughout the world and without any publicity in particular. The grandeur, magnificence, and wisdom of the content has attracted numerous good fruits and conversions: even people immersed in the whirlwind of life and far from the Christian Faith, but nevertheless yearning to get in touch with solid truths, have opened their hearts to a meeting with the Absolute, with God-Love, and they have found full confirmation of the 2,000-year-old teaching of the Church.

I also refer readers to the testimony of Antonio Socci, a leading Italian journalist, TV show host, author of *The Fourth Secret of Fatima*, and public intellectual in Italy wrote about the *Poem of the Man-God* in 2012:⁶⁰

For twenty years, after having laboriously stumbled through trying to read hundreds of biblical scholars' volumes, *I can say that – with the reading of the Work of Valtorta – two hundred years of Enlightenment-based, idealistic, and modernist chatter about the Gospels and about the Life of Jesus can be run through the shredder.*

And this perhaps is one of the reasons why this exceptional work – a work which moved even Pius XII – is still ignored and “repressed” by the official intelligentsia and by clerical modernism.

In spite of that, outside the normal channels of distribution, thanks to Emilio Pisani and Centro Editoriale Valtortiano, the Work has been read by a sea of people – every year, by tens of thousands of new readers – and has been translated into 21 languages.

Anselmo's article stands completely refuted and only serves to show the hypocrisy and weakness of the anti-Valtorta position and arguments. This article by Anselmo presents so many irregularities that it is difficult to understand how it can be accepted in Catholic milieus, including traditionalist ones. Because of the theological errors and methodological flaws it contains – and other adjoining negative aspects – it is difficult to understand how it could be accepted by traditional Catholic media outlets, such as Tradition in Action, while at the same time, they claim they are a quality apostolate and publisher who fact check all of their articles and only include articles with solid theology and sound arguments. As someone once said to me who read my

refutation of Horvat's anti-Valtorta article which is published on Tradition in Action's website, "I am blown away. I find TIA [Tradition in Action] sometimes a bit too stuffy at times, but I did not think that they would have done such a poor job on the *Poem*." Well, they did it again with Anselmo's embarrassingly poor articles. (Click [here](#) for the refutation of Horvat's anti-Valtorta article).

In Anselmo's, Horvat's, and TraditioninAction.org's "witch hunt" against Valtorta, based on their faulty presumptions, poor theology, and – I might daresay – unsubstantiated paranoia that Valtorta's writings are some sort of anti-Catholic conspiracy – I'm afraid that they are guilty of the same exact thing that some of the pre-Vatican II Holy Office officials were guilty of in wrongly condemning and censuring St. Padre Pio five times prematurely based on bad information: they are attempting to uproot an authentic private revelation of an authentic mystic and victim soul because of their own methodological and theological incompetency and whatever other elements that may be involved with them that are typically involved in deluding man from the truth (for example, pride, close-mindedness, trusting in one's own emotions or "gut reaction" too much instead of reason, falling into presumptions and assumptions instead of sound reasoning and mature inquiry, lack of interest in the truth, lack of fact checking, lack of thorough scholarly research, etc.) Irrespective of what elements are involved, what's important is that the truth is made known to inform those most deserving of this revelation (the humble, open-minded people of good will interested in the truth) and this is accomplished in these refutations. Anselmo's accusations and articles stand completely refuted.

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