

THE LIFE OF

Anne Catherine EMMERICH



By the Very Reverend
CARL E. SCHMÖGER, C.S.S.R.

VOLUME 1
(Two Volumes)

LIFE

OF

ANNE CATHERINE EMMERICH

VERY REV. K. E. SCHMÖGER, C.S.S.R.

VOL. I.

TAN BOOKS AND PUBLISHERS, INC.
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APPROBATION.

The first volume of the work entitled "Life of Anne Catherine Emmerich," by Father Schmöger, C.S.S.R., presented to us in manuscript, contains nothing contrary to the teachings of the Catholic Church, either as to dogma or morals, and, as it seems conducive to faith and piety, we cheerfully give it the approbation solicited by the author.

✠ PETER JOSEPH,
Bishop of Limbourg.

Limbourg, Sept. 26, 1867.

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DEDICATION

*To the Immaculate Heart of the Virgin Mary, Mother of God,
Queen of Heaven and Earth, Lady of the Most Holy Rosary,
Help of Christians, and Refuge of the Human Race.*

PREFACE TO THE ENGLISH EDITION.

The life of Anne Catherine Emmerich is already well known to thousands in Germany, Italy, and France. Its publication in those countries was hailed by numbers who have profited by its perusal. It will be no small recommendation in its favor to state that His Holiness, Pius IX. of blessed memory, ordered the Italian translation to be made from advanced proof-sheets of the German. The French, also, as we are told by Canon de Cazalès in his preface, was taken from the original proofs furnished by the author himself, Very Rev. Carl Erhard Schmöger, C.SS.R.

The present translation from the edition of 1870 was undertaken in the conviction, that the work is calculated to edify English readers not less than those of other nationalities. We were likewise actuated by the persuasion that it would be pleasing to Almighty God to publish the wonders of His workings in chosen souls; for if it is good to hide the secret of the king, it is also honorable to confess the works of the Most High (Tob. xii. 7).

The disciples of Antichrist never weary of publishing book after book, each more pernicious than the preceding, with the design of perverting the mind and corrupting the hearts of millions; they employ every effort, every stratagem to spread around by means of the press and in every possible form the deadly poison of hell.

Should the children of Holy Church, they who have it in their power to counteract these diabolical designs by the publication and circulation of good books, remain idle ? Should they fancy themselves exonerated from further efforts in a contrary direction by the mere utterance of useless lamentations whilst, at the same time, they behold the tide of evil gaining fresh strength as it sweeps along bearing with it innumerable souls to ruin ? Can too much be done to stem the torrent, to avert the danger before it is too late ?

May we not, also, whilst offering an antidote to the deadly effects of so much of our current literature, supply the spiritual wants, and gratify the varied tastes of many souls hungering for fresh and more suitable nourishment ?

Much has already been done in English Catholic literature, both in defence of Catholic principles and to lay before the public the lives of numerous saints and servants of God. But much still remains to be done, and it ought to be accomplished as carefully, as conscientiously as so noble an object deserves.

As every bad book tends to mislead the mind and corrupt the heart of its reader ; so every good book is a cherished companion, a faithful teacher, whose lessons are often more telling on the interior life than the most eloquent sermons.

Should we have to-day a St. Ignatius Loyola had he, when convalescing after his wound at Pompeluna, been supplied with novels by way of entertainment instead of the legends of the saints ? Where would be our great St. Teresa had she continued her secret perusal of those dangerous ro-

mances which she found in the paternal home? Should we be called upon to lament the spiritual ruin of so many of our young people, had they not imbibed principles of infidelity and licentiousness from the pages of those miserable publications whose only aim is to depict vice in its most vivid colors, and to spread it broadcast throughout the land? Earnest Catholic parents, good Catholic schools, zealous priests, are indeed rich blessings for our Catholic youth; but let some dangerous book fall into a child's hands, and the efforts of parents, teachers, and priests will soon be frustrated.

May the present work, the "Life of Anne Catherine Emmerich," open in the future, as it has done in the past, a source of multiplied graces to its readers! May its perusal prepare them for that of another most intimately connected with it; viz., the "Life of Our Lord Jesus Christ and His Blessed Mother," compiled from the revelations made to this holy religious!

If some of our readers find it difficult to lend credence to the extraordinary favors conferred upon this privileged spouse of Christ, let them remember that they are facts not met in every-day life, consequently, facts to the contemplation of which the mind must be gradually trained as to any other subject of thought and reflection. Let them understand that *the arm of the Lord is not shortened*: that He who bestowed so many extraordinary favors on His servants both of the Old and the New Law, has the same power, the same freedom to show forth in our own day for the benefit of mankind His marvellous gifts in those whom He has selected and prepared for them.

To those of our readers who may feel an interest in the opinion of theologians concerning the present biography, we can afford evidence not to be lightly put aside.

Even in her lifetime, after she had been subjected to the test of a most rigid examination, sound theologians approved Anne Catherine Emmerich's supernatural state; after her death sound theologians wrote and examined her life, and distinguished ecclesiastical authorities set their seal of approbation upon it. Among the first class, we may mention Mgr. Clemens Auguste, Count von Droste-Vischering, Coadjutor-Bishop of Münster, later Archbishop of Cologne, who suffered so much, even two years' imprisonment, for defending and upholding the rights of the Church against the encroachments of the government. We mention the renowned Bishop Michael Sailer, of Ratisbon, and his coadjutor, the saintly Bishop Wittman, (1) one of the greatest prelates of our age. Some hours before the death of the latter, as we read in *Schmöger's Lebensbild*, he earnestly exhorted the Pilgrim (Brentano) to publish his manuscripts relating to the servant of God. "O my beloved friend," said he, "labor faithfully, labor faithfully for the

(1) Mgr. Wittman (1760-1833) was during the greater part of his life Director of the Seminary at Ratisbon, Bavaria. He was a man of extraordinary learning, eminent holiness, and untiring activity. Besides his position as Director of the Seminary and professor in several branches, for twenty-five years the administration of the Cathedral parish was intrusted to him. In this capacity, he gave thirty-seven hours catechetical instructions weekly, preached generally twice on Sundays, visited the hospitals, the prisons, and the poor-house every week, breaking to the afflicted inmates the Word of God and affording them spiritual consolation. Five o'clock every morning found the good priest in his confessional, where he often had an opportunity to exercise the peculiar facility bestowed upon him to reconcile inveterate enemies. Amid all these labors he still found time to compose a number of excellent works particularly adapted to the use of the clergy. His day was divided as follows: seven hours of prayer; seven hours of study; seven hours' work; and three hours' sleep taken on a plank with a book for his pillow. He died in his seventy-third year, lying on the floor under a crucifix, as preconized Bishop of Ratisbon. His death was lamented by all that knew him, but most of all by the poor, to whom he was a real father and benefactor. His name is held in veneration by the Catholics of southern Germany.—Taken from Herder's Lexicon.

honor of Jesus Christ! Go on courageously!"—So spoke the dying Bishop as he blessed Brentano, and congratulated him in the hearing of all around upon having noted down the visions of Anne Catherine, to the publication of which he had in their very first interview urged him. Nor must we omit Sister Emmerich's extraordinary confessor, the pious and learned Dean Overberg, for a time Director of the Seminary at Münster. We shall often meet his name in the following pages. To the foregoing illustrious names may be added those of Count von Stolberg and Joseph Goerres who, though not in the ranks of the priesthood, so excelled in theological learning and sound judgment that their words were received as oracles in their time.

All these distinguished men knew Anne Catherine Emmerich personally and, like innumerable other witnesses of her life, pronounced her a true spouse of Christ, a chosen soul endowed with extraordinary graces and privileges.

Let us now turn to the second class of witnesses, to the sound theologians that wrote and examined her life at a later period. The notes taken by Clement Brentano at the bedside of the ecstatica during his six years' stay in Dülmen, were at his death bequeathed as a precious legacy to Christian Brentano, his brother. The latter handed them over to the Abbot Haneberg, later Bishop of Spire, with the understanding that they should at some future day be arranged and published. But the pious Abbot, a sincere admirer of Sister Emmerich and fully conscious of the treasure in his possession, could not find the time necessary

for the accomplishment of so great a work ; viz., the publication of the Life of Christ with that of the venerable Sister herself.

Almighty God called another to undertake the task, one eminently competent, one who united deep learning with solid piety. This man was Very Rev. Carl Erhard Schmöger, C.SS.R., who had in 1850 entered the Congregation of the Most Holy Redeemer as a secular priest of more than ordinary learning. His Superiors soon discovered his extraordinary talents and uncommon love for the study of theology. He was, consequently, engaged for years as professor in its different branches, dogmatic, hermeneutic, and exegetic, besides which he for some time taught philosophy. As he was constantly enriching his mind by the reading of the Holy Fathers, his keen eye could detect at a glance the least inaccuracy in any author respecting Catholic faith or tradition. This was an excellent preparation for Father Schmöger's later providential mission.

Gladly and with noble generosity, Abbot Haneberg delivered Brentano's manuscripts to such a man, to one whom he considered so well qualified for the work, and by whom that rich treasure of God's mercy was to be opened to the faithful. Meanwhile, Divine Providence favored the undertaking. Father Schmöger found access to many documents concerning the civil and ecclesiastical trials to which Sister Emmerich had been subjected, and this enabled him to give a still more correct picture of her interior and exterior life. The task was begun in obedience to the command of Superiors. Encouraged by men like Abbot Hane-

berg and Very Rev. Frederic Windischmann, Vicar-General of Munich, and supported by the prayers of many pious souls, Father Schmöger continued and accomplished it only after years of hard and oft-interrupted labor; for during the latter part of his life, he held the office of Provincial of his Congregation in Bavaria. Although himself a renowned theologian, he never failed to submit the result of his careful researches to other theologians and authorities upon whose learning and solidity he could safely rely. And so the *Life of Anne Catherine Emmerich* was published for the first time in 1870, with the approbation of the Bishop of Limbourg and the permission of Father Schmöger's Superior, the General of the Redemptorists at Rome.

The fact that not one voice was raised against his works after their publication by the Catholic press; the fact that his books found their way unmolested into the houses of thousands, as the "*Dolorous Passion*," the only compilation from Sister Emmerich's revelations published during Brentano's lifetime, had previously done; the fact that the *Life of the Stigmatisee* was immediately translated into French and Italian with the approbation of orthodox Bishops; the fact that in Germany a second edition of the said *Life* soon followed the first, and that new demands now render a third necessary—these facts might, we think, be accepted as sufficient proofs of God's blessing on the work.

But when great men like Dom Guéranger, Abbot of Solesmes, and Very Rev. F. Windischmann of Munich, whose names are known throughout the Catholic world, speak in

the highest terms of it, have we room to fear not being in harmony with Catholic faith and teaching if we lend to it our meed of praise? Dom Gueranger (whose word, as Rev. Frederic Windischmann tells us, is of more weight with him than that of a thousand others) expresses his conviction that Anne Catherine Emmerich had a mission from God and that she faithfully fulfilled the same; otherwise God never would have lavished so abundant and so extraordinary favors upon her. It was hers to bring before the mind of the German nation the Gospel in its most minute details just at a time when the Divinity of Christ and the Gospel truths were most strenuously denied by the philosophers so-called of the day. And here the learned Abbot expresses his astonishment at the way in which she fulfilled her mission. That a poor, uneducated peasant-girl in the heart of Europe should describe in their smallest details the various characters and languages, manners and customs of different and far-off countries; that she should do all this with perfect accuracy with respect to the varied circumstances of geography, topography, and archæology of times long passed, is certainly sufficient to astound even the most prudent and learned.

Rev. F. Windischmann, himself a warm friend of Father Schmöger, considers it something very wonderful that in all Sister Emmerich's descriptions of the various circumstances and situations in which the Sacred Person of Our Lord figures; viz., at meals, at marriage-feasts, on journeys, etc., we find not the least trace of anything unworthy of Him. All and everything He does or says is animated by a cer-

tain nobleness indicative of His Divine Personality. This, he concludes, Anne Catherine could never have done had her work been a mere human invention.

These facts would seem proof sufficient to establish the truth of Sister Emmerich's revelations. But we have still some others to bring forward.

Rev. Alban Stolz, Professor in the Seminary of Freiburg, and a famous German author, mentions in the description of his journey to Jerusalem that a certain Franciscan, Father Wolfgang of Jerusalem, told him that for six years he had made the statements of Anne Catherine Emmerich respecting the Holy Land, as given in Brentano's "Dolorous Passion," a point of special study. The result of his observations was, that they are perfectly correct in all their details. Rev. Stolz tells us on the same page that one Professor Hug, a man known to be not over-credulous on the subject of visions or revelations, one day expressed to his pupils his surprise that the statements of the nun of Dülmen agree so exactly with those of the Jewish historian Josephus. (1)

Rev. Anton Urbas, Parish-priest and Canon of the Cathedral of Laybach, Austria, published a book in 1884, entitled "*Die Reiche der Heiligen Drei Könige.*" He mentions in the preface that he had read Anne Catherine Emmerich's Life, Visions, and Revelations for a considerable time without being able to harmonize many points that he found therein. Some things seemed to him very beautiful, useful, and correct; but others were hard to accept. Instead

(1) See "Sem, Cham, and Japhet," by Alban Stolz.

of denouncing the whole as the pious dream of a good nun, he set himself to the task of studying the geography of Asia in all its details. As he studied he compared his researches with the statements of A. C. Emmerich. The result of his earnest and honest investigation was, that he publicly acknowledged Sister Emmerich to be the most correct geographer, topographer, and archæologist in the world, and that his first difficulties were to be attributed rather to a want of knowledge on his own part than to any fault on that of the wonderfully enlightened Sister.

St. Paul writes to the Corinthians (I. Cor. i. 28, 29), "God has chosen the foolish things of the world that He may confound the wise, and the weak things of the world God has chosen that He may confound the strong that no flesh should glory in His sight." Are not these words here literally verified?

Canon Urbas says, moreover: "The works of Sister Emmerich are a rich mine. Some few remarks often throw much light on certain subjects. Like cross-road signs, they point out the right way. Their power to move and vivify the soul is especially noticeable. Here, as in no other book outside the Holy Scriptures, do we find words of eternal life."

But coming nearer home, we could cite many distinguished ecclesiastics as staunch supporters of Sister Emmerich and her revelations. We shall limit ourselves to two whose rank in the sacred hierarchy lends greater weight to their authority; viz., the saintly John N. Neumann, Fourth Bishop of Philadelphia, and the lately de-

ceased Bishop Tœbbe, of Covington, Ky. That the former favored her works, may be seen by a reference to his *Life*. In it we read that among others books which he imported from Europe in the early days of his ministry, he called particularly for those of A. C. Emmerich; the latter, Bishop Tœbbe, showed his appreciation of the same by heartily approving the new edition of the "*Life of Jesus*," compiled from her revelations. (1)

But as some critic may object that even great theologians may be deceived in such matters, we shall refrain from arguments of our own in its defence, referring our readers to the rules of Pope Benedict XIV. which Rome follows in the canonization of such souls as were favored in life with visions and revelations. By the application of these rules (which may be found in the author's preface) any fair-minded Catholic may judge whether such visions and revelations are from God or not.

If the life of Anne Catherine Emmerich may be tested by these rules, we may safely conclude that her extraordinary gifts were indeed from God; for what is considered by the Holy Father and his Cardinals a sufficient guaranty of truth in the process of canonization, ought to be sufficient also to satisfy the inquiries of the severest critic. Let the reader study without prejudice the *Life* of this favored soul, let him apply to it the aforesaid rules, and then only let him form his judgment of the same.

In conclusion, we beg leave to state that the translation

(1) "*Das arme Leben und bittere Leiden unseres Herrn Jesu Christi und seiner heiligsten Mutter Maria*," published by Fr. Pustet & Co.

of the present work was undertaken with the sole view to extend the reign of Jesus Christ in hearts and to further the coming of His kingdom upon earth. Our aim has been to reproduce carefully and conscientiously from the original every word that fell from the lips of the stigmatisée ; whilst, to suit the taste of English readers, the accompanying matter has been somewhat condensed, though not to the detriment of the author's meaning. Like the original it has been submitted to the judgment of competent persons and been thoroughly revised by an able theologian.

February 5, 1885.

PREFACE TO THE SECOND EDITION.

One of the hopeful signs of our times, despite a spirit of worldliness and polite sensualism, is the growing interest which is being manifested in the study of the lives of the mystics. It is evidence of how far the Church of God has lifted society out of the dross of materialism, when her great heroes and heroines of virtue, whose hearts were so unreservedly and passionately set upon things not of this earth, and never appealing to anything but the highest and noblest in their fellow men, are receiving a recognition so sincere and so profound. Nor is this recognition confined to the children of the "household of the faith." The "mystical" literature of the Catholic Church is read by a great number of non-Catholics who are engaged in a sincere search after truth. The writer has in mind the testimony of more than one devout convert, who owes the first dawning of the Light to the reading of the life of a saint. And this is but natural. The blending of the potential perfections of heaven with the actual experiences of earth, so impressively illustrated in the lives of the saints, brings the well disposed mind into such close touch with the supernatural, that all worldly concerns appear dwarfed and pale. The tree is judged by its fruit, and the conclusion is, that a church which can produce such exalted characters must have within her the divinity of the Gospel and the truth as it has been revealed by Jesus Christ.

Considering these facts, it is with joy and edification we hail this second English edition of the life of Anne Catherine Emmerich. Already her name is well known to the whole Catholic world. When the record of the wonderful