

“Answers To Objections on TLIG”

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Introduction

Over the past few years, a number of objections have been heard by this author and in general by those who evangelize on the inspirations of *True Life In God*, received by Vassula Ryden (“Vassula”) most commonly referred to as the “Messages of TLIG”.

This paper will not address objections from non Christians, as the underlying premise is that non Christians need to first accept the Divine authority of Jesus, before they can accept TLIG, because of the large number of inspirations from Jesus that can be found in TLIG.

It is the belief of the author that Christian objections to TLIG are often the result of a poor understanding of the Messages of TLIG, either because they are not read in their totality or because they are not read in prayer to the Triune God. Whereas some have objections that are based in hearsay evidence, others object to these inspirations in principle, based on their fear of possibly being misled into a dogmatic error. After all, it is safer to stay with the “tried and true” traditions of their Christian Church, than to follow something that may sound good, but may ultimately be proven wrong.

One can hardly disagree with the notion of “proceeding with caution”. However, if God is truly speaking today, His people cannot and should not ignore their Master’s voice.

It is hoped that the following answers to the most common objections (or questions) will provide some comfort to those who seek sincere answers, so that they could indeed “proceed with caution” and feel at ease to read the TLIG Messages. May the Holy Spirit enlighten us all who seek with sincerity and child like heart.

1. Does the Church approve TLIG?

- ❖ The Church is slow and deliberate in action, and for good reason. Throughout the centuries of Church history, many a charismatic person has risen with spiritual pronouncements of one sort or another that have been proven wrong! Time has a way of “sifting” and separating truth from fiction. The “flash in the pan” and the latest novelty may just be wrong!

Yet, God is not dead! God would not remain silent in our times, when we live at an age of debasement and sin that is unrivaled in the history of mankind! Consider, for example the global sin of abortion: Estimates vary, but it is reasonable to state that in the last 35 years since abortion has

widely become legal, more than 1.5 billion babies have been killed¹ before their birth! This level of homicide² is unparalleled in history! God is appalled³ at our degree of debasement... how could our living God remain silent at this magnitude of human carnage?

Those who believe in the authenticity of the Bible as a divine inspiration know that our heavenly Father has often intervened in order to save His people. When He did so, He always selected whomsoever He pleased to act as His mouth piece (we call them Prophets). Inevitably, His Prophets were either very reluctant to embark on prophetic tasks (remember Jonah?) and at times were ill equipped to undertake their mission (Moses had a stutter!) so, why would God act differently in our times? Vassula too, was reluctant to accept this prophetic mission (Ref: TLIG Messages of (a) Jan. 21, 1987- **"...daughter, will you revive My Church? Oh Jesus, You ask something I am unable to do for You!"**; (b) Jan. 30, 1987- **"I have chosen a nothing"** and (c) Dec. 10, 2001 - **"I had to find a blank piece of cloth on which I would design with My Own Hand the ornamental pattern of roses I had in mind"**).

This puts us in a dilemma: If we accept that God *may be speaking to us today*, and as the Church takes its good (and slow) time to verify and pronounce on TLIG, can we afford to wait and not pay immediate attention? Do we know if we will be alive tomorrow, or in the next 5 minutes? Prudence says "proceed with caution", and it is in this manner that people should proceed, when contemplating to read the TLIG Messages.

What is amazing is that when we start reading these TLIG Messages (while in prayer and as God's children) a miracle happens and we DO "HEAR" THE VOICE OF OUR MASTER coming through these inspirations! God speaks to our hearts and He helps us KNOW it is He who speaks! Thus we, as individuals, become convinced and become converted by God Himself!

In any event, God has given us *the* test to know if "the prophecy" is from Him: Seek and find the good fruits⁴. As shown in a later answer, in this document, the fruits of TLIG **are** good!

¹ As reported by Elizabeth Rosenthal in The New York Times, on October 12, 2007: "In 1995, the number of worldwide abortions was 42 million, according to a study by the Guttmacher Institute." Thus, extrapolating for the past 35 years, the worldwide number of abortions is estimated nearly at 1.5 billion!

² People argue about freedom of women to choose... yet, by any reasonable estimate, most abortions (by far) occur after the first 5 weeks of conception, but embryo has: its own unique combination of Chromosomes (hence its own DNA) from the first to the 3rd day; its own blood type and its own heart beat by the 22nd day (Ref: <http://www.nrlc.org/ABORTION/facts/fetusdevelopment.htm>), etc. hence, by any legal standards, at least by the 22nd day, **an embryo is a unique human individual with its own DNA, heart beat and blood type that are different from the mother's**. It is not a "choice" but it is a baby, as confirmed in the Bible: Job 31:15; Psalm 22:9-10; Psalm 58:3; Psalm 139:13; Isaiah 44:2; Isaiah 44:24; Jeremiah 20:17; and especially Luke 1:41 and Luke 1:44.

³ TLIG – Oct. 22, 1996: "today, to My great sorrow, a huge population from every country is being drawn to worship the Beast and he has become for them their ruler and their god, for they have accepted his kingdoms and their luxury; they have become the traders of the earth; yes! they have set their hearts on the fruits of the world; deceived by Satan, they promote error, obsessed with their sins, they promote liberalism and the like, defying the Truth and the Tradition of My Church; the Lie is defying the Truth..."

⁴ Matthew 7:16

- ❖ Whereas it is possible for the Church to approve locutions and inspirations as Prophetic, it is rare to do so while the person is alive, principally because Church “approval” may lead people to assume the person receiving the inspirations (Vassula in this case) is a Saint.

In the Catholic Churches (both Roman and Orthodox) there exists a very well defined process for the canonization of an individual. As we all know, one of the most significant steps to canonization is that the person in question must first be dead!

Whereas some Bishops, Cardinals, Monsignors, etc. of the Catholic Church accept the Inspirations of TLIG, others from their brethren do not, and this is not unusual. In such circumstances, the Roman Catholic Church studies the matter and issues pronouncements. Though TLIG has been studied for 2 ½ years, and the questions in the ensuing dialog were answered to the satisfaction of the CDF (when Cardinal Ratzinger was the Prefect – see below), it appears that the Holy See wants to wait longer, before it outright approves of TLIG (and possibly declare Vassula a Prophet, hence a Saint!) However, Vassula remains very much alive, and there is no Canonization in process for her.

Thus we need to recognize that the Holy See has not condemned TLIG, and that there are many in the Catholic Clergy who think Vassula receives inspirations from God!

- ❖ The Vatican has reviewed the TLIG Messages for 2 ½ years, and their formal dialog is to be found in www.tlig.org.

Upon the conclusion of this dialog, the then Prefect of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, (“CDF”), then Cardinal Ratzinger, now Pope Benedict XVI, has declared⁵ that: “The faithful, at the disposition of the local Bishop, may participate in the ecumenical prayer groups of Mrs. Ryden”.

What this statement clearly says is:

- a) The TLIG Messages are not condemned (if they were, CDF would state so), and
- b) It implies is that there is no objection to the TLIG inspirations, and the faithful may gather in *ecumenical groups*⁶ read them, if the local Bishop agrees.

Some Catholic Bishops **do agree**, and the TLIG Messages have received both the official “**Imprimatur**” (this means it can be printed and read by Roman Catholics) and “**Nihil Obstat**” (this means there are no objections for Roman Catholics to read).

It should be noted that among the misinformation against TLIG that one can find in the Internet, some erroneously state that *Imprimatur* and *Nihil Obstat* should not have been issued in light of the

⁵ See Attachment # 1

⁶ Meaning prayer groups, regardless of denomination.

“Notification”. Such statements are wrong in that the Notification issued is one of caution, not a prohibition!

- ❖ The Orthodox Churches (they are Catholic, also) do not have a unified ecclesiastical hierarchy. With respect to TLIG most of them prefer to maintain a “wait & see” attitude.

The Editor of one of the journals of the Orthodox Church of Greece states that Vassula has *by her own accord* “excommunicated herself in form, if not in substance”. Nothing could be farther from the truth. Not only Vassula has not excommunicated herself (an even that is not possible in the Orthodox Canon, as excommunication is an act of “anathema” rendered by a Bishop, not a lay person) but she maintains her standing in the Orthodox Church by having an Orthodox Priest as her confessor.

Again, misinformation that circulates against TLIG includes a statement that Vassula receives Holy Communion from the Roman Catholic Church, an event that would render an Orthodox in violation of the Orthodox Canon that prohibits Orthodox from receiving the Eucharist from a Church that the Orthodox have excommunicated (as for example the Roman Catholic Church). This statement (or perception) is simply wrong, because in 1965 both the Pope Paul VI and the Patriarch of Constantinople, Athenagoras HAVE LIFTED the excommunication⁷ toward one another, and as a consequence, the Roman Catholic Church now permits the Orthodox to receive the Eucharist (Canon 844 §3). The decision of Patriarch Athenagoras to lift the Excommunication of the Roman Church was reaffirmed by his successor, Patriarch Dimitrios who directed⁸ that “an Orthodox could receive Holy Communion from a Roman Catholic Priest”.

Yet, it appears that Church politics interfere with God’s desires that we may all be one⁹. The Orthodox Bishops have been too slow to accept the lifting of the excommunication, and they have been pressuring¹⁰ Bartholomew I, the current Orthodox Patriarch of Constantinople, to distance his Church from the Roman Church.

Nevertheless, the former excommunication remains lifted! Therefore, officially, the Orthodox do not consider the Roman Catholic as excommunicated, in spite of what certain Orthodox Bishops choose to do! Why would then be wrong for any Orthodox to receive Holy Communion from a Roman Catholic Priest?

⁷ See http://www.brainyhistory.com/events/1965/december_7_1965_130728.html

⁸ Reported in the Journal *Episkepsis*, Dec. 15, 1977, pp. 34; and Nos. 139, 159, 161, 214).

⁹ John 17:11; John 17:21-22

¹⁰ Newsweek Magazine, November 3, 1997: “But Bartholomew’s blunt language may have less to do with Christian ecumenism than with Orthodox Church politics. These fellows aren’t called Byzantine for nothing. There are many bishops in the Orthodox churches of Greece, Russia and elsewhere who believe that he is already too friendly with Rome.”

The previous notwithstanding, for the Orthodox Churches to approve TLIG as one body, it probably requires a world-wide synod... something that last happened in the eighth century AD. The author believes that only a divine intervention would cause the Orthodox to convene in a Panorthodox Synod in order to approve TLIG!

- ❖ Those who are converted readers of TLIG are called by God to live a life that is true to God, a “**True Life in God**”! Doing so simply adds to the “good fruits” that could help new readers discern the truth!

2. The Roman Catholic Church Does Not Approve TLIG

- ❖ In January of 2007, Cardinal Levada of the CDF stated in a letter (see Attachment #2) that (a) the “old notification” of 1995 stands, (b) that Vassula maintains that the Messages are not divine but personal meditations and (c) that the faithful should not pray in TLIG prayer groups. Looking at each of these points:

- a. The 1995 Notification instructed the faithful to “**read with Caution, because TLIG has theological errors**”. It cited such errors, as for example: “Vassula calls Jesus “Father”; and “The antichrist will prevail” (this latter statement is Not in TLIG – read TLIG, March 17, 1993), etc.

In fact, **never did the CDF instruct the faithful not to read** TLIG, but to read it with caution! No one argues with this (see answers to objection #1).

However, there are theological problems with the “errors” cited in that 1995 Notification, which cause serious doubts to a faithful but also sincere, impartial, yet knowledgeable reader regarding the validity of that Notification. For example, the 1995 Notification states that Vassula confuses the persons of the Holy Trinity, because she calls Jesus “Father” when Yahweh is the Father, and Jesus is the Son... this of course contrasts sharply with the words of Jesus that “I and the Father are One¹¹”; and “he who sees Me, sees He who sent Me¹² (the Father)”. For an in depth Response to the older Notification, please read: “*Touched By The Spirit of God – Vassula and the CDF*” By Fr. Edward D. O’Connor, C.S.C.

- b. Vassula emphatically disagrees that she has ever said that the Messages are not of divine inspiration.
- c. Cardinal Levada’s comment for the faithful to not participate in prayer with TLIG groups is most strange, and definitely in contradiction with the Canons cited in the letter, namely 215

¹¹ John 10:30

¹² John 12:45

and 223 §1. These Canons encourage people to form associations and to pray! Any statements that invite the faithful not to pray with other Christians is simply unchristian!

- ❖ Given the above, the Pope's letter (Attachment #1)... is the best he could do, and he did so, in support of TLIG!
- ❖ Some Orthodox and some Roman Catholic Bishops (at local level) approve of TLIG and some do not approve. However, no formal Orthodox or Roman Catholic position on TLIG has been pronounced.

Certainly, according to the Roman Catholic Canon 50, if the Church is to arrive at a conclusion, it must hear the defense of the person under scrutiny. The "dialog" between Vassula and the Vatican concluded satisfactorily for TLIG, as evident by the fact that Pope Benedict XVI (a) agreed to publish this dialog in the TLIG books - it has been included in Volume 12 of the handwritten edition – and (b) issued the clarification letter (Attachment #1).

There have been no additional formal "hearings" specific to TLIG by either the Roman Catholic or the Orthodox Church and **TLIG remains not condemned** by either.

- ❖ Protestant Churches are by and large not aware of TLIG, hence there is nothing to comment upon.

One may postulate on difficulties that mainline Protestants may have with Catholic (Orthodox and Roman) Traditions not explicitly stated in the Bible, such as Confession to a Priest, the true nature of the Holy Eucharist, salvation through faith alone, prayers to the Holy Mother and the Saints, etc. It is not the purpose of this document to discuss doctrinal differences between Protestants and Catholics... however, the author believes these differences stem from serious misunderstandings that can be explained away in a brotherly and humble way.

3. My Bishop/Priest tells me to stop with TLIG

- ❖ This is a delicate issue. On the one hand, Jesus does not advocate anarchy¹³ or rebellion in His Church. On the other hand he tells us that we ought to be one¹⁴. Simply put, we ought to obey Jesus before we owe obey His Church, and especially with regard to the Orthodox vs. Roman Catholic Churches, the Churches are no longer excommunicated though differences continue to remain.

Consequently, we need to remember that individual Clergy have their own opinions - Some are right, some are wrong, and in humility and patience we ought to stand firm with our Clergy

¹³ TLIG - Oct. 22, 1996: "Remain obedient to My Church"

¹⁴ TLIG - Dec. 10, 2001: "why has no one listened to My supplication while I prayed to the Father that you may be one? today, had you responded to My call by showing obedience, you would be sharing one Cup around one altar"

reminding them that TLIG is not condemned and that if they oppose TLIG, they should reconsider their position by digging deeper into the issues, as there are a great many who advocate in favor of TLIG.

- ❖ Any Bishop/Priest's opinion is subject to the authority of the Holy See, and the Holy See HAS NOT CONDEMNED TLIG. Therefore an individual Clergyman should be cautious before condemning something that we claim is the Word of God in our times!
- ❖ We also need to remember that Popes John Paul II¹⁵ and Benedict XVI¹⁶ have blessed TLIG.
- ❖ Jesus does not want rebels, so obey the Bishop/Priest, but obey Jesus above all, therefore: (a) when the Church closes the door, find a window; (b) when you want to evangelize do not forget to turn to those that need it the most, e.g. the un-churched, the sick, the prisoners.

4. I am too busy with other Church activities

- ❖ When my friends claim they have no time to read TLIG or to get involved with a TLIG Prayer Group, the author usually reminds them that:
 - God speaks in our days; will they refuse to hear Him?
 - God calls TLIG "His most important gift to our generation", why ignore it?
- ❖ Other paths to God are also valid, but people should first "taste" the TLIG goodness, and then decide whether to be converted to it. To ignore the TLIG messages without really having read them is such a folly that only the enemy of Jesus would enjoy.

5. I have enough, I do not need anything else Spiritual

Such a claim requires deep reflection/meditation. The one who thinks this way should be helped to answer for himself the following questions:

- ❖ Are you sure you are already a Saint?
- ❖ Do you believe in God, and if yes:
 - Is He dead?

¹⁵ John Paul II has given his Apostolic Blessing to the TLIG Prayer Groups – See www.tlig.org

¹⁶ His letter in Appendix # 1

- If He is alive then can He speak to us?
- If He speaks to us, would He not do it as he has always done in the past?
- Isn't His Word life, including Spiritual life?
- Why wouldn't anyone want more life, more Spirituality?
- Is our enemy putting such thoughts in our minds?

6. TLIG is a Cult

This notion is absolute nonsense. None of the Cult characteristics exist in TLIG, for example:

- ❖ No "New Revelations" are introduced in TLIG. The themes are absolutely consistent with the Bible.
- ❖ No personal following of Vassula is practiced nor does it exist; TLIG converts are true and faithful Christians that follow the true God of the Holy Trinity.
- ❖ The "Fruits" are good – see www.tlig.org for the "fruits" of the testimonies from thousands of people and clergy.
- ❖ Contrary to a lot of "spiritualists" who are possessed and write, the TLIG Messages are Hieratic writing, and Vassula's hand is not "grabbed". She remains in full possession of her faculties, and receives locutions, just as all Saints have done in the past.
- ❖ You, as a convert to TLIG are free to come and go as you please.
- ❖ No brainwashing takes place. Individuals are encouraged to stay in their Church and to become better followers of their Church.
- ❖ Vassula earns NOTHING from presentations, books, nor does anyone around her.
- ❖ No dues required; regional voluntary groups have been set up as those regions see fit, for charity purposes. For example in the USA a 501c3 designated charitable organization has been set up, under the scrutiny of the US Government, customary for such charitable organizations.
- ❖ Far too many clergy from all Christian (and non Christian) denominations read TLIG, while they remain faithful to their Church.

7. I have seen “bad press” on TLIG in the Internet

- ❖ The Internet is like a big “soap box”
 - Anyone can write what they want, but is “it” true?
 - No editorial policing exists in the Internet
 - God’s will and God’s work ALWAYS have enemies!
- ❖ On religious matters, it is prudent to always check Official Websites, only, such as www.Vatican.va, etc.
- ❖ Those who seek sincere answers should reflect on these questions:
 - Why would any normal individual spend both serious money and serious time persecuting TLIG?
 - If TLIG is not from the True God, why don’t those individuals leave it up to the Church to condemn it, but instead they choose to be virulent attackers, and if they do so, is their behavior the pious behavior of a faithful Christian? If their behavior is not Christian, why read that web site?

8. How do I know TLIG is from God?

- ❖ Pick up a TLIG book, pray from your heart, then read... and God will let you KNOW and RECOGNIZE HIS VOICE in TLIG
- ❖ Seek the ‘fruits’ and you shall know

9. There are no Prophets in our times

Though Vassula has not been declared by the Church as a Prophet, she may one day be recognized as such. However, that we may have Prophets in our times is well recorded in our Bible, where it is revealed in:

- ❖ Acts 2:17: “and it shall be in the last days,’ god says, that I will pour forth of my spirit on all mankind; and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams;”

- ❖ Matthew 7:15-17: “Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly are ravenous wolves; you will know them by their fruits... every good tree bears good fruit, but the bad tree bears bad fruit¹⁷”.
- ❖ Matthew 7:20: “So then, you will know them by their fruits.”

10. God does not choose women as Prophets

God does not make distinctions among His children. Of course women CAN BE and HAVE BEEN Prophets, as shown in the Bible:

- ❖ Acts 2:17-18 (sons and daughters will prophesy)
 - ❖ Prophetess Deborah (Judges 4:4)
 - ❖ Prophetess Huldah (11 Chronicles 34:22-30)
 - ❖ Anna (Luke 2:36-38)
 - ❖ Elizabeth (2:41-55)
 - ❖ 4 Prophetesses - virgin daughters of Apostle Philip (Acts 21:9)
- Etc.

11. God would choose Sacerdotals for Prophets

- ❖ We do not dictate to God any course of action.
 - The Spirit “blows when and where He pleases” (John 3:8)
 - God has spoken through a DONKEY, why not a lay woman? (Numbers 22:28)
 - God’s truth is hidden from the wise but it is revealed to children (Matt 11:25; Luke 10:21)
- ❖ Almost all Prophets in the Bible were simple men and women.

12. I accept Christian Unity, but only when “you accept my dogma”

¹⁷ Author’s note: If the “fruits” are the criteria to recognize false prophets, then it follows that if the ‘fruits’ are good, then the prophet is good.

- ❖ God has asked us to be loving, not to be more correct viz. our brothers' faith.
- ❖ In TLIG God asks us¹⁸ not to differentiate among ourselves, but to behave like children.
- ❖ Our differences are not as important to the people, but they remain important to the hierarchy, only. As proof, where the demographics make it possible, Christians intermarry without regard to their denomination.

13. Cannot share the Eucharist with those outside of my Church

This is very similar to the issues discussed earlier regarding the separation of the Churches. To recap:

- ❖ Roman Catholics grant the Sacraments to the Orthodox Catholics (Canon 844, #3)
- ❖ Orthodox do not share with anyone (in spite of the "lifting" of the Roman Catholic excommunication), unless "they" return to the "true fold" of Orthodoxy.
- ❖ The Protestant view of Sacraments (more often than not) is not the same as with the Catholics, hence a separation de facto exists for the present time.
- ❖ God wants us to unite in our hearts and in the Sacraments. We need to pray for this.
- ❖ It may appear to be small but there are no theological reasons why we should separate Easter at different times. Were we to unite Easter, Jesus would unite us all¹⁹ around a single altar.

14. I disagree with the Pope as "Peter"

Perhaps the Churches will one day revert to the organization they had prior to the first ("great") schism of 1054AD. Up to that time, all Christian Sees recognized the "primacy of honor" of the Pope of Rome. Until then, we can only pray to God and remember the relevant TLIG Messages:

- ❖ The "3 iron bars" will melt and come together at the top
- ❖ It is possible for the institutions to unite under "Peter" as "first among equals", yet they could also remain under their own separate administration.
- ❖ In any event, God will decide on the form and structure His Church will take in the future, because we obviously are not able to resolve such issues due to our lack of humility.

¹⁸ TLIG – April 12, 1990: "I shall remind you not to differentiate yourselves in Me; I shall remind you to be united in heart and soul and love one another as I love you;"

¹⁹ TLIG – May 31, 1994

15. I disagree with the Catholic Sacraments

Such objections (and other similar ones, e.g. the role of St. Mary in our lives) are typically concerns of those with a Protestant background. To those we can only say:

- ❖ We do not agree, but we are not the Judge. Perhaps one day, soon, the Protestant Churches might return to the practice of honoring the Holy Eucharist as was the ancient tradition of the single (unified) Church of old (before the Schism), a tradition that is both recognized by the “Fathers²⁰” of the Church, and is reflected in TLIG.
- ❖ We want to UNITE in our hearts, while respecting each other in Christ’s love!

The previous are but a summary of the most common objections. The sincere reader is encouraged to seek and to speak to one of the regional coordinators for TLIG to follow up with any additional questions/issues.

“May God’s kingdom come on earth, as it is in Heaven.”

²⁰ The term “Fathers” refers to the early elders/Bishops of the Church during the formative first 3-4 centuries of the Christian Church.