

# Saint Dominic of Guzman

~ circa 1172-1221 ~

*The earliest accounts* of the life of St. Dominic narrate a miraculous episode in which the protagonists are the Angels.

It is about an event that left an indelible impression in the memories of the first Dominican brothers and which has been passed down from generation to generation. Here is the written version of Humbert of Rome in his "Legenda Sancti Dominici" written after 1235 which included "The Miracle of the Bread" in his collection. "At that time, the Preaching Friars were struggling as they resided at Saint Sisto in Rome. Still not well known, they were very poor, they frequently did not have even the minimal necessities. So one day it happened that the bursar, Brother Jacob del Miele (of the honey), a Roman, did not have bread to put on

that the baker usually made and sent over. They deposited the bread in silence at the head of the table where the man of God, Dominic, was seated and they quickly left. No one ever knew from whence they came nor where they went. After the two men disappeared, St. Dominic raised his hand and said, 'Now eat, my brothers!' It all happened because of divine benevolence and for the merits of the servant of God, Dominic; no one ever doubted it. They still swear to it many of the brothers who were there and are still living today." In the same way, Jacob of Varazze (+ 1298), in the *Legenda Aurea*, written in the 14<sup>th</sup> century, refers to the



the table for the brothers. The friars were sent out in a quest; they knocked at many homes, as usual, but came back to the monastery with very little bread. Nearing meal-time, the bursar presented to the servant of God, Dominic, who was in the house, about the reality of how things were. Joyfully and happily, Dominic gave thanks to God, comforted by a supernatural faith, and gave the order to serve the little bread they had at their disposition and to divide it. There were about 40 friars at the time in the monastery. The bell was rung, and the friars came into the refectory and recited the mealtime prayer in a joyful voice. They sat down at the table following the order. Smiling and in good humor, they broke the mouthful of bread that was allotted to each of them, when all of a sudden two young men enter the refectory, similar in appearance and in dress; they brought, hanging across their collarbone, sacks overflowing with bread, just like those

same episode, in which it is evidenced the stupor and the wonder of the friars who suddenly see these Angels who come to serve in the refectory.

In the life of Saint Dominic there were many episodes of battle against the devil, among which is what occurred in the church in the monastery of Bologna in which the devil tells him: "I make the friars arrive late for choir; in the dormitory I make them sleepy and negligent; in the refectory I gorge some of them and I starve the others; in the parlor I am the absolute boss, and the brothers I wield power over them so they gossip and make frivolous talk." Saint Dominic then brought the devil by force into the Chapter Room of the Monastery, but he refused to enter, saying: "It is the place of my defeat. Here the brothers confess, they make amends, they are renewed. That which in other places I gain, here I lose it all over again!"