

Saint Clement Maria Hofbauer

1751 - 1820

PARADISE

At times the blessed come to invite friends and followers in Heaven, to give them the advice of preparing themselves for their entry into the heavenly home, or to fulfill some promise made in life. In the processes of beatification and canonization of Saint Clement Maria Hofbauer (who died in 1820) it is written: "Zachary Werner, a prominent Catholic writer, had been the leader of the persecutors who expelled the Venerable Servant of God and his disciples from Warsaw. Later on, in Rome, he embraced the Catholic Faith, and it was by a special grace of the Divine Providence that this adversary of the Servant of God became then his disciple, friend and follower. For many years, until the death of the Venerable Servant of God, he submitted himself to his direction like a child. It was the First Sunday of Advent – as I believe to know with certainty – when (Werner) began his homily with these words, which I still keep in my memory: 'I will not live much longer; this indeed Father Hofbauer has told me. After reciting the evening prayers, I was lying in bed, when suddenly the room was brightened by a white light that surpassed the light of the sun. And in that splendor I saw Father Hofbauer, my friend and teacher. He had in his hands a lily, an olive branch and a palm and he spoke to me in this way: 'Zachary, come come, in a short time you will

come.' After saying that, Father Hofbauer disappeared. This apparition is not a fantasy. I was not dreaming, and it is certain that I had seen Father Hofbauer, as it is certain that I am alive and I am in the church at the presence of my Eucharistic God. A peculiar weakness remains with me still now, and I know for certain that soon I shall die.'

And just as Werner said, so it happened. After a few weeks had passed, as much as I now remember, after the Feast of the Epiphany of the year 1823 (if I am not mistaken) he died."

Among the miracles performed by the saint after his death, other three apparitions of the same are narrated, one of them was to a magistrate, a very good person, but by nature much averse and skeptical towards visions.

Saint Clement was born in Tasswitz in the Czech Republic on December 26, 1751. At the age of eight he was already working as apprentice to a baker in the town of Znaim (now Znojmo) in Moravia: his large family was left orphan of their father very early. Then he went to work as servant at a nearby abbey, where he attended also high school until the age of 16. He decided a little later to withdraw to hermitical life and spent two years in solitude, during that time the former student John Evangelist took the name Clement Maria. He seemed to have



abandoned his studies permanently, when in 1780 he returned to study in Vienna, the imperial capital. With the assistance of a wealthy family, he studied philosophy and theology at the University and learned catechesis at a school for teachers in Saint Anne. During a pilgrimage to Rome, in 1784, he entered the Congregation of the Redemptorists, founded by Saint Alphonsus Maria Liguori, and became a priest after professing his vows in 1785. For 21 years he was in Warsaw, establishing there the first house of the Redemptorists. He died on March 15, 1820.

