

Sister Anna Felix Menghini

1859

PURGATORY

In Foligno (Perugia) there is a monastery commonly known “of the countesses”, dedicated to Saint Anne and Saint Anthony. Here dwelled for several centuries a community of sisters of the Third Order Regular of St. Francis, founded around 1395 by Angelina of Marsciano, widow of Giovanni, count of Civitella del Tronto. In this monastery, Sister Teresa Margherita Gesta died of an apoplectic stroke on November 4, 1859, at the age of 62, after 34 years of religious life. During her saintly existence she had taken up in the monastery various responsibilities among which the one of Abbess, distinguishing herself for a spirit of poverty and for a scrupulous observance of the Rule. On November 16, twelve days after her death, to show how much she suffered in Purgatory, she appeared to her fellow sister Anna Felix Menghini. The latter one, between 9:30 and 10 of that morning went as usual to the guest house and as she was putting it in order, she heard some wailing and then distinctly a voice saying: “Oh God how much I suffer!” From the sound of the voice she understood that it was Sister Teresa Margherita, thus Sister Anna Felix asked her for what reason was she wailing. The fellow sister responded: “For poverty.”

Sister Anna Felix was left surprised and perturbed by the answer, knowing through direct experience, how exemplar Sister Teresa Margherita was in her poverty.

Then that blessed soul specified that the sins against poverty were to be attributed not directly to herself, but to the permissiveness and condescendence that she had

towards her fellow sisters regarding poverty.

Meanwhile the room became filled with a dense fog; Sister Anna Felix saw turning towards the door a shadow, who before departing exclaimed: “This is a mercy; I am not returning here anymore and as a sign of this...” at that instant a light knock on the door was heard.

When the fog disappeared, the sister, frightened, exited the room shouting. Her fellow sisters ran to her, and still trembling, she recounted the occurrence to them.

All of them became curious, went to the indicated place and on the doorframe, which is presently preserved in a wooden storage box in the first cloister to the right of the monastery, they saw burn marks that reproduced the shape of a skeletal right hand.

Seeing this sign the sisters believed all that Sister Anna Felix had narrated and made supplications for the soul of the deceased with penances and incessant prayers. The results were soon observed. On the evening of Friday, November 18, the same Sister Anna Felix, as she was about to fall asleep, heard her name called three times.

Then she saw a very luminous globe rising slowly high from the floor of the room. She heard distinctly the words: “On the day of the Passion I died; and on the day of the Passion I go to the glory. Be strong in suffering and take courage. Farewell, farewell.”

