

Saint Frances of Rome

1384 - 1440

PURGATORY

Saint Frances of Rome was led by the Archangel Raphael into purgatory and he showed her around. For the saint this was the “Kingdom of Pain”, divided into two large regions: the top region contains the souls suffering the pain of injury, meaning they could not see God and they suffered for minor sins. For these souls purgatory consists of an infinite nostalgia for God and His beatified vision. In the middle region of purgatory are the souls that suffer from faults too grave for which to make amends. This region is divided into three zones. The first is like a bog of frozen water; the second is like a pool of pitch that flows full of boiling oil; the third is like a pool of boiling foam that seems like liquefied silver and gold. Thirty-six angels have received from God the task of dipping the souls into these three pools. They do this with much respect and compassion for those souls. Lastly, the third region, which is the lowest, and the closest to hell, is full of a fire that penetrates the bones and the medulla, fire that is different from the fire of hell only because of its purifying and sanctifying power.

Also in this region there are three different zones. In the first there is a bit less suffering for there are the laymen,

Christians who live in the world and suffer punishment for grave fault for which they have not yet made amends; the second is where the pain is so grave that it is destined to the clerics that were not yet ordained priests, and therefore also the religious and the lay brothers; finally the third zone, the most painful is destined for the priests and bishops. Those that received the biggest graces during life and did not live their life in correlation to those graces making them worthy of suffering major pain just like the torment of hell except for a different duration. Also the type of pain is not the same for everyone, but it changes according to the number and the gravity of the faults committed and not made up for and according to the level of dignity of each person, the same goes for the duration and intensity of the pain.

Saint Frances however added that God received prayers and acts of contrition and penitence for the suffering of souls, except in the case in which there were particular motives for which those good deeds and prayers could not be applied to those souls, as for example, if one never had respect for the Mass or had failed to follow it or listen to it during the holy days. Saint Frances confirmed that prayer and good deeds offered by



the faithful in suffering for a certain soul in purgatory would go right away in favor of that soul but not only for the soul but also for all the others in virtue of the common existence. In the case in which a soul is already in glory, the merit of the prayers and good deeds will go in favor of other souls that are still suffering in purgatory.

