

Saint Peter Damian

Part 2

1007-1072

PURGATORY

In one story Saint Peter Damian narrates that on the solemnity of the Assumption of Mary each year thousands of souls were liberated from Purgatory. As proof of this he reported what happened in Rome in those years: “At that time on the night preceding the Feast of the Assumption of Our Lady it was still customary for the faithful to visit various churches walking in procession and carrying lit torches in their hands, during one of these nocturnal processions going up to Santa Maria in Araceli on the Capitoline a lady suddenly saw before her in the church her deceased godmother who died one year before. To assure herself whether it was truly her or if it was simply an illusion the lady decided to wait at the door of the church for the person who had appeared to her. Indeed after awhile this person also exited the door. Completely disturbed the lady approached her and after taking her aside, asked whether she was her godmother Marozia. Yes! Answered the deceased, *it’s really me*. Therefore the lady replied: “But how is it possible since you are by now dead for several months, how can you be now again among the living?” The deceased responded: *Until now I have been immersed in a terrible fire as chastisement, because as a youth I was very vain. But today the Blessed Queen of the world has descended to us and has rescued me and many others out of the flames of Purgatory, on the occasion of her Feast that is celebrated by the Church. The Blessed Mother repeats every year this miracle of*

mercy ... In thanksgiving for this grace we visit on this night her shrines. Although only I have appeared just to you, know nevertheless that we are here in a great number. To prove that all I tell you is the truth, know that one year from now, that is the next solemnity of Our Lady’s Assumption, you will die. If after this day what I told you will not be realized, you will be able to think that it was all an illusion and a deception! Saint Peter Damian declared that from that instant the lady prepared herself to die well with prayers, mortifications and penances, and indeed on the vigil of the Solemnity of the Assumption of Mary a serious illness afflicted her and she died on the following day.”

