

Saint Paul of the Cross

1694-1775

One day Saint Paul of the Cross had a demonic apparition, as reported by a witness:

“In the Retreat of San Angelo, where at the time he found himself as a sick person in the middle of the morning, two demons entered his room dressed in the black uniform of medical doctors. As if they had been rightly summoned, they began to give a consultation on the condition of his illness. But Paul quickly realized that the two men were two demons not two doctors, and putting a hand to his trusty walking cane, he drove them out saying: ‘Go to your own home, excommunicated scoundrels!’ And the vision quickly disappeared.”

The devils often tormented him when he spoke of God to his fellow Passionist brothers. Well aware of that and after every discourse with them he would affirm: “Oh, now I must pay for the talk that I did about God!” And this is what would happen when he wrote his letters of spiritual direction: “When he would then take a pen to write some letter to the glory of God, there were troubles. So numerous were they that molested him that, in his words, they seemed to be like flies and insects, buzzing and stinging, and at other times they would send his paper, quill, or inkwell flying across his cell. He would kick them out saying: ‘Parasites, vermin, slaves of hell, go away!’ They reserved the same molestations for him when he would get ready to recite the canonical hours or to pray, unleashing themselves upon him with infernal spite.”

The evil spirits sought many ways to bring him down. One of the direst was an attempt to so discourage and depress him as to reduce him to despair even to suicide. The Saint told his brother, Father John Baptist, who was also his spiritual director: “Today I felt extremely vigorous impulses to run off like a fugitive through these forests or to throw myself from the window.” And the devils mocked him by telling him: “You are already counted among the damned, because you have not done anything good! God has turned his back on you; there is no more hope of salvation for you!”

The devil then had it in for him because of the good that he performed with the missions to the people. In the one at

Mount Orgiali: “In the night that followed his sermon on peace, the devil yanked him out of his bed by his feet, and dragged him around telling him that he had come to this town to unsettle him and that he had robbed him of many souls.” And let us not even talk about what the demon did to him when the bandits confessed!

A witness for the cause narrates that: “In the mission of Sutri, one evening, while we were saying the Holy Rosary, so much that I (at the time I was still a child), as well as my mother, my father and the whole family, we suddenly heard a very loud clamor come from the room above us, so much so that I, extremely frightened, ran to throw myself into



the arms of my Uncle Joseph. The following morning we found out the reason for what had happened. We found Paul so badly finished off that he seemed to have been suffering an illness for six months. My mother interrogated his mission companion Father Marcellinus: ‘But what is wrong with Father Paul?’ ‘They gave it to him! They gave it to him!’ ‘Who gave it to him?’ ‘The devils, the devils!’ replied Father Marcellinus.”

And also, in another mission, Saint Paul was sleeping in the same room as Father Nicholas, when the devil appeared to him in the form of a horrible giant. Father Nicholas also saw it, who terror-stricken, asked the Saint: “Do you see it?” “Be quiet”, he replied, “do not be afraid, it did not come for you, no!” And without touching Father Nicholas, the demon inflicted so many beatings on the Saint, that for days the black marks from the hits he received were still visible on his legs.