

Reflection on Saint Vincent Ferrer

Peggy Brechtel

Oct 17, 2018

In the year 1374 the whole of Northeastern Spain was suffering terribly from famine and disease. Vincent Ferrer told the people that their forgetfulness of the laws of God brought this famine upon them and that it was a punishment for their sins, and he called on them to repent. He called on them to trust totally in divine mercy. In his preaching he paused and announced that two ships would arrive in the port that evening loaded with wheat. The people were starving and the weather at the time was very stormy. The people were angry with him for such folly. But, as he predicted, two ships did come loaded with wheat. Vincent gained a reputation from this incident.

Saint Vincent was the fourth of eight children born on January 23, 1350 in Valencia, Spain. Before his birth, his father had a dream that a Dominican priest while giving a sermon suddenly stopped and announced that the baby to be born would be a Dominican whose deeds would fill heaven with joy and hell with fear.

His mother, who generally had very difficult pregnancies, felt great through this pregnancy. She had a habit of taking flour to a blind woman who she asked to pray for her to have a safe pregnancy. The blind woman rested her head on the mother's womb. In astonishment she declared that the baby had healed her blindness. The woman could see!

On Oct. 3, 1396 when St. Vincent was at death's door from fever, the Lord appeared to him and commanded him to preach. Go out to preach the encroachment of judgment day. The pope gave him unfettered power to preach everywhere and anywhere. He would preach "Fear the Lord and give him honor, because the hour of the Lord is come." Because the people believed his preaching it delayed the end of the world and the coming of the anti-Christ. He preached for 20 years. He frequently had 80,000 listeners and all heard him in their own native tongue.

After preaching he would bless and cure the sick. On one occasion 18,000 Muslims were converted, and 200,000 Jews were cured in the year 1400 alone.

He performed so many miracles it was a miracle when he performed no miracles.

He grew ill in Brittany and died there on April 5,

Lessons from Vincent: message of reverent fear: there is a judgment coming. We must repent.

Profound hope: If we redeem the time by converting and by manfully battling the world, the flesh and the devil, and practicing the virtues, we have every reason to hope that come what may we will gain eternal life.

There is so much more to learn about this wonderful Dominican saint!