

Blessed Angela of Foligno

1248-1309

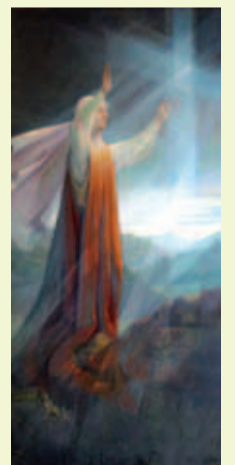
The spiritual experience of Blessed Angela of Foligno is among the most profound and significant experiences in Catholic tradition.

The stages in the ascetical and mystical journey of Angela can be found in the book known as the “Memorial”, better known as “The Book of Blessed Angela of Foligno.” The book was edited by Friar Arnaldo, her relative and confessor.

Among the many passages we cite the one about the vision of the Angelic Thrones: “...Then I saw Jesus Christ arriving with an army of Angels, and the magnificence of His escort was savored by my soul with immense pleasure. I was surprised I was able to rejoice at the sight of the Angels, because, as a rule, all my joy is focused on Jesus Christ. But I soon noticed in my soul two

brought me such ecstasy. I would never have believed that the most holy Angels were so gentle and capable of giving souls such delights. I had prayed to the Angels, especially the Seraphim, and the most Holy Guardians told me: ‘Now you are receiving what the Seraphim possess and you can thus take part in their joy.’”

So great is Blessed Angela’s devotion to the Holy Eucharist that one day, during the Holy Mass celebrated by Friar Arnaldo, she hears the words: “Here is all the joy of the Angels. Here is the delight of the Saints. Here is all your happiness. At this moment, the Son of God, in His



perfectly distinct joys: one coming from God, the other from the Angels. But they did not resemble each other. I was admiring the magnificence which surrounded the Lord. I asked what it was that I was witnessing. ‘They are the Thrones,’ a voice said. The multitude was dazzling and infinite, so much so that, if number and measure were not laws of creation, I would have thought that the sublime crowd before my eyes was countless and boundless. I could not see the beginning or the end of that crowd, whose number transcends our figures.”

In another passage, we witness Blessed Angela’s overflowing joy for having experienced the presence of the Angels in her life, in particular, that of the Seraphim: “I was experiencing such infinite delights and such joy at the presence of the Angels. Their conversation filled me with such happiness that never have their words ever

humanity and divinity, is on the altar and is in the company of an immense multitude of Angels.”

Unfortunately, we don’t know the date of Angela’s birth. Some say she was born in 1248 at Foligno of a well-to-do family. In 1285, she is converted, goes to confession in the Cathedral Church of St. Feliciano of Foligno, after which — due to her desire for adulation and her incessant search for the vanities of life — she got away from her religious practices and maybe from the faith itself. She begins to live according to the Rule of the Third Order Franciscan and shares her home with a friend by the name of Masazuola. During her pilgrimage to the Tomb of St. Francis of Assisi, she received a great mystical grace. Around 1291, she enters the Third Order Franciscan. She dies on January 4, 1309.