

Blessed Camilla Battista Da Varano

1458-1524

Camilla Battista Da Varano is the daughter of the Julius Caesar Da Varano, Lord of Camerino in the 1400s, and of a concubine of his.

Although she lived from infancy in a court filled with luxury and riches, at the age of 23 years old she decided to withdraw herself into a convent amongst the Poor Clares of Urbino at first, and then the Monastery of Santa Maria Nuova at Camerino, which was restored by her father who was initially opposed very strongly to her choice. From her there are several writings which came forth. In some of them Camilla describes her angelic experiences. Often the Angels appeared to her in the form of adolescents dressed in white, with wings of gold, and they helped her discover the tricks of the devil, defending her with their swords of fire against the diabolical assaults, consoling her when she was thrown half dead onto the pavement of her cell. Among her writings, these merit particular attention: *Remembrances of Jesus* (1483); *Praise of the Vision of Christ* (1479-1481); *The Spiritual Life* (1491), an autobiography of the Blessed from 1466 to 1491, considered a jewel of art and of interior life. In this work the Blessed describes how two Seraphim appeared to her because they were assigned to help her to understand in her soul the mysterious workings of unitive love which she describes to us like this: "Two angels came to me, dressed in resplendent white garments which I have seen worn only by Jesus. They had wings of gold. One of them took my soul from the right side, the other from the left side, and they elevated it in the air, laying it down near the crucified feet of the Son of God made Man. This state lasted for about two months almost continually; I seemed to walk, to speak, and do what I wished, deprived however of my soul. It remained there where the two Angels had placed it but they never abandoned it." At the conclusion of this experience, the holy Poor Clare was in this way instructed by these Celestial Spirits:

"They declared to me that they were so intimate with God that God is not ever separated from them. They also explained to me that the Seraphim were likewise united

to the Cherubim in that none of them could ever go without the other to a soul."

It is worth being reminded that her masterpiece of spirituality is without a doubt the "*Treatise on the Mental Sufferings of Jesus Christ Our Lord*" (1488): in it the Blessed did nothing other than translate into writings that which she received through revelation of the interior sufferings from an agonizing Jesus, who said to her: "Go and write down those mental sufferings of my Passion which you know about."

It is here that Varano makes us participants in an extraordinary mystical experience where she reveals herself to be a



true teacher of spirituality, a guide to reach the perfection through contemplation. In this work she particularly insists upon prayer, writing a real and true method, and upon the devotion of the Passion of Christ.