

---

"CERTAINLY THE VIRTUE AND EXCELLENCE OF DOMINIC OF GUZMAN WAS NOT AT ALL UNKNOWN OR DOUBTED WHEN IN THE THIRTEENTH YEAR AFTER HIS DEATH, HE WAS HELD WORTHY TO BE ASCRIBED IN THE NUMBER OF THE SAINTS. MOREOVER THE VERY GRANDEUR AND AMPLITUDE OF THE WORK THAT THE MOST WISE GOD GAVE THAT LAWGIVING FATHER TO CARRY OUT, DECIDEDLY CALLED FOR A SUBLIME AND SINGULAR HOLINESS OF LIFE."—*Pius XI in the Apostolic Letter "Inclitam ac Perillustrem."*



HE all-merciful and provident God raises up champions of the faith—heroic and gigantic saints when Holy Mother Church is in need of defense or renovation. Recalling the extraordinary life and mission of Saint Dominic in his troubled and critical times on the seventh hundredth anniversary of his canonization in 1234 by Gregory IX, it is meet that we render praise to the Divine Providence which disposes and orders all things in infinite wisdom.

It is a commonplace of history that Saint Dominic's character and ideals blazoned a new page in the history of Christendom by giving new vigor and life to the Catholic Faith. We accept with assurance today those ideals of Dominic which have been tried and proved but in his day they startled and challenged the world. Alive to the new currents of ideas that were seeking recognition he realized the value of democracy and the tremendous power of learning; he sanctified both by laying them on the altar of the Lord. Having diagnosed the cataclysmic breakdown of parts of the Church he realized that new methods, new remedies must be applied to stay this new and terrible disintegration. Apostles were again needed to preach the word of God in divine power, in humility, in charity, in poverty of spirit.

He was the exemplar of those ideals which stimulated and invigorated so many of his followers. Gifted by nature with a keen mind, he cultivated his talents by a splendid education in the sacred and profane sciences; having been a canon for nine years he experienced the power of prayer and contemplation; being an apostle who burned with love of God and of souls he desired to spread the truth

of Christ. He opposed heresy with a terrible violence but like his Master, his heart bled for the erring and the sinner. His mortifications worried his brethren but he did not think of himself, only of the divine justice which had to be placated for the sins of men. Recollected in spirit at all times and places he continually conversed with God and this was the font of his charity which melted the hearts of his enemies. His sanctity, attested by canonization thirteen years after his death, must be considered the light and source of all his activities. By its consuming flame it fused all his talents and energies into a mighty instrument of divine power. Nor did God fail to show His power in ratification of His servant's life and activities. Many miracles were worked by his intercession as Gregory IX attested; among the more striking may be mentioned the failure of the fire to consume his dissertation against the heretics although it was cast into the flames three times, the raising to life of at least three persons from the coldness of death and the appearance of angels in the refectory at San Sisto. Strengthened in spiritual energy by prayer and contemplation he fared forth from his convent and quickened by his ardor and the spirits of men. He was not content to shine in the narrow confines of the cloister but truly made the whole world his cloister; "truly did he develop the canonical man in the apostolic."

While the heretics looked upon matters as evil because of their uncatholic viewpoint of God and the world, Dominic sought to instill the Christian concept of the goodness of God's creatures. A virgin with unsullied innocence, he brought the erring back to a realization of the dignity of marriage; in union with the Eternal Spirit he reached down to restore all creatures in their rightful places; a saint, he gave knowledge the push to which all subsequent progress to our own day is deeply indebted. He was not afraid of matter, science or reason, these were things of God and had to be sanctified in His Service. Dominic was truly Catholic; having sought and attained the kingdom of God he added all other things in their right order.

It has been repeatedly pointed out that our civilization today faces a crisis. Stifling materialism and distorted idealism have rent asunder the fabric of our Christian world. We may solve the difficulty by following Dominic's example by restoring all things in Christ so that a new and better order may flourish. Surely, Saint Dominic has not ceased to intercede for men and for the welfare of the Church. We may ask this great saint with confidence to help us in the struggle to achieve the kingdom of God on earth.