

Reflection Wednesday Week 15 – St Bonaventure 2020

Bonaventure was a trusted friend of the greatest theologian in Dominican history, Saint Thomas Aquinas, known as the “Angelic Doctor.” Bonaventure is often recognized as the greatest theologian in Franciscan history and been granted the title of “Seraphic Doctor.”

Bonaventure was great in learning, but no less great in humility and holiness. His innocence and dove-like simplicity were such that Alexander of Hales, the renowned doctor whose disciple Saint Bonaventure became, used to say of him that it seemed as though Adam had never sinned in him. – Pope Sixtus IV,

Thomas (Aquinas) was the teacher of the schools, Bonaventure of practical life; Thomas enlightened the mind, Bonaventure inflamed the heart; Thomas extended the Kingdom of God by the love of theology, Bonaventure by the theology of love. Even those who hold that Bonaventure does not reach the level of St. Thomas in the sphere of Scholastic speculation concede that as a mystic he far surpasses the Angelic Doctor. – The Catholic Encyclopaedia

For there was in St. Bonaventure something preeminent and unique, so that he stood out not only in subtlety of arguing, in facility of teaching, in cleverness of defining, but he excelled in a certain divine strength of thoroughly stirring up souls. In writing with the greatest erudition he so conjoined an equal ardour of piety, that he would move the reader by teaching and it would sink into the recesses of the soul, and then he would prick the heart with certain seraphic stings and it would pour forth with a wonderful sweetness of devotion; admiring the grace which poured out of his mouth and his pen. – Pope Sixtus V

‘A good, affable, devout and compassionate man, full of virtue, beloved of God and human beings alike.... God in fact had bestowed upon him such grace that all who saw him were pervaded by a love that their hearts could not conceal.’

“Your beauty, O God, astonishes the sun and the moon; the angelic powers serve and obey you. By your gentle touch the sick are healed while your rose-sweet fragrance revives the dead.” – Saint Bonaventure

“Proud demons flee before the lofty virtues of the humble.” – Saint Bonaventure

“No one can become blessed, unless he ascends above his very self, not by an ascent with the body, but with the heart.” – Saint Bonaventure

“As well as being a seeker of God, St. Bonaventure was the seraphic poet of creation.” – Pope Benedict XVI

“Therefore he who is not brightened by such splendours of created things is blind; he who does not awaken at such clamours is deaf; he who does not praise God on account of all these effects is mute; he who does not turn toward the First Principle on account of such indications is stupid.” – Saint Bonaventure

“If you do not know your own dignity and condition, you cannot value the proper worth of anything.” – Saint Bonaventure.

Something more

- What’s the best thing about Switzerland? **I don’t know, but the flag is a big plus.**
- Did you hear about the mathematician who’s afraid of negative numbers?
He’ll stop at nothing to avoid them.
- Where are average things manufactured? **The satis-factory.**