

## ST. VICENT FERRER'S CATALÁN SERMON ON ST. MARTIN OF TOURS\*

POR

ALBERTO FERREIRO

*Seattle Pacific University, Department of History*

### ABSTRACT

One of the most widely venerated saints in the Middle Ages was St. Martin of Tours whose cult continues to this day in many parts of the world. In the Middle Ages, he became as popular as other major saints such as Thomas Becket, Santiago de Compostela and the Virgin Mary. St. Martin's cult became very prominent in the Iberian Peninsula before and after the emergence of the cult of Santiago de Compostela. In St. Vicent Ferrer's voluminous sermons this one in Catalán is dedicated to this most venerated Gallic saint. The most important late antique and early medieval sources that form the background of this sermon are by Sulpicius Severus- the *Gallus* and *Vita Sancti Martini*. In the high Middle Ages, however, his cult was popularized through the *Legenda Aurea* written by the Dominican Jacobus of Voragine, who synthesized Sulpicius' two works on St. Martin. Moreover, St. Vicent preached not to make any major doctrinal breakthroughs- his main interest was to evangelize, not to write academic theology- he nevertheless exhibited great creativity. The object of this study is St. Vicent's Catalán sermon *Alius Sermo Sancti Martini*, CXXXIV.

**KEY WORDS:** Martin of Tours, Jacobus of Voragine, Sulpicius Severus, Catalán Sermons, Vicent Ferrer, Veneration of Saints, Hagiography.

---

\* A version of this paper was presented at the 46<sup>th</sup>. *International Congress on Medieval Studies*, Western Michigan University, 11-15, May 2011. I wish to thank the libraries of the Universidad de Salamanca and the Universidad Pontificia de Salamanca for access to their collections. Also, the *Centro Fray Luis de León* for funding my research in Salamanca the summer of 2010. I dedicate this article to one of my mentors during my Fulbright year in Barcelona (1983-1984) for his guidance and generosity, Prof. Dr. Manuel Riu i Riu, *Requiescat in Pace*.

## EL SERMÓN CATALÁN DE SAN VICENTE FERRER SOBRE SAN MARTÍN DE TOURS

### RESUMEN

Uno de los santos más venerados en la edad media fue San Martín de Tours, cuyo culto continúa hasta hoy en muchas partes del mundo. En la edad media, se hizo tan popular como otros grandes Santos: Thomas Becket, Santiago de Compostela y la Virgen María. El culto de San Martín se hizo prominente en la Península Ibérica antes y después de la aparición del culto a Santiago de Compostela. En los sermones voluminosos de San Vicente Ferrer esta uno en Catalán que está dedicado a este santo tan venerado de Galia. Las fuentes más importantes procedentes de la antigüedad tardía y principios medievales que forma el fondo de este sermón son *Gallus* y la *Vita Sancti Martini* de Sulpicio Severo. Sin embargo, en la alta edad media, su culto se popularizó a través de la *Legenda Aurea* escrita por el dominico Jacobus de Vorágine, que sintetiza las dos obras de Sulpicio. Por otra parte, San Vicente predicó no para realizar grandes avances doctrinales- su principal interés fue predicar el evangelio, no escribir teología académica. Sin embargo, exhibió gran creatividad. El objeto de este estudio es el sermón en Catalán de San Vicente *Alius Sermo Sancti Martini*, CXXIV.

**PALABRAS CLAVE:** Martín de Tours, Jacobus de Voragine, Sulpicio Severo, Sermones en Catalán, Vicente Ferrer, Veneración de los Santos, Hagiografía.

Recibido/Received 01-06-2011  
Aceptado/Accepted 30-04-2013

One of the most widely venerated saints in the Middle Ages was St. Martin of Tours whose cult continues to this day in many parts of the world. In the Middle Ages, he became as popular as other major saints such as Thomas Becket, Santiago de Compostela and the Virgin Mary. The thousands of churches, shrines and hermitages dedicated to St. Martin of Tours across Europe are visible testimony. As one would expect, St. Martin's cult in France became most prominent; but it also extended into the Iberian Peninsula before and after the emergence of the cult of Santiago de Compostela.<sup>2</sup> Furthermore, medieval sermons dedicated to St. Martin of Tours celebrating his Feast on November 11 are abundant. It is

<sup>2</sup> For the emergence of the cult of St. Martin of Tours in early medieval Iberia in Gallaecia consult, 1996. A. Ferreiro, «The Cult of Saints and Divine Patronage in *Gallaecia* before Santiago», in *The Pilgrimage to Compostela in the Middle Ages*. (ed.) Mary Jane Dunn and Linda Davidson. New York: Garland Medieval Casebooks, pp. 3-22 and 1995. «Braga and Tours: Some observations on Gregory's *De virtutibus sancti St. Martini* (1.11)». *Journal of Early Christian Studies* 3, 2: 195-210. 2010. «Martin of Tours in Spain,» in *Encyclopedia of Medieval Pilgrimage*, Brill, pp. 381-382.

only natural that we find in St. Vicent Ferrer's voluminous sermons this one in Catalán dedicated to this most venerated Gallic saint.<sup>3</sup>

The principal late antique and early medieval sources that promoted St. Martin's cult were written by Sulpicius Severus and Gregory of Tours. Sulpicius wrote two works entitled *Gallus* and the *Vita Sancti Martini* which complement one another.<sup>4</sup> Gregory of Tours' *De virtutibus sancti Martini* relates the major miracles that transpired at his shrine in Tours through his relics. In the high Middle Ages, however, his cult was popularized through the *Legenda Aurea* written by the Dominican Jacobus of Voragine, who synthesized Sulpicius' two works on St. Martin.<sup>5</sup> Jacobus acknowledges explicitly Sulpicius Severus as the primary source for his narrative.<sup>6</sup> St. Vicent Ferrer constructed his sermon mainly from the *Legenda Aurea* while not using at all Gregory of Tours. When St. Vicent composed a sermon to celebrate a particular saint he turned to the *Legenda Aurea* to construct the main framework, as correctly signaled by Esponera Cerdán, «Recorre a la hagiografía —sea ésta legendaria o no— y a obras que quizá eran lectura habitual entre sus oyentes, o por lo menos muy conocidas por ellos como por ejemplo *La leyenda dorada*, de Santiago de VoráGINE, o el *Speculum* de Vicente de Beauvais.»<sup>7</sup> His further observation regarding Vicent's works, «Hay que señalar que el Maestro Vicente Ferrer no es original

<sup>3</sup> Our sermon is found in, 1977. Sant Vicent Ferrer, *Sermons*. (ed.) G. Schib, Volum IV. Els nostres clàssics, Col.lecció —B (Volum en Quart), volum 7. Barcelona: Editorial Barcino— Fundació Carulla Fonti, pp. 249-257. There is another sermon in Latin by St. Vicent on St. Martin of Tours in the Manuscript of Ayora which has some material found in ours but lacking much more. In other words, St. Vicent did not preach the same sermon every time; he took the liberty to vary the content. For the Latin sermon see, 1995. *San Vicente Ferrer. Colección de Sermones de Cuaresma y otros según el Manuscrito de Ayora*. (ed.) A. Robles Sierra, O. P. Valencia, pp. 456-464. For the Catalán language I am using 1985. *Diccionari Català-Valencià-Balear*, 10 vols. Mn. Antoni Ma. Alcover i Francesc de B. Moll. Palma de Mallorca. The *Diccionari* is available for free on-line and has a word search engine.

The most prolific scholar of Sant Vicent is unquestionably, Alfonso Esponera Cerdán. Consult his work on the sermons, 2007. *El oficio de predicar. Los postulados teológicos de los sermones de San Vicente Ferrer*. Monumenta Histórica Iberoamericana de la Orden de Predicadores, vol. 30. Salamanca: Ediciones San Esteban, and for a broader treatment, by the same author, 2005. *San Vicente Ferrer. Vida y escritos*. Madrid: Edibesa, and pp. 144-146 for more discussion on the sermons.

<sup>4</sup> 1967-1969. Sulpice Sévère, *Vie de Saint Martin*, 3 vols. (ed.) Jacques Fontaine. Sources Chrétiennes, vols. 133-135. Paris: Les Éditions du Cerf = *VSM*. 2006. Sulpice Sévère, *Gallus, Dialogues sur les 'Vertus' de Saint Martin*. (ed.) Jacques Fontaine. Sources Chrétiennes, vol. 510. Paris: Les Éditions du Cerf, = *Gallus*. I am following Fontaine regarding the title of this work by Sulpicius which is commonly known as the *Dialogues*, he instead demonstrates that it was not generally known by that title by the earliest Church Fathers, pp. 17-18. See also the edition, 1866. Sulpicii Severi, *Libri qui supersunt*, CSEL, vol. 1. (ed.) Carl Halm. Vindobonae.

<sup>5</sup> 1846. Jacobi a Voragine, *Legenda Aurea, vulgo historia lombardica dicta*. (ed.) Th. Graesse. Dresdae & Lipsiae.

<sup>6</sup> *Severus cognomento Sulpicius discipulus sancti Martini, quem Gennadius inter illustres viros connumerat, scripsit, Legenda Aurea*, p. 741.

<sup>7</sup> Esponera Cerdán, *El oficio de predicar*, p. 228.

ni hace mayores aportaciones doctrinales.....la gran mayoría de piezas vicentinas no tienen tanto interés por su originalidad.»<sup>8</sup> I would qualify. While I fully concur that St. Vicent did not write to make any major doctrinal breakthroughs — his main interest was to evangelize, not to write academic theology — he also exhibited great creativity in what I call ‘homiletical license’ to fill in gaps in the sermons that are hagiographical.<sup>9</sup>

The object of this study St. Vicent’s Catalán sermon *Alius Sermo Sancti Martini*, CXXXIV is prefaced with the *thema* from *Ecclesiasticus* (Sirach), 44-*Ffecit illum Dominus crescere in plebem suam*.<sup>10</sup> A reading of chapter 44 of Sirach reveals why St. Vicent chose it to set the framework for the sermon on St. Martin of Tours. It is where Sirach provides brief highlights of some of the renowned Old Testament figures who are proposed as roles models to imitate. The main objective of St. Vicent’s sermon is to present St. Martin as a model of the *Imitatio Christi*.<sup>11</sup> With that in mind, I analyze this sermon to determine the Christological goals, audience, and scriptural exegesis. Moreover, I intend to identify where St. Vicent integrated and departed from his two primary sources, Sulpicius Severus and Jacobus of Voragine.

St. Vicent opened the sermon with a short discussion of the life-cycle of a person, which he said everyone knew to be seven stages.<sup>12</sup> In the Middle Ages, as Deborah Youngs has articulated in her book about the subject, the number of stages in a life cycle was not agreed upon. The main classical source on life-cycles was Aristotle who proposed that a lifespan transpired in three stages—youth, maturity, and old age. This basic scheme was not only embraced in the Middle Ages, it was divided even further into numerous stages. Youngs describes this state of affairs, «By the later Middle Ages the number of stages ranged from three to twelve, with some preference for seven among English writings and ten in German speaking areas. Of particular influence was the work of Isidore of Seville (d. 636), whose Latin dictionary, the *Etymologiarum*, described the

<sup>8</sup> Esponera Cerdán, *El oficio de predicar*, pp. 230-231.

<sup>9</sup> See for example my previous studies, 1998. «Vicent Ferrer’s Catalán sermon *Beati Petri Apostoli*: An example of canonical and apocryphal sources in popular preaching.» *Harvard Theological Review* 91,1: 41-57, 1 figure, 2010. «St. Vicent Ferrer’s Catalán Sermon on Saint Mary Magdalene.» *Anuario de estudios medievales* 40/1: 415-433, «A Little More than the Angels:» *Anthropology and the Imitatio Christi* in a Catalán Sermon by St. Vicent Ferrer on St. James the Greater.» *On the Shoulders of Giants: Essays in Honor of Glenn Olsen*. Toronto: Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies (in press).

<sup>10</sup> The Catalán edition used for our sermon contains the first page of another sermon dedicated to St. Martin entitled, *Fferia IIIa. De Sent Martí*, CXXXIII which flows into the next one. It states that now he was going to preach on the virtues of St. Martin, *E ara yo vos vull prejar de les virtuts de sent Martí, e he’n trobades set* -ut in sequenti sermon, p. 249.

<sup>11</sup> For an excellent analysis of St. Vicent’s sermons, see Alfonso Esponera Cerdán, (see note 2).

<sup>12</sup> *Com ara, ja sabeu que set edats són, en les quals la persona viu*, p. 251.

etymology and characteristics of six stages.»<sup>13</sup> As we can see, St. Vicent had a variety of life cycle models to pick from; he chose seven. Having done so, St. Vicent summarized the seven stages (*edats*) as follows: the first three comprise growth from infancy to maturity and the remaining four stages leading to full age.<sup>14</sup> St. Vicent used this template of the natural life cycle to speak about the spiritual cycle of St. Martin of Tours' growth in charity. St. Vicent dealt with the initial three stages of charity quickly. St. Martin's soul reached great heights through three grades of charity.<sup>15</sup> The majority of the sermon, however, details the seven stages or degrees of charity attained by St. Martin of Tours. St. Vicent proposed to his audience this sevenfold model of holiness for imitation. Let us commence, however, with St. Vicent's brief discussion of St. Martin's three initial stages of charity.

A person on the first step towards charity is identified as in the state of 'inception' (*Lo primer és inepció*). This is an individual who has sinned a great deal, demonstrated contrition, made a good confession, has done penance, and fought many strong spiritual battles (*e ha batalles molts e forts*) against evil. The struggle against evil entails enduring many temptations from demons and evil inclinations of the flesh from the world that offer many alluring and ornate things.<sup>16</sup> The disciple who successfully resists them achieves the first step of inception (*és en lo primer grau de inepció*). St. Vicent cites again Sirach 2:1 (*Ecclesiasticus*) as his scriptural authority.<sup>17</sup>

The spiritual journey in pursuit of charity is identified as perfection (*perfecció*). Those who reach this stage do not have any cares (*no cura*) about temptation and conform their behavior to please Jesus Christ, in accord with Saint Luke 12:33.<sup>18</sup> St. Vicent further clarified that *Saccos* identifies the powers of the soul, which are: memory, intelligence, and free will.<sup>19</sup> The memory to recall virtue and learn from past mistakes, the intelligence (divinely enlightened) to discern good from evil, and free will to choose that which pleases the Lord. A disciple in the third 'grade' of charity of Christ out of love relinquishes the world, its

<sup>13</sup> 2006. Deborah Youngs, *The Life Cycle in Western Europe, c.1300–c.1500*. Manchester Medieval Studies. Manchester and New York: Manchester University Press, p. 20.

<sup>14</sup> *E en les tres edats primeres, la persona creix en alt, e en les IIIe se exemple en gros*, p. 251.

<sup>15</sup> *E en les tres primeres creix la ànima en altitud en tres graus de caritat, en los quals la ànima creix*, p. 251.

<sup>16</sup> *Del dimoni per moltes temptacions, après de la carn per moltes males inclinacions, e après del món, que done molts abelliments*, p.251.

<sup>17</sup> *Fili, accedens ad servitum Dei, sta in timore et prepara animam tuam ad temptationem*, My son, when you come to serve the Lord. Prepare yourself for trials, p. 251.

<sup>18</sup> *Facite vobis saccos [qui no veterascunt, thesaurum non deficientem] in celo*, - Sell your belongings and give alms. Provide money bags for yourselves that do not wear out, an inexhaustible treasure in heaven that no thief can reach nor moth destroy, p. 251.

<sup>19</sup> *Són les potències de la anima: memòria, intelligença e voluntat*, p. 251.

honors and riches, and desires death.<sup>20</sup> St. Vicent quoted St. Paul to press his message on the three degrees of charity.<sup>21</sup> St. Vicent paused to explain further *constructa* which he said refers to growing in merits (*en creximent de mèrits*). This growing in perfection occurs in community with fellow believers.<sup>22</sup> St. Vicent explained that this truth is taught with authority in two places, the first part a rephrasing of the scripture just cited, while the second is a direct quote.<sup>23</sup>

St. Vicent arrived at the main body of his sermon. He summarized what he would preach about St. Martin of Tours' life. St. Vicent identified seven degrees of charity that St. Martin achieved: divine fidelity, personal humility, piety [love] towards neighbor, corporal poverty, personal dignity, benign [great piety] spirituality, and final stability [a good end].<sup>24</sup>

The first degree of charity 'divine fidelity' related St. Martin's quest for ultimate Truth —the true religious faith— driven in part because he grew up in a non-Christian family. So 'divine fidelity' identified St. Martin's honest and open search for this Truth. The main source for this story originated from the second chapter in the *VSM* entitled 'Military Service of St. Martin' by Sulpicius Severus, and is reproduced in a shorter version in *Legenda Aurea*. St. Vicent Ferrer while retaining the main contours of this account took great liberty to create a series of dialogues that St. Martin had on the road to conversion not found in *VSM*, *Gallus*, or *Legenda Aurea*.

St. Martin's father was a noble military man who was so esteemed that he obtained the title of *tribunus*.<sup>25</sup> Vicent added that his mother was also noble. In

<sup>20</sup> *Quan la persona és tan enamorada, que meysprea tot aquest món e honors e riquesa, e desiga la mort*, p. 251. It is very common in the lives of the saints for some to express their desire to die to be with the Lord, as St. Paul had expressed, «My desire is to part and be with Christ, for that is far better.» (Philippians 1:23). A notable example is Teresa of Jesus, who cried out in a refrain in her poem entitled, *Vivo sin vivir en mí*, «que muero porque no muero.» for a bilingual translation Spanish-English by 1985. Adrian J. Cooney, O. C. D., in *The Collected Works of St. Teresa of Avila*. (trans.) Kieran Kavanaugh, O. C. D. and Otilio Rodríguez, O. C. D., Vol. 3. Washington, D. C.: Institute of Carmelite Studies, pp. 375-376.

<sup>21</sup> *Omnia arbitror ut stercora, ut Christi lucrifaciam*, Philippians 3:8, and *Omnis edificatio constructa crescit in templum Domini*, Ephesians 2:21, p. 252.

<sup>22</sup> *Mas ja no pot exir de perfectió, mas pot muntar més avant, e per ço diu «omnis.»* p. 252.

<sup>23</sup> *Cepit cedere et crescere in templum in Domino* and *Fecit illum Dominus crescere in plebem suam*- a conflation from *Ecclesiasticus* 44:16-17 and 45:3-20.

<sup>24</sup> *Ara, yo he cerquat quants graus de caritat ha haüid mossènyer sent Martí, per los quals és crescut en multiplicació de mèrits, e he'n trobat set*, p. 252 and *Lo primer és fidelitat divinal; lo segon, humilitat personal; lo tercer, pietat proximal; lo quart, pobretat corporal; lo V, dignitat personal; lo VI, benignitat spiritual, lo VII, stabilitat final*, p. 252.

<sup>25</sup> Sulpicius, *Igitur Martinus Sabaria Pannoniarum oppido oriundus fuit, sed intra Italiam Ticini altus est, parentibus secundum saeculi dignitatem non infimis gentilibus tamen. Pater eius miles primum, post tribunus militum fuit*, *VSM*, 2, 1-2, 1: 254; *Martinus Sabariae Pannoniorum oppido oriundus, sed intra Italiam Papias alitus cum patre suo, tribuno militum*, *Legenda Aurea*, p. 741.

what follows, St. Vicent's reference to the parent's nobility identified their social status not their character. Since the parents were pagans (*Mas eren infels*) this caused tension with St. Martin who refused to go to temple with them to offer sacrifices. St. Vicent conjectured that his father harassed or beat him for his refusal to worship at the temple (*Ara, pensat lo pare, com lo abufetegave*). Although St. Vicent excluded the following detail, Sulpicius and Jacobus related that St. Martin, against the wishes of his parents, went secretly to a church to become a catechumen. Sulpicius said he was 10 years old while Jacobus put it at 12.<sup>26</sup> St. Vicent made reference to St. Martin as a ten year old (*havia deu anys*) clearly following Sulpicius. Whether he was 10 or 12 the entire episode parallels the incident when Jesus at the age of 12 was «about his Father's business,» in the Temple in Jerusalem (Luke 2:41-52). St. Vicent must have believed that St. Martin all along was not only refusing to go to his parent's pagan temple, he was also sneaking off to church, hence the likely source of the beatings of the 'rebellious' child. Like Jesus, moreover, St. Martin of Tours was obeying his heavenly Father's will, rather than that of his earthly father. St. Vicent proceeded to relate the process of St. Martin's conversion at such a young age. It is here that he recreated three dialogues with pagans, Jews, and Christians, not found in Sulpicius or Jacobus.

In those days, St. Vicent pointed out; the world was governed by three laws: pagan, Mosaic [Jewish], and [Christian] evangelical.<sup>27</sup> St. Martin at the age of ten set out to find the truth.<sup>28</sup> In Sulpicius and Jacobus there is no mention of paganism and Judaism as possible choices for St. Martin, he simply went straightway to a church to become a catechumen.

St. Martin's first place of inquiry was the faith of his parents, a pagan temple where he demanded to speak with the main priest. The priest asked, «What would you like, my son?» St. Martin replied, «I would like to know what beliefs you have.» The priest responded, «We believe in one God (*Nosaltres creem hun Déu*).» St. Martin responded, «What is that?»—The priest showed him an idol, «That [thing] is your God?» (*E açò és vostre Déu?*), St. Martin replied. He rebuked the priest, «It is not a good thing to adore a creature, but rather God alone, who created all creatures.»<sup>29</sup> St. Martin unconvinced by the beliefs of the pagans departed (*E anà-sse'n*), to continue his search.

<sup>26</sup> Sulpicius, *VSM*, 2, 3, *Nam cum esset annorum decem, inuitis parentibus ad ecclesiam confugit seque catechumenum fieri postulauit*, 1: 254. Jacobus of Voragine, *quia ab infantia divinitus inspiratus, cum esset annorum duodecim, inuitis parentibus ad ecclesiam fugit et catechumenum se fieri postulavit*, *Legenda Aurea*, p. 741.

<sup>27</sup> *En aquell temps havia en lo món tres leys: la una ere pagànica; la segona, mosayca; la altra, evangèlica*, p. 252.

<sup>28</sup> *E diu que sent Martí havia deu anys, e anà per instruir-se en la fe catòlica*, p. 252.

<sup>29</sup> *No'm par que sie bona cosa adorar creatura, mas Déu tan solament, qui ha fet totes creatures*, p. 252.



St. Martin arrived at a synagogue where he requested to speak to the Chief Rabbi.<sup>30</sup> He wanted to learn what the beliefs of the Jews were. The Rabbi told him they believed in one God, creator and ruler of all things.<sup>31</sup> St. Martin then asked the Rabbi what they hoped to receive from this God, the Rabbi exclaimed, «honors and riches have been promised.»<sup>32</sup> St. Martin agreed that this was a good belief. Let us keep in mind that St. Martin was renowned for having become initially a hermit and who as a monastic renounced wealth and earthly honors. These are themes that St. Vicent addressed specifically in sections four and six that follow. Although he approved of the teaching it was not enough to move him to embrace Judaism. It is rather curious that in this imaginary dialogue St. Vicent did not raise questions about the Trinity and divinity of Christ, two of the major issues that divide Jews and Christians. Instead, this exchange promoted the stereotype of the Jews as greedy for money and riches. St. Martin had one more place of inquiry before making his final choice, the Church.

When St. Martin arrived at the Church he did not ask for a specific priest or bishop, instead he addressed all who were gathered, «What beliefs do all you have?» (*E quinya creença haveu vosaltres?*). As the conversation ensued it was a priest who responded to St. Martin's many questions about the Christian faith. The priest explained, «We believe in one God, creator of heaven and earth, moreover God is three persons, Father, Son and Holy Spirit.»<sup>33</sup> St. Martin asked, «How can this be?» (*E com se pot fer?*). The priest used the metaphorical example of the sun to help St. Martin understand.<sup>34</sup> This being a *reportata* sermon it does not provide the full explanation of the symbolic meaning of the sun, but it is one that must have been used frequently in the Middle Ages. The priest continued, that «the Son of God assumed human flesh» and «that He is present entirely in the Host.»<sup>35</sup> To all affirmations in sequence, St. Martin responded, «Now I believe»- (*Ara ó crech*). St. Martin concluded that this faith was of more value than the others (*Aquesta fe val més que deguna de les altres*). St. Vicent inserted here Acts 16:31, «Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved.»<sup>36</sup> St. Martin was further persuaded because of the hope that Christians possess (*Mas vegam la sperança*). The priest expounded that Christians do not seek or expect from the Lord gold or money- in contrast to the Jews- (*or ne argent*) which He did not value (*menyspreem*); moreover, their hope is for eternal glory in heaven when one

<sup>30</sup> *E après anà-sse'n a la sinagoga dels jueus, e allí demanà: «Digau,? qual és lo major rabí?»* p. 252.

<sup>31</sup> *Nosaltres creem hun Déu, creador de totes coses e governador,* p. 252.

<sup>32</sup> *Ara, què'n sperau haver d'ell, e què?» «Honors e riqueses, que axí'ns ó ha promès.»* pp. 252-253.

<sup>33</sup> *Que creem hun Déu, creador del cel e de la terra, mas que aquell Déu és tres persones, Pare, Fill e Sant Spirit,* p. 253.

<sup>34</sup> *Mas per ço que u entenau millor, dar-vos n' é una semblança natural del sol,* p. 253.

<sup>35</sup> *Que l Fill de Déu ha pres carn humana... que és dins la òstia tot,* p. 253.

<sup>36</sup> *Si credis dominum Jesum Christum, salvus eris,* p. 253.



leaves this world.<sup>37</sup> St. Vicent quoted as his authority Matthew 7:21, «but he who does the will of my Father in heaven will enter into the kingdom of heaven.»<sup>38</sup> In contrast to St. Martin's previous praise of the Rabbi's expectation of material prosperity from God, he in the end did not deem it as sufficient to accept Judaism. To all of this St. Martin responded that, «This law pleases me» (*Aquest ley me plau*). The priest asked him, «do you want to be a Christian,?» (*voleu-vos fer cristià?*), «I do father,» responded St. Martin (*Hoc, pare*). The priest admonished him, «Now then, my son, this is the faith: the Creed, learn it, when you know it, we will win you over,»<sup>39</sup> to which St. Martin agreed to do. St. Vicent in summation exclaimed, «Whoever says the Creed daily, during Matins or Vespers etc... is following the counsel of St. Jerome» - we are not given the precise reference of St. Jerome's counsel.<sup>40</sup>

St. Vicent pressed Christians not to desire, ask, or expect from God worldly riches. Rather, in imitation of St. Martin they should be eschewed. In addition, hope and expectation should be eternal life with God as a reward for having served him faithfully. This is the main teaching set forth here. St. Vicent considered paganism [idolatry] and Judaism a matter of concern. His inveighing against paganism was an apologetic against having faith in 'things' —riches or worldly honors— that become idols. Since mixed crowds were often present when he preached including Jews, this was an apologetic to persuade them to become Christians.

St. Martin's second degree of charity was his personal humility. St. Vicent used as his framework the moment St. Martin became a soldier like his father. The story originates in Sulpicius and then is recapitulated in the *Legenda Aurea*. Since his father was a nobleman and soldier of high rank he offered St. Martin several servants (*e donà-li molts escuders*) to attend to his personal needs. St. Martin chose to have only one to travel with him to serve him.<sup>41</sup> Sulpicius did not say that his father offered several attendants. Since St. Martin, however, was content to have one, the implication is that he was offered others (*uno tantum seruo comite contentus*, *VSM*, 2, 5, 1: 254). The *Legenda Aurea* does not imply multiple attendants; it simply says that he was content with one (*uno tantum contentus seruo*, p. 741). St. Vicent on this detail apparently remained more faithful to Sulpicius. St. Martin's humility is that it was he who served his attendant.<sup>42</sup>

<sup>37</sup> *Nosaltres, dix lo sacerdot, de aquest senyor nostre no n'esperam or ne argent, ans diu que.l menyspreem; mas speram-ne glòria perpetual alt en lo cel, quant exirem de aquest món*, p. 253.

<sup>38</sup> *Qui fecerit voluntatem patris mei qui in celis est, ipse intrabit in regnum celorum*, p. 253.

<sup>39</sup> *Ara donchs, mon fill, veus ací la fe: lo Credo, apreneu-lo, e quan lo sabreu, bategar-vos em*, p. 253.

<sup>40</sup> *Ara, moralmente: qua vullau dir lo Credo tots jorns, a matí o vespre, etc. Aquest consell dóna sent Jerònim*, p. 253.

<sup>41</sup> *Mas ell no.n volch sinó hu, e aquell anava ab ell, perquè.l servís*, p. 253.

<sup>42</sup> *Mas sent Martí servia a ell a la pràtica, p. 253; cui tamen uersa uice dominus seruiebat*, *VSM*, 2, 5, 1: 254.

When both of them sat down to eat breakfast; the attendant had a towel and a jar of water so St. Martin could wash his hands.<sup>43</sup> St. Martin, however, washed the hands of his attendant («*Daçà, e llava't tu*»). To which the attendant protested that he should not do such a thing because it caused him to suffer («*Oo, senyor, no.u faria!*»- «*Tu, creu-me!*»). St. Vicent even added a detail not mentioned by Sulpicius or Jacobus; St. Martin also bathed his attendant's body (*E sent Martí li tallava la carn*). St. Vicent commented that this was the way St. Martin always behaved. Furthermore, when both were travelling, St. Martin would dismount his horse and walk while his attendant rode.<sup>44</sup> Lastly, when evening arrived to rest, the attendant asked to remove St. Martin's boots, he instead removed the boots of his servant, to which St. Vicent shouted with joy, «O, what great humility!» (*Oo, quanta humilitat!*). Sulpicius noted that St. Martin would also wash the boots of his attendant.<sup>45</sup> St. Vicent closed this section with a direct rephrasing from Sulpicius.<sup>46</sup> What is the moral of this section asked St. Vicent?: Believers should humble themselves one with another as St. Peter enjoined.<sup>47</sup>

The third manifestation of charity — the love of neighbor — (*pietat proximal*) is found in the well-known encounter involving a beggar. This story more than any became the most pervasive artistic representation of St. Martin. Let us summarize the event as told initially by Sulpicius Severus. The incident occurred during extreme cold, in which many people died, at the entrance gate of Amiens where a beggar pleaded for alms. People in general, especially St. Martin's fellow soldiers, ignored him completely showing no pity on the desperate man. All that St. Martin had, however, was his cloak; he had already given the rest of his garments to other beggars. St. Martin divided his last cloak with his sword and gave one to the beggar and kept the other half. Some bystanders gawked at him while others were put to shame for their lack of compassion. That night, when St. Martin went to sleep, Christ appeared to him in a vision wearing the half of the cloak he had given to the beggar. Christ then proclaimed to the angels round about, «St. Martin who is only a catechumen has clothed me with his robe.»<sup>48</sup>

<sup>43</sup> *Quant venia que.s volien dinar, veus que.l scuder prenia una tovallolla e una cetra per donar-li aygua a mans*, p. 253.

<sup>44</sup> *Quan venie per lo camí, que portava son cavall, sent Martí descavalcava e fahia cavalcar l'escuder, e ell anava a peu, quan altri no.y anava*, p. 253.

<sup>45</sup> *Adeo ut plerumque ei et calciamenta ipse detraheret et ipse detergeret, cibum una caperent, hic tamen saepius ministraret*, *VSM*, 2, 5, 1: 254-256; *Cui tamen Martinus serviens saepius ministrabat et calceamenta detrahebat atque tergebat*, *Legenda Aurea*, p. 741.

<sup>46</sup> *Uno [solo servo comite contentus erat, et cui uersa uice adeo] serviebat.*» p. 254 = *VSM*, 2, 5, 1: 254.

<sup>47</sup> *Nosaltres que.ns vullam humiliar los uns als altres, axí com diu sent Pere: Humiliamini sub manu potenti Dei, ut vos exaltet*, p. 254- Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that in due time he may exalt you, I Peter 5:6.

<sup>48</sup> *Martinus adhuc catechumenus hac me ueste contexit*, *VSM*, 3, 3, 1: 258.

The *Legenda Aurea* faithfully retold the story without any deviation (pp. 741-742). Now let us see how St. Vicent incorporated this story into the sermon.

In St. Vicent's version, St. Martin with his fellow soldiers would frequently travel out of the city [Amiens is unnamed] well-armed and clothed with a beautiful robe.<sup>49</sup> St. Vicent has St. Martin in the company of fellow soldiers who mocked his charity towards the beggar.<sup>50</sup> Sulpicius included the mocking but did not identify them as soldiers.<sup>51</sup> The *Legenda Aurea* has no mocking of St. Martin by anyone. Again, it is evident that St. Vicent borrowed directly from Sulpicius. After everyone had ignored the destitute beggar St. Martin could not, so he asked, «Alas, if I leave this poor man as is, what is the Lord Jesus Christ going to say to me when my soul exits this world?»<sup>52</sup> St. Martin did not have any money, only weapons and his robe. He told the beggar that he had no money but only his robe that he would divide with him.<sup>53</sup> Sulpicius, as noted above, mentioned that the reason St. Martin had only one robe to give is that he had already given the others away.<sup>54</sup> This detail is not in the *Legenda Aurea*. St. Vicent made the same observation at the beginning of this section of the sermon, «He was so merciful, that he donated everything,» and «the poor man put it on and left joyfully.»<sup>55</sup> It is at this point that his fellow soldiers mocked St. Martin.

St. Vicent continued with his version. That evening, while in prayer, St. Martin saw Jesus in heaven clothed with the robe that he gave to the beggar, and spoke to St. Martin: «*Martinus, hac veste me contexit.*» Sulpicius and the *Legenda Aurea* mention specifically that Christ said St. Martin «clothed me while still a catechumen.»<sup>56</sup> St. Vicent Ferrer's sermon omits any reference to St. Martin being a catechumen. Sulpicius wrote that St. Martin went to sleep and saw the vision of Christ while the *Legenda Aurea* only says that the next night he saw the vision of Christ, omitting mention of being asleep.<sup>57</sup> Neither of them have St.

<sup>49</sup> *Sapiau que una vegada sent Martí fahie mostra de sa companya, axí com cavallers ó acostumen, e axí com exien de la ciutat, ell estave bé armat, e damunt portava un bell mantó*, p. 254.

<sup>50</sup> *E los altres cavallers, que.u veren, e que anava ab la mitat del mantó, trahien-se'n escarn, mas ell bé sabia què fahia*, p. 254.

<sup>51</sup> *Interea de circumstantibus ridere nonnulli, quia deformis esse truncatus habitu uideretur*, VSM, 3, 2, 1: 256-258.

<sup>52</sup> *O llas, e si yo jaquia axí aquest pobre, què.m dirie mon senyor Jesuchrist, quan la mia ànima exirà de aquest món?* p. 254.

<sup>53</sup> *No tinch sinó aquest mantó, mas nec mihi nec tibi, sed dividatur*, p. 254- the Latin quotation is not verbatim from the VSM.

<sup>54</sup> *Nihil praeter chlamydem, qua indutus erat, habebat: iam enim reliqua in opus simile consumpserat*, VSM 3, 2, 1: 256.

<sup>55</sup> *Que era tan misericordiós que tot ó donava, and E tragué la spasa e parti'l, e lo pobre abrigà'l-se e va-sse'n alegre*, p. 254.

<sup>56</sup> *Martinus adhuc catechumenus hac me ueste contexit*, VSM 3, 3, 1: 258, *Legenda Aurea*, p. 742.

<sup>57</sup> *Nocte igitur insecuta, cum se sopori dedisset*, VSM 3, 3, 1: 258; *Sequenti igitur nocte Christum chlamydis suae*, *Legenda Aurea*, p. 742.

Martin at prayer as St. Vicent does when the vision transpired. The moral of this section is that Christians should imitate St. Martin's sacrificial giving to the poor by giving them the best clothes. The episode is intended to remind Christians that at the Last Judgment they will be judged on their response to those in need, as found in the teaching of the sheep and goats in Matthew 25.

In the discussion about St. Martin's fourth virtue 'corporal poverty,' he revisited the eternal fate of St. Martin's parents. St. Martin demonstrated his corporal poverty by shunning earthly honors, military career, inheritance, parents, and entering a monastery- fulfilling Luke 18:26-30. Everything seemed to be going just fine until one day Jesus Christ appeared to him again and asked St. Martin, «Why do you not have any compassion for your father and mother who are on the path to damnation?»<sup>58</sup> St. Martin asked what he was supposed to do, so the Lord told him to hasten to his parents. St. Martin recalled how his father wished him ill fortune when he saw him in monastic habit. He said to St. Martin, «You have dishonored our entire lineage.»<sup>59</sup> St. Martin, nevertheless, preached to his father but failed to convert him and so was damned (*e per ço és dapnat*). St. Vicent then added that his father, who had been a miserable greedy man (*mesquí*) now tormented intensely, could see his son in glory.<sup>60</sup> This description has more than a passing resemblance to the story of the beggar and the rich man in Luke 16:19-31. St. Vicent lamented that if only the father had believed things would have turned out better. St. Martin did, however, convert his mother who went to Paradise. Immediately, St. Martin returned to the monastery.<sup>61</sup> The moral teaching, St. Vicent concluded, is that those who take vows to the Lord are obligated to fulfill them. St. Martin had vowed to be a witness to Christ. This obligation was not fulfilled until he made an attempt to convert his parents. St. Vicent cited the Psalm 75[74]:12 as his authority, «*Vovete et reddite*».

This entire discourse is completely absent in the *VSM* and the *Legenda Aurea*. Sulpicius simply says that St. Martin freed his mother from her paganism while his father refused to give up his evil ways.<sup>62</sup> The *Legenda Aurea* says the mother was converted without mentioning her paganism and his father refused to give up his error.<sup>63</sup> St. Vicent's omission of the mother's paganism does not necessarily mean he was following the *Legenda Aurea* and not the *VSM*. Let us

<sup>58</sup> *E no has compassió de ton pare e de ta mare que són en via de dapnació?* p. 254.

<sup>59</sup> *Ara, pensau com lo pare lo lançava a la mala ventura, quan lo véu ab l'àbit, dient-li: Tot mon linatge me has deshonorat*, p. 255.

<sup>60</sup> *O del mesquí! E quinya dolor li deu ésser, ara que veu son fill estar en glòria, e ell en torment*, p. 255.

<sup>61</sup> *Si l'hagués cregut, bé haguere fet, Mas vues que convertí a la mare, e ara és en parais. E puix tornà-sse'n al monestir*, p. 255.

<sup>62</sup> *Matrem gentilitatis absoluit errore, patre in malis perseuerante*, *VSM* 6, 3, 1: 264.

<sup>63</sup> *Itaque matrem convertit, pater vero in errore permansit*, p. 742.

recall, that the paganism of both parents is clearly mentioned in the first section so it was unnecessary to repeat it again.

St. Martin's fifth virtue was his 'personal dignity' as bishop. When the See in Tours became vacant, it seems that all of the clergy agreed that he should be the next bishop.<sup>64</sup> St. Martin, however, who had already left behind many honors refused to accept the bishopric (*Ell ha jaquit tantes de honors ja*). A man went to him to tell him that another man was in need of confession [last rites]. The people seized him to force him to become bishop. After taking him 'captive,' they led St. Martin to the church to enthrone him as bishop while he protested.<sup>65</sup> There emerged one dissenting bishop named Defensor who vigorously opposed St. Martin's election. He swayed many to reconsider their choice. The *Legenda Aurea* states the reason some protested St. Martin's election is that he was too short and unattractive in appearance. His unkempt appearance reflected his ascetic heremital life.<sup>66</sup> The *VSM* does not refer to his unkempt appearance. St. Vicent continued that a voice was heard saying, «Out of the mouth of infants and of sucklings you have perfected praise, to destroy the enemy and the defender.»<sup>67</sup> In the *VSM* the designated lector was unable to read from the Psalter because he could not get through the dense crowd. It was an anonymous man who read the first passage that he saw.<sup>68</sup> Sulpicius interjected that the scripture passage was a sign of divine intervention intended to expose the evil intentions of Defensor. When Defensor heard these words he lost all support and departed in shame.<sup>69</sup> St. Martin finally realized that it was God's will that he become bishop, so he accepted (*E sent Martí, vehent que Déus ó volia, acceptà-u*). In the *Legenda Aurea* after Defensor lost all of his supporters St. Martin left the city because of the tumult, built a monastery two miles away, and with eighty monks lived the ascetical life.<sup>70</sup> The *Gallus* included nothing about Defensor and the circumstances as reported in the *VSM* surrounding St. Martin's election as bishop of Tours.

<sup>64</sup> *Morí lo bisbe, e finalment tot lo clero se acordà a sent Martí que fos bisbe*, p. 255.

<sup>65</sup> *E axí ó feren, e com lo hagueren pres, menaren-lo a la església per cathedrar-lo, e ell contrastà y fort*, p. 255.

<sup>66</sup> *Quidam autem ex episcopis, qui convenerant, eo, quod deformis esset habita et vultu despectabilis, resisiebant*, p. 743.

<sup>67</sup> *Ex ore infancium et lactencium perfecisti laudem propter inimicos tuos, ut destruas inimicum et defensorem*, Psalm 8:3, p. 255.

<sup>68</sup> *Nam cum fortuito lector, cui legendi eo die officium erat, interclusus a populo defuisset, turbatis ministris, dum expectatur qui non aderat, unus e circumstantibus, sumpto psalterio, quem primum uersum inuenit, arripuit*, *VSM* 9, 5, 1: 272.

<sup>69</sup> *Atque ita habitum est diuino nutu psalmum hunc lectum fuisse*, *VSM* 9, 7, 1: 272 ...*E quan lo bisbe hof açò, que ell fos destròit, baxà lo cap e anà-sse'n tot envergonyit*, p. 255.

<sup>70</sup> *Ordinatus itaque episcopus cum populi tumultam non ferret, duobus fere milliariis extra urbem monasterium constituit, ubi cum LXXX discipulis in multa abstinentia vixit*, p. 743.

St. Vicent shifted his focus to an incident that is recorded in Sulpicius' *Gallus* (2, 3, 1-10, pp. 226-230) but absent in the *VSM*. Moreover, it is one that the *Legenda Aurea* included. Jacobus identified his source observing that, «We also read in the *Dialogue* of Severus and Gallus where many details are supplied which Severus omitted in his Life of Saint Martin.»<sup>71</sup> St. Martin was making the rounds as bishop travelling on a mule [borrowed], dressed in clothing fit for the poor, with no attendants, a heavy wool garment that he wore for penance, ashes for penance, and devoted chaplains.<sup>72</sup> He was hardly the sight of a bishop, but more of an ascetic. The *Legenda Aurea* says that he wore a coarse garment and black cloak, (p. 746). Suddenly he came across two soldiers whose horses became frightened by St. Martin's mule causing the horses to throw the riders to the ground. They became angry and assaulted him, since St. Martin was not wearing his episcopal cape; he wore a black cloak, (*in veste hispida, nigro, Legenda Aurea*, p. 745). They did not recognize him as bishop; much less that it was the 'renowned' bishop.<sup>73</sup> When they attempted to flee the scene, their horses became immobile<sup>74</sup> causing them to marvel, «That man must be a holy man» (*Aquest hom deuria ésser sant hom*). When they returned to St. Martin they recognized him and pleaded, «Oh, lord, please do forgive us!» to which he replied, «God forgive you» (*Oo, senyor, e perdonau-nos!*)- «*Déus vos perdó*). St. Martin then gave them leave to depart. St. Vicent highlighted the moral lesson with a reference from Saint Paul (I Corinthians 5: 1-13) where the apostle talks about a male fornicator. St. Vicent, says, there are some today who were like those men who, «should be expelled because on account of their sins there come ruin, plagues, wars, and tempests.»<sup>75</sup> The aforementioned men, who assaulted St. Martin, although not accused of fornication, had illicit desires. St. Vicent warned that men who behave in such a way bring upon themselves and on the community.

Another manifestation of St. Martin's charity —the sixth— was his great spiritual piety (*benignitat spiritual*). Apparently his impeccable piety and zealous asceticism was not admired by some clergy, instead they exhibited jealousy (*Veus que ls altres preveres lo menyspreaven*). They spoke aloud so St. Martin could hear them, «Why does he live so simply?» and «Look at how the bishop

<sup>71</sup> 1993. Jacobus de Voragine, *The Golden Legend, Readings on the Saints*. (trans), William Granger Ryan, vol. 2. Princeton University Press, p. 294.

<sup>72</sup> *Car axí matex portava cilici com de primer, e una gonella pobla damunt, ni féu altre llit sinó lo de primer, una poqua de cendra ab hun cilici gros nuat per lançol. No tenia mules ni escuders, mas capellans devots*, p. 255.

<sup>73</sup> *E sent Martí diu que acubanà's ab lo mantó, per ço que no.l coneguessen*, p. 256.

<sup>74</sup> *E aquests tornen a cavalcar per fugir, e los rocins no.s vollien moure*, p. 256. Rocins (Rossi = rocí) was a horse of average quality used primarily used by attendants (*encuders*) for hunting and war), *Diccionari Català-Valencià-Balear*.

<sup>75</sup> *Estirpau-ó, que per peccats manifests vénen pedres, plagues, guerres e tempestes*, p. 256.



goes» [behaves]! - referring to his rustic garments and poverty. They pompously boasted, «If I were bishop, I would behave in a different manner!»<sup>76</sup> St. Vicent said he would explain the true source of all of the hostility towards St. Martin by some clergy. What follows in the sermon originates from the *Gallus* (2, 1, 1-9, pp. 214-221), as Jacobus informs the reader. St. Vicent relying on the *Legenda Aurea* incorporated this episode into the sermon.

St. Martin was on his way to offer Mass when he encountered a naked and cold man begging for alms. He told his treasurer, as an expression of his love for the poor, to get the man a garment.<sup>77</sup> The treasurer ordered the beggar to accompany him. On their way he made excuses to leave him and did not purchase the garment (*E meté-li excusa a partí's d'ell e no.n féu res*). Shortly thereafter, the beggar saw St. Martin and told him that no clothing had been given to him. St. Martin taking pity gave him his garment and thus was left with only his penitential garment. The beggar, however, went off to church wearing the garment of a bishop. The treasure shocked at St. Martin's appearance, said «Quickly, get dressed, many people are waiting for you for Mass, the poor man already has your garment.»<sup>78</sup> St. Martin responded, «Oh, what a lie» - «We have here another poor person,»<sup>79</sup> referring to himself. When he showed the treasurer his penitential garment (*E ensenyà-li lo cilici*), the treasure went hastily to retrieve a priestly garment for the bishop. St. Martin put on the priestly robes for Mass and entered the church. During Mass when he elevated the body of Christ [host], the sleeves of his garment which were very large, slid down exposing half of his arms. Suddenly, all gathered witnessed an amazing miracle.<sup>80</sup> Angels covered his exposed arms with a cloth studded with beautiful pearls and other precious stones.<sup>81</sup> Additionally, the *Gallus* and the *Legenda Aurea* mention that a 'globe of fire' also appeared over St. Martin; St. Vicent omitted this miraculous sign. The *Gallus*, however, omits the incident with the angels and pearl covered arms. Jacobus of Voragine cited John Beleth as his source for the 'globe of fire.'<sup>82</sup> Jacques Fontaine raises several possible explanations about what the 'globe of fire' may signify; among them that it might be an inverse of the descent of the

<sup>76</sup> *E per què anau axí simplement? E pugau dir com deyen: Guardau com va li bisbe! Si yo fos bisbe, en altra manera yria!* p. 256.

<sup>77</sup> *Per amor de mi, feu-li una gonella*, p. 256. A 'Gonella' was a garment worn by men like a long overcoat, *Diccionari Català-Valencià-Baleà*.

<sup>78</sup> *Tost, vestiu-vos, que tant à que us speren a missa, que lo pobre ja haüda la gonella*, p. 256.

<sup>79</sup> *Oo, quinya mentira!*—«No, que de alter pobre dich,» p. 256.

<sup>80</sup> *E quan vench al levar del cors de Jesuchrist, les mànegues del camís, que són amples, tornaren-se'n avall, e los braços li's descobriren tots de mig avant*, pp. 256-257.

<sup>81</sup> *E veus que àngels ab una tovallola molt bella de perles e de pedres precioses posaren-la davant los braços de sent Martí, per tal que lo poble no li ves los braços*, p. 257.

<sup>82</sup> *Huic autem miraculo addit magister Johannes Beleth, Legenda Aurea*, p. 747.

Holy Spirit at Pentecost.<sup>83</sup> I propose as a possibility that in view that the ‘globe of fire’ appears as St. Martin is offering Mass that it acts as a purifying fire for the entire world. From the fifteenth century onward the symbol of purifying fire setting aflame the world as a result of preaching became frequently used in art depicting Dominicans, especially St. Dominic. At times this artistic motif has a dog holding a torch setting the world ablaze with this purifying fire, the result of preaching. Absent in St. Vicent’s sermon is the miraculous sign of the ‘globe of fire’ in *Gallus* and retold in the *Legenda Aurea*.<sup>84</sup> St. Vicent exclaimed that the angels and cloth was a sign from God to affirm St. Martin’s humility. His humility was manifested through a simple life of poverty, his compassion for the poor, a pure heart, and daily penance by wearing a penitential garment (*cilici*) under his episcopal garments.

We come at last to the seventh expression of charity in St. Martin’s life, ‘final stability’ (*stabilitat final*) -what we would call a good end to a life of virtue (*E ací se compleix bona vida*). St. Vicent begins by likening life’s journey to a pilgrimage to Rome. It is like going to Rome to seek forgiveness of sin by visiting the holy sanctuaries.<sup>85</sup> A virtuous pilgrim is like the one who serves God, goes to Rome, and then to Paradise with Peter and Paul. Such a pilgrim does not enter the door of death but that of a good life [Paradise]. The pilgrim will not be saved unless that person lives a life of virtue.<sup>86</sup> St. Martin was such a pilgrim. His life was one of continuous virtue and charity. The reference to Rome was a way to confirm that St. Martin was doctrinally orthodox that unites him to the See of Peter and his life reflected that of Peter and Paul.

St. Vicent continued preaching that one day Jesus Christ revealed to St. Martin the day of his death, about which St. Martin expressed joy «Oh, what a consolation!» (*Oo, quínya consolacio!*). Jesus also told St. Martin, «You will enter with me into my glory» («*Martí, tu entraràs ab mi en la mia glòria*»). St. Martin, who had made so many holy persons [his disciples], told them that the Lord had revealed to him the day of his death, they in turn began to weep (*E aquells començaren de plorar*). When the day arrived St. Martin lay in a bed of ashes for penance lying face up, so he could contemplate the sky. This attitude reflects St. Paul’s admonition, «Set your minds on things that are above, not on

<sup>83</sup> He says, «Sorte de transfiguration (par interprétation erronée d’un jeu de lumière?). Phénomène inverse de la descent de langues de feu sur les Apôtres à la Pentecôte (Ac 2, 3)? Transposition de traditions antiques? Comparer, en effet, les flames jaillissant des tempes d’Octave après sa victoire d’Actium (Aen. 8, 680 s.), ou encore la chevelure de Lavinie prenant feu (ibid. 7, 74 s.)» *Gallus*, p. 222, note 3.

<sup>84</sup> *Globus igneus super caput ejus apparuit et a multis ibidem visus fuit, Legenda Aurea*, p. 747, *Gallus*, *globum ignis de capite illius uidimus emicare, Gallus*, 2, 2, 1, p. 222.

<sup>85</sup> *Axí com si hun hom anava a la perdonança de Roma, ....E ha a visitar los santuaris*, p. 257.

<sup>86</sup> *Susaxí és de la persona que serveix Déu e va a Roma, a paradís, e sent Pere e sent Pau, e no plegue a la porta de la mort ab la bona vida: veus que tal hom no serà salvat, mas si.y plegue*, p. 257.

things that are on earth.» (Colossians 3:2). His doctors advised him to lie on his side, but St. Martin responded that he wanted to see the sky which was the path that his soul would take.<sup>87</sup> As he was gazing at the sky a demon appeared to taunt him. St. Martin fearlessly rebuked the demon, «What are you doing here you cruel beast? You will find nothing of you [unrepented sin] in me; I am a servant of Abraham.»<sup>88</sup> The *Legenda Aurea* has St. Martin responding to the demon that he was going to be received into Abraham's Bosom, the abode of the righteous (*Abrahae me sinus recipiet*, p. 748). It is a matter of interest that St. Vicent —the *Legenda Aurea* included— does not have him saying he was going to Paradise to meet Christ. Could this remark be also directed at Jews? Recall, that oftentimes when he preached to large crowds people of many backgrounds were present, including Jews.

In the *Legenda Aurea* the demon did all that it could to prevent St. Martin's soul from entering Paradise, but it does not describe anything specific about the demon's strategy.<sup>89</sup> St. Vicent Ferrer, however, did take 'homiletical license' to recount specifically the demon's strategy in St. Martin's deathbed. The demon entered into his bed chamber and with malice asked, «St. Martin, and the coin?» (*Martí, e la mealla?*). St. Martin responded, «What coin?» (*Quinya mealla?*).<sup>90</sup> The demon reminded St. Martin of a coin that he took from a home. Just then, St. Martin recalled that when he was young he took a coin from his godmother. St. Martin summoned the 'majordomos,' instructing him, «Quickly, quickly, seek out the heirs of my godmother and return the coin for me,» and then confessed his sin.<sup>91</sup> St. Vicent used this story to warn avaricious money lenders. St. Martin asked, «What good will all of their ill-gotten money do for them?» St. Vicent preached that the cruel beast [devil] will accuse the money lenders at the judgment of God.<sup>92</sup> After St. Martin took Eucharist and received extreme unction, he saw angels coming to him, to whom he commended his soul and was escorted to Paradise.<sup>93</sup> The sermon as we have it ends here.

This *reportata* version of the sermon by St. Vicent Ferrer, by its very genre does not contain a complete re-telling of St. Martin's life, although when

<sup>87</sup> *E los metges deyen-li: «Girat-vos de costat,» e ell deya: Bé estich, per tal que veja lo cel, e ja veyg lo camí per hon la mia anima irà*, p. 257.

<sup>88</sup> *Quid facis hic, cruenta bestia? Nichil de tuo in me est. Serve Abrahe sum*, p. 257.

<sup>89</sup> *Daemones autem affuerunt, qui eum retinere voluerunt, sed nihil in eo reperientes confusi recesserunt*, p. 749.

<sup>90</sup> The 'mealla' was a copper coin that circulated in Castilla-León and was often given as alms to the poor, *Diccionari Català-Valencià-Balear*

<sup>91</sup> *Tost, tost, cerquau los hereus de ma padrina e tornau-la per mi vosaltres, e confessà-sse'n*, p. 257.

<sup>92</sup> *Logrers, mesquins e baratistes.?què fareu al dia de la mort, que teniu tants florins de tort? La bèstia cruenta vos acusarà davant lo juhí de Déu*, p. 257.

<sup>93</sup> *E après combregà e perolí, e veus que vingueren àngels, e ab sobirana devoció donà la sua ànima en las mans dels àngels, e axí anà a paraís*, p. 257.

delivered in public it would have been much longer. St. Vicent was known, as was typical, to preach very long sermons sometimes lasting several hours. As an *exempla* sermon St. Martin is proposed as model of imitation in concord with the *thema* drawn from Sirach 44 where Old Testament saints are praised for their great faith and deeds.

We need to recall that St. Vicent flourished when the Avignon Schism was at its height.<sup>94</sup> One of the major critiques against the high clergy was its opulent living and over involvement in secular affairs. St. Vicent had been a good friend Pope Benedict XIII (Pedro de Luna) also from Valencia and had served him briefly. Although he was a partisan for a very long time of the Avignon popes, eventually he had a change of heart, as Esponera Cerdán astutely observes, «El Maestro Vicente nunca reveló el secreto de su cambio personal. Pero creo que si se rastrea bien se constata un gradual desencanto en su adhesión a la línea francesa y a Benedicto XIII.»<sup>95</sup> St. Vicent apparently was not pleased with the status quo and a clergy too worldly in its way whether in Avignon or in Rome. His goal in all of his preaching was to call everyone to repentance and discipleship. Throughout most of the sermon I believe he directed his admonitions at clergy, to challenge them to a deeper discipleship. In these he called them to frugality, rejection of high positions, daily penance, prayer, and most especially generosity to the poor. These virtues are fundamental to the *Imitatio Christi* that is the principal pedagogical goal of St. Vicent Ferrer in his sermons. Since his audience at his public sermons was more often than not mixed, this explains the two places where he addressed Jews. In one, he included an anti-Semitic slur of the Jews' love of money and riches when he asked at the synagogue what benefit they expected from God. A general condemnation of paganism must have been intended to warn all present to avoid making idols of anything. In the end, St. Vicent Ferrer presented in the sermon St. Martin of Tours as an embodiment of how a bishop and clergy ought to live out their discipleship. Even though St. Vicent related much of the well-known hagiography, he took the liberty to add to the narrative some rather creative embellishments intended to accentuate the already admirable qualities of St. Martin of Tours. In the end, St. Vicent made his own contribution to the continued diffusion of the cult of St. Martin of Tours in the early fifteenth century and beyond.

Alberto Ferreiro  
*Seattle Pacific University*

---

<sup>94</sup> An enlightening discussion of the Avignon background can be found in Esponera Cerdán, *El oficio de predicar*, pp. 23-27 and 49-51. Also, Esponera Cerdán, *San Vicente Ferrer. Vida y Escritos*, pp. 58-70 and 144-146.

<sup>95</sup> Esponera Cerdán, *El oficio de predicar*, p. 26.

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

Alcover i Francesc de B. Moll, Mn. Antoni Ma. (ed.), 1985. *Diccionari Català-Valencià-Balear*, 10 vols. Palma de Mallorca.

Cooney, A. J. 1985. *The Collected Works of St. Teresa of Avila*. (trans.) Kieran Kavanaugh, O. C. D and Otilio Rodríguez, O. C. D., Vol. 3. Washington, D. C.: Institute of Carmelite Studies.

Esponera Cerdán, A. 2005. *San Vicente Ferrer. Vida y escritos*. Madrid: Edibesa.

Esponera Cerdán, A. 2007. *El oficio de predicar. Los postulados teológicos de los sermones de San Vicente Ferrer*. Monumenta Histórica Iberoamericana de la Orden de Predicadores, vol. 30. Salamanca: Ediciones San Esteban.

Ferreiro, A. «A Little More than the Angels:» Anthropology and the *Imitatio Christi* in a Catalán Sermon by St. Vicent Ferrer on St. James the Greater.» *On the Shoulders of Giants: Essays in Honor of Glenn Olsen*. Toronto: Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies (in press).

Ferreiro, A. 1995. «Braga and Tours: Some observations on Gregory's *De virtutibus sancti St. Martini* (1.11)». *Journal of Early Christian Studies* 3, 2: 195-210.

Ferreiro, A. 1996. «The Cult of Saints and Divine Patronage in *Gallaecia* before Santiago», in Mary Jane Dunn and Linda Davidson (eds), *The Pilgrimage to Compostela in the Middle Ages: 3-22*. New York: Garland Medieval Casebooks.

Ferreiro, A. 1998. «Vincent Ferrer's Catalán sermon *Beati Petri Apostoli*: An example of canonical and apocryphal sources in popular preaching.» *Harvard Theological Review* 91, 1: 41-57, 1 figure.

Ferreiro, A. 2010. «Martin of Tours in Spain,» in *Encyclopedia of Medieval Pilgrimage*, Brill, pp. 381-382.

Ferreiro, A. 2010. «St. Vicent Ferrer's Catalán Sermon on Saint Mary Magdalene.» *Anuario de estudios medievales* 40/1: 415-433.

Fontaine, J. (ed.), 1967-1969. Sulpice Sévère, *Vie de Saint Martin*, 3 vols. Sources Chrétiennes, vols. 133-135. Paris: Les Éditions du Cerf.

Fontaine, J. (ed.), 2006. Sulpice Sévère, *Gallus, Dialogues sur les 'Vertus' de Saint Martin*. Sources Chrétiennes, vol. 510. Paris: Les Éditions du Cerf.

Graesse, Th. (ed.), 1846. Jacobi a Voragine, *Legenda Aurea, vulgo historia lombardica dicta*. Dresdae & Lipsiae.

Halm, C. (ed.), 1866. Sulpicii Severi, *Libri qui supersunt*, CSEL, vol. 1. Vindobonae.

Robles Sierra, A. (ed.), 1995. *San Vicente Ferrer. Colección de Sermones de Cuaresma y otros según el Manuscrito de Ayora*. Valencia.

Ryan, W. G. (trans), 1993. Jacobus de Voragine, *The Golden Legend, Readings on the Saints*. vol. 2. Princeton University Press.

Schib, G. (ed), 1977. Sant Vicent Ferrer, *Sermons*, Volum IV. Els nostres clàssics, Col·lecció —B (Volum en Quart), volum 7. Barcelona: Editorial Barcino— Fundació Carulla Fonti.

Youngs, D. 2006. *The Life Cycle in Western Europe, c.1300-c.1500*. Manchester Medieval Studies. Manchester and New York: Manchester University Press.