

## LIFE OF BLESSED FRANCIS OF SIENA

### Introduction

The *Life of Blessed Francis of Siena* (1266-1328) recounts the events of the life of a friar from Siena who entered the Servite monastery there in 1288, sixteen years after Blessed Joachim. He was ordained a priest in 1291.

The vision which opens the narrative summarizes the profound spiritual orientation which inspired the religious experience of Blessed Francis. The lily, in his mother's dream while she was pregnant, is a symbol of a life of virginity understood as a dedication to the Lord and to her who is the glorious Virgin, the Queen of Virgins, or simply the Virgin. This pure light manifests itself in all Francis' gestures and activities. First of all in his great love for the Word of God which he listens to and proclaims faithfully to his last breath, then in the depth of his gaze which penetrates the hearts of the men and women who find in him a father and a friend, in his gentle welcoming of sinners, in his tender devotion to the Mother of God, and in the love he shows to the poor and disinherited.

The *Legenda* of Blessed Francis of Siena was written by Fra Christopher of Parma, Francis' friend and confidant. Christopher of Parma was a member of the priory of Siena before 1328; from 1330 to 1331 he was prior provincial of Tuscany, and vicar of the prior general Peter of Todi until 31 December 1341. Two passages in the *Legenda* itself confirm the identity of the author. In the first, on the day before he died, the Francis entrusted to his confessor the duty of transmitting the last prodigious facts of his life to Fra Christopher of Parma, "my beloved father and son, to whom I have told other secrets" (no. 29). The author of the *Legenda* writes, "His confessor (who later told me what I report)" (no. 29), thus identifying himself with Fra Christopher. The second passage belongs to the long testimony with which Fra Benedict "Gerj", probably the copyist and final redactor of the *Legenda*, who entered the priory in Siena in 1341 (no. 58), concludes the first list of miracles (numbers 36-55) which took place after the Blessed's death. He writes: "Up to this point Fra Christopher of Parma, worthy vicar of the prior general of our excellent Order, has written the *Legenda* and has compiled the life of our Blessed Father Francis and has reported the wonderful miracles" (no. 56). To this *Legenda* Fra Benedict adds the miracle that he himself had experienced at the age of four at the tomb of Blessed Francis in August of 1329 (no. 57).

On the basis of a reference to the Black Death of 1348 (no. 25), which devastated Europe until 1350, Soulier places the redaction of the *Legenda* in a later period, between 1355 and 1360. These dates seem excessively late to Montagna. He believes that it would be impossible for a "secretary of Fra Peter of Todi", to still be actively writing lives of Servite saints around 1350. Peter of Todi had died in 1344 and he had been in disgrace among several of the priories of the Order for about ten years before that. The *Legenda of Blessed Francis* should be placed in the same period in which the *Legenda of Blessed Joachim* was written, that is between 1330 and 1335. The reference to the Black Death would therefore be a gloss of the copyist and final redactor, identified as Fra Benedict "Gerj", who could have transcribed and glossed the original text after 1348-1349, or even toward 1374, under Prior General Andrew of Faenza who was interested in preserving the early memories of the origins of the Order.

The *Legenda of Blessed Francis* differs from that of Blessed Joachim by its style and theological positions. It is the work of a cultured person, similar in various ways to the redactor of the *Legenda de origine Ordinis*.

### **Editions**

The *Life* or *Legenda of Blessed Francis* is found in the same manuscript (Vat. Lat. 10.87, ff. 276v-284v) in which the *Life* or *Legenda of Blessed Joachim* is found.

The first partial and not always correct edition is found in the *Positio super dubio: an sententia lata... super cultu ab immemorabili tempore, prae-dicto beato exhibito, seu super case excepto... sit confirmanda* (Rome, Ex Typographia Rev. Camerae Apostolicae, 1743), pp. 15-28. Soulier then published it, based on the copy by Palombella, in *Analecta Bollandiana*, 14 (1895): 167-197, and after the discovery of the Vatican manuscript, he prepared a second edition in *Monumenta OSM*, 5 (1902): 22-45.

An English translation, *The Life of Blessed Francis of Siena*, is found in *Origins and Early Saints of the Order of Servants of Mary: Writings of the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Centuries* (Chicago, Friar Servants of Mary, 1984), p. 91-108.

### **Bibliography**

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## TEXT

LIFE OF BLESSED FRANCIS CONFESSOR OF SIENA  
OF THE ORDER OF THE FRIARS SERVANTS  
OF THE HOLY VIRGIN MARY

1. In former times God spoke often and in diverse ways to our fathers through the prophets; in these latter days, beloved brothers, he has spoken to us<sup>1</sup> through his servant Francis. The Father of all mercy<sup>2</sup> called him from darkness to the splendor of his light<sup>3</sup>. If we renounce impiety and worldly greed, as the apostle tells us, we will live in this world with temperance, justice, and piety, awaiting the blessed hope<sup>4</sup> of future glory promised to the faithful who run in the race<sup>5</sup>. In this brief account we shall explain Francis' birth in the life of nature and grace, and his holy passing when he ascended to heavenly glory to reign forever.

2. Our blessed father Francis, the faithful witness of Christ, was born in the city of Siena in Tuscany. His parents were Arrighetto and Rainaldesca, people of no mean station in this world, but even more notable for their life, faith, morals, Christian practice and devotion. While pregnant, his mother dreamt that she was giving birth to a lily with deep roots, from whose stem many other lilies sprouted forth. She gathered the flowers and made a crown which she placed on the head of the Queen of Virgins<sup>6</sup>. When she awoke she told her husband about this dream. He did not believe that it was a vision, but thought it only a dream. She went back to sleep and had another extraordinary vision: she was in a beautiful church and there was a bishop dressed in pontifical robes, surrounded by clerics for the celebration of Solemn Mass. He called to her and she trembled. "Woman, do not be afraid. You will give birth to the lily you saw in your womb. It will pass unstained and unharmed through the corruptions of the world". He then made the sign of the cross over her womb with his staff. She awoke and understood the vision the Lord had granted her, but she revealed its secret to no one until the day she died.

3. A few days later, the neighbors assisted her in childbirth and greeted her as a new Elizabeth<sup>7</sup>. When the child had been reborn through the sacrament of Baptism, his godfather took him from the font and gave him to the midwife to be clothed. She in turn consecrated the infant before an image of the glorious Virgin. The baby, sealed by heavenly anointing, opened his eyes, gave signs of great happiness<sup>8</sup> and, with baby gestures, tried to greet the glorious Virgin. This holy beginning foretold his future life<sup>9</sup> and devotion in the garden of the glorious Virgin<sup>10</sup>.

4. When little Francis was weaned by his mother who had nursed him, he was entrusted to a

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<sup>1</sup> *Heb* 1, 1. The solemnity of the beginning recalls the introduction of some of the early lives of St. Dominic.

<sup>2</sup> *2Cor* 1, 3.

<sup>3</sup> *1Pt* 2, 9.

<sup>4</sup> *Ti* 2, 12-13a.

<sup>5</sup> *1Cor* 9, 24-25.

<sup>6</sup> The symbol of the lily extends throughout Francis' entire life, in which virginity is a principle characteristic (cf. numbers 6, 8, 9, 14, 27). For this reason the Mother of God is called or invoked as the "glorious Virgin", the "Virgin Mother", the "Virgin", or also as the "Queen of Virgins".

<sup>7</sup> *Lk* 1, 58.

<sup>8</sup> *Lk* 1, 41.44.

<sup>9</sup> *Lk* 1, 66. The entire paragraph is built on a parallelism between John the Baptist and Blessed Francis.

<sup>10</sup> A definition of the Order of Servants of Mary which underlines the characteristic of being the special property of Our Lady, according to a concept found also in the LO.

tutor to be taught, so that he, like Samuel<sup>11</sup>, might remain in the temple of the Lord forever. The child was blessed and full of God. He lost his father when he was ten years old and began to frequent the church to hear the word of God. What he could understand he meditated upon continually in his contemplative soul and treasured the thoughts in the small library<sup>12</sup> of his heart like choice flowers.

5. At that time there lived in Siena blessed Ambrose of the Order of Preachers<sup>13</sup>, a man dear to God and of great holiness, who was famous among the people for his life and learning, and particularly for his frequent sermons. The little Francis was overwhelmed by his eloquence and spent no time playing children's games lest he miss any of Ambrose's sermons. More than once, during a holy fast, he spent the night praying in the cemetery, or at the door of the Dominican church. One day while preaching to the people, Ambrose pronounced with great conviction words spoken to a certain saint: "Arsenius, flee worldly company and you will be saved"<sup>14</sup>. These words pierced the heart and mind of blessed Francis and at an early age he decided to retire to the solitary life of the desert<sup>15</sup>. He would have carried out this decision immediately had his mother not been ill. Divine providence made her blind to test the humility and patience of blessed Francis. He cared for her lovingly until he was twenty-two years old, lest he transgress the commandment of the Lord. His generosity and compassion grew with him from earliest childhood. The sweetness of his compassion was manifest not only to his parents but to all suffering people redeemed in the blood of Christ.

6. Francis chose the glorious Virgin as his special mother and Lady<sup>16</sup>; he so revered her in his mind and heart that he never called her anything but Lady. He would genuflect before her image five hundred times a day. He recited the Hail Mary and other praises of the glorious Virgin and prayed that the lily of his own virginity would never be uprooted. He fervently sought humility of heart, patience in adversity and strength to overcome the temptations of the devil. He made his flesh serve his spirit and, with plaintive cries, dashed the passions that allured him against the rock which is Christ and the glorious Virgin, his Lady. He washed away with tears and sighs those venial sins that sometimes crept into his mind. He wore a hair shirt and used the discipline.

7. When his mother died, he was free of worldly obligations and thought to carry out the plan in his heart. He would have retired to solitary life in service of the Creator and the glorious Virgin, his Lady<sup>17</sup>, but they had determined otherwise. He had frequently pondered in his heart the words: "Flee worldly company", and the Holy Spirit gave him to understand that it was imitation of the vices of others, not contact with them, that was sinful. On the contrary contact with people could be more meritorious if by his words and the example of his life he could save them from the wiles of the devil. Those who walked as wild beasts in the dangerous paths of the world, lost in vice through the devil's deceit, he would lead to the path of holiness.

8. Francis, the servant of God, like the prophets, understood that the Lord was speaking within him. Following this inspiration, he decided to enter religion immediately. There, under obedience, which is better than sacrifices and holocausts<sup>18</sup>, with nothing of his own, he could imitate the poor Christ and the glorious Virgin. In the flower of his virginity and purity, his service to the

<sup>11</sup> *ISam* 1, 22 ff.

<sup>12</sup> This expression, here in the diminutive "armariolum", is of patristic origin (see for example, St. Jerome, letter 60, 10-8-9). It is typical of medieval monastic literature. The "armarium" is the monastery library. The term is also found in the Perugina *Legenda* of St. Philip (edition of Montagna, pp. 14-15, 40-42).

<sup>13</sup> For Blessed Ambrose Sansedoni see the "Life of Blessed Joachim of Siena", no. 21, notes 26 and 27.

<sup>14</sup> Teodoro Studita, *Vita di Arsenio*, Chap. 4, no. 4.

<sup>15</sup> His desire for a desert life could be in line with the parallelism between John the Baptist and Blessed Francis (see note 9).

<sup>16</sup> Cf. LO, no. 7.

<sup>17</sup> The service of Our Lady is strictly united with service of God. In the following paragraph (no. 8) it is said that Francis chose the Order of Servants in order to serve with a life of virginity "the Virgin Mother and her Son"

<sup>18</sup> *ISam* 15, 22.

Virgin Mother and her Son would be more pleasing. At the age of twenty-two, Francis, already a servant of the Virgin, entered the Order of her Servants.

The outcome was to show how happy was his choice. Among his brothers in religion there are many who bear witness to his perfection which found favor with the Lord of all virtue. I call as my witnesses God and his saints that I will say nothing about his virtues that I have not seen myself or heard from his own mouth before his blessed death. I will not play the flatterer; my only intention is to manifest the glory of the Divine Majesty, and the honor of the immaculate Virgin Mary, whose protection Francis ever sought.

9. This man, full of God, once confided to me under the seal of confession that he never remembered committing any grave actual sin, either in his heart or in his deeds, from infancy to old age. Every day he begged the glorious Virgin with prayers and tears that she might take the life from his body rather than permit his soul to be involved in grave, voluntary sin. Frequently he repeated the words of Solomon: “As from a serpent, flee from sin”<sup>19</sup>. But if the stain of any venial sin had darkened his soul, the salutary sacrament of Penance every day, morning and evening, cleansed it.

10. Less than three years after entering the Order, at the age of twenty-five, he was raised to the dignity of the priesthood. He experienced such devotion towards the sacrament of the Eucharist that he celebrated it every day. He once said, “It is not fitting for a servant of God to remain without Viaticum for a single day, for nothing is more uncertain than the hour of death and we know not when the Lord will come”<sup>20</sup>. When he celebrated Mass his face was frequently transformed with intense and profound joy; one would have thought that he saw the flesh of Christ without the sacramental veil. One of the friars saw this change and asked him, “Fra Francis, what happened? What did you see? You seemed to laugh and rejoice so much during the Mass”. The holy man looked to the ground and replied, “God forgive you, my son, for looking at the priest’s face. No one should look at the priest, nor should he look at anyone in the presence of the Sacred Body of Jesus Christ. Only Moses went into the Holy of Holies, and the children of Israel could not look on his face, which had become radiant from speaking with God”<sup>21</sup>. His confessor heard of this and asked Francis if something had been revealed to him. Francis replied, “My secret is for me alone”<sup>22</sup>; anyone who carries a treasure through the streets desires to be robbed”. The servant of God was so quick, and God gave him such facility with words that even if questioned unexpectedly he would reply immediately without thinking, and answer all questions satisfactorily.

11. Francis was especially zealous in preaching the Word of God to the people. The Lord gave him such a gift of words that without warning or preparation, he would kneel before a crucifix or image of the Virgin, then seek the blessing of the prelate or a priest, and break the bread of the word for the people, giving them words of life. Some of the friars wondered at his knowledge and answers, and his gift of preaching spontaneously. They decided to test him. The prior unexpectedly commanded him to go immediately to the pulpit and preach the word of God to the waiting people. He received the blessing and went towards the church, repeating the Hail Mary and adding: “May the Lord be in my heart...”<sup>23</sup>. One of the friars followed him silently and another asked him how he dared preach without any preparation. Francis replied, “The Lord gives wisdom; from his mouth come riches and glory”<sup>24</sup>. He added, “If one has need of wisdom, let him ask it of the Lord, who

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<sup>19</sup> *Sir* 21, 2.

<sup>20</sup> *Mt* 24, 42.

<sup>21</sup> *Ex* 34, 29.

<sup>22</sup> *Is* 24, 16 of the *Vulgate*.

<sup>23</sup> These are the words which the celebrant uses to bless the deacon or which he himself pronounces before the proclamation of the gospel.

<sup>24</sup> *Prv* 2, 6.

gives to all with abundance and without discrimination<sup>25</sup>. Do you not know that Our Lady is full of grace?” He then went up to the pulpit and preached more successfully than usual. The friars gave thanks to God. The Pharisees did not understand the Lord’s teaching and they marveled that Peter and John knew the Law although they were unlettered<sup>26</sup>; similarly there were those who marveled at the preaching of the servant of God, and they asked him how he could preach without having studied. He would look up to heaven and smile: “Not erudition, but charism; not knowledge but wisdom; not books but love – these things teach us God’s truth”.

12. One day, while he was preaching the word of God with special fervor, two young girls came to hear him. They were both overwhelmed to see the same prodigy: during the sermon, they later told their confessor, they saw a ball of fire come down upon Francis’ head. It rested there a while, and then descended to his right shoulder, where it appeared as a very bright star reflecting its rays upon his lips. At the end of the sermon the star rose above his head and disappeared in the form of a lily. From this they knew that God had given abundant grace to his servant.

13. The servant of the Most High, Francis, had a special gift for giving counsel. Men and women of all conditions came to him for advice. Some of the friars were jealous of his good works and began to murmur that, with the excuse of hearing confessions, he spent too much time with lay people and women. The servant of God heard this and was grieved that he had been a cause of scandal and an occasion of sin. Desiring to choose the better part, like Mary<sup>27</sup>, and not to cause scandal or sin, he threw himself down before an image of the glorious Virgin and prayed: “Dearest Mother, Most Benign Virgin, Queen of Heaven, Lady of the Angels, Mother of Grace and Mercy, I ask you, sweetest Mother, Advocate of sinners, to dispose of me, your unworthy servant, of my actions and my intentions in a way pleasing to you, that I may be ever more faithful in praising you and not a scandal to my neighbors”. He wept a flood of tears during this prayer. He often said that in this life one must not ask any favor of the Creator or the Queen of Heaven without tears. When the prayer was finished, he fell asleep and heard a voice that said, “Your prayer has been heard”. Francis awoke in the deep silence of the night<sup>28</sup>. He got out of bed as usual when the other friars were rising for Matins. Gradually he became aware that he could hear nothing. From this loss of hearing, the servant of God understood that his prayer had been heard by the Lord. And when the friars called him, he placed his finger on his ears and with gestures made them understand that he had lost his hearing. The friars and the lay people were very upset and wanted to call a doctor, but the servant of Christ forbade them. The friars asked him how this had happened so suddenly. He answered, “The ills that oppress us here compel us to turn to God. One of the gates of the city has now been battered down, that we might not spend our strength in the cause of a city which will pass away, but for the permanent and lasting city”<sup>29</sup>.

14. The servant of Christ rejoiced when he realized that Divine Grace shone forth in him. He became more fervent in serving God; he was the exclusive possession of the glorious Virgin; day and night he meditated on the Law of the Lord<sup>30</sup> and on how to improve in virtue. If I were to praise his every virtue in particular, I think that no writer’s pen would suffice. Never, except when seriously ill, would he lie down on a soft bed; even when half-dead he reclined on boards or on the ground, placing a small cushion under his head. When sleep overcame him, day or night, he would rise immediately and run to the oratory he had erected in his cell with an image of the glorious Virgin. Over and above the required “Hours”, he continually and devoutly repeated the Hail Mary

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<sup>25</sup> *Jas* 1, 5.

<sup>26</sup> *Acts* 4, 13.

<sup>27</sup> *Lk* 10, 42.

<sup>28</sup> *Wis* 18, 14.

<sup>29</sup> *Heb* 11, 10.16.

<sup>30</sup> *Ps* 1, 2.

and other praises of the Blessed Virgin. Every day he prayed to the angels, the apostles, the patriarchs, confessors, prophets, the martyrs of Christ and the virgins; he had a special prayer for each of these. He urged everyone to be devoted to the Mother of Christ, and thus he wove that crown for the head of the Queen of Virgins, as had been shown to his mother before his birth.

15. What more can I say? There are friars still alive who are witnesses of his humility. He was so profoundly humble that he considered himself the inferior of not only superiors and equals but even of children. He venerated superiors as fathers and lords, he treated his equals as fathers, and inferiors he respected as dear brothers. If someone, even an inferior, offended him, he blamed himself and saw fault where there was none. He would humbly kneel at his brother's feet and remain there until forced to be silent. He seldom associated with the other friars, unless his superiors explicitly summoned him.

16. He was delicate and sensitive not just with the friars, but with all his neighbors, particularly with orphans, wards, widows, unfortunate people, and those who were bitter or in danger. This should not surprise you; his superiors had granted him permission to give freely whatever the Holy Spirit prompted him to give. He was often with nobles and lords; whatever they offered him or he begged from them, he would distribute to men and women oppressed by shame and poverty. He said that this accomplished two good ends: it made the givers generous, and alleviated the misery of those without the necessities of life.

17. The man of God went through the city at all times preaching the Good News to everyone. He was a mediator of peace in fights and quarrels, a comfort to the victims of any calamity. It was enough for him to intervene as a peacemaker and opposing parties were brought together in harmony.

18. When noblewomen fell ill, they called for the servant of God. He prayed for them, and laid his holy hands on their heads or traced the sign of the cross on them, and they were restored to health. A friar, named Peter of Castello, once told me that he had suffered great pain in his eye. He asked Francis, the servant of God, to trace the sign of the cross on his eye. Francis was generous with his affection and power: he consented and the pain disappeared completely. Needless to say he received pilgrims with such great kindness that he freed them from the discomfort and fatigue of their journey.

19. He was sparing in food, but not excessively so. One must not deny the necessary nourishment to our servant, the body<sup>31</sup>, lest it react or become proud<sup>32</sup>. Rather should we be strong and ready to perform every good work. "We know that for those who love God all things work together for good"<sup>33</sup>.

20. Once Francis was going to preach in the village of Santa Colomba near Siena. He was a rather heavy man and found himself tired from the climb and the heat. He wanted to bathe his lips with wine and water. He came to a villa and asked the owner for a drink for Our Lady's sake. The owner rudely answered that he did not have the keys to the cellar. The man of God was rather timid and withdrew blushing. After going on a short distance he said to his companion, "Son, the Lord is greatly offended when someone denies his servants what they need. The apostle tells us that God commanded that those who serve the altar should live by the altar"<sup>34</sup>. It is not extraordinary for lay

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<sup>31</sup> *Sir* 33, 25.

<sup>32</sup> *Prv* 29, 21.

<sup>33</sup> *Rom* 8, 28.

<sup>34</sup> *ICor* 9, 13.

people to give us material things, for we give spiritual things to them<sup>35</sup>. I think God will be angry with this place". He then continued on his way. That night a furious and unexpected storm broke upon the villa, the vines, and the orchard. It destroyed all the fruit, the grapes, and the leaves. One passing by would have thought winter had come suddenly in the middle of summer.

21. If Francis had to go outside the city walls to preach or for any other reason, he would kneel down, ask the superior's blessing and receive a walking stick from his hands. His companion told him that it was not always necessary to show such great respect. Francis answered, "Dearest brother, we know of our departure, but we know not how and when the Lord may have decreed our return. Every day must therefore be considered as the last".

22. Every day, before the friars rose for Matins, Francis would inflict on himself a fierce use of the discipline, for the living as well as for the dead. One who heard the blows would have said that he was beating wood or stone, and not his own flesh.

23. He ardently desired to leave this dwelling of flesh and would often clap his hands joyfully and repeat the words of the Apostle: "I desire to depart and to be with Christ"<sup>36</sup> or "For me to live is Christ and to die is gain"<sup>37</sup>. When the time approached that the Most High had established for his spirit to be separated from his body so that he might rest from his labors in blessed and complete peace, at the age of seventy two, God gave Francis signs of his imminent death.

24. The feast of the Ascension, on which Christ was freed from the dominion of death and went up to heaven to reign forever glorious, was near at hand. Francis knew his death was near and did not want to leave his spiritual children abandoned and sad without his blessing. The servant of God went into the city and entered the house of one of his friends, Meocone, and his wife, the lady Guccia, who was also devoted to Francis. In prosperous times they had often helped him with their own goods. Francis spoke words of encouragement and asked the lady to gather her sons and daughters and all the family. When they had come together, he lifted his eyes and hands to heaven and blessed each of them, laying his hands on their heads. The devout lady was amazed that he acted so strangely. The man of God said to her, "What I do now you understand not, but you will understand later"<sup>38</sup>. He went away and met her husband with other townsmen near the houses of the nobles. He gave the man a similar blessing and said much the same thing he had said to his wife. The man was equally amazed. Thus, for several days, Francis continued until he had given his blessing to each of his spiritual children.

25. Early on the eve of the feast he received the sacrament of the Eucharist and retired to his cell to meditate deeply on the Ascension of Our Lord Jesus Christ. He was not a little saddened with his delay here below, and broke into tears. With groans and sighs he begged Our Lord and the Blessed Virgin to free his spirit from the prison of his body. "It is time", he prayed, "O King and Queen of Glory, that this body of dust and mud return to the earth, and that my spirit return to you". He was all taken up with tears of devotion when Fra John of Cennina, his intimate and devoted friend, arrived. John asked him what was wrong. The servant of God quietly and kindly replied, "Do you not know, my son, that tomorrow Our Lord will ascend to heaven?". "I know, Father", John answered. "Do you believe, my son, that he will leave me behind in this valley of misery? Truly I hope he will grant me this favor and not keep me in my misery". Fra John, a man of blessed memory who died in the great plague<sup>39</sup>, did not understand these words.

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<sup>35</sup> *1Cor* 9, 11

<sup>36</sup> *Phil* 1, 23.

<sup>37</sup> *Phil* 1, 21.

<sup>38</sup> *Jn* 13, 7.

<sup>39</sup> That is, the Black Death of 1348 which spread throughout all Europe, striking down more than thirty million victims, about one-third of the population of the continent.

26. The servant of God realized that shortly his spirit would be called back to the Lord. He suddenly lost his strength, but in preparation for his departure he put in order his books and meager possessions. Towards the hour of the evening meal, Francis went to the prior provincial, Fra Michael of Castello, and the prior of the community, Fra Nicholas of Siena, and begged their leave to eat with them that evening. They were opposed and said that he could eat with them some other time. He replied, "Fathers, we do not know what may happen tomorrow". They gave him permission to eat with them. Francis sat down and said, "With desire, I have desired to eat this pasch"<sup>40</sup>. They did not understand what he was saying and thought the man of God was speaking in riddles. While they were eating, the prior said, "Fra Francis, eat this meal with the blessing of God". Francis, the servant of God, replied with a Sienese proverb, "Love, do you not know that the messenger has come to say that the camp must be surrendered, and I have answered: willingly, as long as the person is saved?". They thought he was speaking of some Sienese camp and questioned him no further. After supper, the prior asked him if he had been speaking of the camp of his body, since he had eaten next to nothing. But Francis would not tell him the Lord's secret.

27. A little later Francis, half-dead, lay down on some boards before an image of the glorious Virgin. After he fell asleep he saw the glorious Virgin speaking to her Son, whom she held on her knees. "My Beloved, Beloved of my womb, how can I reward my beloved for the service he has rendered me?". The Babe answered, "It would be just, dearest Mother, that he who has loved us so much be happy with us in heaven and honored on earth for your sake". The Babe made a sign with his hand and said to Francis, "Come, my beloved"<sup>41</sup>, beloved of my Mother, and enjoy forever the glory of the blessed"<sup>42</sup>. You have preserved unstained the robe of flesh with the honor of virginity".

28. The servant of God was suddenly awakened by the friar who called the friars to Matins. This surprised him. He went to the church before the third bell had rung, still thinking of the vision. He said to himself, "O God, my heart is ready, my heart is ready; I will sing and speak praise"<sup>43</sup>. Other friars who had come to choir before office noticed his voice was stronger than usual. They heard him sing psalms and verses from the psalter. Not thinking he could be heard, Francis prayed: "O God, you have taught me from my youth, and even now I am preaching your wonders"<sup>44</sup>. As the deer longs for running streams, thus does my soul long for you, O God. My soul thirsts for God, the living God: when will I come and appear in the presence of God"<sup>45</sup>? How lovely is your dwelling place, O Lord of Hosts! My soul longs and pines for the courts of the Lord"<sup>46</sup>. How great are the benefits of sweetness which you have reserved for those who fear you"<sup>47</sup>. O Lord. O Lord, I love the dwelling of your house and the place where your majesty dwells"<sup>48</sup>. One thing only I ask of the Lord, to dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, to see the magnificent sight of the Lord and visit his sanctuary"<sup>49</sup>. In you, O Lord, I have hoped, I will never be disappointed. Come quickly to free me. Into your hands I commend my spirit, O Lord"<sup>50</sup>. 10 After Matins he continued to repeat these invocations until the hour of Prime.

29. While preparing himself to celebrate the Mass of the Ascension he called his confessor,

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<sup>40</sup> *Lk* 22, 15.

<sup>41</sup> *Sg* 7, 12 (*Vulgate* 7, 11).

<sup>42</sup> Eternal joy, which Our Lady obtains from her Son for her Servants, is the reward of service faithful performed until death.

<sup>43</sup> *Ps* 57, 8-9.

<sup>44</sup> *Ps* 71, 17

<sup>45</sup> *Ps* 42, 2-3.

<sup>46</sup> *Ps* 84, 2-3.

<sup>47</sup> *Ps* 31, 20.

<sup>48</sup> *Ps* 26, 8.

<sup>49</sup> *Ps* 27, 4.

<sup>50</sup> *Ps* 31, 2.3.6 (71, 1).

who had also heard the words he had spoken. He made his confession carefully. His confessor (who later told me what I report) asked him why he had sung those verses. Francis replied, "It is the will of God not to hide his secret, but be careful not to reveal what I tell you before the time established by the Lord. Dearest son, in a little while I shall be taken from this world". "Do not talk like that, Fra Francis", his confessor said. "I do not believe", Francis continued, "that you will see me celebrate again, because there is little time left for my body on earth". He told him of the vision and the reply he had made. His confessor was sad and wanted to cry, but Francis said, "Try not to cry. Please keep these things secret and when it pleases God you will reveal them to Fra Christopher of Parma, my beloved father and son, to whom I have told other secrets". A third time, with an almost menacing countenance, he added, "Be careful not to tell others about this!".

30. After celebrating Mass he was completely exhausted and could barely stand up. Nonetheless he had to go to preach in a town called Prisciano near Siena. He knelt before the prior and asked his blessing and the absolution of all his sins. He asked the prior to place the walking stick in his hand. The prior refused this act of profound reverence, for he knew not what had happened, and was unaware of the Lord's secret. Francis said, "Father, I do not know when I will ever again be able to ask your blessing". With his remaining strength he set out, sustained by the walking stick and a friar who accompanied him. When the servant of God had gone a stone's throw from the city gate, his strength abandoned him and he fell to his knees and said, "I love you, O Lord my strength, O God my firmament, my refuge and my liberator"<sup>51</sup>. Since the Hail Mary was always on his lips he added: "Hail Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with you". Then with the help of his companion, he tried to continue, obedient even unto death.

31. The servant of God went forward about thirty steps, and saw an unknown woman with a bunch of roses coming towards him. She said, "Fra Francis, take these roses". He took them graciously and carried them to an image of the glorious Virgin painted on a nearby hermitage. He began the angelic salutation and slid slowly to the ground, first on his knees, then on his side. As he was about to die he recommended himself, like a flower or a virgin lily, to the Virgin. Beloved readers, Our Savior suffered the agony of his own Passion outside the city walls<sup>52</sup>, so that his saving Passion might be known to all people. So too Francis, the servant of God, received the spirit of the promise and pledge of his vocation before the glorious Virgin, his Lady, outside the city, so that his holy death might be known even among distant nations.

32. His almost lifeless body was carried to the monastery. While someone went to fetch a doctor, the servant of God made the others understand with signs what he could not express with his tongue: he shook his head and rolled his eyes as if to say he had no need of earthly medicine. The infirmarian said, "Fra Francis, how are you? Do you want me to prepare something for you?". The servant of God opened his eyes, his face shone and he repeated softly, "All things are finished; in peace I will take my rest"<sup>53</sup>.

33. In the deep quiet of the night of the feast of the Ascension, as the friars were singing the *Invitatorium*<sup>54</sup> in the church, the infirmarian asked him how he was. But the servant of God did not answer. When the friars reached the verse: "If today you hear his voice..."<sup>55</sup> he sought to pronounce the words with his lips and with his eyes to indicate that the Lord was soon to call him. Then he fell back again when the friars began the verse: "For forty years..."<sup>56</sup>, and indicated that he was thirsty. A moment later he was heard to say, "I fear you not", and then, raising his hand slightly, he slowly

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<sup>51</sup> Ps 18, 2-3.

<sup>52</sup> Heb 13, 12-13.

<sup>53</sup> Ps 4, 9.

<sup>54</sup> The *Invitatorium* is *Psalm* 95, so called because it is the psalm which opens the common prayer and "invites" one to pray.

<sup>55</sup> Ps 95, 8

<sup>56</sup> Ps 95, 10.

said the single word: “meum”. We believe that he said the words of Our Savior: “Father, into your hands I commend my spirit”<sup>57</sup>. With that, Francis, the servant of the Most High, gave back his spirit to our Creator in the presence of the friars. He was seventy-two years old and it was the year of the Lord 1328, in the eleventh indiction<sup>58</sup>, the 26th of May, in the twelfth year of the pontificate of our Most Holy Father and Lord in Christ, John XXII, by divine providence Pope of the Most Holy and Universal Roman Church<sup>59</sup>.

34. From the city, the surrounding villages and the countryside people came to see his holy body although they had not been called. The friars were overwhelmed by this sudden gathering of men and women. There was so much grief, lamenting, sighing and wringing of hands that one would have thought there had been a massacre in the city! Everyone mourned for him as for a father; they had lost their comforter, their intercessor with the glorious Virgin. “What shall we do, holy father?” they said. “Who will console us now that you have been taken away? Who will give us the counsels of salvation?”. They wept for him as for a first-born son, with inconsolable tears.

35. The community of religious and the clergy had come together for the obsequies, to bury his holy body worthily. After the Office of the Dead, the Requiem was intoned as the Introit of the Mass, but the people made the chanter sing: “*Gaudeamus omnes in Domino, diem festum celebrantes...*”<sup>60</sup>. We, the pilgrims and the Sieneese people, that day, were certain that we were sending before us into heaven a patron and a trusted intercessor with the Most High. The religious and clergy wanted to bury the holy body, but they were unable to do so for four days. From near-by towns and from the city great crowds of people came to see that treasure of virtue, blessed Francis, in whom had shone so many spiritual gifts.

Through the merits of his holy body, the Lord gave sight to the blind and hearing to the deaf; he allowed cripples to walk; the possessed were freed, lepers were cleansed, all pains were relieved and most extraordinary of all, the dead rose<sup>61</sup>. In the meantime the holy body was unclothed and part of his relics and the clothing that covered his pure body were carried away. He was dressed a second and a third time, but relics were still carried away.

#### [Miracles]

36. A certain curious person arrived and began to defame the holy man of God. Then someone drew a sword to cut off a piece of the cowl of this great father so that he might have it as a means of health and devotion; but because of the press of the crowd the sword struck the face of the holy man. And immediately from the holy body there gushed forth an abundant stream of living blood, as to have one think that he was not dead but alive. And certainly he was dead to the world, but living for God<sup>62</sup>. When the skeptical man saw this, he beat his breast and became devoted to Blessed Francis. He asked pardon and began to make frequent visits to the sacred body.

37. Tongues would not be sufficient to recount the quantity and magnitude of the innumerable miracles that the mercy of our Savior has worked through the merits of his glorious confessor Francis. But a few simple examples from the innumerable that have happened are set down here for the consolation of those who read and listen.

<sup>57</sup> *Ps* 31, 6; *Lk* 23, 46.

<sup>58</sup> The indiction is a cycle of fifteen years computed so as to begin with the year 313, the year Constantine brought peace to the Church after centuries of persecutions. The years in each cycle are numbered from one to fifteen. The papal chancery began to use the year of indiction in 1088 and it remained in use throughout the Middle Ages

<sup>59</sup> Jacques Duèse of Cahors, Pope in Avignon from 1316 to 1334.

<sup>60</sup> This is the entrance hymn or Introit for solemn feast days.

<sup>61</sup> *Mt* 11, 5; *Lk* 7, 22.

<sup>62</sup> *Rm* 6, 11.

38. On the same day on which the spirit of the beloved confessor of Christ, Francis, was carried to the heavenly dwelling place, he suddenly appeared to a woman, a close friend of the man of God, Necca by name. She had taken some pieces of the clothing from the sacred body, and now he appeared to her with the same appearance he had when he was among the living. When she saw him, she was seized by a great fear. The glorious Francis gently comforted her and said to her: “Daughter, do not fear; but run swiftly to tell my brothers that they should arrange my body with greater honor, for it is put in a rather unfitting place. It has pleased the Queen of Heaven to honor my body on earth, as she has raised my spirit with the blessed”. And having said this, he suddenly disappeared. The woman ran swiftly and with many tears recounted the vision publicly to the friars and to all those present.

39. Many months later it happened that a woman, Mita by name, a *mantellate*<sup>63</sup> of the Friars Preachers, who enjoyed an excellent reputation among all the people of Siena, was close to death. She was carried off for two days to contemplation in heaven. When she returned to normal life in order to recount the marvelous visions, to the questions of those present who asked for a word of comfort and devotion, she replied using the words of the Apostle: “Eye has not seen”, etc.<sup>64</sup>. They asked her to tell them what she had seen regarding some religious who were very famous among the people, and whether she had seen them among the blessed. She replied: “Men see what is on the outside; God, on the other hand, looks into the heart<sup>65</sup>. Many appear to men to be filled with light, but to the Most High there is darkness. Nevertheless, those about whom you ask are among the elect, but they are not yet in glory with the blessed”. Then some who did not have much confidence in the holiness of the glorious Francis, asked her out of curiosity: “Did you, dear lady, see Blessed Francis of the Order of Servants, through whom it seems that God is now working great miracles?” And she replied with a happy expression on her face, “Ah, dearest daughters, I saw him all radiant, glorious as the sun before the Queen of Heaven, and the Queen of the heavenly court placed a crown on his head. You must have no doubt about the glory of his holiness”. Shortly after having said these words, she rendered her spirit to the Creator. Those women, enlightened by this heavenly wonder, now took the part of the glorious Francis and began to visit his tomb frequently. I have inserted this event here, even if many others happened before it, so that the first vision and apparition and manifestation of his glory would be confirmed by the great praise of the second vision.

40. While crowds of people were going with great devotion to visit the tomb containing his sacred body, since spiritual gifts and physical cures were given there to those in need, a certain Vito di Andrea, of the Camollia district, began to defame the holy man of God with words and shouting. And behold he was immediately seized by a severe and constant fever and went to bed. Doctors were consulted and they sought the cause of his sickness, but from the examination of the symptoms they could reach no conclusion. The sickness grew more serious, so that after three days of constant worsening, all signs of recovery were gone. There were evident signs of death and none of health. As it pleased the Most High, Vito remembered that he had defamed and been unbelieving regarding the holy man of God. He recoiled at the misdeed, repented, and now believing in his sanctity, he commended himself from the depths of his heart with complete devotion. If he would merit to regain his health – which in fact he did not deserve – he promised that he would go barefoot to visit his tomb with great reverence. He had not yet spoken the vow, when behold without forewarning he jumped up from the bed. The fever was gone, and he cried out that he had unexpectedly been cured and freed from every illness through the merits of Blessed Francis. He fulfilled his vow and from that moment became a strong supporter of Blessed Francis and the friars.

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<sup>63</sup> Mantellates were lay people who belonged to a Third Order. They were called mantellates because of the mantle they wore.

<sup>64</sup> *1Cor* 2, 9.

<sup>65</sup> *1Sam* 16, 7

41. A certain Master Bartholomew thought that the miracles of Blessed Francis were of no worth. He raised his hand and arm and said: "I don't know what kind of miracles these are!" And at that moment the hand and arm became senseless as stone or wood and they became shriveled. Striking his breast and crying abundant tears, he went to the tomb of the holy man of God, and doing homage, his hand and arm were restored.

42. Another man, called John Dureliani, had had a withered hand for more than four years, so that he could not extend his fingers or the hand itself. On contact with the sacred body, the hand and fingers immediately opened.

43. For a long time Bindo from Pieve di Castello had been stricken with darkness in his eyes. This had so impaired his ability to see and contracted the pupils of his eyes that he could see almost nothing. He was taken to the tomb of the sacred body and entreated the holy man of God with complete devotion. Before rising from prayer, he obtained his request.

44. A woman, the Lady Tora, whose knees and legs had been dried and shriveled for more than eight years, so that she had lost all possibility of walking, was brought to the tomb of the holy man of God. Praising God and the glorious Francis, she returned on foot to her home without the help of anyone and without tiring.

45. Because of the miracles which God had worked with such abundance through the holy man Francis, another woman, called Lady Tura, who for a long time had lost her hearing and could hear almost nothing, went to the sacred body. She took his holy hand and placed it devoutly on her ears. Immediately her hearing was restored.

46. Tuccia, a woman from Poleta in the diocese of Florence, was possessed by an evil spirit, and for ten months she was cruelly tormented. She was brought to the tomb of the holy body and placed in front of it. The evil spirit could not bear the holiness and began to give signs of its departure. It came forth leaving the poor woman half dead.

47. Another woman, by the name of Bilia, widow of Dino from Ponte d'Arbia, had been possessed by an evil spirit for twelve years. When she touched the sacred body she was completely freed.

48. Francis, a child of two and a half years, son of Master Naddo, a citizen of Siena, had been stricken with a severe fever. For eight days he had not taken milk from the wet-nurse or any other liquid. He was near to death. In desperation he was commended to Blessed Francis, and when this was done, after a certain period of time he became healthy, as if he never had had a serious illness.

49. A man, Guido di Nerio from Belforte in the diocese of Siena, was stricken with a great trembling of his limbs, his head, and his hands. He had suffered this illness which they call paralysis for four years. If he carried a container of water in his hand, he would spill it. Even his head moved with such frequency that he could not hold it still even a moment. He went to the tomb of the sacred body, and after passing three days and three nights there, he was so perfectly cured as to think that he had never suffered this illness.

50. Another man, named Minuzio, of the hospital<sup>66</sup>, had a wife who bore him a son. When the

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<sup>66</sup> This is the famous hospital of Santa Maria della Scala in Siena, where eminent people of the time offered their services. In particular we might remember Blessed James of Città della Pieve, called the Almsgiver (1270 ca.-1304), a member of both the Servite and Franciscan Third Orders.

days of her delivery were approaching, she began to feel overwhelmed by distressful concern about the birth. When the birth pains came, she delivered a stillborn child, an infant without vital organs. There was no breath of life in that small body: not a cry, not a breath, nor any feeling. It was absolutely lifeless. The father of this dead fetus, filled with sorrow, turned to Blessed Francis with complete faith and total devotion so that through his merits he might obtain from God that a living spirit and rational soul might be infused into that small body. Divine grace did not fail to come to assist his devotion, and after three hours, breath was given to him, and he came to the light as if he has just then come from his mother's womb. He fulfilled all the functions of that first moment of life. Some days later, that child in whom divine grace was manifested through the merits of Blessed Francis, was reborn in the sacrament of baptism and called John. God is glorious in his saints and he alone works great miracles, repeating the miracles as if from the beginning.

51. I will also tell about a famous miracle, known to all the people. A man named Vinuto had a young son. He went with some other boys to a spring. One of his companions pushed him and he fell into the spring and sank to the bottom where he drowned. He was pulled out dead: there was no sign of life in him. His father came running and brought him home and commended him with devotion and tears to Blessed Francis. He was immediately restored to life and began to walk by himself, as if, awakening from sleep, he had never suffered anything.

52. In addition, a certain Nicholas di Giunta's wife, Lady Bruna, bore him a son who at baptism was given the name Guntino. When he was three years old, he was stricken with a violent form of epilepsy that tormented him with very strong attacks of fever. In a few days he was near death from the fever and sickness. For two days he remained with no signs of vital functions. His parents, who were in profound desolation and crying as if the boy had died, commended him with great trust and devotion to the grace of Blessed Francis. Then, as if he had never been sick, the boy got up as if from sleep and was immediately restored to his former state of health. His parents dressed him in the habit of the Order and led him through the city with a candle in his hand to the tomb of Blessed Francis. Proclaiming publicly that he had been cured through the merits of Blessed Francis, they offered him with profound reverence at the altar of Blessed Francis.

The wife of a certain Peter, son of the late Mino, had conceived a son. At the moment of birth, when she was in great pain, the midwives who assisted her – one was named Turma and the other Nuzia – brought forth a dead child from the uterus of the mother. What sorrow! They informed the mother and father, and with many tears they commended him immediately to Blessed Francis. He was forthwith restored to life, and they brought him to the tomb and presented him with devotion at the altar of Blessed Francis.

54. A certain Muzio of Buonconvento in the diocese of Siena had a young child of about two years who caught one of those strong fevers which happen at that age. For fourteen days he suffered continually and was not able to drink milk or consume any other food. Thus little by little every vital sign was extinguished. On the fourteenth day, at the first watch of the night, the child died with the great lament of his parents. The following morning the parents commended the child to Blessed Francis and immediately the child was freed from the bonds of death and came out as from a light drowsiness. They kissed him now alive and well whom they had mourned for as dead. They then carried the boy to the tomb of Blessed Francis and showed him to all the friars. I, too, saw him and held him in my arms, driven by the devotion which the miracle inspired.

55. In order to extol his holiness I have recorded these few things from among many. If you, reader, wish to know more about them and learn other important facts, go to see the book of his miracles<sup>67</sup>, where there are miracles of every type. There is no type or class of illness, for which the

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<sup>67</sup> This book of miracles, authenticated by notaries as Fra Benedict of Geri notes later on, was still extant at the time of Poccianti and Giani.

Most High has not given the gift of a cure through the merits of the holy confessor of Christ Francis.

56. Up to this point the Reverend Fra Christopher of Parma, worthy vicar of the General of our most excellent Order, has written this *Legenda* and has compiled the life of our blessed father Francis<sup>68</sup>. Since men by their nature wish to know many things, as a result of the task given me to read and do research in the book of miracles, I want to add to this *Legenda* a miracle which I found, so that I may give witness to the work of truth, manifested so luminously in Blessed Francis, that is, that every word be confirmed from the mouth of two or three. That which I wish to add to the “legenda” happened in the year of the Lord 1329, in the month of August, and I have found the confirmation in the hand of a notary, as I saw it. And thus I find the following written in the book of miracles:

57. A four-year old boy, named Benedict, son of Geri Lanarvoli<sup>69</sup>, of the parish of St. Martin, had never walked from the time of his birth until the moment that he was brought to the tomb of Blessed Francis. When he was carried there, he was immediately healed. The witnesses were Geri his father, Lady Mea his mother, Minucia his sister, and so many others that it would be tedious to list them all. That is what was written there.

58. What I, the aforementioned boy and least of all, Fra Benedict, useless and ungrateful servant, to whom so much has been given, shall shout in a loud voice, that I shall put in writing about the our illustrious and famous father, Francis. Certainly virtue has not been given to me, since I am chosen from sinners and unjust men, to whom, we know, God does not listen. But my ignorance also hinders me from giving Blessed Francis the praises worthy of him, from celebrating him with lofty praises, and from commending his virtues without ceasing. Nor do I propose this testimony only because I have found myself in the writings about Blessed Francis, but because I have heard this account thousands of times from my father, mother, and sister, and from many others. Since I was still a small child, as if awakening from a short slumber, I do not remember having been placed on his altar, but I have been told about it. It seems evident, therefore, that my illness was for the glory of this holy man. That which came from my mother’s womb was brought to the baptismal font and placed before the parish priest that day without delay; on seeing me he was astonished and said to those who had come with me, “Do you not know that one who holds a creature (without baptism) for so many days is excommunicated?”. The answer was given, “He was born today”. As long as my mother and father were alive they always sent me each year with a candle for the feast of Blessed Francis and many times they themselves came with me. And for the praise of Blessed Francis I wish to tell what had been told to me. When I was old enough to make a decision, for my salvation I wanted to join the Order of the Friars Minor. But those who knew me said openly to me: “In no way should you join the Order of Friars Minor, for in you Blessed Francis of the Order of Servants has shown his great power”. Thence not understanding the plan of God and not wishing to scorn Blessed Francis and his Order, but following the devotion of my boyish spirit, until the moment of my entrance into an Order, I asked to enter the Order of Friars Minor for a month. I had already been left by my parents in this life for two years. Inspired, however, by the merits of Blessed Francis through the words of a man, I, an unworthy and unfaithful servant, entered into this his Order in the year of the Lord 1341, on the vigil of St. Andrew the Apostle of Our Lord Jesus Christ, to whom be eternal honor and praise with the Father and the Holy Spirit for ever and ever. Amen.

### **Some miracles of Blessed Francis which have not yet been recorded in the “Legenda”.**

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<sup>68</sup> See *Introduction*.

<sup>69</sup> *Ibid.*

So that the memory of such great miracles and the virtues of the illustrious man, Blessed Francis are not lost to memory, I wish to record, as briefly as possible, among the many miracles, some which I have found confirmed by the hand of a notary.

1. Lady Guglielma, widow of Andrew, of the district in Siena called Vallepiazza, suffered from an arm which could not be extended, because it was paralyzed. When she touched the hand of Blessed Francis, she was instantly cured in the presence of all the people.

2. John di Gualtiero Malevolti suffered from an illness of the head, almost causing him to lose his vision. Because of the pain he could not sleep. He commended himself to Blessed Francis with a devout prayer and was immediately healed.

3. John di Mino from Leonina, paralyzed in the legs for three months, was brought to the tomb of Blessed Francis and was cured in the sight of the people.

4. Bartholomew di Simon had lost the use of an arm because he was unable to extend it; he made a vow to the Blessed Francis and was instantly healed.

5. On the same day on which the reverend father went to Christ, a woman, Geronna, wife of Manfred, who suffered from an enormous abscess on her right leg, was persuaded to commend herself with reverence to the holy man, since the doctor had lost all hope of healing. She had fallen asleep and a voice had invited her to do this. When she awoke, she heard the voice but saw no one and did not know whose voice it was. With great faith she made a vow, and rising the following morning, she found that through the merits of the holy man she was suddenly healed of her infirmity.

6. A woman, by the name of Balduccia of Master Incontro of San Quirico, in the district of Siena, suffered from a disease of the right eye for more than four months, so that she could not even see her own feet. She commended herself to the holy man and was immediately healed. Thus she left her house and went barefoot to visit his tomb.

7. A merchant of Pieve di Marmoraia, who could no longer see out of one eye, devoutly made a promise and immediately regained his sight.

8. A woman, Mina, wife of Master Dato of Fileta, had a disease of the eyes and could no longer see light. Having heard of the power of this great saint, she went to venerate his tomb. Immediately she obtained a healing before a large crowd and returned with her sight restored.

9. A certain Casino di Casini, of Monte Santa Maria, in the district of Siena, injured himself by carrying a heavy load. His intestines had descended in his bladder for four months. Hearing of the miracles of Blessed Francis, he went to venerate his tomb, and having said a prayer, he realized that he had been cured.

10. Angelo di Nutino di Naddo had such a severe pain in his chest that they feared for his life. He was devoutly commended by his nurse and at that instant he was cured.

11. A certain Peter of Saltuccio was suffering from quartan fever for a year. He commended himself devoutly to

Blessed Francis and visited his tomb while he was still had the fever. Suddenly, in the sight of many people, he was cured.

12. The Lady Angela, wife of Signor Gontiero, had a daughter who had suffered from a fever

for five weeks. Hearing of the life and miracles of Blessed Francis, she devoutly offered him the girl with a vow. Her faith was rewarded, for through the merits of Blessed Francis the girl was cured.

13. Urso di Naddo from Marlia di Lucca was paralyzed on his right side. He heard of the life and power of the Blessed Francis. From the baths he came with great faith and remained devoutly before the body of the Blessed. He who for many months had suffered and not been cured by the baths or by the doctors was healed immediately in the presence of many people.

14. Mante, the maid of Signor Angelo Grifoli, lost the use of one side. She made a vow and was immediately healed.

15. Pancolino from Montaperti, stricken with epilepsy, made a vow and through the merits of Blessed Francis was cured.

16. A certain man from Montepulciano, who had lost his hearing for a year, commended himself to Blessed Francis and was immediately healed.

17. Nine days after Blessed Francis' death, while a certain man was eating lettuce and cheese, he suddenly experienced great pains, so that all thought...<sup>70</sup>.

18. A young boy, son of a certain Crasso Barlettaio, of the parish of St. George, had been killed when a large piece of dried meat, which had been hanging up high, fell on him. Through the merits of the Blessed Francis and the prayers which his mother and other members of the family made to the Blessed, he came back to life. This I learned from a summary made by one of our friars who had the testimony first confirmed by the signature of a notary.

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<sup>70</sup> Here the manuscript copied by Palombella is interrupted. The following miracle is written in smaller characters on the bottom part of the second column of the last page.