

Letizia Pellegrini, ed. *Il Processo di canonizzazione di Bernardino da Siena (1445–1450)*.

Analecta Franciscana 16. Nova Series, Documenta et Studia 4. Rome: Frati Editori di Quaracchi, 2009. 756 pp. index. append. bibl. €80. ISBN: 978-88-7013-287-8.

Pope Nicholas V canonized Bernardino of Siena on 24 May 1450, only six years after the famous preacher's death. An Observant Clarisse from Ferrara was among those who witnessed the ceremony at St. Peter's, although she was not

present physically. Rather, Caterina Vigri's prayers had transported her spiritually to Rome in order to see Bernardino honored as a saint. She also intended to demand that he bring about the release of her brother's soul from purgatory (successfully, according to her own saintly biographer). Caterina's devotion to Bernardino certainly attests to their shared reforming zeal, which would be an important factor supporting his canonization within the reform branch of the Franciscan Order. However, her interest also suggests the rapid growth of his cult among those who had been inspired by his famous sermons and who now sought his thaumaturgical assistance. These qualities made his canonization attractive to other parties outside the Franciscan Order, including the papacy, which wanted to emphasize its authority in the aftermath of the Great Schism, and communal authorities in Siena, who wanted another civic saint. These interests come together in the extensive record of Bernardino's canonization process, which Letizia Pellegrini publishes here. Her fine edition is a significant contribution to our understanding of his popularity in Quattrocento Italy and thus also to a deeper appreciation of the society in which Bernardino lived, preached, and was understood to work miracles.

Pellegrini's edition begins with a brief assessment of Bernardino's career, but soon turns toward the development of his saintly memory. The formal investigation occurred in three phases between 1445 and 1449. Three manuscripts include all three phases, while two others include the first and third. These manuscripts, all preserved in Aquila where Bernardino died, serve as the foundation for her edition along with some additional notarial material from the Vatican Library (112\*–133\*). Pellegrini addresses each of the three stages, but also considers Bernardino's investigation within the context of developments to the canonization process. She compares it with earlier ones for Bridget of Sweden and Nicolas of Tolentino and finds that Bernardino's process reflected deliberate changes in papal emphasis toward the legal aspects of the investigation that would become normative in the early modern era. She suggests it came to serve as a model for subsequent investigations including those of the Dominicans Vincent Ferrer and Catherina of Siena. This development is a topic of much interest to scholars of later medieval and early modern sainthood, one of the areas to which Pellegrini's research contributes. Certainly beyond these procedural matters, the particular stories that testify to Bernardino's sanctity are also of great interest for religious historians. While the early witnesses include many friars who knew Bernardino, the majority were laypeople who tell about healings and other assistance from the fiery friar. They include men and women, young and old, and the more ordinary members of society along with the urban elites. This rich publication thus offers a new resource for assessing Bernardino's impact and the concerns of his followers.

Indices help locate individual names and places throughout the process. An extensive bibliography also provides a useful orientation to Bernardino studies (9\*–26\*), although some important recent studies are missing. These include monographs on his preaching by Cynthia Pollecritti (2000) and Nirit Ben-Aryeh Debby (2001), as well as Machtelt Israël's study of the Bernardino's portraits, contemporary to the process (*I Tatti Studies: Essays in the Renaissance* 11 (2007):

77–114). Nonetheless, a glimpse through the names of authors and dates of publications in the bibliography and Pellegrini's own commentary on the study of Bernardino's reputation reflect how the field of Franciscan Studies had changed. Where it was once a concern limited primarily to friars interested in their own religious order's history, it now attracts lay scholars with broad interests in late medieval and early modern religious institutions. That the "Quaracchi" friars at the Collegio di San Bonaventura have published this work in their series of editions of the important historical and theological works of the early Franciscan Order reflects this shift (Pellegrini is a lay scholar), and attests to the high quality of Pellegrini's work.

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