

THE VISION OF ALBERICO

Translated by Robert Piselli

In a certain region of Campania there is a castle by the name of Settefrati (Seven Brothers). It was given this name by its inhabitants because of a church that exists there of the same name. In this castle once lived the son of a noble knight, his name was Alberico. At the age of ten, the youth was overtaken by illness and fell severely ill. During a period of nine days and nights, he remained motionless and unconscious, as if he were dead. During the course of these days, he had an astonishing vision.

He narrated thus:

1

A white bird resembling a dove came near me and inserting its beak into my mouth, it withdrew something that I do not know. With its beak it then grasped me by the tufts of my hair

and lifted me above ground, at the height of a man. There appeared before me at the same time the Blessed Apostle Peter and two angels; one was called Emanuel and the other Helos. They began to lead me and show me the places of Hell and punishments.

2

The first place of my journey was a site that burned of embers of fire and flamed out gasses in which were purged the infants of one year of age. The Apostle Peter, who was the guide and interpreter of my visions, told me "I did not want you to see the major punishments at first, but instead the minor ones. Punishment is given out according to a man's age, and the amount given is considered in this fashion; men is first an infant; then as he matures, he arrives at adolescence, he then reaches adulthood and little by little he becomes weaker and moves towards old age. During all the stages of his life, man accumulates sins. For this infants are punished, then a little more the youth are punished etc. This continues until little by little

the sins are diminished by long suffering; punishment comes to be lessened by old age.

Many believe that youth and infants are without sin and that after dying they will not be subjected to punishment. But this is not true because even an infant of one day is without sin. Often youths have tormented their mothers, struck her in the face, or for other causes of human frailty they can not be cleared of any guilt. Therefore youth of one year of age are purged in this fire for seven days, those of two years of age, for fourteen, and so on. This punishment is called Prudence.

3

After saying these things the Apostle showed me a terrible valley, in which I observed a great number of people covered with ice and almost frozen; I could barely see their heads. The frozen ice consumed these unhappy souls, as if in a fire. I saw many of them submerged up to the heels; others up to their knees or up to their hips; and a few up to their chests; depending on the type of sin. I saw others who were burdened

by many sins submerged entirely. These, the Blessed Apostle Peter told me, are those who committed adultery, incest, rape, or who lived without marriage and had fallen into grave acts of fornication.

4

Next I passed into another valley it was even more terrible and full of tall slender trees. These were like poles of sixty arms in length; the tops of which were like pointed spikes.

Hanging from them I saw many women with their breasts pierced and from which hung two snakes, each sucking on a nipple.

These women, the Blessed Peter told me, are those that refused to breast feed orphans or infants who had been deprived of their mothers. These are also those women who had pretended to breast feed, but in reality did not. It often happens that an orphan is left in the hands of a relative who in wanting to save him give him to the neighbors or to other women to be nourished; some of these lack compassion and refuse to raise him. Others, as I have mentioned, may have promise to breast feed,

but instead with their trickery, they allowed the baby to die of hunger. Since a baby can only cry and whimper, the relatives may have assumed that the baby was sufficiently nourished of milk and therefore did not learn the real cause for his death. These women not believing they are guilty don't even confess their sins to their priest; for this reason they suffer this punishment. In the same valley I saw still other women suspended by their hair and being burnt by flames. I was told they suffer this punishment because they had broken their matrimonial contract and betrayed their husband's trust, they had committed Adultery.

5

After these things I saw an iron ladder of three hundred and sixty five cubits long. It was burning and spewing out flames as scorching iron withdrawn from a furnace.

At its feet was a big cauldron containing oil, pitch and tar; it was boiling vigorously. The feet of those who climbed and descended this ladder were scorched over the flaming rungs; and falling into the cauldron, burnt even more then before. The Apostle Peter said to me "these you

see tormented in this manner, are those who on Sundays and on the feasts of the saints and major days of fasting, did not abstain from carnal pleasures of their wives". There are those who believe they can derive pleasure from their wives at any time without out any blame, but on these days one must abstain from their partners. Similar are those who boast of being Christians, but in reality are as much so as a horse or a mule. The just, who on these days behaved properly, performed acts of charity, did deeds of mercy toward the jailed and oppressed or buried their dead; these are not given this punishment, but for other sins, they will suffer other punishments. Not all those who call themselves just are truly so. Sins are all different and not all sinners will suffer the same punishments; instead they will suffer only those punishments they deserve for their sins. Each type of sin has an assigned punishment.

6.

After these words, I saw many balls of fire and sulfurous flames, as if from a great furnace. The Apostle told me, "In the middle of these fires are

punished the lords who governed over their subjects as cruel tyrants and afflicted them with many injustices and pain. These same subjects are now in front of them saying to them "you did such and such injustices". In these same fires are burnt wicked women; murderers of their own reproductive organs. These in various wicked and medical ways aborted their fetus before birth. These babies now standing in front of them are telling them "you in your wickedness have cut off our lives not allowing us to come into Christianity and into the salvation of our souls". These babies resemble their sons and daughters, but they are not; instead they are malignant spirits that appear in their likeness. Demons often transform themselves into various forms and shapes of men and beasts or other things for the purpose of tormenting in a variety of ways the souls of men.

7

Afterwards I saw a great lake full of what appeared to be blood. The Apostle told me it was not blood but fire destined to burn

murderers, and those who held hatred; it looked this way because it was mixed with blood. He told me "the murderer who died without repenting, carries suspended from his neck, for a period of three years, a malignant spirit taking the figure of the person he killed. It now being attached in this way weighs him down and submerges him into this lake to be tormented".

8

I saw another place of torture for graver sins; it was called Convinio. It was in the shape of a great vase of immense length and vastness. It seemed to be full of molten bronze, tin, lead, sulfur and resin all mixed together. It boiled over the fire like oil in a frying pan. At one end of this cauldron, amidst the flames, was the head of a horse. It was sixty paces in length, thirty in height and twenty in width. At the other end, through a little door, entered the souls of those who were to be tortured in it.

Having observed this with great fear, the Blessed Apostle Peter told me in this torture are destined the parishioners of churches, who

knowing that their priest was an adulterer, a perjurer and had been excommunicated, they overlooked his sins. They even defended him and attended his sermons. If he were guilty of say only adultery, perhaps his parish would not have been subjected to so much scandal; but often from adultery one falls into perjury and then is excommunicated. Thus comes to pass that which is written: "who is immersed in mud, more then ever is contaminated". For this the parishioners, as I have warned, are punished in this torment for three years, but not all of them, since not all may have overlooked them.

The lord or the owner of the church, even if he possessed it unjustly because it was not of his jurisdiction, if he closed his eyes to the failings of his curator he too will be tortured here for sixty years. The bishop, who consented to such wickedness and did not warn him, instead rewarded him with some gift; he too will be subjected in this torture for eighty years. For this reason there are two churches in a city; one in which the priest is good, just, chaste, modest, fearful of God and zealous for the care of souls. He teaches the people given to his care; he warns them, brings them back into the fold and

excommunicates the unjust. He imposes on the sinner penitence according to the gravity of his sins. There are those who have no zeal for the salvation of their souls, they instead reject those things preached to them and don't appreciate the penitence given them. On the contrary, the priest who is himself an adulterer, liar and sacrilegious does not attract the people given to his care. He doesn't excommunicate them and does not impose on them penitence based on the gravity of their sins. He lets go lightly the sins that he himself has committed. For this the sinners don't oppose this priest, instead flock to him, hear his masses and abandon the good and righteous priest. They voluntarily gravitate to the bad priest, because he doesn't yell at them, nor requires them to do a grave penitence. These then don't receive "the prophet in the name of the prophet but instead the sinner in the name of the sinner". The worshippers, who defend the scandalous priest in order to be free themselves from having to repay their own sins, the masses they attend nor the penitence they do leads them to salvation but instead to condemnation. The same is for others who defend the sinful priest and as a result don't

correct their vices and wickedness. Those who went to hear his masses, and respected him only because of fear of God, are not subjected to this torment because they accepted this prophet in the name of the prophet. There are those who go to confession looking for a corrupt priest that will not impose on them a severe penitence. Even if he would want to impose it, they would face him with the sins he himself had committed. Those who receive penitence from a good priest are saved. It is written that; "an equal penitence is given not only to those who commit the sin, but also to those who agree to it". All those who come to fall in this cauldron, can only exit through the belly of the horse and thus through his rear.

9

After seeing all these things I was led to the abyssal places at the mouth of the deep hell; it appeared similar to a well. These places were horrid, dark, full of stench and loud cries. Near this inferno was a serpent of enormous size tied with a great chain, the other end of which seemed to be anchored in Hell. In front of

the mouth of this worm was a multitude of souls; it inhaled all of them together like flies, such that in inhaling he swallowed them and in exhaling he would blow them out burning, red hot like sparks. This process continued until the soul was purged of the sin assigned to this punishment. In this way is fulfilled the prophecy "their worm will not die; the fire will not become extinguished". I saw then the punishments that awaited the sinners who were at the rim of hell. The apostle told me, this darkness is Hell; "in here are Judas, Anna, Caiphas and Herod". I don't remember if he told me they were situated in the area of darkness or in the inferno. The area was so dense and black that nothing in it could be seen. I heard the cries and screams of those within; the Apostle told me that sinners found in here will not be judged, instead they will perish without judgement.

10

After this I saw a valley in which was a great lake. It was reddish in color as if it contained

molten metal; its waves made a loud crashing noise. The undulating waves ejected flames in which were burnt the sacrilegious.

11

I saw also the great mouth of an abyss that spewed out flames high and low; the apostle told me "in these flames burn the simoniacs; these buy and sell sacred objects".

12

I then saw a horrid and dark place smelling of noxious fumes and of roaring flames; it was full of snakes and dragons amongst shrieks and terrible screams. The Apostle explained it was to be the destination of those that had abandoned the ecclesiastic order and had quit the monastic rule. These are the souls that had returned to a fleeting life of pleasure, had lost hope to save their souls for their sins, committed adultery, sacrilege, false testimony, and other sins for which they had received penitence but hadn't benefited from it. These are purged depending

on the type of sin they committed. They are punished till they suffer this pain, and are purged as gold is purified in a furnace. In the process of purifying gold, if there remains mixed some impurity of tin, lead, bronze or any other metal; all continues to be cooked until it is purged entirely of any impurity. In this way if fulfilled that which is written; "fire will purify each one's action".

13

Afterwards the Apostle showed me a great lake dark in appearance and full of water of a sulfurous stench; it was full of serpents and scorpions. In this lake were submerged a great number of souls. There were demons holding a serpent by one hand and smashing the faces and the heads of men against those of the serpents. The Apostle told me "these are the slanderers who gave false testimony".

14

At the same time I saw two evil spirits appearing in the figures of a dog and a lion. From their mouths spewed out a burning sulfurous exhale. It seemed to be the initial source for the setting aflame of all the torments outside of hell. The strength of their breath pushed before them the souls in the same way that a tornado vehemently lifts up dust from the ground.

15

In the meantime, while I was standing next to the doors of Hell, I could no longer see the dove that had been carrying me by the tufts of my hair. I started to tremble with great fear. Soon afterwards I raised my eyes and saw flying above a bird of great size and uncommon beauty carrying under its wings an elderly monk of small stature. When it arrived over the gloomy place that spewed out flames, it let him fall into the middle of the fire. Quickly the wicked demons surrounded him and exhorted each other to beat him, but just as suddenly the same bird flew down, snatched him from their hands and brought him back up. While I was observing these things, the Blessed Apostle Peter told me "wait here so I can go open the

gates of heaven for that servant of God". While still stunned along with the angels, one of those infernal demons of horrid, shaggy appearance and of enormous stature rushed towards me. He hastened to push me and hurt me as much as he could. The Apostle rushed to my defense and quickly helped me and transported me to another location of a glorious appearance. But I, still startled, was crying for fear of dying; the Blessed Apostle Peter told me, "don't be afraid because you will not die now; first you have to return and go do what you will be assigned, and then you will come back". What I would be assigned was not explained to me.

16

I saw then a few men stripped bare and bound by their necks, hands and feet with chains that were sparking red hot, as iron withdrawn from a furnace. Hanging from the chains and strangling their necks were red-hot and heavy weights; so heavy that the men could not even lift their heads; the Apostle told me "they are thieves and rapists".

In the same field, I saw gushing out from hell a great river made of burning pitch. In the middle of the field stood erected an iron bridge of great width. The souls of the just passed easily and speedily across the bridge because they were not weighed down by their sins. But for those that were hampered by the weight of their sins, the bridge became as thin as a wire in the middle and posed such difficulty that they could not pass across it and fell back into the river. These souls then re-attempted the passage and again fell back into the river. They continued to be punished in this way till they remained cooked, like boiled meat. This process continued until they were purged of sin and allowed to cross the bridge. According to the teachings of the Apostle, I came to know it is called Purgatory.

The Apostle then said, "no one must despair for the quantity of their sins, because they can all be forgiven with penitence".

The Apostle confirmed this with the following example. There was once a powerful lord who was full of filthy vices. He had dedicated himself to great lust. He had desired for a long time the wife of another man. He could never satisfy his wishes because the woman had resolved to maintain her chastity pure to the all-powerful God and had kept her spouse's trust intact. Many are virgin in body but not in spirit, just as it is said in the gospel "he who sees with lust someone else's woman has already sinned"; of what use is it then to guard virginity in the body but loose it in the heart? There are others who do not have virginity in their bodies, but nevertheless guard their chastity. It then happened that the husband of this woman was made slave by Saracens. The virtuous woman in order to alleviate her husband's condition spent all her possessions. Finally not having more to sell and not knowing where else to turn, she went to the rich man, who till then had desired her with wicked intentions. She told him "oh powerful lord, I promised God to maintain my

chastity intact; I have never wanted to give in to your desires but now I don't have any way to free my husband from slavery. I have no other way to help him and so I am running to your kindness in order to liberate my husband. I come to give myself to your desires and to satisfy your wishes. I pray you for the love of God to give me only the sum of money that I need to liberate my husband". The rich man, in hearing this reasoning, began to tremble and to remember his passed wickedness; he cried remorsefully. Asking the woman how much was necessary for the release of her husband, he gave her the payment generously, without wanting to abuse her in any way. In addition, from that time on he began to abstain from any sort of vice, and came to earn the strongest respect and admiration from his subjects.

It also happened that one of God's servants who had spent his life in solitude as a hermit, prayed the omnipotent God to tell him with whom he will be compared to in his future life. The answer given him from the heavens was; "If you want to know to whom you will be compared, know that it will be the rich man". Having heard this the hermit remained astonished and began

to say quietly to himself, "I who in the course of many years have served Jesus Christ, I will now be compared to that rich man. After having said this he came down from the hermitage to the city and arrived at the house of the rich man. Seeing him surrounded with glory and a big court of magistrates and servants, he was astonished. Moving forward, he began to ask that rich man what good deeds he had ever done. The rich man told him that in the past he had committed many sins and had never done any good deeds. The hermit then, more than before, prayed him not to worry, but to tell him whatever good deeds he had ever done in his life. The rich man remembered the attempts he had made to extract the virtues of that woman, and how he had conducted himself with her and faithfully told him everything.

After having made this genuine confession the good hermit returned to his home. Soon afterwards the rich man passed away. Knowing this the hermit returned to the house of the rich man. There this servant of God saw a Demon and an Angel, each hurrying to grasp the soul of the rich man. The Demon argued that the rich man had never done any good deeds and

quickly presented to the Angel a great book in which were written all his sins. The Demon opened the book, just as the Angel had demanded. It then appeared to the hermit, who was looking at all from above, that the Angel had saved in a little glass bottle the tears that had been shed by the rich man for the captivity of the woman's husband and in remorse for his sins. The Angel then spread a portion of those tears over the pages of the book. After having done this he ordered the Demon to close the book and to reopen it. After doing this the Demon found a third of the sins erased. Repeating this three times, all the sins of the rich man were found erased. For this he was now destined to the enjoyment of a blessed afterlife, since in him were found the merits of penitence, martyrdom, charity and penitence, this because he had repented his sins and had abstained from committing new ones. Martyrdom because he had abstained with the strength of his spirit from the passions and temptations of the body, of charity because he had given the woman the money needed to free her husband. True and beneficial penitence consists of repenting in the heart, in having

remorse for the sins committed and in abstaining from re-committing new ones.

19

After the Apostle told me these things, he showed me a vast field. He told me it could not be crossed in less than three days and three nights and was covered by thick briars and thorns. It appeared that it was not possible for anyone to lay foot on it without stepping on the thorns.

In this field was a dragon of immense size on which the demon had placed a saddle and bridle. A demon holding a serpent in one hand rode on the dragon. It chased any soul that had stepped into that field and if he caught up to it, he would shake it with the serpent. In so doing, the soul suffered from the pain of those thorns and was thus purged of sins. As a result, it was able to run faster because of being lighter. This purging continued until the soul was able to outrun the demon that chased it.

20

The soul, no longer in danger of being persecuted by the demon, crossed into a beautiful field where just by walking in it all the limbs and clothing that had been thorn by the passage through that previous harsh field of thorns became healed and repaired. On entering into this field, all the souls of the just reverently kneeled and raised their eyes and hands to God and gave him humble thanks, because he had dared to deliver them from the power of the demon and to have lead them into safety.

This field is so splendid, vast, glorious and beautiful that no language or phrase could ever describe it. It is full of happiness, joy and cheerfulness. The air above was scented with the fragrance of irises, roses and all types of perfumes. Throughout was an abundance of blessings of all the heavenly and eternal delights. In the middle of it was heaven into which the souls of the just were not allowed to enter until judgment day.

21

Surrounding this field is the chorus of angels and saints that have been placed in the sixth heaven; these will not be judged except for those who have been placed the outer edge of heaven.

22

The Apostle then told me the Blessed Saint Benedict, even though he was placed amongst the confessors, nonetheless he enjoys a glory above that of the others, and also do those who have followed his teachings without stumbling. Their glory added the Apostle, is not similar to the glory of men because the glory of men at times is satisfied and at times is rendered empty. God's glory instead refills the souls of the just, whenever they desire it. An so they are placed in this field, in accordance to the proportion of their merits like are also the Apostles, followed by the martyrs, then the confessors, all then all the other saints.

The Apostle showed me in the same field a group of monks, enjoying above others a priceless glory; he told me they were placed in such a great glory as a gift in return for their humbleness. He then undertook to explain to me the reason for obedience and of the life of monks. He told me the monks that have been converted, have to forego their will, renounce the devil, and his boastfulness, abandon bodily pleasures, the love of their relatives and the frail and fleeting things of this world. They must detach themselves especially from those belongings that impair them or are obstacles to them in performing their service to Jesus Christ. These monks after having retreated to a monastery must follow the examples of Christ and the Apostles.

They must keep these things before their eyes constantly. Christ came into the world to offer himself as a guide and set an example to his servants. Without him we cannot reach the celestial kingdom, for us he is obedient to God the father till death.

Like Christ sustained injustices and persecution, this way also those that profess the holy faith must sustain patiently any injustice for the hope of an eternal reward. The monks must receive with humbleness the obedience that the abbot imposes on them, and avoid being arrogant.

The Demon fell from heaven as a result of arrogance; it is then in this way that the monks will ascend to it by way of humility.

Monks must receive penitence from their Abbot with cheerfulness in same way as a traveler receives the gift of a piece of clothing. In the same way also as someone who is saddened upon being excluded from his owner's will and is then rendered happy upon being readmitted. The monk has to enjoy penitence in this same way. In the example above the one that is readmitted experiences only a temporary joy. The monks enjoy it because by virtue of being obedient they gain the possession of a never-ending joy.

Having been obedient, the monks should no longer look back and think of that which they have done; they should avoid being boastful. They must guard against diabolic deceit, they must avoid feeling weary and they should never turn back. The Demon with perverse thoughts often uproots many monks who think they have already served God for many years. Some monks who having faithfully followed the obedience required of them think they have arrived at a point where they can rest from their toils and thus lead a comfortable and peaceful life; they should not think this way. They should instead behave like that traveler who uses all his strength to hurry and return to his home, and never turn back. In the same way also as one who is feeling saddened by having being exiled but soon dispels any sadness when permitted to return and quickly and quietly hurries his steps towards his home nation. In this way the monks must also postpone and renounce with great joy those temporary things. The monk must hasten to obtain the eternal joys of this world, unlike others whose aim is to obtain only the fleeting ones.

The monks should never stop working with their hands to help the poor of their needs till they feel worthy of being told by Jesus Christ "I was hungry and you gave me food; I was thirsty and you gave me to drink". Their eagerness and vows to work is not for the purpose of amassing wealth, but only to help the poor.

They must battle constantly against lust, because from lust comes homicide and other crimes.

The monks who know how to resist lust and corruption and how to be chaste are similar to martyrs. The martyrs resisted the pagans and infidels, fought and shed their blood for Jesus Christ until death. In this same way the monks must also fight against demons and oppose their lust, dirty and impure thoughts, lechery, shamelessness, desires for wealth, greed and all the other sins until their death.

Monks who fight against lust are equal to martyrs and will receive forever glory but above all else they will receive God's love. Christ for his great love and charity liberated us from death and to give us life he sacrificed his own. In this way monks also fulfill the precepts of Jesus Christ and love him and their neighbors as of themselves. They thus ensure that they themselves are not guilty of any sin and ensure neither are their neighbors. They themselves suffer from spiritual or secular illness and anguishes of the poor.

They should attend to their neighbors, as they attend themselves; they should do good deeds for them but not for self-glory or earthly desire, but for eternal rewards. They should always maintain the true and righteous faith.

The monks should always trust in the redemption of sins. They should always have a healthy respect of their good actions and never wander from the righteous way. The Apostle gave me this example. The monks should be

careful so that it does not happen to them what often happens to many travelers. At times a traveler, having started off on a right way, may come to pass by a beautiful and open field. In forgetting their true destination, they say to themselves "let me go in this field to eat and rest". This is very harmful because some times while they are eating and resting, they are assailed by surprise and are assassinated by thieves. Others who have gone and amused themselves in such a field have struggled to regain the right way and have never found it.

The monks must have fear of losing their way from being presumptuous as described above. By saying to themselves "the lord is merciful" and gathers those repenting and encourages them not be dissuaded; but this is false hope. They must be careful not to forget Christ's cross that they themselves carry on their shoulders. Many who in succumbing to the crimes of their heart's desires have wandered away from the righteous path and have entered a long and vast way that has led them to the accumulation of

sins and finally to their deaths. Those who have become accustomed to sins as being normal will never reenter the righteous path. These sinners in being immersed for a long time in the stench of sin, and putting off repenting from day to day, will some day be overtaken and assassinated like the highway robbers as in the aforementioned story. In being caught by a sudden death they don't even have a moment to repent. The monks must therefore fear and not sin because the time of death is never certain. Life can end at any time from morning to evening and from the evening to morning. If the monk should sin, he must resort to confession and to the corresponding penitence. This is true not only for the monks but also for the clergy and layman who renounce the pleasures of the body and lust and instead work with their hands to build a path that leads to obedience, humbleness, faith, hope, charity, chastity and all the other virtues. They should dedicate themselves to penitence and to the conversion of people to the love of God and their neighbors with all their hearts just as they love themselves.

This path will lead them, after death, to this holy and glorious place that you see and they will feel worthy on the day of the final judgement. God will tell them "come my blessed sons and share in the possessions of my kingdom".

30

The same field seemed to extend very high, almost as if it reached heaven and it was of immense span. The apostle told me it was looked over by angels who were made of the primordial material of life; the same of which were also made Adam; he told me it was called "Neptalim". The names of those who are in heaven were not told to me except for Abel, Abraham, Lazarus and the good thief

31

He also showed me heaven's bed. It was adorned with noble and splendid covers. There were two priests dressed in sacred vestments

holding incense on each side of the bed. Lying in the bed I saw someone whose name the apostle told me, but forbid me to tell it to anyone.

32

In the meantime the blessed apostle started to tell me that there are three sins which primarily place mankind in danger and of which layman know little or none. These are greed, lust and arrogance. These are the root causes of all the other sins. For example from greed derives avarice, lust, fornication and other similar sins. The lover of carnal pleasures, hated by God and by men, reneges to give his soul to God. He holds on to his belongings and robs others of theirs, he does not do charity, does not come to aid the tormented and those that suffer from need even if it were someone to which he felt he was obliged.

From Arrogance are born self-aggrandizement, the desire to dominate, self-importance and demeaning of others. From arrogance also comes insult, from insult hatred and from hatred

homicide. In this way these three sins are linked to all other sins.

33

After these things the dove leading me, the angels and the blessed Peter arrived at the first heaven. This is the heaven of the Meridian star above which lies the orbit of the moon, and not below it as appears to men; it completes one orbit in thirty days.

34

The second heaven is called Etereo (Ethereal), in it orbits the star of Mars

35

The heaven is called Sidereo, in it orbits the star of Mercury.

36

The fourth heaven is called Orleon, in which the Sun makes its orbit in three hundred and sixty five days.

37

The fifth heaven is called Junio, here orbits the star of Jupiter.

38

The sixth heaven is called Venustus, here orbits the star of Venus.

39

The seventh heaven is called Anaperon and here orbits the star of Saturn; it completes its orbit in three hundred and sixty five days, the same as the sun and it heats the sun. Since the sun is cool in the morning and at night, it would also be cool for the rest of the day if it were not for this star orbiting above it. The sun receives strength and splendor from this star. God's throne is in the supreme heaven, where before the glory of his majesty the cherubs beating

their six wings never stop singing "holy, holy, holy lord God Sabbath".

Saint Peter told me these angels are here before God just as they were here before the creation of heaven and earth flying over the wings of the winds.

40

In the sixth heaven are all the saints, angels, archangels, patriarchs, prophets, martyrs, confessors and virgins. The chorus of the apostles is the highest and most glorious. The blessed Peter sits above all other apostles. The angelic spirits praise and pray the creator with continuous singing without stopping; these songs are none other than expressions of their will.

Finding myself in the first heaven all the things above and below me were visibly clear.

41

Afterwards, following the orders of the Apostle, the dove brought me to a place, surrounded by high walls. While holding me above them, I observed the things that were within. I was instructed not to reveal them to anyone.

42

After this the apostle lead me through the regions of 51 provinces, that is in the parts of:

1. India
2. Arone
3. Fenicia
4. Mesopotamia
5. Siria
6. Palestina
7. Comicina
8. Iria
9. Apamea
10. Media
11. Macedonia
12. Epiro
13. Tarsia

14. Lidia
15. Asia
16. Licia
17. Pamfilia
18. Galizia
19. Bitinia
20. Paflagonia
21. Cilicia
22. Armenia Maggiore
23. e Minore
24. Africa
25. Getulia
26. Numidia
27. Libia
28. Mauritania
29. Jamphepossedit
30. Setifensis
31. Spagna
32. Bretagna
33. Germania
34. Belgio
35. Gallia Comata
36. Gallia Togata
37. Gallia Cisalpina
38. Gallia Transalpina
39. Pannonia

40. Piceno
41. Etruria
42. Umbria
43. Flaminia
44. Dalmazia
45. Illirico
46. Norico
47. Citharnie
48. Scropos
49. Scropari
50. Michae
51. Samaria

He showed me the locations of all these provinces and told me their names. In addition he showed me in various lands many orators of saints and venerable places. I will tell you about one of them.

43

In one of these provinces the apostle shoved me a deserted city. Its mountains rose above the ground at the height of a palm tree. In the middle of the city were the ruins of a church with only one altar remaining. I saw in front of

the church, walking rapidly, a multitude of boys, girls and men of somber and dark appearance. These men drove before them the aforementioned children, and struck them with many blows. Upon arriving in front of the church, the children desired to enter and make the sign of the holy cross. In doing this they would have been liberated from the demons that followed them; but they were not allowed to do so. They were driven in front of the demons with an impetus similar to that of a turbine wind and tempest. After they had passed by the church, I heard inside the city a loud voice, similar to one who cries and screams, but I did not see the person. Then continuing to observe, I saw passing in front of the church a woman with loose hair, down to her socks, feet and ground!

She was carrying two lit candles one in each hand. She attempted to enter in the church, but could was not allowed to. Then another man running from his pursuer came in front of the altar and upon arrival the demons started thrashing him violently. I could hear his cries and screams and they resembled those of a howling wolf.

Seeing me fearful and perplexed by these things, the Blessed Peter told me "those who you saw resembling boys and girls were once residents of this city and who in the course of their lives didn't do anything but steal, commit perjury, adultery and larceny. They came to this church not to adore the lord or to hear the divine word, but to argue and quarrel.

Even if one of them entered the church, as soon as having made the sign of the cross, they would quickly exit it.

Now they would like to enter and seek refuge within, but they are not permitted. The men of somber and dark appearance that pursue them with torture and torment, are demons. The mournful voice that you heard was that of the master of this land, who during his entire life had gone chasing worldly possessions and had committed perjury, homicide, adultery, false testimony, arguments, slander, betrayals and all sorts of sins. Every time that he came to church, even though he had heard the divine word, he would gather his soldiers to oppress the poor, commit adultery, commit perjury, take away other's belongings and do many other injustices. Now that he would like to enter the church in

order to find refuge and asylum within, he is not allowed. The woman that you saw is the master's wife who during her life never thought of serving God. All her attentions consisted in beautifying and adorning herself and to allure men who saw her. Her untied and loose hair down to her feet is like fire that burns her. The stockings she wears were once given to her by a poor man and for this God has agreed to give her a little comfort. The lit candles that she has in each of her hands are not real but appear only to be so. When she lived, even though she had a great abundance of wax and lamp oil, she never thought of maintaining the oil lamps of the church. And now she would like to provide for them but permission is not granted her.

Finally the man that you saw chastised in front of the altar is the priest of that church, who for his entire life neglected to preach to the congregation assigned to his custody, he instead occupied himself only with adultery and theft.

This is why he howls like a wolf; just like that animal lives in filth, wind and theft. He did the same as long as he lived having wished only for lucrative lands and loved only odious words of thievery. The life of a priest is to be spent in the

teachings of the word of God and in the study of the divine scriptures. He, instead, only worried of worldly things; and when he preached, he did not do it with intentions to save souls, but instead to steal property from the poor. Sometimes, being himself filthy and an adulterer, he in order to hide his own faults, preached with astute hypocrisy those principles that he knew would have been good to his listeners. The priest who has studied the scriptures can speak well of them and sow a good seed; but he who has instead aspired only to earthly gains, only preached bad principles and as a result made many souls perish. He now suffers this punishment for them and with them and does so in vain. The other one you saw also tries in vain to do good deeds but can't. The wealthy man was permitted to do good deeds while he was alive but he didn't and only after he fell into Hell he became restless to do good deeds and uplift his brethren but he is not allowed.

44

I saw afterwards in Galizia a very big church whose entire floor seemed to be made of metal.

Its ceiling was made like a room and was adorned with a beautiful painting containing historical scenes. Above the altar was a drape used to keep from soiling whatever was beneath it. Inside the same room, above a glass bucket was a crucifix of great size and beauty, it appeared to be crying continuously for the sins of mankind. I was told that it sheds tears because the wickedness of mankind has increased immeasurably, and just as good deeds shed perfume before God, the stench of sins also rises to him. Currently not only laymen but also pontiffs, bishops and other officers of the church have strayed away from the true path and have tended to the profits and cares of the present. These never thought for the salvation of lost souls, and as a result of this trend, sinning has increased; this church is called San Pandido.

45

The blessed Peter showed me also many other places and punishments and talked to me of many other things, giving me explanations on the Old Testament. He revealed to me many

sins of people that are still living and forbid me not to tell what I had heard.

46

From what I could see, the blessed Peter was not tall, nor short, but medium height, well built body, large face and hair mixed with gray. He wore a bright white tunic, decorated around the chest and the collar with a gold necklace. He wore on his head a gold crown, he had in his hand some big keys onto which seemed imbedded all types of precious jewels; of what type and of what metal the keys were made of I did not learn.

47

He had also in his hands a piece of paper of a great size that was covered with minute writing from top to bottom. Having shown me all these things, he proceeded to fold it and reduce it in size. He then inserted it into my mouth and told me that I will never be able to vomit it and that my blood would never be able to erase it; I don't remember if I really swallowed it.

48

Finally he told me "don't forget to bring every year to my church the offering of a blessed candle as tall as your stature and as soon as you return, you have to bring a candle to the altar consecrated in my name".

49

I saw then in a dream inside Saint Peter's church the Blessed Apostle Paul with my mother who was crying over me as if I were dead. The Blessed Apostle Paul, having detached himself from an image on which he had been painted, was telling her not to cry but instead to go and make an offering in my name on the altar of the blessed Peter. He told her that after having done this I would immediately reacquire my health. After I regained my senses I told my mother of this dream and she went to make an offering in my name, as it had been requested; soon afterwards I regained entirely all my senses.

50

Abandoning his parents, he turned to the monastery of Montecassino where the venerable Gerardus, abbot of the monastery, received him

with the greatest love. He dressed him with holy robes thus joining him into the service of the Lord with all the other brothers under the rule of Saint Benedict.

Above is an ancient mural painted in the church of Santa Maria in Piano in the town of Loreto Aprutino in Abruzzi, Italy.

The painting illustrates scenes from Alberico's vision, most notably is the bridge of purgatory bottom center.

About the author:

Roberto Piselli was born in the medieval town of Settefrati, Province of Frosinone, Italy. At a young age he dressed in the robes of a monk thus carrying on the ancient tradition of a young boy wearing the robes of a monk for the duration of one year.

Roberto moved with his family at the age of 12 to the United States where he currently resides. Throughout his life he never forgot Settefrati and how the town had cradled him along with his childhood friends, how he ran and played in the streets of the town, its valleys and mountains. As an altar boy he served mass and

rang daily the church bells calling the townspeople to church.

He had vaguely heard of the vision of his townsman Alberico and knew very little about it till one day while doing research at the Yale University Sterling library, his curiosity caused him to look through the card catalogue for any information related to Alberico. There he found amongst the volumes of that library a copy of the text of the Visione translated from Latin to Italian by Francesco Cancellieri in the early 1800's.

In this English translation Roberto hopes to expose others to the ancient literary work and pride of Settefrati.

Thanks to the diligent and dedicated efforts of Antonio Vitti, former mayor of settefrati and web master of the Settefratesi Web site, the Vision of Alberico is being disseminated across the internet, most notably to Settefratesi descendants living throughout the world.

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