



## Ordo Franciscanus Saecularis Consilium Internationale

### Attachment

Excerpt from the Treatise on the Miracles of Saint Francis by Thomas of Celano

#### CHAPTER VI

##### LADY JACOBA DE' SETTESOLI

860 37. Jacoba of the Settesoli, equal in fame and holiness in the city of Rome, earned the privilege of special love from the saint. It is not for me to repeat, in praise of her, her noble lineage, family honor, and ample wealth, nor the great perfection of her virtues and long, chaste widowhood.

The saint was bedridden with that illness by which, putting off all his weariness, he was about to *complete* the *race* with a blessed ending. A few days before his death he decided to send for Lady Jacoba in Rome, telling her that if she wanted to see the one whom she so loved so warmly as an exile, she should come with all haste, because he was about to return to his homeland.

A letter was written; a messenger noted for his swiftness was sought and, once found, was outfitted for the journey. Just then there was heard at the door the sound of horses, the commotion of knights, the crowd of an escort. One of the companions, the one who had given instructions to the messenger, went to the door and found there present the one whom he sought because absent. He was struck with wonder and ran very quickly to the saint. Unable to restrain himself for joy, said, "*I have good news for you, father.*" Without a pause the saint immediately replied, "*Blessed be God, who has brought our Brother Lady Jacoba to us! Open the doors and bring her in. The decree about women is not to be observed for Brother Jacoba!*"

38. There was great rejoicing among the noble guests, but their spiritual delight was mingled with flowing tears. To make the miracle complete, it was discovered that the holy woman had brought with her everything that the letter just written had requested for the father's burial. God had supplied everything that the spirit of this man wanted: she brought some ash-colored cloth to cover the little body of the one who was departing; many candles; a cloth for his face; a cushion for his head; and a special dish the saint had a longing for.

861 But I want to narrate the outcome of this pilgrimage, so that I do not leave the noble pilgrim without consolation. A great crowd of people, especially the devout inhabitants of the city, expected the saint's birth through death very shortly. But he seemed to be strengthened by the arrival of the devout Roman lady, and there was a glimmer of hope that he would recover.

So, the lady gave orders that the rest of her escort should leave: she alone with her children and a few attendants would remain. But the saint said to her, "*No, don't! I will depart on Saturday, and on Sunday you and all the others will return.*" And so, it happened. At the predicted time, he who had fought valiantly in the Church militant entered the Church triumphant. I omit here the crowds of people, the shouts of rejoicing, the ringing of bells, the streams of tears. Likewise, I leave out the mourning of his sons, the sobbing of those dear to him, the lament of his companions. I want to recount only how this pilgrim, deprived of the solace of her father, was consoled.

862 39. All wet with tears, she was brought in private and alone, and the body of her friend was placed in her arms. "*Here,*" said his vicar, "*hold, even in death, the one you loved when alive!*" Her warm tears bathed his body, and with sobs and sighs she kept hugging and kissing him, and pulled back the veil to see him unveiled. What did she see? She gazed on that *precious vessel* that hid a precious treasure adorned with five pearls. She beheld those engravings that the hand of the

Almighty alone had produced for the whole world to admire. Then she was refreshed with unusual joy over the death of her friend.

Right then she counselled that such an unheard-of miracle should not be disguised or hidden any further. Rather, she wisely advised it should be displayed for all to see with their own eyes. All ran eagerly to see this sight. They were able to verify for themselves that God *had not done thus for any other nation* and stood in awe.

Here I will put down my pen rather than stammer over something I cannot explain. Giovanni Frigia Pennate, who was then a boy, and afterwards a Roman proconsul and Count of the Sacred Palace, freely swears and declares, against all doubts, that at that time he was with his mother, and that he *saw with his own eyes* and *touched it with his hands*. The lady pilgrim may now return to her homeland, comforted by this privilege of grace and we, after having narrated the death of the Saint, move on to something else.