

St. Vincent Ferrer's Catalan Sermon on St. Augustine*

In his sermon on Augustine, St. Vincent followed his usual three-part structure: the *introductio*, a biblical passage on the gospel or epistle of the day; the *introductio thematis*, a literal and moral commentary on the passage; and the *divisio thematis*, a longer section exploring the possibilities of the biblical theme. He also began his homily with a brief salutation and the recitation of the *Ave Maria*.

St. Vincent chose Luke, 12:35, "Lucerne ardentes in manibus vestris", from Christ's parable on the watchful servants, as a biblical passage for Augustine's feast day. Throughout the sermon he applied these words and the lamp image to Augustine's life¹). His inspiration for this image came from a passage in Augustine's biography, the *Vita Sancti Augustini* by Possidius, who wrote, "lit and burning and 'raised upon a candlestick' Augustine continued to 'give light to all who were in the house'"²). To explore every possible meaning of the lamp image, St. Vincent used several biblical passages, especially in the Old Testament and in Paul's epistles. He took the Judaic menorah with seven candles from Exodus, 25:31-37, and commented on this passage³). He

*) This sermon exists in a manuscript housed at the cathedral of Valencia. It was edited by Gret Schib, *Sermons* (Barcelona: Barcino, 1975), III, 151-57. I have included a translation of the Catalan following this study. In my translation, I have kept the Latin passages in my text, translating them either in the text, if I did not identify their source, or in a note if I identified their source in the study. For translations of non-biblical sources, I relied on Frederic R. HOARE, *The Western Fathers* (New York: Sheed and Ward, 1954), pp. 192-244, and *The Golden Legend*, tr. Granger Ryan and Helmut Ripperger (Salem, New Hampshire: Ayer Company, 1969), pp. 485-501. I thank Harriet GOLDBERG for her suggestions on Hispanic legends.

¹) The choice of this image may also have been influenced by the Common of Saints recited on St. Monica's feast day: "Gustavit, et vidit quia bona est negotiatis eius: non exstinguetur in nocte lucerna eius. Manum suam misit ad fortia, et digiti eius apprehenderunt fusum" (*Liber Usualis* [Tournai: Society of St. John the Evangelist, 1947], p. 1240).

²) He based these words on Mat. 5:15. Consult *Opera omnia* (Paris: J.-P. MIGNE, 1877), I, 3, from the series *Patrologia Latina*, 32: 37; hereafter cited in the text as *PL*.

³) St. Vincent may have deliberately chosen this image because of its significance to Jews in his audience. His contemporary, Israel ben Joseph Al-Nakawa, wrote a book entitled *Menorath ha-Ma'or* (Shining Lamp). This work and another with the same title by Isaac Aboab contain ethical and haggadic teachings of the rabbis, ritual instruction,

continued to develop this sermon by characterizing Augustine as a model of these virtues and by offering further commentaries on Luke's biblical passage, quoting Paul on the virtues and Zechariah on the lamp stand of pure gold (Exodus, 25:36). Also, he compared the seven candles to seven virtues (humility, mercy, chastity, good will, temperance, patience, diligence) and the light they shed on seven deadly sins (pride, covetousness, lust, jealousy, gluttony, vengeance, sloth), all of which would be extinguished⁴).

A third into the sermon St. Vincent turned to Augustine's life, depending on several sources: the Bible, Possidius, Church chants, Jacob of Voragine's *Legenda aurea*, the *Confessions*, and other traditions and legends⁵). Beginning with Augustine's conversion, St. Vincent compared it to the candle holder that is given form by the blows from the goldsmith's hammer, blows he equated with the prayers and tears of St. Monica and with St. Ambrose's sermons. Since Possidius offered little information on Augustine's conversion and baptism, St. Vincent consulted either the *Legenda aurea* (LA) or a source based upon it. The singing of the baptismal chant (i.e., the *Te Deum*) between Ambrose and Augustine came from this source.

St. Vincent described Augustine's activities after his conversion as leaving cities and traveling into the country, details related in LA (p. 553) on Augustine's return to Africa after Monica's death. His version of how Valerius made Augustine a priest follows Jacob of Voragine's account (LA, p. 554), with one minor difference: according to St. Vincent, Valerius lured Augustine to Hippo to counsel a wealthy merchant about distributing his wealth. In the version of LA, a rich man asks Augustine to preach to him so that he might renounce the world. St. Vincent took details on bishop Augustine's humble dress from LA (pp. 554-55). However, his description of Augustine's eating utensils, a detail introduced by Possidius (PL, 32:52), "cochlearibus

and virtues such as charity and humility. Copies were common in fourteenth- and fifteenth-century Spain.

⁴) The list of vices follows the system Gregory the Great prescribed. The list of virtues, partly based on the infused moral virtues which are related to charity, may be derived from St. Thomas Aquinas's works, although they bear a striking resemblance to Augustine's prayer: Jordanus of Quedlinburg, *Liber Vitasfratrum* (New York: Cosmopolitan Science and Art Service, 1943), pp. 228, 30.

⁵) For this material St. Vincent did not consult Jacob of Voragine's source, Honorius of Autun's sermon on Augustine (PL, 172:995), nor the pseudo-Augustine sermon, "Epistola ad sororem de vita et virtutibus S. Monicæ".

tantum argenteis utens, caetera vasa quibus mensae inferebantur cibi, vel testea, vel lignea, vel marmorea fuerunt", may come from another source or St. Vincent cited this passage from memory based on Possidius⁶).

St. Vincent described Augustine's sacrifice and life of poverty in terms echoing Possidius (*PL*, 32:54, n. 4). Like Possidius (chs. 22-26), he included Augustine's insistence that women not live in his house and that he speak to women only with another clergyman present, information related in *LA* (pp. 557-58), adding that Augustine would speak with them only in the church and confessional. Also, he mentioned Augustine's admonition against backbiting during meals (*PL*, 32:52), first recorded by Possidius and repeated by Jacob of Voragine (*LA*, p. 555), and others. However, St. Vincent stated that Augustine had his words carved into a wall ("in pariete"), not into the table, as Possidius and Jacob of Voragine wrote. Either he used a different source or he confused this account with that of the seven psalms (see note 9). He also described Augustine's frugal diet in terms Possidius used (*PL*, 32:51-52), terms repeated in *LA* (p. 555).

While discussing temperance versus gluttony, St. Vincent narrated an anecdote about the bishop who visited Augustine and found only cold dishes in his kitchen. In St. Vincent's version, when the bishop asks, "What is there to eat", Augustine replies, "Like you, I don't know"⁷). The second anecdote is the most interesting because it appears neither in Possidius, *LA*, nor in well-known legends about Augustine. In this legend a merchant sends Augustine the thigh of a capon. Since he had already eaten, he has the thigh put away and forgets to eat it. A year later, on the same feast day he remembers it and finds it as fresh as the day it was brought to him. The detail on preserving food for long periods and the passage of time are common themes in legends. Yet, to my knowledge, no legend of this type has been associated with Augustine's life⁸).

⁶) St. Vincent stated that Augustine ate with a small clay spoon, whereas Possidius wrote "a silver spoon" (*PL*, 32:52).

⁷) Ferrer must have cited this source, which is ultimately based on the *Vita* (*PL*, 32:51): "Mensa usus est frugali et parca, quae quidem inter olera et legumina, etiam carnes aliquando propter hospites, vel quosque infirmiores". However, the passage in *LA* (p. 555) is closer to Ferrer's quotation: "Mensa frugali infirmos et hospites pluerumque carnes habebat". These words also appear verbatim in *Liber Vitasfratrum*, p. 397.

⁸) This legend vaguely recalls the ending of "Exemplum XI" of Don Juan Manuel's *El Conde Lucanor*, written between 1330 and 1340. However, the miracle may have come from a Marian miracle similar to Alfonso X's *Cantigas de Santa Maria*, n° 57, verses 70-82.

The following anecdote, which St. Vincent described as a miracle and an example of patience, came from Augustine's works. On his way to preach in a town, Augustine takes the wrong road. When the priests who accompany him ask him how they got lost, he answers, "By chance and for the better". They later realize that, had he arrived on time, his enemies would have been waiting to kill him. The enemies are the Donasts, who regarded him as "a wolf to be killed" (PL, 32:41). St. Vincent either took this account from Possidius (PL, 32, 43) or read it in Augustine's *Enchiridion de fide, spe et caritate*, V, 17. Except for the presence of the priests, this source agrees with St. Vincent's account. In addition, "Exemplum XVIII" of Don Juan Manuel may have influenced the way in which this preacher narrated the legend.

The ending of St. Vincent's homily, which describes Augustine's sickness and death, derives from Possidius (PL, 32:63-66), although St. Vincent used a medieval source such as LA (pp. 558-60). The friar mentions three details from Augustine's last months: Augustine ordered seven penitential psalms copied and placed on the wall facing his bed⁹); he cured a sick man who approached him at his deathbed; and he died without a will¹⁰). These references appear in the *Vita* and in LA although the wording and details of St. Vincent's account indicate he may have followed the LA more closely than he did the *Vita*.

In the concluding paragraphs St. Vincent also cited the *Confessions*: "remember the spider and the fly, etc., that you might have good thoughts (read it in the *Confessions*)". Here he had in mind the *Confessions*, 10, 57, on the trivial and contemptible things that capture our curiosity. The passage continues with the words, "Item de falcons, etc. Item, de perdice, etc. Item"¹¹).

⁹) Possidius does not mention the number of psalms (seven) but indicates that Augustine wept (PL, 32, 63). However, the words of LA (p. 559), "et ubertim ac jugiter lacrymas fundebant", which St. Vincent gave as "et fluebant jugiter lacrimae de oculis ejus", correspond more closely to the LA account and to that of the *Liber Vitas fratrum*, pp. 149-50.

¹⁰) St. Vincent ended his sermon with the words: "Testamentum nullum fecit, quia unde faceret, pauper Christi non habuit". These words appear verbatim in the *Vita* (PL, 32:64) and LA, 560. I believe that St. Vincent copied them directly from Jacob of Voragine, who took them from Possidius.

¹¹) St. Vincent may have taken these nature images from Augustine's work because he often cited Augustine on elements and organisms: José M. de GARGANTA and Vicente FORCADA, *San Vicente Ferrer* (Madrid: Biblioteca de Autores Cristianos, 1956), p. 371. The birds and insects St. Vincent cited here appear in Augustine's works: hawk (*Mor. Manich.* 12); fly (*In Evangel. Ioh.* 3,4); partridge (*Contra Faustum*, 13, 12), (*Divers. Quaest.*, 74).

The word "Item" was probably introduced by a stenographer to summarize an example which St. Vincent had explained in a previous sermon. Generally two stenographers (*reportadores*), clerics and jurists who accompanied the friar, would sit at the base of the pulpit and alternately transcribe his sermons as he preached. Later they revised their notes and wrote out the sermon. But because a sermon often lasted more than two hours, they often omitted and abbreviated information (especially fables, *exempla*, and anecdotes) repeated in the same sermon or in previous homilies. To indicate the lacunae, they used words such as "etc.," "ut supra in alio sermone", or "item".

Although he cited the *Confessions* in his sermons, St. Vincent based his account of Augustine's life on the *Vita*, *LA*, and perhaps lesser known accounts, because these works were narrated in the third person. If he wanted to convert the prose of the *Confessions* into his sermons, St. Vincent would have had to change the accounts from a first to a third-person narrative. He directed his vernacular sermons generally to the poor and illiterate. Therefore, he used simple words and language structures and often repeated words and structures for his uneducated followers. In addition, he used examples from nature and stories that his audience would understand. Despite his erudition and the humanistic oratory of contemporaries, such as Jean Gerson and the canon of Barcelona, Felipe de Malla, St. Vincent found his inspiration in the Bible and not in the classics. He preferred the medieval world, as evident from his favorite sources: *Vitae patrum* and works by Augustine, Jerome, Gregory the Great, Thomas Aquinas and Bernard, among others. He therefore selected the descriptive, narrative version of Possidius and his imitators instead of the introspective and philosophical sections of Augustine's search for God. Nor could St. Vincent interest his lay followers, especially the uneducated, in the speculative topics of the *Confessions*: the philosophy of memory, time and eternity, form and matter. He also avoided material on the heresies mentioned in the *Confessions*, the *Vita*, and *LA*, perhaps believing that to mention early Christian heresies would do more harm than good. Indeed, the threat of heresy from the north was a reality in St. Vincent's time.

On his journeys through Europe, St. Vincent would break away from his cortege to stay at a local friary, where he prepared the sermons for the following day after Mass. He took with him few books, including the Bible and the *Summa theologica*¹²). Also, according to

¹²) Roc CHABÁS, "Estudio sobre los sermones valencianos de san Vicente Ferrer", *Revista de Archivos, Bibliotecas y Museos*, 6 (1902), 131-32: The night before the sermon,

Clovis Brunel, St. Vincent took notes for his homilies from the Bible and patristic authors and often quoted the Church Fathers and the Scholastics in Latin from memory¹³). In some of his hagiographic sermons, he created a fictional dialogue to animate the homily and to hold the attention of his audience¹⁴).

I believe that, when St. Vincent began preparing his sermon on Augustine, he copied narrative and descriptive passages from Possidius and Jacob of Voragine or from a manuscript that closely followed these works. Also, variants from the Florians manuscript of the *Vita* (PL, 32), indicate that he used a manuscript derived from or akin to this one for his notes. The legends I have not been able to identify come either from an unknown written source or from legends St. Vincent recalled.

The role of the stenographers must also be taken into account. For example, St. Vincent knew the famous legend of Augustine and the angel but did not mention it in this sermon, for he had told it in a homily on the Trinity¹⁵). The stenographers or scribes who copied the manuscript probably omitted it because he had formerly given it or because it was widely known. Discrepancies in St. Vincent's Latin version of passages from Possidius and Jacob of Voragine again may be due to stenographers or scribes who reworked his sermons. However, St. Vincent often cites these two authors verbatim. Last, his own desire

St. Vincent retired to his room, read the gospel passage on which he was going to preach, divided it up, and began to think out aloud. A notary who accompanied him ... rapidly took notes (my translation).

¹³) "Un plan de sermon de Saint Vincent Ferrier", *Bibliothèque de l'École de Chartes*, 85 (1924), 114.

¹⁴) Joan FUSTER, *Obres completes* (Barcelona: Edicions 62, 1975), I, 114.

¹⁵) Sant Vincent FERRER, *Sermons*, ed. Josep Sanchis SIVERA (Barcelona: Barcino, 1932), I, 229-30: "I will tell you about a beautiful miracle of St. Augustine as it happened to him. Be aware that he once made up his mind to understand the Trinity, about which he wanted to write a good book. And note that one day he walked along the seashore thinking with his book under his arm. And as he walked he came upon a boy near the seashore, and the child made a hole in the sand. He carried water back and forth from the sea in a silver spoon trying to fill the hole. And when St. Augustine saw this, he said, 'Listen, good child! What are you doing?' He answered, 'I want to fill the hole with water from the sea'. 'Oh, that is impossible!' The child answered, 'It would be easier to do it than to do what you are attempting'. And he disappeared. And then St. Augustine, when he witnessed the miracle (I think it was Christ), stopped arguing and said these words of St. Paul: 'O altitudo diuiciarum sapientie et scientie; quam incomprehensibilia sunt iudicia eius, et inuestigabiles uie eius' (Ad Rom., XI [33]). Therefore, St. Augustine wanted to prove the Trinity through apparent proofs; but it could never be done because it is infinite". (my translation).

to animate biographical accounts and legends from Augustine's life with rapid and lively dialogue and his dependence on his memory for narratives may account for discrepancies in biographical details.

SAINT AUGUSTINE

*"Lucerne ardentes in manibus vestris"*¹⁾

(Lu., XII), etc.

Because today is the solemn feast of that great doctor and confessor St. Augustine, the sermon will also be about him, that is, his perfect way of life. But first, "Ave Maria", etc.

If we apply these words to St. Augustine, notice what they mean: Oh, St. Augustine, they were burning candles in your hands! But, so that you may understand these words, keep in mind, sirs and ladies, that candles mean virtues, such as those that God gives to my soul and yours. They [virtues] are called candles for a very good reason. You notice that when there are no burning candles in a room, you see a dark room, but if there are burning candles, the room is clear and beautiful. So is the soul when it has virtues, it is clear and beautiful, as Christ himself said: "*Delicie mee esse cum filiis hominum*" (Prov., VIII)²⁾. And St. Augustine had many virtues, so that we can apply this passage to St. Augustine. God the Father, speaking to Christ, his son, said, *Facies candelas septem et pones eas super candelabrum, ut luceat ex adverso*" (Exo., XXV)³⁾. My son, make seven candles, that is, seven virtues against seven mortal sins.

The first is humility against pride, by which man resists honors and high rank and is not presumptuous. The second is mercy and generosity, by which man avoids taking or owning anything unjustly, but is happy with what he rightfully owns. The third is chastity, by which man resists tasting the filth of lust. The fourth is friendship or good will, which makes man happy for his neighbors' good fortune, honor, and rank. The fifth is temperance, by which man avoids overeating but takes in only what is necessary. The sixth is patience, by which man

¹⁾ Lk. 12:35: Let your lamps [be] burning [in your hands].

²⁾ Pr. 8:31: And my delights were to be with the children of men.

³⁾ Ex. 25:37: You shall then make seven lamps for it and shall get them upon the candlestick to give light over against.

does not avenge injustices committed against him. The seventh is diligence, which compels man to do good works and penitence for his sins; for this reason God made man so that with diligence and good works he might enter heaven.

And do you now see why he said, "*facies VII candelas*"; "*item, pones eas super candelabrum*" [make six candles and get them upon the candlestick], on the candlestick of St. Augustine and not on the flesh. As St. Paul said, "*Scio quod non habitat in me bonum, scilicet virtus* (Ad. Ro., VII)⁴). *Et ideo, "pones eas super candelabrum"* [put them] on the candlestick of St. Augustine, *Item, "ut luceat ex adverso", hoc est, contra VII peccata mortalia* [also, "to give light over against", that is, against seven mortal sins]. And the first candle lights the human heart against pride, etc., [as above].

Therefore, I tell you, all those virtues were in St. Augustine. But know now that before St. Augustine was converted to Christianity he was at first a bad man, for keep in mind that an infidel cannot be but evil. And he was converted when he was thirty; and when he was converted by God's grace, he had all seven virtues. Oh, be blessed! And this is what is meant by the subject, "*Lucerne*", etc.

There is something hidden here: *in manibus* [in your hands]. He did not say *in oculis nec in labiis* [on your eyes or on your lips] as do those who study and read moral works; they read with virtues only in their eyes. *Item, nec in labiis*, as do those who preach moral virtues but do not act morally; notice how they have virtues on their lips. *Item, in auribus* [nor in your ears] as do you who hear virtues preached but do not act according to them, so that you have virtues only in your ears. *Ideo dicit tema: in manibus* [therefore, the passage says "in your hands"] that you might have them in your hands to put them into practice.

Therefore, we speak and praise St. Augustine saying: "Oh, St. Augustine, the burning candles are in your hands as are all those virtues. But now that you might understand, here is the proof: *Ecce candelabrum aureum [totum, et lampas ejus super caput ipsius, et septem lucernae ejus super illud] ante et retro* (Zac., IV)⁵). *Candelabrum aureum* [golden candlestick]; all of this is in St. Augustine. At first he was mud,

⁴) Rm. 7:18: For I know that in me ... no good dwells [that is, virtue].

⁵) Za. 4:2: behold a candlestick all of gold, and its lamp upon the top of it, and the seven lights thereof upon it, and seven funnels for the lights that were upon the top thereof.

but now he is gold. But this golden candlestand was not molded in fire but by hammering it out. As a proof of this: *Facies candelabrum ductile* [make the candlestick malleable], that is by hammering it out.

How then was he converted? By the blows of a hammer, that is by preaching and by his mother's words. And notice how Holy Mother Church sings: *Cuius mater devotissima quem in carne prius perierat in mundo cuius semine lacrimarum convertit* [whose most devout mother converted, through the seed of her tears, he who had previously died in the flesh in the world]. Her name was Monica. She was a Christian before he was, and she begged him so much to hear St. Ambrose's sermon that he finally went. And St. Ambrose told him that his beliefs were all false and told him to take up Christ, for this is the true and holy law. Finally, through St. Ambrose's sermons and his mother's prayers and tears, he received the Christian faith. Therefore, the parents' tears please God much when they pray for their son. Notice that he went to St. Ambrose for baptism, and he felt a great joy because he was intelligent. And as they bent over the baptismal font and baptized him, St. Ambrose joyfully began to sing, "*Te Deum laudamus*", and St. Augustine immediately answered "*Te Deum confitemur*"; and St. Ambrose said, "*Tibi omnes angeli*", etc. And therefore it was done "*Te Deum laudamus*".

Notice how he was converted; he could say: "*Gloria Dei sum id quod sum*" (*scilicet christianus*) "*persecutus sum*" (*scilicet doctoribus*) *quia arguebat contra eos in tantum quod aliqui dicebant: "A logica Augustini libera me Domine"* (Prima ad Corint., XV)⁶). Then he left the city and went into the country to study so that no one could find him. He took several people with him to teach them. And there he wrote his 1030 books. He was a great priest, philosopher, and theologian. And notice his humility, for he left the cities, and went to Campotanea [and] to Hermeriça. As Holy Mother Church sings: "*Post mortem matris reversus est ad agros, et in jejuniis et orationibus scribebat libros*"⁷), that is those 1030 books.

Notice how humble he was; a bishop, Valerius, wanted to make him a priest, but he refused because he did not believe he was worthy.

⁶) 1 Cor. 15:10: But by the grace of God, I am what I am (i.e., a Christian); I am pursued (i.e., by learned men); I have proven so much against them that some would say: Lord deliver me from Augustine's reasoning.

⁷) After his mother's death he returned to the country and in fasting and prayer wrote books.

And St. Valerius, because he knew this and because he refused to come to the city, did the following. He sent another to him to tell him that an old merchant who lived in the city wished to distribute his wealth and ordered St. Augustine to counsel him on how to distribute it. And St. Augustine, realizing that the wealth could be put to good use, went there secretly. The bishop had already prepared several locations, so that when he entered the city they might seize him. They did so and took him to the bishop, who, under the threat of disobedience, made him a priest. And when he gave him his orders, St. Augustine wept at each order, as if they were taking him to the gallows. Later the bishop, according to his life story, left this position, forcing him to accept this position. And when St. Augustine accepted it, he did not change his habit, only his cape. And if the people saw that his habit was torn, they made him a more expensive one, which he would sell, insisting that they make an inexpensive one. And notice what he would say: "*Fateor de preciosa veste [erubesco, et ideo cum datur mihi, vendo eam, ut quia vestis communis esse non potest], precium sit commune. Item*"⁸⁾, when he ate at his table, he did not eat with silver but with a small spoon made of clay or wood. "*Sine cuius cibi ... solum cloquariis argenteis jactabitur*" [without food ... he will boast only of silver spoons]. Oh, what humility! He truly followed the counsel of the Scriptures: *Quanto magnus es, humilia te in omnibus et coram Deo invenies gratiam*" (Ecli. 3)⁹⁾. Oh, notice the golden candlestick!

Item: Et lampas super caput ejus [therefore, get them upon the candlestick]. This lamp is the grace he received in baptism; and we read that he never lost this grace. *Ideo, lampas super caput ejus. Item, septem candele ante et retro* [so, get them upon the candlestick. Therefore, seven candles over against]. Those are seven virtues against mortal sins. And he held the candle of humility, mercy, and generosity, for he was very merciful, supporting widows, arranging the marriages of young girls, maintaining hospitals, so that he spent all his wealth in a half year, not for himself nor to show off his pride, as bishops today do, but to help the poor. And after, what did he live from? After he sold everything he would say in a sermon: "You see, I have spent all my

⁸⁾ I confess that I am ashamed of a garment of price, and therefore, when one is given me, I sell it, so that, since it cannot be common to all, the price is shared by all.

⁹⁾ Ecli. 3:20: The greater thou art, the more humble thyself in all things, and thou shalt find grace before God.

wealth! And so help me and the poor". And so some helped him, and if they did not, he unseamed his pants, sold them, and then gave the profits to the poor. *Vasa quoque dominica propter indigenciam jubebat frangi et pauperibus dari et flari*" [out of generosity he ordered that the vessels of the Lord be broken because of the need, melted, and given to the poor]. And for this reason, you, who unjustly have something belonging to another, do not give it as alms but return it to its owner, *nam qui offert sacrificium de substantia pauperis, quasi qui inmolat filium in conspectu patris* [for he who sacrifices what belongs to the poor is like some who slay a child before its father], but what is yours, and therefore pleasing to God: *Ex substantia tua fac elemosinam, et ne avertas faciem tuam pauperi*" (Tob. IV)¹⁰.

The third virtue or candle is purity or chastity. Well, was he a virgin? No, because before he became a Christian he had an illegitimate child. You see what kind of man he was! But those sins were removed in baptism. He was so chaste after baptism that he would not let a sister he had enter his house, nor a niece so that the people would not be taught evil. And so, if they wanted to speak to him, how did they do it? At church he spoke to them, giving them good moral lessons to save their souls, *Ideo dicit sanctus Paulus: "Providentes bona non solum eorum Deo, set etiam coram hominibus* (Ad Rom., XII)¹¹. He never wished to speak to any woman unless he had others with him or in the confessional. Our priests should follow his example: *"Melius est duo simul [esse quam unum; habent enim emolumentum societatis suae] ... ambulate"* (Eccl. IV)¹².

The fourth candle is temperance and good will. If you want to know if a person loves another, praise the other before him. And if he loves him he will praise him immediately; if not he will murmur and say, "You don't know him well", or something like that. Now, look how he loved his neighbor: at table, when a man is full, he begins to speak negatively against this one and that one: *Ideo sanctus Augustinus fecit scribi in pariete istud: "Quisquis amat victis in mensa, rodere vitam*

¹⁰) Tb. 4:7: Give alms out of thy substance, and turn not away thy face from any poor person.

¹¹) Rm. 12:17: Provide good things not only in the sight of God but also in the sight of all men.

¹²) Eccl. 4:9-10: It is better therefore that two should be together than one, for they have the advantage of their society ... Go forth.

indignum noveris esse ibi"¹³). This means that a backbiter should not sit at this table. Therefore, he should not defame another in this way.

The fifth candle is temperance against gluttony. And consider what he ate: "*Mensa parva et frugali, olera et legumina, et propter ospites et infirmos carnes*"¹⁴). And listen to what I am going to tell you. One day he invited a bishop, who said: "Now we'll see, this man of so great abstinence, what will he give others to eat?" And when Mass was over, they went to the house. And one of them entered the kitchen and found nothing, not even a fire. He said, "What do we eat?" "Whatever is left over!" What a face he made! So notice what little attention he paid to gluttony. *Item*, another marvel: Once a merchant had a capon and sent him a thigh. And when he took it to him he had already eaten. He received it and had them put it away. And he forgot it the next day and the second day. Finally a year passed, and finally when that same feast day came around, he remembered it and said: "Get it". And he who got it found it as fresh as the day they brought it to him. *Ideo*: "*Attendite vobis, ne graventur corpora vestra*" (Luc, XXI)¹⁵).

The sixth candle is patience; so, some who defamed him for what he did, did so out of vainglory and caused him much displeasure. And listen to the miracle I will tell from his life. Some stubborn people who wanted to kill him plotted to do it. "When he goes to preach there, we'll kill him". But he did not go there because he took the wrong road; and the priests asked: "How did we get so lost?" He answered, "By chance and for the better". And when they reached the place, they were told that if he had passed there, they would have killed him. So be patient. *Paciencia enim nobis necessaria est* (Ad Hebr., XII)¹⁶).

The seventh candle is diligence, which does not allow one to waste time. *Primo*, he said his office well, getting up at matins and saying his prayers, *et fluebant jugiter lacrimae de oculis ejus* [and a steady flow of tears came from his eyes]. *Item*, notice that he confessed: remember the spider and the fly, etc., that you might have good thoughts (read it in the *Confessions*). *Item* the hawks, etc. *Item*, *de perdice* [also, about

¹³) So St. Augustine had written on the wall: Let him who takes pleasure in mauling the lives of those absent know his own is not such as to fit him to sit at this table. [There may be an error in the manuscript for both Possidius and Jacob of Voragine write "*quidquis amat dictis*" not "*victis*" as St. Vincent writes.

¹⁴) His table was always frugal and sparing while, besides herbs and vegetables, he commonly had meat for the sick and for guests.

¹⁵) Lk. 21:34: But take heed to yourselves, lest your hearts be overburdened.

¹⁶) Hb. 10:36: For you have need of patience.

partridges], etc. *Item*, when his end came a fever which lasted thirteen months seized him. And he then had seven psalms written in a clear, large handwriting and placed on the wall opposite his bed; and it read: "*Domine, ne in furore*", etc.¹⁷). He knew what it meant. He remained there a long time, when a sick man came to him to be cured. St. Augustine told him, "Oh, if I cannot get well myself, how am I to cure you?"¹⁸) And the man said, "Tonight I heard a voice which said to me: if you want to be cured, go to my servant Augustine and he will cure you". "Is it true?" "Yes, it is". He then pronounced these words over the man's head: *Super egros manus imponent [et bene habebunt* (Marc, 16)]¹⁹). And he was cured. *Item*, when death came he confessed and received the body of Christ and extreme unction. And so he left this world. And he made no formal will: *Testamentum nullum fecit, quia unde faceret, pauper Christi non habuit*²⁰).

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¹⁷) Ps. 6:2: O Lord, rebuke me not in thy anger, nor upbraid me in thy wrath.

¹⁸) [See PL 32, 59].

¹⁹) Mk. 16:18: they shall lay hands upon the sick and they shall get well.

²⁰) He made no will because, as one of God's poor, he has nothing to leave.