

JACOBINUS OF CREVACUORE (De Canepaciis, 1438?-1508) Blessed

The earliest notice about Jacobinus' name, country and cult is that found on his tomb in the vicinity of the bell-tower of the Carmelite church of Vercelli. Depicted is his image, with the Latin inscription: «March 3, 1508. Here lies the Blessed Brother Jacobinus of Crevacuore, who died on the date given above». There are two other images with ex-voto inscriptions of a little later date, that is, of the years 1509 and 1511. Experts at the two diocesan processes (1728 and 1843) judged these last two inscriptions to have been composed by Giovenone, either father or son, before 1520. One of the three pictures shows the blessed with a knapsack over his shoulder, which supports the argument that he had been a brother-quester. That he was a lay brother is explicitly affirmed by the English Carmelite, John Bale, in one of his *Collectanea*;, the result of a scientific trip to northern Europe about the years 1525-27 (it is not known whether he also visited Vercelli): «In the convent of Vercelli, in the province of Lombardy, rests the blessed father Jacobinus, a lay brother with the surname of Crevacuore.» He adds: «Formerly the doorkeeper of the convent of Vercelli, he was glorious with an admirable holiness unknown to men.» Of the life of the blessed we know only that he gave his portion of bread and wine to the poor and that he was assiduous in prayer and work. Having died during the plague, he was buried in the garden of the cloister and afterwards transferred to a more worthy place. But the religious did not want to have him placed in the choir, because he had been only a lay brother.

Perhaps this explains the fact that the place of his burial was near the belltower, which was in communication with the choir of the church. The surname de Canepaciis (by which he is known today), the year of his birth (1438). and his birth-place (Piasca, at first in the parish of Crevacuore and then in that of Ayloche), as well as the miracles he worked during his lifetime, appear only later. The rank of lay brother, however, together with one of the miracles, and the title of blessed are met with also in the life of another Jacobinus, called Jacobinus of Luino (d. 1477/78), who a short time before his death received a donation of property for the foundation of the Carmelite convent of Luino. Some have thought that all these matters had to do with the same person, but recent studies and findings exclude such a hypothesis.

Pope Gregory XVI approved the cult *ab immemorabili* /from time immemorial/ of Bl. Jacobinus on March 5, 1845.

BIBLIOGRAPHY: The juridical diocesan processes of 1728 and 1843 are found in the Roman archives of the Postulator of the Carmelite Servants of God, cod. IV, 143. There also (in cod. III. 47, cc. 295-344) are the *Lives of the two Bl. Jacobinuses*, together with the authors who have made mention of them. The printed Acts of the apostolic process, concluding with the approbation of cult, *ibid.*, cod. IV, 80. The *Collectanea* of Bale is in London, in the British Museum ms. Harley 1819, carta 86rv; [Anonymus], *Vita del b. G. di Ayloche cantone di Crevacuore...*, Vercelli [1846]; P. Frigerio-S. Mazza-P. Pisoni, *L'antica parrocchiale di San Pietro in Luino; ricerche storiche ed archeologiche*, Luino 1969, 22 sg., 64-76 86-110. Louis Saggi