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The life of San Isidro of Madrid

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the life of san isidro of madrid

(by an anonymous hagiographer, thirteenth century)

translated by

Kenneth Baxter Wolf



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(Source: *Leyenda de San Isidro* por Juan Diácono, ed. Fidel Fita, *Biblioteca de la Real Academia de Historia*, IX (Madrid, 1886) pp. 97-157.)

This anonymous Life of Isidro of Madrid (d. pre-1192) represents a rare medieval effort to justify the sanctification of a non-noble layman, in this case, a tenant farmer. Note how the author does this, in part, by depicting Isidro as a man who made a virtue out of the curse inflicted on Adam ("You will earn your bread from the labor of your hands and the sweat of your brow," Genesis 3:19) by embracing the life of an agricultural laborer. Isidro was canonized in 1622, along with Ignatius Loyola, Francis Xavier, Teresa of Ávila, and Philip Neri. Shortly thereafter, Isidro became the patron saint of Madrid.

1. In Madrid[1] [lives] the memory of blessed Isidro,[2] most glorious confessor of our Lord Jesus Christ, who, while he was [only] a simple farmer,[3] was seen to be devoted to God and a friend to man. And being a diligent—by no means negligent--imitator of holy scriptures, he placed spiritual matters before temporal ones, not temporal before spiritual. For each day (as we have learned from the reports of reliable men) at the break of dawn, he would put off his farming duties and frequent the thresholds of many holy churches of God with the intention of praying. He persisted for the better part of the day in prayer, while his neighbors applied themselves to their labors, and was the last one [to report to work]. Yet marvelously enough, he energetically performed the labor that he owed and, with the assistance of the Lord, surpassed the work of the others. This brings to mind what the apostle [Paul] said: "Work with your hands so that you will be able to relieve the poverty of the hungry,"[4] and elsewhere: "Always do some kind of work so that the devil finds you occupied."[5] Ignited with the grace of charity, [Isidro] burned with divine love, and although he was not rich, having nothing and yet possessing everything [that really mattered], he put out food not only for men but also for birds, laboring in their hunger and in the cold. In fact one winter day, when the land was covered with snow, Isidro was making his way to the mill, in the company of his young son[6] to grind his grain, when he saw a flock of

doves sitting together on the branch of a tree. Realizing that the birds had been suffering for a long time and were in danger of starving, he was moved by pity towards them. He brushed [the snow away from] the ground with his feet and hands and placed there for the birds a good amount of the very grain that that he had intended for his own needs. Seeing this, a certain acquaintance of his was irritated and mocked blessed Isidro, treating him as if he were stupid for wasting the grain. But when they arrived at the mill, they discovered that there was no less grain in his sack [than there had been before]. Indeed, marvelous to behold, the [amount of] flour [that was produced from his grain] actually increased to such an extent that the bags of both [men], which had been half empty, were abundantly filled.

2. A second prodigy that divine providence deigned to work through Isidro, the man of God, one that stood out among all the rest and is by no means worthy of omission. With the judgment of divine providence and in accordance with what was said to the first human couple--“You will earn your bread from the labor of your hands and the sweat of your brow”[7]--he rightly dedicated himself to the same. Assuming no other life, he chose to seek his food from the labor of his hands. So, making himself obedient to the Lord’s command with regard to the first couple, he made himself a humble tenant of a knight of the counsel[8] from Madrid [working for] a yearly wage. When, in this capacity, he was placed in a field near the city,[9] Isidro married[10] and led a life of labor, thus rendering to God the things that were God’s[11] and to his neighbors, the fraternal [obligations] that he owed. But certain ones from the adjoining fields spoke to the knight--whose land he worked for a set wage[12]--about Isidro, accusing him in the following manner: “Venerable Lord, we profess ourselves to be truly subject to you. In the interests of your well-being, we do not wish to be silent about that which causes injury to you. May you know for certain that Isidro, whom you chose to labor in your field so that he might work your farm for an annual wage, rises at the break of dawn, abandons the farm work that he is supposed to do, and heads off in the manner of a pilgrim to visit all the churches of Madrid under the pretense of prayer. Because he only returns to his work in the evening, when the day has passed, he does not even complete half of the work that he owes. With regard to this matter, do not think us malicious or hateful. We have simply been frank with you about what is useful and profitable for your household.” Having heard these things, the knight was deeply disturbed. Moved with anger, thinking that what they had told him was true, he set out the next day and, approaching the blessed man, upbraided him harshly. But blessed Isidro, already educated in the patience of Christ, responded modestly with words of this kind: “O most dear and venerable man, under whose dominion I am placed, I admit to you faithfully that I do not wish nor am I able to be separated by any means from the King of kings and [his] flock of saints, and their service. If you fear that, on account of my tardiness in beginning my work that the anticipated yield of your harvest is threatened, according to the judgment of my neighbors, may it please you that I restore, from my own [crops] whatever there may be in the way of a loss. I beseech your honor that, as long as I carry out the service of my Lord without depriving you of the use [of my labor], you will hold nothing serious against me.” Hearing these words, the upright knight, modestly restoring him to his grace, returned to his own home, though somewhat dubious about what he had just heard. Because Isidro had built his house on firm rock,[13] he was untouched by the attacks of concern and threats. In fact he became even more vehement that he would not desist from assiduously visiting the churches of God, as was his custom, so that he could pray. Thus with all his heart and soul, he called to mind, from memory, the word of God: “Seek first the kingdom of God and nothing that you need will be absent from you.”[14] The aforementioned knight, to whose dominion Isidro was subject, wondering how he might find out what the man of

God was really up to, rose at dawn on a particular work day and, heading out along the road, hid himself in a certain vantage point so that he might see with his own eyes what the man of God was doing. When he spied the servant of God returning even later from his usual pilgrimage, he grew angry as he watched, thinking that he was being negligent about putting his hand to the plow. Disturbed by this, he began to make his way to him so that he might sternly discuss this matter with him. But because, in accordance with the prophetic word, “Who knew the meaning of the Lord, who was his advisor?,”[15] as the knight was making his way down the road, deeply irritated with the servant of God, suddenly—as the result of divine power—he saw in the same field given over to farming, two yoke of oxen—not his own—white in color and plowing quickly and heartily alongside the man of God.[16] Astonished by this vision and marveling at it, he stopped on the road and stood there. Deeply stunned, he tried to figure out what this could mean. Finally coming to the conclusion that he was benefiting from no human help, he was forced to accept the fact that this man of God enjoyed divine assistance in his labors. Rejoicing and marveling, he approached [Isidro] so that he might understand [better]. As he drew near to him to ask what it was [that he was seeing], the knight glanced elsewhere and when he returned his gaze to the cultivation of his field, he saw no one except the man of God, Isidro. Having turned this prodigy over many times in his head, he finally returned to his senses and, after offering a word of salutation, modestly questioned Isidro, the man of God, in this manner: “I beg you, dearest one, by God whom you serve so faithfully, not to hesitate to disclose to me who were your companions standing there and helping you as you farmed a short time ago. I saw certain ones assisting you and working while you worked, but suddenly, in the blink of an eye, they vanished from sight.” Then the just man of God, well aware of what [the knight] meant, responded simply and in this manner: “In the presence of God, whom I serve as fully as I am able, let me faithfully reveal to you that I have neither summoned nor seen any helpers in this field, other than God alone, whom I invoke and implore and whom I always have as a helper.” Then the knight, pierced in his heart and illuminated from on high by the things that he had seen, realized that divine grace adhered to the servant of God. So, as he was about to depart, he said to him: “Whatever the envious and the whisperers have said to me in order to disparage you, I do not believe. In fact whatever I own in this farm I place under your power and whatever is to be done I leave to your discretion.” Having done this, the knight returned home and reported to many of his neighbors what had happened to him. This miracle, among all the rest, has been pressed into the memories of many up to this very day.

3. It happened on a certain feast day in summer that the man of God, according to his custom, had entered the church of St. Mary Magdalene, pouring out his prayers most devoutly to the Lord. While he was involved in these prayers, some boys found him and, in a most hasty manner, reported to him in this manner: “Rise, father Isidro, and rush as fast as you can because a fierce wolf is attacking and harassing your donkey![17] [Hurry] before he inflicts a mortal wound!” But the man of God responded to them: “Go in peace, my sons. Let the will of God be done.” Once he had finished his prayers, [Isidro] went out to see what had happened with regard to the events that had been described to him, and he found the wild wolf dead and, next to him, the beast, cured of his wound. Divinely consoled, he rushed immediately [back] into the church of St. Mary Magdalene so that he might give thanks to the Lord who, in his mercy, protects both men and beasts.

4. Following the example of that just man Tobias—who admonished his son, saying, “If you have much, give abundantly, but if you have little, strive to share freely”[18]--with true mercy flowing out of his innermost being, Isidro never stopped giving alms insofar as he was able. It

happened on a certain sabbath, when he had just given alms, as was his custom, to some poor people from the bowl that contained his very own meal, a certain pitiable person suddenly came to him, asking that Isidro give him something in the way of alms. But he had nothing [to offer] except his hands. So, led by his great pity, he simply said to his wife: "I beg you, by God, my dearest wife, if there is any food left over, then give it as alms to this poor person. Knowing that there was nothing left over, she went to show [her husband] that the pot was empty. But, with the complicity of God who wanted to satisfy the most pious desire of his pious servant, she found the pot full of food. Seeing this miracle, she was dumbstruck and was unable to speak for a moment. But exhilarated by such an obvious miracle, and conscious of it being a divine gift, she served the food, abundantly and gratefully, to the poor person, apprehensive about telling her husband about it, knowing how disdainful he was of empty glory. But because it is not appropriate for those who are burning with the spirit of God to restrain the tongue with regard to those things [which come from] God, she told the neighbors and other suitable people what the Lord had revealed. And we have deemed it worthy of record here just as it was told to us by faithful witnesses.

5. It happened, in accordance with divine providence, that, as is the custom in various regions, Isidro was a member of a certain confraternity. On one particular day, when everyone [in the confraternity] had gathered to celebrate a meal together, Isidro, the so-called "man of God," was late arriving since he was accustomed to going to the churches for the sake of devout prayer. When he finally did arrive--mercifully bringing with him certain alms-seeking poor people whom he had found at the door of the house where the feast was being held--the celebration was already over. Seeing this, one of the members offered him a word of this type: "Good man of God, it is marvelous that you have brought these poor men with you, but there is nothing left except the portion that we saved for you." The man of God, bearing the words with patience, responded: "Let us all share equally from the portion of God which was given to us." When the servers went to the pot on the table so that they might give him the portion that had been saved, they found the pot filled to overflowing with meat. Seeing this prodigy, they were suddenly and marvelously stunned and fell silent for a time. Waiting for an opportune moment to proclaim [the miracle], they served, with joy and happiness, the excellent meal to the man of God and to the poor people that he had let in, satisfying them all. The amount of food was in fact so great that they [were able] to give the leftovers to other poor people. And thus the prophecy which is sung in faith was fulfilled: "Those seeking after God shall lack nothing good." [19] When the feast was over, the man of God, with his hands raised to heaven, blessed the name of God, not forgetting to remember those who do good. Saying good-bye to those reclining there, he hastened to the nearby church of St. Mary Magdalene to offer copious thanks with all his heart to the Lord, whose gift had just been furnished to him, for mercifully assisting him in his needs on that opportune occasion. All those who had come to the house, both the members of the confraternity and the other servants, when they suddenly realized that clearly a miracle had occurred, they praised the name of God with wounded hearts and believed the man of God to be a true servant of God. Confirmed by this miracle of the true God, they faithfully reported what had happened to many men and women, not only in the fields but also throughout the manor, so that there were many witnesses and many praisers of God, "who raises the poor man from the dust and lifts the pauper from the mire, so that he might sit with princes and hold the throne of glory." [20] We know this to have been fulfilled not only spiritually but corporeally in this servant of God. His glorious body rests today in the church of St. Andrew, placed among those glorious princes, the

apostles, having a beautiful throne of human glory,[21] and in heaven he has been rewarded with a throne of glory where he is eternally glorified with all the saints.

6. As long as he was able with good humor to do so, he managed his household well and legitimately had a wife and a son. Thus leading a praiseworthy life, he deserved to receive an even more praiseworthy death, thanks to the mercy of God. When the time came in which the Lord Jesus Christ, a just judge, resolved to reward most piously his assiduous labor, Isidro collapsed in his bed. When he realized that the end his life had arrived, he was given the last rites, disposed of his temporal goods--however few they were—and admonished his family to follow the Lord at was appropriate. Stricken in the chest, with his hands clenched [conplosis] and his eyes closed, he consigned himself to his Maker, his Redeemer, to whom he had dedicated himself—having doubled the gift of the talents[22]--and gave up his humble spirit to Christ, ready to receive from Him the eternal wages of his life on earth. That which is foretold in the book of Wisdom, concerning the just man can rightly be applied to this man, with exceptional praise of this kind: “The Lord led the just man along straight paths and showed him the kingdom of God; and gave him the knowledge of the saints; and dignified him in his labor; and completed his labors.”[23] He was buried in the cemetery of the blessed apostle Andrew, from whose church he used to withdraw, in the time of his assiduous pilgrimage and prayer, finally returning to his labors at the estate. There his body lay for a long time, that is, forty years, visited by virtually no one. He lay hidden in this way for such a long time that during the rainy season, little streams of rainwater, which overflowed and cut into the surface of the earth, made their way into the hole where he was buried. But the merciful Lord is the guardian of the elect both day and night, and--as it says in the gospel: “Not a hair on your head shall perish”[24]--allowed neither the hair nor the skin of his faithful servant to deteriorate in the least.

7. It happened by divine mercy that [Isidro] appeared by night to a certain friend[25] who was in the aforementioned church, admonishing him to tell the men of that church’s parish that his body ought, by God’s command, to be taken out of that grave and be placed in the church of blessed Andrew. But that friend of his, mindful of his own humble life and being truly full of doubt, refused to make public the admonition which he had experienced. As a result of this, he was struck with an illness that lasted until the day that [Isidro’s body] was finally translated. By divine disposition, [Isidro] appeared to a second person, a certain matron of good faith, telling her through a vision one night, the same thing: that he ought to be moved into the church. This matron, in good faith, communicated this [message] to the people, some of whom were unaware of his just and decent life. When they had heard this [from her], they all together most diligently dug up the grave of the man of God. They found [the body] whole and unharmed, with healthy-looking, undamaged skin and the sweet odor of incense. With great joy and praises of gratitude, they directed the most copious thanks to the magnificent Lord, who alone works such great miracles, because he deigned to exalt the humility of his faithful [servant] and to unite the treasures of this elect one with his chosen princes. The upright knights along with all the rest of the people rejoiced as together they placed, with appropriate honor, the body of the blessed man in the church of the aforementioned apostle next to the altars of the blessed apostles in a new mausoleum.

8. Through which [i.e., the body], many miracles were revealed, with the Lord’s assistance, at different times and to different people, miracles which, as a result of negligence, were not recorded. Of those miracles which we have been able to faithfully discover in our own times by means of the appropriate method, he are ordered to record as follows.

9. It would not be right to pass over that which it pleased the divine dignity to be miraculously done. For upon the elevation of the holy body, for the sake of taking it into the church of San Andrés, the Lord deigned to reveal the following prodigy. All of the bells[26] of this church began to ring altogether, as if they had been shaken by human hands, yet in fact moving of their own accord, without the help of any hand or artifice, until the body was laid in the sepulchre. On account of which both those present and the time and those who came after, recognizing it to be a divine prodigy, ascribed the title of saint to the man of God, at least as far as faith is concerned, even without pastoral authority.[27] As a result from then on he was generally called “saint Isidro” by men and women alike, thus fulfilling that scripture which is laudably recited in church: the Lord our God “made him his saint for his faith and his meekness and chose him out of all flesh and glorified him in the presence of kings.”[28] It should not be omitted that certain poor people, crippled and blind, begging on the public roads, dwelling at the manor nearby, having heard the news of such a prodigy, rejoiced out of their faith and, gathering at the gravesite, collected dirt from the hole and rubbing it on their own limbs, received the grace of health, thanks to divine mercy, for the sake of testifying to his faithful servant.

10. In era 1270 [1232 CE], during the reign of the lord King Fernando,[29] in the month of May, a lack of rain [led to] a dangerous drought which threatened the harvest. By common agreement, both clerics and laymen extracted the man of God from his tomb and placed it honorably on a bed in front of the altar of the blessed apostle Andrew. The clemency of divine goodness poured forth water onto the land. When it was time to put him back in the tomb, many of the clerics gathered around the bed, contemplating the composition of his holy body. Among them was a certain upright priest, the prebendary of the church of St. Mary, who was called Pedro Garcia. He cut hairs from the head of the holy man so that they could be kept among the relics of the church of the Blessed Virgin. When the divine office was finished, and the body of the blessed man had been taken back to the tomb, since it was a day of fasting, that is, a Friday, the appropriate dinner hour had arrived. The aforementioned cleric, taking the hairs with him, returned home and placed them on the window, thinking to himself that he would take them to his church either after supper or the next day. And when the upright aunt of this cleric, in whose house she provided company, compelled him to sit down to dinner and he had begun to wash his hands, suddenly a nervousness of the heart, an anxiety of the mind, and a perturbation of the brain struck him. Because he was lettered and discrete, he considered all of this in his mind, wondering as to the reason why this sudden circumstance had come upon him. Illuminated from heaven, he recognized that this dangerous situation had occurred because of the relics which he had kept in his house: because he, not fasting at an hour in which he was supposed to, had neglected to take them to the church. Reproaching himself, with his hands already washed and dried, he rose quickly and, taking up the relics of hair with reverence and fear, immediately took them to the church of the Blessed Virgin and placed the same on the altar in a most fitting box so that they would be appropriately preserved. Having done this, the aforementioned cleric, made nimble and fully strengthened once again, went back home and rejoiced over the prodigy that had been bestowed upon him, and cheerfully ate with his family. I, John, a certain deacon, along with many others, heard [it] just like this from his mouth, and it is recorded [here] in simple words on this very page.

11. And when the body of the most blessed Isidro had rested for a long time, it happened that, from the first day of May until the feast of blessed Gregory [March 29], either for the sake of exacting [a penalty] or as a deserved penalty for our sins, God, who is the universal provider for all of his creatures, refused to water the land with sufficient rain, to the extent that many farmers

did not dare to sow the seeds of their crops in the earth. The men of that place [new author's perspective implies he was not writing in Madrid], in accordance with their custom, beseeched the Lord for the sake of their yearly crops and for more favorable circumstances, and, over the space of almost one month, came all together and in a state of great anxiety to the church of blessed Andrew in honor of blessed Isidro and the apostle himself. And farmers from neighboring villages, fearing famine (caristiam) in time to come, incessantly visited many saints' shrines, and giving to the poor with an eye to those things which the Lord had bestowed on them. It happened that when they came to the church of the blessed Andrew, in which the aforementioned body venerably rested, a certain member of the Order of the Friars Minor to whom faith is to be totally applied, by divine provision, he saw, as he lay in his bed at night, the aforementioned servant of God visibly speaking: "May none of you, my dear ones, neglect to pray to God, who gives food to all flesh and who 'has made us and not we ourselves' [Psalms 99: 3], because he will, out of his ineffable mercy, bestow sufficient rain on you." This vision was divulged in public just as the good brother had seen it. And the confirmation of its truth was no less apparent. For just as blessed Isidro had predicted to the friar minor, after a space of fifteen days, [the Lord] to [let the] rain [fall] copiously from his storehouse. Whence they venerably reported to all those who had come to the sepulchre from which they had extracted the body, that it had happened through the blessed Isidro, in the era 1290 [1252 C.E.]

12. At the disposition of divine providence, it happened in the time veris, on account of the iniquity of human merits, the harvests were afflicted by the a critical period of drought and the need for rain. Whence both the clergy and the people, faced with his judgment, gathered so that they might extract the holy man Isidro and place him on the bed in front of the altar of blessed Andrew the apostle, in the presence of the crucifix. And by praying, singling psalms, beseeching, and tending to the candles day and night, they remained there so that, through [Isidro's] merits and prayers, the Lord would deign to water the land with rain and remove the danger of human need. Which, by grace of divine mercy and the merits of the blessed man, their desires were fulfilled abundantly: a little later, it happened that the rain began to fall and "they were not deprived of what they desired." [30]

13. Again, during the reign of the lord King Fernando [31]—whose body now rests in Seville—it happened that a certain man from his court had come to Madrid with determination to collect the royal taxes which are commonly called the Martiniega, in winter during the month of December. he was put up--as we say, for the greater certitude of the king--in the outskirts [of the city] next to the church of blessed Martin, in the home of Pedro Carrantone. To whom when it was announced that perchance in the evening, after dinner, with all the guests sitting down next to the fire, [they might speak] about the goodness and the miracles of this saint [Isidro], he responded with great indignation, offering words of contempt in this manner: "I could well believe that a son of a prince or of some other magnate might truly be made a saint, but I do not believe that a working man and a farmer could by any means be a saint." Later, when the hour of the night demanded it, everyone went to their beds. But after midnight, when all of the others slept in peace, this one could not relax nor close his eyes in sleep. And when he saw himself prevented on this occasion, his heart perturbed and his mind anxious, vexed with pain, pierced in his heart, he knew that he had erred with his words of insult against the saint. Contorted with pain in his soul, he could not stop shouting out, awaking the guests and the servants with his frequent cries, proclaiming in the following manner: "I beseech you, my dear guests and you my servants, rise! Come quickly to me, afflicted as I am. From the moment I went to bed, I have remained sleepless the entire night; I am perturbed in my soul and my body cannot relax. I have no doubt

that this disturbance has come to me because I said words of foolishness against the holy servant, the man of God.” When all of those attending to him heard these words, and were all pierced to the heart and full of compassion for his affliction, they lit lamps and led him, at the break of dawn, to the sepulchre of the of the holy man with great reverence. [The afflicted one], groaning and grieving as befit the occasion, sensed the grace of the saint curing him from contempt of his foolishness, restoring the health of his body. After hearing [many] masses in succession and giving gifts, he returned to the comfort of his own home, promising to spread the word everywhere that blessed Isidro was a true servant of God.

14. It should not be passed over that on a night of vigils, by divine mercy, a miracle was accomplished there to the worthy excellence of the blessed man. A certain blind man by the name of Benedict was among those whose custom it was to keep watch in the vicinity of the holy body, taking turns praying and sleeping. At midnight when the aforementioned blind man was there praying near the resting place of the holy man, he suddenly proclaimed, as a result of merciful divine grace: “All of you who are present, wake up and see what miracle the Lord has performed in me through the grace of this his saint. Behold I who had been blind can now joyfully see! And I glorify the grace of this saint in the name of Jesus Christ, whom he served faithfully and I bless it in eternity.”

15. Nor should one be reticent about another miraculous thing that happened. In this time of pestilence, when the faithful as well as infidels persisted in praying for rain, and the hands of the Lord delayed the giving of rain, a certain Moor, by the name of García, vowed the following vow in the presence of certain Moors as well as of many Christians: “I promise God and the Christian faithful that if the Lord, in this time of drought, deigns to bestow rain, for the sake of which the Christians extracted St. Isidro from his mausoleum in order to bring about rain, I will not delay in becoming a Christian. If I have not become a Christian within eight days [of the rainfall], may I not be able to evade an awful death.” When God, after this period of drought, finally deigned to release abundant rain, on account of the merits of his saint, and the holy man was closed back up in his tomb, the aforementioned García, a miserable man, spurned the fulfillment of the vow which he had sworn, and before he end of the eighth day, at night, as the rainfall stopped, he was consumed by a horrible death, being killed by the blades of swordsmen.

16. During the reign of the lord King Fernando [III] of good memory, it happened to a certain adolescent from the outskirts of Madrid, who was called by the name of Dominico Peter, that when he was returning to the outskirts of Madrid from the foothill regions with his companions, he was suddenly deprived of the use of his limbs for a time and to such a degree that he was unable to move at all from that place. When his companions reported this to his servants, his parents led him, placed on the back of an animal, to his own home. When his parents, after laboring for a long time, discerned that no cataplasmata, unguent, bath, nor medication improved his condition, they vowed to take him to the tomb of the holy man so that there divine mercy might bring [his condition] to an end whether that end be health or death. When night had fallen, the holy servant of God spoke to the boy in his dreams with these words: “Lord child, I am Isidro, a kind of servant of God, and I admonish you that in the name of Christ that you anoint yourself with such an unguent, and believe without any doubt that you will regain your health.” When, the following morning, the adolescent revealed this dream to his parents, they accepted this as a divine oracle and most diligently covered his body with the recommended ointment. In a wondrous manner, after the first and only application of the unguent, the aforementioned boy recovered his complete health in all his limbs. When they had seen this prodigy of divine mercy done with regard to their son, the parent rejoiced along with him and prepared lamps and

oblations, to the extent to which they were able, to the tomb of the man of God. There, offering a votive gift and poured out copious thanks to the King of Kings, who had such a servant, who, while he is already secure in the possession of his reward in heaven, does not refuse to assist in the weariness of his laboring wretches on earth.

17. In the era 1303 [1265 C.E.], in the month of July, during the reign of King Alfonso [X], the Lord similarly deigned to reveal another miracle in conjunction with a certain boy through the same blessed Isidro. There was a certain man who, with his wife, had a young son whose eyes were so afflicted with disease that they were as red as fire. On account of this malady, the boy, almost four years old, was unable to see. Seeing him this way [his parents] claimed that he was practically blind. Finally his parents, encouraged by good men, made a vow that they would take him to the sepulchre of happy Isidro for an uninterrupted vigil lasting nine nights, hoping that God would have mercy on this boy just as he had been merciful toward many others who were oppressed with various diseases. It happened that on a particular day in accordance with her vow, the mother brought him to the sepulchre in which the venerable corpse had been deposited. And there, while she poured forth prayers, a certain cleric began to touch the [infected eyes] of this boy with the handkerchief [sudario] in which the most blessed body had been wrapped in the tomb. And, with divine mercy, that small boy began to call out, claiming that he could see! His mother began to respond with great joy, asking: "who cured you, my son?" The boy responded: "Blessed Isidro." And the boy was healed from that hour on, so that he returned on foot to his house without any guide, even though he had not been able to come to the church without being led by someone. The Lord deigned to work this miracle through his servant and to visibly demonstrate [it] to everyone standing there.

18. In the outskirts of Madrid it happened that a certain decent woman named Ovidia, suffering a disease of the eyes, came, with great devotion, led by her maidservant, to the tomb of the holy man, asking that assistance be given to her from the true servant of God in restoring her health against the disease of her eyes. So she asked with such devotion and faith that as soon as she had finished her prayers, she sensed the light being restored to her eyes. As a result, she who had come with a guide, joyfully returned home healthy and unimpaired and without a guide. Some time later, it happened that a man named John was stricken and deprived of the use of his limbs. Because no human medication proved capable of curing him, he turned with compunction into his heart. Remembering the woman who had suddenly received the health of her eyes through the saint of God, he confided his whole heart in the Lord and the gracious mercy of his saint, *papiro mensa est membra eius*, which, dressing it in candles, he adorned it in an appropriate fashion. And during the evening of that same day, on the third day after the feast of St. Barnabas, the apostle,[32] he had himself placed on an animal--with the help of six men who carried him about here and there--and transported to the tomb of the blessed man. There the aforementioned woman along with friends of his lit candles and solicitously maintained a vigil with him there all night long. This same woman, who more powerful than the rest in the greatness of her faith and ardor of her faith, prayed to the Lord that might remain sleepless that night, so that she might see and rejoice over the miracle pertaining to the mercy of God and of the holy man. Because she asked with such devout faith, she deserved to get what she asked for. Indeed at midnight she saw the man bend his hands and arms. Having been restored to his health, he began to move in a normal fashion. With his knees continuously bent, he rose up toward the sepulchre and reaching the tomb, kissed the remains of the saint with devotion. When his wife saw this, marveling that a miracle of God had happened so suddenly, wanted, in the great joy of her heart, to awaken the others who were sleeping. But when she asked her husband, he forbid her to announce the

miracle to anyone before the hour of matins. When the hour of matins came, and everyone saw him upright and walking firmly on his own feet, true witnesses were made with regard to this already bestowed miracle. When the divine offices of matins as well as the mass had been celebrated, the man along with his wife and his friends, dumbstruck and rejoicing, praising the name of the Lord and his servant, made their way back to their homes. Those who had seen him the previous day being carried [to the church] on the back of an animal, and now returning home fully healed, extolled the fame of his sanctity in the Lord Christ, as they admired the magnanimity of God exhibited to helpless people through the grace of the holy man.

19. During the reign of the most praiseworthy lord King Alfonso, in the era 1304 [1266 C.E.], such a memorable thing happened that, because it coincides with divine praise, would not be right to pass over in silence. An upright priest from the capital Madrid, called by the name Dominic, contracted a serious disease of the eyes, having been poisoned from eating eels. At that time, being a member of a certain confraternity made up of secular clerics as well as Friars Minor, he was supposed to prepare a common meal on a certain day for the assembled confraternity brothers. But on account of the disease in his eyes, he was unable to fulfill his responsibilities. He wanted to ask that others take his place in preparing the meal, but because the day was fast approaching, he was afraid to approach his clerical brothers lest they reprove him out of contempt. Approaching them quasi sub adventu alterius precedentis, he found them sitting in front of the entrance to the church of San Andrés. Having disclosed to them his very good reasons [for his request], he entered the church, with these same ones sitting there, with the intention of praying. When he approached the tomb of the man of God so that he might ask for help with his malady, he began to turn his face toward the stone sepulchre in which the whole, holy body rested. And—as the aforementioned priest told us afterwards—suddenly he sensed a soft coolness from the top of his head to the tips of his toes, a coolness that he understood to be the clemency of God coming to help him. Relieved in his soul and elevated on his feet, the wooden casket was opened and he took out a piece of cloth which he cut from the funeral clothes of the man of God and placed it over his own eyes. Illumined suddenly and completely by divine grace, he was strengthened in his soul and overjoyed with regard to the miraculously [restored] sight. He hastened, running after his confraternity brothers, who had already left, so that he could tell them about this gift of God. When he found them gathered together at the residence of the Friars Minor, right before they were to sit down to dinner. When they saw him approaching the place with such alacrity, they were overjoyed with the greatest happiness, because they realized that he was healthy intuitum reportare. While they took up their food altogether with joy, he told them about the divine gift. The men gave copious thanks and praise to the highest King of glory from the bottom of their hearts; the King who, through the dignity of his servant, did not fail to dispense worthy miracles to his unworthy servants.

20. In the following year, following the “era” mentioned above, another sign happened in the church of San Andrés where the body of the holy man Isidro was venerably conserved, a sign most curious to behold. One winter night, a certain sacristan of the aforementioned church, by the name of Blasius, who was very tired, fell asleep. A certain most black boy, with an ugly face, appeared before him in his dreams and grabbed the index finger of his right hand. It began to squeeze it so much, that the sacristan was vehemently tortured [with pain]. But then he saw, by divine mercy, in the area around the tomb of the man of God, a man in the habit of a monk, head bowed, coming and crossing in front of the altar of St. Andrew. Approaching, he stood staring with a fixed gaze at the face of the aforementioned phantasm. When this evil boy realized that he was being stared at in this manner, he let go of the finger and, terrified, gathered himself and

began to flee quickly to the back of the church, and from there he vanished, to be seen no more. The aforementioned sacristan, awakened, stood up from his bed with fear and admiration, stupefied at what had happened to him. Finally, recognizing the gift of God given to him, he addressed his heartfelt thanks to God who, through his holy servant, had deigned to liberate him in his paternal mercy from the evil tempter and hostile danger.

21. In the era 1307 [1269 C.E.], a certain knight of the lord Frederico, by the name of Dominic, a native of Guadalquivir, suffered a swelling of the throat, and was by no means able to relieve it with medical remedies. But when, by order of lord Frederico, he was compelled to go on a journey, he passed through Madrid and heard the reports about the handkerchief of the man of God, that many had been liberated from their diseases by contact with it. Hearing this with joy, prompted by the complete devotion of his mind, he went to and approached the sepulchre of St. Isidro, seeking the handkerchief of the man of God. He held it against his swollen throat and in the blink of an eye he felt as if he had been liberated from the swelling of his throat. Giving thanks for the divine mercy, he promised to spread the fame of the man of God wherever he might be. We have taken care to note this just as he reported it to us.

22. In the ear 1308 [1270 CE], a certain upright man by the name of John Dominic, an inhabitant and citizen of the city of Córdoba, had advanced along with other Christians into frontier areas, fighting in military campaigns against the Saracens. As a result of their sins, he and his companions were surrounded by the infidels and overcome by the power of their forces. Bitterly vanquished, they were taken into captivity. The aforementioned John Dominic, on account of the sufferings under which he labored so bitterly, assiduously beseeched his Lord with all his heart to free him mercifully from the hand of his enemy through one of his saints. Looking down on him with great mercy, the Lord sent the holy man Isidro to him by night, disguised as a Madrileño, and offering words of this sort: "Give thanks to God, who mercifully heard you, I have been sent to you so that I might free you from the hand of the enemy." Immediately released from his chains, he led him to a place from which he would be able to leave safely. And so, liberated by the servant of God, he returned to his own home. Though he had made a promise with regard to this prodigy to go to the tomb of the man of God with an oblation, he did not fulfill the promise which he had made to the saint because his friends did not believe what had happened and disparaged the story. Not long after that, he was once again led into captivity. Recognizing the extent of his guilt, he asked God, crying and wailing, that, in his great mercy, he release him from the power of the enemy a second time—just as he had deigned to do the first time--through his holy servant. Wondrously at that very moment, divine mercy was fulfilled. Liberated by such a prodigy, he returned to his home and told his relatives and friends and many others what had miraculously happened. He added to this--wonderful to relate--reporting on the shape of the face of the man of God and the measure of his height, though he had never seen him nor heard anything about him. With great haste he made the necessary preparations, and, with candles and the oblations, made the journey, quickly arrived in Madrid with the greatest desire to visit the tomb of the holy man. There, fulfilling his vow in a heartfelt manner, with candles and oblations, once the divine offices were celebrated and copious thanks were offered to divine mercy and his servant, he returned home joyful and unharmed. We have had it inscribed here exactly what the aforementioned man reported to us.

23. In the era 1309 [1271 CE], there was a certain little woman by the name of Maria, from a village called Leganes, situated on the outskirts of Madrid, who, though she had been legitimately married to her husband for ten years, grieved that she had had no children. Encouraged by the fame of the man of God, whom she heard had helped many people many

times, she went to the tomb of the man of God full of devotion in her heart. There, keeping a vigil, she confidently asked from the divine mercy through his faithful servant, that a son mercifully be given to her. That which she had confidently requested from divine mercy was bestowed upon her that same year. Shortly after she had delivered the child, she returned to the presence of the holy man to offer with all of her heart copious thanks along with an oblation and lamps dedicated to God and his servant. Everything has been noted here in this book just as she publicly described it.

24. In the era 1309 [1271 CE], during the reign of the most illustrious lord King Alfonso [X], for the sake of reviving the memory of the holy man, in accordance with the operation of divine grace, a miracle was made public on the third day before the Feast of All Saints.[33] A certain boy by the name of Dominic, already well along in his youth, suddenly, at noon on a Friday, went blind. When he disclosed, in a timid voice, to his guardian and servants that he could not see, they chastised him, because, since he had had excellent vision, that he was only pretending not to be able to see. But one of his companions testified to his blindness, saying that once, when both of them made their way out of the village, on orders of his guardian for the sake of some business, he would have walked into a rampart of the walls if his companion had not restrained him with his hands, and that he had led him, serving as his guide--since he could see nothing--to his home. Nevertheless, because his eyes seemed to be clear and undamaged, they by no means led one to believe that he could not see. Questioning this same boy about the danger of blindness, with arguments made from many different angles for the sake of determining whether or not he could see, they finally realized that he truly could not. Then his friends and his servants, and especially his mother and sister, wounded with the dart of pain as a result of this unexpected situation, tearfully grieved and stood there speechless, not knowing what to do. But because it is written: "The spirit of God blows where it will,"[34] the aforementioned young lord is said to have offered the following words in the face of this danger: "Take me, for God's sake, to St. Isidro, that he might heal me." Hearing this, those who were standing, accepting his words as if they were sent from heaven, led him by the hand to the tomb of the holy man. There on bent knee, imploring the help of the holy man with tear-filled pain, they asked about the handkerchief of the man of God that was kept in the tomb, so that it might be touched to the blind eyes of the boy—its touch being held customarily to cure many ailments of the eyes. Once this had been done, after a brief time, the aforementioned boy, rubbing his eyes with his hands, called out in an unrestrained voice: "Thanks to God and to St. Isidro, for now I can indeed see; I can see and recognize the people standing around me." Upon hearing these words, all who were present began to marvel and asked him about the object [opertorio] which he had gotten from the tomb of the holy man: what it was and what color it was. The boy promptly responded: "It is a soft cloth, light red in color, with various stripes." Hesitating over this, holding up diverse things for him to see, they knew that he had fully received his natural ability to see. Then everyone, offering thanks to God and to his saint, commended the boy to the servant of God and returned home with joy, consoled in their good hope. With word of this event spreading to the ears of many, both cleric and lay acknowledged the prodigy which had been accomplished with regard to this boy, and they extolled with devout praise the gracious gifts of God, who incessantly glorifies his saints with his marvelous providence year after year.

[Hymns]

31. A certain cleric by the name of Ferrant Martin was doubtful with regard to blessed Isidro and, having no confidence in him, said: "Let's cast the body of blessed Isidro down and burn it; if it remains whole and no injury appears on it, we will regard it as certain that God worked

miracles through him.” And because all the while he impugned the glory of blessed Isidro with his chatter, he added detestable blasphemy to his sins. And the anger of God did not delay in bringing a suitable punishment. For after this one had made his “prayer in sin,”[35] he suddenly became ill and was paralyzed for the rest of his life.

32. A certain man by the name of Stephen had been rendered blind as a result of the great anguish of his pain. But when his relatives, carrying him in their arms, brought him to the catacomb of blessed Isidro, his sight was restored to its former condition through the miraculous power of [Isidro’s] merits.

33. A certain woman, by the name of Sancha, had been paralyzed in her right arm for four months. Making her way to the tomb of blessed Isidro, the moment she touched it with her right hand, she was rendered healthy and whole.

34. Another woman, by the name of Marina, from the outskirts of Madrid, had lost the sight in her eyes three weeks before. Going to the sepulchre of blessed Isidro, she opened her eyes and was restored miraculously to health.

35. A certain man by the name of Pedro Garcia was falsely accused of minting money and was held captive by the Castilian king for a period of ten months, having been sentenced in such a way that he could not escape death. But the aforementioned Pedro Garcia called out: “Blessed Isidro, succor me; father Isidro, help me. Deign to free me from the penalty of death. That night blessed Isidro appeared to him and said: “Pedro Garcia, do not be afraid, because your enemies will not prevail against you. Tomorrow you will be freed from your chains. Thus the merits of the blessed father freed him from the jaws of death and transformed his sorrow into joy.

36. Another man—majordomo of the confraternity of blessed Isidro—who, by order of the confraternity, was supposed to feed sixteen poor people and satisfy them with food in accordance with the custom of the land. It happened that there was, left over in the cauldron, a certain quantity of meat. The servers brought in two poor people whom they fed with the bit of meat. But afterward they found the cauldron filled with meat and with it they sated just as many poor people as before. When they had seen this prodigy suddenly accomplished, everyone who was present was wonderfully astounded. Saving the announcement for an opportune time, the men as well as the poor people praised the Lord with glee and joy. The food sufficed to such an extent that they were able to offer what was left over to poor people who had not even been present in the first place.

37. When a certain woman was afflicted with paralysis, they took her to the tomb of the blessed Isidro and immediately she achieved what she wanted and obtained what she sought.

38. A certain man by the name of Lawrence had been a paralytic for a long time, when he was led to the sepulchre of blessed Isidro. Once night had fallen, blessed Isidro appeared to him, dressed in white vestments, and spoke the following words: “Lawrence, my son, I, Isidro, a servant of God, admonish you in the name of Christ that you anoint yourself with a certain ointment and then believe with certainty that you will recover your health. When morning came, the aforementioned man revealed to those standing around him what had happened to him, and they diligently covered his body with the indicated ointment. After giving the small gifts of his prayer, he went home greatly comforted.

39. A certain man by the name of Bartholomew was blind for seven weeks. Having requested assistance from the blessed father, his former health was restored to him.

40. Another man by the name of Nuncio had been blind for a long time on account of a serious disease in his eyes. But his plight ended in health at the catacomb of the blessed father Isidro.

41. A certain man by the name of Pedro lay down in bed and surrendered himself to sleep only to have the devil appear to him in a strange and horrible form. Taking him by the hand, the devil placed it on the neck of the aforementioned man with the intention of throwing him down a well. Blessed Isidro appeared to him, held out his arm, and offered these words: "You have no power over this man, because I am his surety." The devil responded: "How can you are his surety when he is in mortal sin?" Blessed Isidro answered: "Because he has served me for a long time. With the help of Christ, I will be able to snatch him from your hands." And immediately the devil was removed from the man's sight.

42. A wonderful thing! A certain man, by the name of Ferrant Dominic, had completely lost the sight in his eyes. Indeed he was rendered blind by his own sins. For he had not zealously purged them with penitential confession. When, guided by his relatives, he was led to the catacomb of the blessed Isidro, so as to seek his assistance against the disease of his eyes, he asked with such devotion and faith that, the moment his prayer was finished, he sensed that the sight in his eyes had been restored. And thus he returned healthy, with joy, and without a guide to his own home. And so that he might show his debt in honor of the blessed father, he arranged to provide a meal for poor people. And whatever in the way of wine or flour the poor people needed, they received completely and fully.

43. The son of a certain knight, blind from birth, received perfect sight on the basis of Isidro's merits.

44. A certain man from the outskirts of Madrid was laboring in his vineyard tried to strike a certain log with his tool but hit his own eye instead, cutting it in half, so that half of it hung outside his eye socket. When, in the midst of such desperate danger, he had given up hope of ever being cured by men, he promised to fast during the feast of St. Isidro if he would succor him. Immediately the saint restored the eye to its proper place and rejoined the divided eye that he had struck and adorned him with his former sight so that no traces of any injury remained.

45. A certain girl by the name of Romera who had been deprived of her sight for a long time, was taken by her parents to the catacomb of the blessed Isidro. After asking for the help of the most holy father, she was restored to her former state within nine days.

46. A certain woman by the name of Dominica had no children despite the fact that she had been married for a long time to her husband. She asked most devoutly for a favor from blessed Isidro. And within a year she gave birth to a wonderful boy.

47. A certain woman, by the name of Maria Alvar, was deprived of sight in her eyes. She was taken to the tomb of blessed Isidro by her relatives carrying candles, and there, with the merits of blessed Isidro interceding for her, she deserved to receive the desired sight.

48. A certain boy was taken by his parents to the tomb of blessed Isidro on account of a very grave illness, and there he left this world for the celestial one. His parents and relatives, greatly grieved on account of his death, begged blessed Isidro devotedly and with many tears for his life [to be restored]. Wonderful to relate, in that very hour the blessed father returned their living and cured boy to them.

49. A certain knight contracted with a certain peasant to cultivate his farm for a certain period of time. Since the peasant did have a surety, he promised before the sepulchre of the blessed Isidro that he would faithfully fulfill his promise and that if he did not, he would [expect to] be punished gravely by blessed Isidro. When all the wages had been paid [in advance to the peasant], he immediately adorned his body with clothing. When this unfaithful peasant took off a short time later in flight, oblivious to divine judgment, he passed near the church where the body of blessed Isidro lay honorably entombed. A wonderful thing [happened]! Over the course of that

night, he ran around that church more than a thousand times. When morning came, he was discovered by the knight who had required the peasant's promise before the tomb of blessed Isidro, and begged for mercy from him for his bad proposal, promising that he would serve him forever.

50. While he was struggling in the last moments of his life, a certain man saw himself surrounded by crowds of demons due to the fact that he was ensnared in mortal sin. When he invoked the assistance of Isidro—as he often had done—blessed Isidro appeared to him, put the demons to flight, and procured from the Lord extra time so the man could confess.

51. A certain man by the name of Pedro Fortunio, suffered from a serious disease in his eye. When he began to deeply despair of the help of the doctors, he turned his mind completely toward the help of blessed Isidro. And this tireless helper of miserable people who beseech him with prayers was not absent. He restored the lost eye to its former vigor and illuminated it as desired with rays of light.

52. A certain man by the name of Garcia Peter went to the church of blessed Isidro for the sake of maintaining a vigil. Once the man had fallen asleep, the lamps were extinguished. Waking up immediately, he went looking for light outside of the church. When he returned, it happened that he quickly discovered that the lamp which was in front of the sepulchre of Isidro had, with divine assent, been relit.

53. A certain excellent [eximius] man by the name of Pedro had been rendered practically blind. They led him to the church of the blessed Isidro and, as a result of Isidro's merits, the man received the power of sight that he had longed for.

54. A certain man, by the name of Juan Pedro, was seized with the greatest of fears, to the point where he was unable to relax whether by night or by day. He promised to hold a vigil for three nights before the sepulchre of blessed Isidro. Having heard that the virtue of the blessed man was effective for putting airy powers to flight, he humbly prayed. And approaching the sepulchre of the pious father, sleep overcame the aforementioned man. When he was roused, he had been wonderfully liberated [from his fear].

55. A certain woman, by the name of Sol, had been blind for a long time, as extra skin had grown into her eyes, impeding the movement and use of her eyelids. She promised to hold a vigil for nine nights in front of the sepulchre of blessed Isidro. When she had fulfilled this promise, she opened her eyes and, seeing clearly, adored [Isidro] most devotedly. In the midst of this adoration, she proclaimed in a loud voice: "I give thanks to God and to St. Isidro, because sight was quickly restored to my eyes." And the woman returned home with joyful of spirit and her eyesight.

56. Another woman, as the result of a severe headache, had lost her vision and was greatly bothered [by pain] by night and by day. Approaching the tomb of the blessed Isidro, she embraced it in supplication. Suddenly in a wondrous manner, she sensed that she had been cured and adored [Isidro] most devoutly.

57. The son of a certain good woman, whose name was Juan, had been sick with a quartan fever for two years. Succumbing to the power of nature, every effort [to restore his health] having failed, the name of blessed Isidro was invoked and immediately he was made healthy and he stayed healthy.

58. A certain youth by the name of Garcia had suffered from a fever for a year. Approaching the sepulchre of the blessed Isidro, he was immediately cured by the merits of the same.

59. A certain woman from Escalona by the name of Jordana had suddenly, in anguish, had almost completely lost her eyes. The harshness of her passions had so propelled her eyes from

their sockets that she could expect no help from the doctors. Seeking the assistance of blessed Isidro, she was immediately liberated by means of his wonderful virtue and illuminated by the desired rays of light.

60. A certain man by the name of Gonzalez suffered from a tremendous pain in his head, on account of which he had lost his sight. "I will go," he said, "to the sepulchre of the blessed Israel and hold a vigil there." Having carried this out, he was immediately made healthy and whole.

61. Another man, by the name of Pedro Dominic, had suffered from a fever for many years. He promised to go to St. Isidro. Having fulfilled his promise, he was immediately and completely liberated.

62. A certain man by the name of Dominic was very sick for eighteen months. Coming to Isidro's sepulchre, he prostrated himself there and full health replaced his illness.

63. A certain man by the name of Miguel Pedro, suffered from a great pain in his eyes to the extent that he seemed to be totally blind. He was exhorted by his relatives to go to the sepulchre of blessed Isidro. Upon doing so, he called out: "Come to me, blessed Isidro." Immediately his illness began to worsen. Suddenly regretted having spoken such words. Approaching the sepulchre of blessed Isidro, he sensed himself to be liberated by [Isidro's] merits.

64. The son of a certain good man had remained paralyzed for a long time. Led by his parents to the mausoleum of blessed Isidro, he achieved full health in that very place.

65. The daughter of the certain good woman, by the name of Flos, was so sick that she seemed to have been changed by men. After invoking the name of Isidro, she was restored to health.

66. A certain brother from the Order of the Friars Minor suffered from great pain in his teeth and molars to the point where he was unable to relax or sleep. Coming to the tomb of Isidro, he ended up healthy.

67. Among the other notable miracles that are written about the holy man Isidro, it would by no means be appropriate to leave out a miracle of divine esteem, which, by divine mercy, was miraculously declared to all the people of Madrid, clerics as well as laymen, and to no few people who had gathered from various regions in order to ask for rain, in the era 1313 [1275 CE], in the month of March, during the reign of the lord King Alfonso.[36] When, at the abovementioned time, a lack of bread and food afflicted all the people far and wide, and the oppression of hunger annihilated the beggars and the poor, the seeds that had been sowed in the land having been denied water from the heavens, the various peoples from all around, carrying the sign of the cross before them, made their way to various sanctuaries in a crowd, and begged for rain with tears and sighs. In the midst of this calamity, the entire population of Madrid—the chapter of clerics as well as the council of laymen and the college of monks, unanimously convened in a singular council so as to extract the body of the holy man Isidro from his sepulchre and through him ask for rain from the heavens. This having been done, the religious men from the order of the Friars Minor, carrying the body of the holy man, on a litter placed on their shoulders, took it with great honor to the basilica of the Blessed Virgin, which lay two miles from the city,[37] which all the clergy and people following in procession. Once there they found that a great number of people had come from the region of Ilesca[38] honoring the image of the Blessed Virgin and waiting for the rain to fall from the heavens. Having celebrated the divine office, as was appropriate, and the divine request of preaching having been fulfilled, when the rain still did not deign to descend from the sky to the land, the great multitude of peoples who were present all began to overflow with tears, shouts, and sighs, greatly stupefied that even through him, who while he lived he visited with assiduous effort the church of the Blessed Virgin, the Lord did not deign to give rain. While the preacher said, "Let the most worthy fish be

drawn from its place of quiet and be laid prostrate before the virgin's in aure and let it be done what will have decreed to be approved." Then the body of the holy man was elevated at once toward heaven by the hands of the religious in the presence of the Virgin and, with everyone irrupting into heartfelt tears and signs and cries, it suddenly pleased divine clemency to pour down rain from the sky and abundantly water the entire region. All present were comforted by this divine blessing and, with great joy, offered copious thanks to God, the Blessed Virgins, and to St. Isidro alike. Carrying the body of St. Isidro back to his tomb, everyone returned home with great joy. In that year, thanks to merciful divine grace, the inhabitants of the region were not deprived of their harvests.

68. [In Spanish] Sunday, with four days left in the month of May in the year of our Lord 1421.[39] On this day in the church of St. Andrés in Madrid, were gathered first the lord archdeacon of Madrid, Martin Sanchez--his benefice being from the same church—; and Juan Alvarez, a priest from the same church; and Diego Gutierrez, a priest from Santiago; and Alfonso Martinez, a cleric from Canillas;[40] and Alfonso Ruiz along with Antonio Ruiz, his brother, both clerics; and Francisco Fernandez, majordomo of the lord archbishop; and Matheo Sanchez, priest of St. Peter; and Fray Juan Guerra, prior of Santo Domingo; As well as the laymen present, who were the following: first, Sancho Garcia de vosmediano; and Antonio Sanchez, scribe; Lope Sanchez, aposentador of the king; and Pedro de Vargas; and Diego de Vargas; and Ruy Vazquez, aposentador of the king; and Ruy Martinez; and Lope Martinez; and Diego Duro, lawyer; and Folcos, the blacksmith; and Gutierrez Fernandez Gudiel; and Rodrigo Alonso de Oviedo; and Ruy Ferrandes de Peñalosa; and Gil Alvares de Viana; and Fernando de Vargas; and Ruy Dias, hijo de Ruy Ferrandes de Peñalosa; and Pedro Gonzales, son of Martin; and Diego Sanchez Cano; and Juan Logroño with Gonzalo Dias de Valda, neighbors of the said villa. The holy body of the lord St. Isidro was taken out, which was seen by all the witnesses mentioned above. And the body was returned to the place where it was before. But first the archdeacon of Madrid performed the office along with the other lord clerics mentioned above. And I, Juan Alvarez, priest of this church, being there present, recorded what is contained here about this event so it would be remembered, and recorded those who donated money for the fabric of this church. Therefore I put my name in the recordbook which belongs to the holy body, on the day and year mentioned above. Juan Alvarez, priest of this church.

69. Sabbath, the 27th day of April, in the year of the Lord 1426, and the people of Madrid, both the religious and the secular clergy, as well as laymen and women, extracted the body of the most holy confessor Isidro, enclosed in its covering, from its tomb, on account of the drought. With a solemn procession, they carried it to the church of Blessed Mary of the Almudena and also to the nunnery of the ladies of St. Dominic, that is, they carried it outside the walls [of the city] to the that village [where the nunnery is located]. The aforementioned people returned the body of the above mentioned Isidro to the church of San Andrés so that it would remain enclosed as before. And our God of gods, [thanks to] the merits of our holy confessor, let rain fall from the sky and gave fruitful harvests to the land. After the celebration and a solemn sermon, everyone returned home with great joy. The key to his arca is entrusted: first, to the chapter of clerics; second, to Didaco de Vargas; third, to Fernando de Vargas; fourth, to Roderic Martin the Cordoban; and fifth, to the cleric of San Martin. Martin, unworthy priest.

[1] The author uses "Maioritum" for Madrid, suggesting to me that he was steering away from the more obvious Arabic forms (Magerit, Magerid, Maidrit, Madrit, Magerito, Maiarid,

Magerritum, etc.) that appear in the earliest Madrid-related documents, conveniently collected by Fita.

[2] Some commentators have speculated that he was named after St. Isidore of Seville (d. 636), suggesting that perhaps he was born on April 4 (Isidore's feast day) or that his parents were influenced in their choice of name by the translation of Isidore's remains from Seville to León in 1053. As Moreno Chicharro points out (p. 36), however, Isidorus was a common name in Spain.

[3] As Tazbir has noted, peasant saints are rare, but not unheard of. However Isidro seems to have been the only one who spent his entire life as a farmer. Tazbir, p. 99-101.

[4] Ephesians 4:28

[5] Jerome, Letter 125: Ad Rusticum.

[6] Previous translators have shied away from identifying Isidro's companion, here, as his son, preferring to interpret filiulus as a hired hand or apprentice of some sort. But I see no compelling reason why it would not be his son.

[7] Genesis 3:19. Here we see a would-be saint turning the curse directed against fallen man into his own kind of spiritual discipline.

[8] See Fita, p. 104, n. 5. This would have made Isidro's lord a caballero villano, from the lowest level of the nobility.

[9] These fields are commonly identified as those in which the ermita and cemetery of San Isidro are currently located.

[10] Note that even Isidro's marriage is treated implicitly as an imitation of Adam, who needed an "Eve."

[11] Mark 12:17

[12] sub mercede notoria

[13] [Genesis 3:19

[14] Matthew 6:33

[15] Isaiah 40:13

[16] According to Tazbir, angels tilled in place of the pilgrim-farmhand St. Guy of Anderlecht, the tenth-century Belgian patron of peasants. Tazbir, 101.

[17] The author uses the more generic bestiola and animal, but "donkey" seems to be the most likely candidate given the context.

[18] Tobias 4:9

[19] Psalm 33:11

[20] I Kings 2:8

[21] i.e., his tomb

[22] Matthew 25:14-23

[23] Wisdom 10:10

[24] Luke 21:18. The gospel basis for the traditional idea that natural processes of decomposition do not apply to the bodies of saints.

[25] compater

[26] cimbala

[27] A good example of a saint created by the "vox populi."

[28] Ecclesiasticus 45:3-4

[29] Fernando III (1217-52)

[30] Psalm 77:30

[31] Fernando III (1217-52)

[32] June 11.

[33] October 30.

[34] John 3:8.

[35] Psalms 108:7.

[36] Alfonso X (1252-84)

[37] Our Lady of Atocha.

[38] Between Madrid and Toledo.

[39] That is, May 27.

[40] A village just northeast of Madrid.

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