

ISABEL I OF CASTILE - ENGLISH

26 de noviembre de 2011

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In order to understand Isabel (1451-1504) it is necessary to understand the values that she promoted in her life and work in the 15th century, so different from those in our 21st century.

She shone with exquisite dignity in her distinguished femininity: cultured, advising, simple, austere, sensible, fair and impartial, charitable, honest, virtuous, delicate, elegant, catholic!

From the decadence and dissolution of the people and their leaders, she started the way to the splendour which culminated in the Spanish "golden century", the opening of a continent to the civilization and European-Roman-Greek culture; more than twenty nations that today pray the Our father in Spanish.

DID SHE USURP THE THRONE? Segovia, December 13rd 1474

It is very doubtful that Juana (the Beltraneja) was the king's daughter; but even if she were, the "queen's daughter" (Isabel called her that way), was an illegitimate daughter, as there is no documentary proof of the dispensation to the impediment of her parents' marriage, Enrique IV and Juana de Portugal, who were cousins. In Guisando Isabel was declared the legitimate heir before the Pontifical Legate.

HER MARRIAGE. Valladolid, October 19th 1469

Fernando and Isabel were cousins too. Due to the interests of Paulo II, the dispensation was granted personally by the Pontifical Legate internally, and a papal bull of this dispensation was feigned until the authentic by Sixtus IV.

INQUISITION 1480

It is not a Spanish invention. It was created in France, 1231, in St. Luis IX days, against the Albigenians. Isabel was reluctant to introduce it for two years, after other measures, against the excesses of the converted Jews. The Spanish Black Legend has exaggerated and slandered this Court action.

GRANADA January 2nd 1492

Isabel played a decisive role in the liberation of Granada Kingdom from the Muslim dominion. This way, the Reconquest of the Visigoth Spain invaded by the Muslims in the 8th century, culminated. The Queen was congratulated, among others, by the Pope Inocencio VIII and the University of Paris.

AMERICA October 12th 1492.

When Columbus' project was rejected by experts as unviable, Isabel takes him in, helps him, settles the agreements with him and provides the caravels for the first trip. Reason: "Our main intention was... endeavour to induce and bring the people (from those lands) and convert them to our holy catholic faith and send... prelates, friars and clerics and other learned and God-fearing people to instruct their neighbours and people living there in the catholic faith and teach them good habits and to do it with diligence" (Codicil). This way was carried out from Columbus' second trip onwards (September 1493).

In 1495, the Queen sends back to America, released by her, the slaves brought and sold by Columbus in Seville, and orders the Admiral, 50 years before the People's Rights stated by the Fr. Vitoria!: "You shall not bring slaves"; and to the Governors, to treat the natives well and "to encourage Indians to deal and chat with Christians"... It is the crossbreeding as characteristic of the Spanish colonization, which adds new provinces, not colonies to the Crown.

THE JEWS. March 1492

Isabel never was anti-Semitic; personal doctors and high administrative public offices in the Court were Jews. She was not the first who, for State reasons, decreed their expulsion. The Fourth Letran Concilium, 1215, had stated that it was convenient to keep them apart from the Christians; this had been already done (sometimes with great cruelty) in England, France (recall the insults in the Talmud to the Christians), Naples, Germany, Italy... In 1492 Spain was a refuge for Jews and also a place with serious disturbances. The Church pressured the Queen, whose wish was their conversion, the defence of the faith, the obedience to the Church. The "suppression of the right of residence to the Jews in Castile and Leon", painful as it was, was carried out with humanizing rules by the Queen.

"Pure in faith. Entire in chastity. Deep in advice. Strong in constancy. Constant in justice. Full of real clemency, humility and grace". (R. de Santaella, Seville, 1495).

HOLINESS?

The deeply Christian behaviour of Isabel, her fame of holiness even during her life, her love to the Church, her determination to evangelize the countries discovered by Columbus, all the petitions, particularly after the 4th centenary of her death, by individuals, groups, congresses, episcopates... decided the Archbishop of Valladolid (Spain) to initiate the canonization process of the Catholic Queen. Currently it continues in Rome, waiting for the Church's report on the heroism of her virtues.