Apparition of the Virgin Mary in Peschiera sul Garda

ITALY, 1510

The Shrine of the Madonna of the Ash Tree is considered a source of pride and joy in these parts. Its origin dates back to a period in history that was turbulent due to political changes and uprisings by wars and battles for the dominion of the city. It is always accompanied by poverty, hunger, and plague. In May of 1510 it came under the dominion of the French.

On the 11th of May 1510, the Blessed Mother, Comforter of the Afflicted, responded to the invocations of the people. Here is what Fr. Bartolomeo Spinelli from Montanaro, a town near Mantua in the region of Lombardy, wrote: “It was the 11th of May in the year 1510. While I was in the farmyard of the district of Pigna, a peasant was putting his vines in order, glancing nearby a frightening serpent, he stepped out of fear, as if paralysed. He raised his eyes to Heaven, and to the Most Holy Virgin, his Advocate, he entrusted himself. Suddenly he saw amongst the bush, verdant foliage of an ash tree a luminous little statue of the Virgin Mary; he knelt down and every fear dismissed, he was full of great consolation, he offered thanks, got to his feet and approached the ash tree, extended his hand, removed it, and completely jubilant, he brought it home with him. “The peasant, having returned home, showed the little statue to his family members full of astonishment, and told them about what had happened to him that morning in the field. A miraculous occurrence of “his treasure,” so that it would not be stolen, he enclosed it in a strong chest. But the sensational occurrence quickly spread throughout the district and in the city. Everyone wanted to see, to admire the “Little Madonna” that had saved him. The man, who did not know how to resist the praiseworthy request, decided to show “his treasure.” And so he opened the chest where he had hidden the little statue. But it was no longer there! It is said that the peasant ran right away to his field to check the ash tree of the miracle. The little statue of the Blessed Mother had returned there all by herself.