Apparitions of the Virgin Mary at Ornavasso

The shrine of Our Lady of Miracles, called the Boden, is located at an altitude of 479 meters, a little above Ornavasso and the Toe Valley, on a plateau called Boden in dialect and it is surrounded by a thick chestnut wood. It owes its construction thanks to a miraculous event of the Virgin Mary who saved a young shepherd girl. On the evening of September 7, 1528, while Maria della Torre was looking after her flock, she fell asleep from fatigue. Awakening late at night, she was frightened because she feared of having her animals and she began to cry and invoke the help of Our Lady.

Suddenly the girl felt no ground beneath her feet and she had the feeling of falling from a high cliff. Then a very bright light enveloped her, and reaching the bottom of the precipice miraculously unharmed, she saw in the glow of that light the nearby Chapel of Boden and her animals gathered around it. Deeply moved, she thanked the Virgin and pleaded her to accompany her through the darkness of the night, in the section of the road that was left to return home. And behold, a new wonder, the light that shone around the chapel guided her down to the bottom of the valley where she met her mother and other women who were coming just to look for her. They remained astonished for the brightness of that unusual light surrounding the girl and her flock.

The news of the extraordinary event quickly spread in the surroundings and the people transformed the small chapel into an actual Church in honor of the Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary. Two years later, on September 8, 1530, they began to celebrate the Feast of Our Lady of the Boden. Numerous were the miracles and the graces performed by the Virgin of the Boden, among them there were also some apparitions. We recall, for example, the episode when the Virgin Mary appeared and saved young Alberto Maffulli, swept away by a terrible landslide of rocks. The image of Our Lady of the Boden was solemnly crowned for the first time in 1668 at the hands of the Bishop of Novara, the Most Rev. Giacomo Filippo Gentile, and a second time at the hands of the Most Rev. Giuseppe Gamba, later Bishop and then Cardinal of Turin.