



THE APPEALS
OF OUR LADY
APPARITIONS
AND
MARIAN SHRINES
IN THE WORLD

Apparition of the Virgin Mary at MOLARE



ITALY, XVI Century

The Shrine of Our Lady of the Rocks, in Molare, arose in the second half of the XVI Century, following the apparition of the Virgin Mary to a woman of the town, Clarice da Molare. As the poor woman was going to bring the meager meal of few cooked greens to her husband, Mary Most Holy appeared to her and, moved by so much poverty, changed the greens into fragrant bread.

Clarice was going to her husband in the woods and along the road she met a shining Lady with a Child in her arms, who asked her: "**Clarice, would you like to give me some bread?**". "**Lady, I do not have bread; I am carrying only a plate of cooked greens to my husband, who is up on the mountain cutting wood.**"

"**Look in the basket**", insisted the Lady. Clarice opened the basket and found it full of bread still warm: "**Most Blessed Virgin!**" she exclaimed astonished. The Lady continued: "**I am truly the one whom you are invoking. Go to Molare and tell everyone that I desire here a church in my honor. I will place here a throne of graces**".

The woman went immediately to inform the people of the area about what happened. The inhabitants of Molare initially did not want to believe, but the crippled Gazzuli intervened, saying: "**Lead me to the place. If it is Mary, she will heal me!**". He was brought there and was miraculously healed.

The devotion to the Virgin Mary, after the apparition, increased dramatically in the territory of Molare and in the adjacent areas, thanks also to miraculous healings, so much that the large offerings, coming from every social class, led in 1608 to a municipal resolution for the establishment of a church. It took twenty years but at the end, in 1630, the first Masses were celebrated. After almost a century of mixed fortune the church, of municipal property, went through a dark period because of the underlying poverty of the faithful and the construction of the new parish church of Molare, which took a large quantity of offerings. Also the subsequent Napoleonic period did not favor pilgrimages to the Rocks but, starting from the second decade, there was an abrupt inversion of tendency. This resulted determinant for the future of the church and on August 10, 1823 the church became a Shrine. The festivities continued for many days attracting a very large number of pilgrims. It was in this circumstance that the Archpriest Giuseppe Antonio Gaioli took on the task of building the bridge on the Rio Amione, to encourage the pilgrimages of the faithful. At the location where Mary appeared, a wooden cross was placed and, later, a picture still visible today was hung on the cross. In its interior one can admire the evocative group near the main altar and on the exterior the painting placed on the facade, depicting the apparition and its protagonists, while the paintings depicting events in the life of Mary, are works of the famous deaf-mute artist Pietro Ivaldi, called the "Mute". The feast of the Shrine of Our Lady of the Rocks is celebrated on Easter Monday and on the first Sunday of September.



Depiction of the apparition of the Virgin Mary to Clarice



Exterior of the Shrine



Detail of the facade of the Shrine where there is a mosaic depicting the apparition



It is worth noting the Altar of Our Lady, 9 meters high, with spiral columns, inlays, and tabernacle in an harmonious marble ensemble



The very numerous votive offerings



The paintings depicting the life of the Virgin are of the famous P. Ivaldi, called the "mute". The Shrine is always open, with priests always available to the visitors

