



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

# Apparition of the Virgin Mary in GENAZZANO



ITALY, 1467



he story of the Shrine of Our Lady of Good Counsel of Genazzano is woven with the story of the suffering of the Albanian people.

It all began in the distant 1467. In Scutari, the Albanian stronghold held by the Venetians but already close to falling in the hands of the Turks, a fresco depicting "Our Lady of Good Counsel" miraculously detached itself from the wall of the church tied to the memory of the national hero Gjergj Kastriot Skanderbeg (famous for having defended Albania from the Turkish invasion), and was transported by Angels to Genazzano. They placed it on one of the walls of a 10th century church dedicated to Saint Mary of Good Counsel that was then expanded into the present Shrine. As is recounted in an aged narrative written by a direct witness of the miraculous event, Ambrogio Cori, "there admirably appeared a beautiful image of the Virgin on a segment of the rough wall... all of Italy was emotionally touched by the occurrence, and from every part of Italy the pilgrims flocked."

In the year 1356 the church was entrusted to the religious order of the Augustians. In the second half of 1400, a widow and tertiary Augustian by the name of Petruccia made available all of her riches to enlarge and to restore the old church that was already crumbling. But the calculated cost estimate was noted as insufficient to bring the project to completion. The work was suspended and the people, with sarcasm, scoffed at the holy widow for the failure of her endeavor. But Petruccia, inspired by the Virgin Mary, with much confidence continued to say: "My children, do not worry, because before I die (and she was already very aged) the Blessed Virgin and Saint Augustine will bring to completion this church."

Not even one year passed from the prediction because in 1467, on the 25th of April, feast of Saint Mark, at the hour of vespers, an image of the Blessed Virgin "divinely" appeared in a wall of the church. Great was the emotional response of the population not only for the phenomenal event, but for the many miracles and graces with which the Blessed Mother wished to manifest herself through her beautiful image. From the 27th of April to the 14th of August 161 miracles were reported. Immense was the crowd of people that came from nearby villages and then from every part of Italy to venerate the holy image. Pope Paul II wished to make himself accountable of the event, and he sent to Genazzano, as his observers, two Bishops. According to an ancient and constant tradition, the image brought to Genazzano by the hands of Angels and professed by two pilgrims named Giorgi and De Scavis, originated from a church in Scutari, Albania, where it used to be venerated. Still today this tradition, which is passed down from generation to generation, is very much alive with the Albanians who, coming as pilgrims to the Shrine, invoke Mary with the ancient title of "Our Lady of Albania."



According to a very old tradition, the image was brought by Angels to Genazzano from Albania. Still today this tradition is very much alive amongst Albanians. The Blessed Mother of Good Counsel is invoked as the "Shield of Albania" since the time of the national hero Skanderbeg, and in 1886 the Third Council of Bishops of Albania proclaimed her Patroness of Albania



Depiction of the miracle



The fresco, consistent in a thin layer of plaster that mysteriously does not chip or crumble, is maintained intact still today



Shrine of the Blessed Mother of Good Counsel in Genazzano



On the 25th of April in 1883, Pope Saint John Paul II had blessed the first stone of the new Shrine in Scutari, dedicated to the Blessed Mother of Good Counsel, donating a copy of the painting of the Blessed Mother of Good Counsel of Genazzano



Painting that represents the arrival of the painting in Genazzano



Interior of the Shrine



Gjergj Kastriot Skanderbeg earned the titles of "fearless defender of the western civilization" and "athlete of Christ"



Fresco portraying the Blessed Petruccia



Sacristy of the Shrine



The new Shrine of the "Blessed Mother of Good Counsel" of Scutari, little jewel of the faith of all the Albanian people