



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

Apparition of the Virgin Mary in BADIA DI CAVA



ITALY, 1470

The origin of the construction of the Shrine of the Advocate, in Badia di Cava (above Maiori, in the province of Salerno) is attributed to an apparition of the Virgin Mary to a young shepherd boy. On an afternoon in the month of November of 1470, a shepherd from Pontepignano, by the name of Gabriele Cinnamo, while he was intently grazing a herd entrusted to his custody, together with his young friend Dattilo Parito, he saw a graceful dove float around a high bluff of rock surrounded by ivy, that repeatedly entered and exited from a shrub that was located at a certain height. Driven by the curiosity he tried in vain to climb up the steep rock, but did not succeed. The following day he returned with a long ladder and a good hatchet to clear the bramble and bushes, and introduced into the hole the companion Dattilo who with a lantern could reach the beautiful and spacious grotto. The following night however, while sleeping, Gabriele saw the Blessed Mother in a dream, who said to him: **“Gabriele, leave the care of the goats to others; build for me a chapel in this grotto, and I will forever be your Advocate.”** The following morning Gabriele was confused about what to do, debating about a simple dream; nevertheless he decided to personally inspect the grotto. He found it suitable to be transformed into a chapel. Not many days passed that, while his flock was grazing and he was intent on weaving wicker, he saw in the grotto a mysterious light and simultaneously heard those same words which the Blessed Mother had said to him in the dream. Astounded by this evident and categorical command, he decided to leave his job as shepherd, put on a rough sackcloth habit, and began a new life, calling himself Brother Gabriele. Having obtained the authorization of the Benedictine Abbott of Santa Maria de Olearia in Maiori, under whose spiritual jurisdiction the territory was, he built an altar in the grotto of the miracle, dedicating it to the Most Holy Virgin under the title of “Advocate.” The news of the wondrous event spread in a flash and quickly, with the involvement of the people, on the summit of the cliff was erected a church with a bell-tower annex and several rooms for the accommodation of pilgrims. These rooms in 1508 were increased and enlarged by the same Brother Gabriele, to satisfy the wish of seven of his countrymen who, like him, wanted to conduct a hermetic life. In 1687, Monte Corona was entrusted to the Camaldolese monks who built there a regular hermitage. The Camaldolese embellished the church with marble and precious furnishings. On the 8th of September of 1720 the church was consecrated and dedicated to Most Holy Mary, the Advocate by the Bishop of Ravello and Scala, Monsignor Guerriero. In memory of the work of the enlargement and embellishment done by the Camaldolese priests, a commemorative stone plaque was placed above the central door which still today can be read in Latin. It recalls the discovery of the grotto because of a dove, and the construction of the primitive church in honor of the Blessed Virgin, the Advocate, by Gabriele Cinnamo in 1475, enlarged and adorned by the children of Saint Romuald in 1719. Around 1890 the mount and the hermitage were donated to the Benedictine Monks of Badia di Cava who, because of the work of Fr. Romano Iannelli, reconstructed the church and part of the hermitage. Still today many pilgrims continue to climb on foot up Monte Falesio (in fact, there are no driveable roads nor electric light), in order to reach the Shrine that is located at about 1014 meters in altitude.



Portrayal of the young shepherd and of the Blessed Mother who speaks to him in his sleep



Shrine of the Advocate above Positano near that of the Little Advocate, both dedicated to the Most Holy Mother, Our Advocate



View of the Shrine of the Little Advocate



Icon symbolized Mary Most Holy, the Advocate



Statue of the Most Holy Blessed Mother, the Little Advocate, carried in procession



Interior of the Shrine



The altar in the grotto



Ex voto, religious offerings given in thanksgiving for answered prayers



Particular of the ceiling



The altar in the grotto



Panoramic view of the location where the Shrine appears