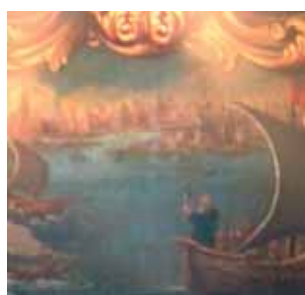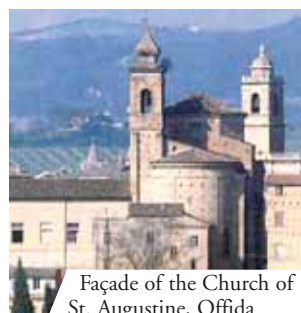In Offida, near the Church of St. Augustine, are kept the relics of the Eucharistic miracle which took place in 1273, in which the Host became living Flesh. There are many documents which describe this miracle, among which is an authentic copy on a parchment of the 13th century, written by the notary Giovanni Battista Doria in 1788. There are also many official decrees of the popes beginning with that of Boniface VIII (1295), to that of Sixtus V (1585), discourses of Roman congregations, Episcopal decrees, communal statutes, votive gifts, memorial stones, frescoes and testimonies of notable historic figures, among whom we recall the Antinori's and Fella.

Frescoes in the church that illustrate the miracle

Relics of the miracle

Façade of the Church of St. Augustine, Offida

Oil jar where the miracle took place, Offida

Relic of the linen with Blood spots where Richiarella enfolded the miraculous Host

Detail of the Blood-stained linen

Enlarged image of the relic of the Host contained in a precious Cross, made by a Venetian craftsman (13th century)

In 1273 in the town of Lanciano, a woman named Richiarella went to a witch and asked her how she could recover the affection of her husband, Giacomo Stasio. Following the witch's advice, she went to Communion to obtain a consecrated Host. She returned home and put the Host on the fire in an earthenware jar with the intention of turning the Blessed Sacrament into powder to put into her husband's food. The Particles, however, were transformed into living Flesh. Richiarella, horrified by these events, wrapped the jar and the Bloodied Host in a linen handkerchief that she then buried under the manure in her husband's stable. Strange events began to take place inside the stable: every time Giacomo's donkey entered, it would genuflect toward the place where the miraculous Host was buried, and Giacomo began to think that his wife had put a spell on the beast. Seven years later, Ricchiarella remorsefully confessed her terrible sacrilege to the prior of the Augustinian priory in Lanciano, Giacomo Diotallevi, a native of Offida. According to the oldest stories, the woman, in tears, began screaming, "I killed God! I killed God!" The priest went to the place, found the bundle with the relics, and gave them to his fellow-citizens.

A cross-shaped reliquary was made to contain the Host. An ancient story recounts that two monks, Brother Michele and a confrere, were invited to Venice. When they arrived, they made the craftsman promise with an oath of loyalty "that he would not reveal to anyone what he was about to see and place inside the cross. Having taken the oath, the craftsman took the pyx containing the miraculous Host, but, struck with a sudden fever, exclaimed, 'What have you brought me, Oh my Brother?' The religious then asked him if he was in mortal sin. The craftsman answered, 'Yes', made his confession to the same priest and, the fever having left him, he took the pyx without any danger. Without extracting the Host, he fixed both Host and pyx, together with the sacred wood, inside the same cross, with a crystal above it, as you can clearly see." The reliquaries of the jar and the Blood-stained linen with the cross containing the miraculous Host are exposed in the Church of St. Augustine in Offida. Richiaretta's house was transformed into a small chapel. In 1973, the seventh centenary of the miracle was celebrated, and every year on May 3rd, the citizens of Offida celebrate the anniversary of the miracle.