THE APPEALS OF OUR LADY

APPARITIONS AND MARIAN SHRINES IN THE WORLD

Apparitions of the Virgin Mary in LUGGAU

AUSTRIA, 16th century

There is little news known regarding the town of Luggau in Carinthia; today there are about 550 inhabitants, but at the end of the 16th century it was composed of about 16 homes inhabitated by peasants who worked in the fields and in the woods of the lords of Petersburg.

In that century on the site where today stands the Basilica there was a rye field, cultivated by a pious, but poor, woman. One day, fatigued from work, she sat down and fell asleep. In a dream she had something like a vision: in that same spot a church was to have appeared and actually she herself would have had to engage herself in this construction. Awoken from sleep, for a moment at first she did not think anymore about the vision also because she was not able to understand that a poor woman such as herself could have erected a church, nevertheless the idea became recurring. Therefore she said to herself: **"If in all this there is something of truth, I will light a candle in the field and this must continue to glow for three days and three nights. In that case I will have to retain that the vision had come from Heaven."** She placed a candle in the field and despite the strong wind this burned for three days without ever extinguishing. Therefore with her savings she bought first of all an image of the Sorrowful Mother, a "Pietà" that she brought from home to home retelling the event and asking for help for the construction of the church, but the woman collected only derision and taunts. Furthermore she was vilified and accused of being a crook and for this she was locked in prison, but seen her righteousness the judges released her soon after. The sufferings and humiliations she endured changed the attitude of the countrymen toward her and some peasants, without having been asked, supplied some quality lumber for the construction of the chapel where the image was placed of the Sorrowful Mother that the woman had acquired.

While the carpenter was working on the roof shingles, a resident of the area, mentally impaired, entered into the little chapel and taken aback perhaps by the vivid colors of the statue, he took it with him and was about to carry it away when the carpenter rebuked him, exhorting him to put the sacred image back in its place. The narration says that the poor creature obeyed the worker's command and simultaneously regained the use of his intellect. The event contributed to spreading even more the fame of the little Shrine.

Fresco that depicts the apparition of the Virgin Mary who illustrates to the visionary how she wants the church to be constructed

The Shrine of Luggau

Painting that portrays the apparition

The miraculous Virgin of Luggau

Interior of the Shrine

Ex voto

Ex voto of a grace received because of a difficult labor

The Shrine is frescoed with numerous paintings that illustrate the miracles worked by the Virgin

Numerous are the pilgrimages of even faithful foreigners who go to render homage to Our Lady of Luggau