



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

Apparition of the Virgin Mary at SANTA MARIA IN VIA, ROME



ITALY, 1256

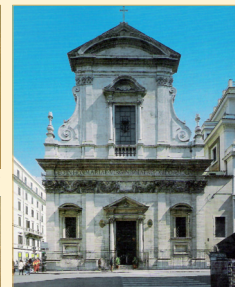
In 1256, at the place of the present church located at the junction of via del Tritone with largo Chigi, in the heart of Rome, there was a simple stable attached to the palace of a Cardinal. Near the stable there was a well to draw water. One September night a servant of the Cardinal, perhaps deliberately or perhaps accidentally, let fall into the well an image of the Virgin Mary, painted on a heavy terracotta tile. A few seconds later the incredible occurred: the water level of the well began to rise suddenly and rapidly, until it started to overflow abundantly. The outflow of the water spilled towards the stable and in a very short time that area began to flood. The horses began to neigh and trample, thus awakening the stablemen who, although amazed by the strange phenomenon, hurried to lead the animals to safety. A little later, they started to try to create some drainage channels inside the stable, that in the meantime had already become a kind of small pond. At the time, in the thirteenth century, one tried to manage this sudden and mysterious invasion of water with the only light of torches, thus the hindrance was considerable! Suddenly one of the men noticed something extraordinary: a stone was floating on the water. He got closer to look better: it was the heavy tile with the image of Our Lady that someone had cast a little earlier to the bottom of the well! It was then that they understood the reason for all that water: in doing this the well had returned the plate with the image of the Virgin Mary, as if to say "It must not lie down here!"

A new extraordinary phenomenon prevents the servants to recover the painting: the tile slipped from their hands like a fish, whereby all their attempts to pull it out of the water were failing. Thus they decided to wake up Cardinal Pietro Capocci, the owner of the stable. The Cardinal rushed to the place with his relatives, and after a prayer, was able to recover the tile with the painting, and as soon as this occurred, the waters of the well spontaneously began to retreat.

The next day the Cardinal went to the Pope, Alexander IV, to recount to him the incredible phenomenon. After the appropriate verifications, the event was recognized as supernatural, and it was decided to build (or perhaps rebuild) the present church around the miraculous well, and to venerate the reemerged image inside it. Still today, entering the church, immediately on the right, there is a chapel with an altar. There you find exposed the image of the Virgin Mary that floated, and right below it, a kind of small faucet, that allows the faithful who request it, to drink the water of the ancient well (see photo), as such water, drank devoutly in spirit of penance, appears to have brought many healings. Precisely for this motive not infrequently one sees not only people drinking this water, but also people filling a small bottle to take it to some sick relative. For this reason the church can be considered a little Lourdes.



Painting depicting Cardinal Capocci who recovers the tile from the water



Shrine of Santa Maria in Via



The Miraculous icon that cast into the well began to float on the waters despite being very heavy



Interior of the Shrine



The altar with the image of Our Lady



Faithful in prayer in front of the miraculous image



Saint John Paul II in visit to the Shrine as he drinks the miraculous water



Faucet to drink the miraculous water of the well. For this reason the church can be considered a little Lourdes