

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

Apparition of the Virgin Mary in QUILLACOLLO

BOLIVIA, 1700



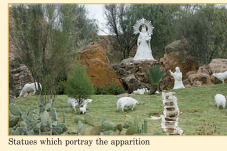
The Virgin of Urkupiña is an image of Mary of the Assumption, who is venerated on the 15th of August in the city of Quillacollo, capital city of the province found 13.85 kilometers from the city of Cochabamba in Bolivia. History narrates that toward the end of the year 1700, in the region of Cota (southeast of Quillacollo), lived a humble family of peasants who earned a living thanks to a small herd of goats entrusted to the care of their youngest daughter. The girl went each day to the lower hills of the area, crossing the Sapinku river, where water and grasses were found in abundance to nourish her flock. On a beautiful day of August, while the sun was making strange games of light with the bushes of the little hill and the meadow sparkled the color emerald, a Lady holding a beautiful Child in her arms appeared to her. From that day, the young shepherdess began to play often with that Child in the waters of a spring that gushed forth from the rocks. She began to then return later and later to her parents' hut. Having become suspicious, they asked the reason for her tardiness and the young girl told them about her encounters with a Lady that she called "The mama and her baby." She said that the mama and her child would come down to play with her in the *chimpa juturis* o *chimpa pilas*, names with which still today are recognized as the two sources of fresh water found at the foot of the hill. One day, upon the insistence of the young shepherd girl, the parents ascended up the hill and they too were able to see a celestial image that vanished in the underbrush among the carob trees, the cactus, and the little birds of prey. Immediately they went in search of the *Doctrinero* (at that time, parishes were called *doctrinas*, therefore the priest was called *Doctrinero*) and some of the local neighbors who, already informed of the events, had the girl lead them to the apparition site in order to ascertain the matter for themselves. In the meantime, the Virgin raised herself up and got on top of the hill of the mountain. Then the girl, indicating with her finger, began to shout in the Quechua language: "*Jaqayman urkupiña, urkupiña.*" which means "Already she is up there on the hill, she is there on the hill!" From this derives the name Urkupiña as adapted into Spanish. Then the Blessed Mother, having arrived on the top of the mountain, vanished. Meanwhile, in the field where the Virgin Mary had appeared, a beautiful statue was discovered of a Lady with Child that was named the "Virgin Mary of Urkupiña," and it was carried in procession. Over time, seeing the miracles that occurred, in that same spot the people built a small chapel dedicated to the Virgin of Urkupiña. Afterward, the miraculous image was transferred to the Shrine of San Ildefonso in Quillacollo, which is an annual pilgrimage destination for many coming from all over Bolivia and from the rest of South America.



Representation of the apparition of the Virgin of Urkupiña to the shepherd girl



For a long time is the Shrine of San Ildefonso of Quillacollo. Our Lady is venerated as the Virgin Mary of Urkupiña. Many are the pilgrims and the devout coming from the whole country who go there all the days of the year. On the 8th of December of 1988, Monsignor René Fernández Agaña, Archbishop of Cochabamba, declared the church of San Ildefonso to be the Shrine of Our Lady of Urkupiña



Statues which portray the apparition



Interior of the Shrine



Detail of the statue



The feast in honor of the Virgin of Urkupiña has the climactic moment on the 16th of August with a celebration on Cota Hill (Caltuary Hill) where, according to tradition, the Virgin appeared



On the 13th of August in 2012, the Plurinational Legislative Assembly of Bolivia assigned to the Virgin of Urkupiña the Medal of Honor for Cultural Merit, recognizing in this way her image and her feast as one of the highest cultural expressions of Bolivia

