



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

Apparition of the Virgin Mary in NAZARÉ

 PORTUGAL, 1182

From the first centuries of Christianity, the area of Coutos de Alcobaga that also included Nazaré, was always characterized by an intense Marian devotion. Since time immemorial, the devotion to Our Lady of Nazaré in particular, was affirmed as one of the most ancient and important (at least from the 14th century), extending itself even past regional borders. The story of Our Lady of Nazaré and the story of the Miracle of Don Fuas Roupinho are both part of the tradition of the Portuguese people. The work of Frei Bernardo de Brito, a Cistercian monk, contributed considerably to the diffusion of the information because in his written "Monarchia Lusitana" he linked the Medieval worship of the Blessed Mother of Nazaré to the miracle of the knight, Don Fuas Roupinho.

Therefore, according to the report of the Cistercian monk that rapidly was ingrained in the memory of everyone, the image of the Virgin, carved in wood by Saint Joseph himself and painted by Saint Luke the Evangelist, originated from Nazareth of Galilee. In the 4th century, the image was in the possession of the Greek monk Ciriaco, who then entrusted it to the protection of Saint Jerome, whom he later advised to bring it to Africa and deliver it to Saint Augustine, Bishop of Hippo. It was Saint Augustine who brought the venerable image to the Iberian peninsula, and he gave it to the Monastery of Cauliniãna, found in the region of Mérida, in Spain, where many miracles were performed. The Virgin of Nazaré remained in that monastery until the 8th century, when the Iberian peninsula was overpowered by the Moors. After the defeat of the Christian armies in the battle of Guadalete, Don Rodrigo, the last king of the Goths, took refuge in the monastery of Cauliniãna. Later, together with Frei Romano, he fled from the Arab invasions, bringing with him the sacred image of Our Lady of Nazaré and a box containing the relics of Saint Blaise and Saint Bartholomew. Always aiming toward the west, on the 22nd of November the two fugitives finally arrived at the place known today as Pederneira. Then, they caught sight of an abandoned hermitage on the mountain of Saint Blaise and they directed themselves there. Having arrived at the retreat, King Don Rodrigo expressed the desire to remain there alone, while Frei Romano continued on toward the site, bringing with him the image of the Virgin and the box of relics. After arriving at the promontory coastline, he situated the image and the box inside the cavity of a rock. Before separating, the two companions had agreed that, at the end of a period of isolation, at the end of every day, they would have ignited a bonfire from their respective mountains, to signal to the other of still being alive. And they did so until the day in which Don Rodrigo did not see any signal on behalf of Frei Romano. Therefore, he went to the site, where he found his friend already dead. The King gave him a burial near the grotto in which the image of Our Lady of Nazaré was hidden, and then he left. The image remained in that location until the time of King D. Afonso Henriques, when it was discovered by the Captain of Porto de Mos, Don Fuas Roupinho, during a hunting excursion.

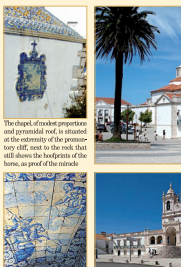
From that day, every time he found himself in the area, he went to venerate the image of the Virgin. On a hazy day – the 14th of September 1182 – during one of the many hunts, Don Fuas directed his horse in the direction of a deer. Blinded by the dense fog, he chased the animal to the very edge of the cliff. Only at that point did he realize that the deer had fallen into the precipices and that he himself was on the brink of the rocky cliff. It was in that moment that the horseman remembered the image of Our Lady hidden in the vicinity, and he invoked her help to be saved. Immediately the horse halted, remaining suspended on the ground by only its rear legs, thus permitting Don Fuas to save himself from certain death. After the miracle, the Knight went back to the grotto in which the image was found to thank his protectress and to offer her a prayer, with the promise of erecting in that same spot a sanctuary in her honor, the Chapel of Remembrance.



Picture present in the Shrine that portrays the miracle.



The interior of the Chapel of Remembrance, when and where the pious depict the apparition of the Virgin while the deer precipitated into the rock. The chapel also has a lower level, made up of the stones where previously was discovered the early image of the Virgin to which Don Fuas had requested help.



Shrine of Our Lady of Nazaré.



Shrine of the Blessed Mother of Nazaré.



Cliff from which Don Fuas was saved, thanks to the miraculous intervention of the Virgin Mary.



Shrine of the Blessed Mother of Nazaré.



Shrine of Our Lady of Nazaré.



Devotion to the Blessed Mother of Nazaré is still very much felt today in Portugal as well as in other countries.



Virgin image in which is presented again the miracle of the Blessed Mother who saved Don Fuas by not letting him fall from the cliff.



Some of the beautiful mosaic ceramic that overlays the Shrine.



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