



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

Apparition of the Virgin Mary in GOZO

ISLE OF CALYPSO, 1575



he origins of the Shrine of Our Lady of Ta' Pinu have been lost in the history of time. Information regarding its existence is held in the archives of the Curia of Gozo and it came about when Bishop Dominick Cubelles paid a visit to the chapel. In these archives it is noted that the chapel had just been rebuilt and it belonged to the noble "Gentile" family.

In 1575, the apostolic visitor, Monsignor Peter Duzina was mandated by Pope Gregory XII to visit the Maltese Islands and during his pastoral visit to the church, he discovered that it was falling into bad condition. He ordered that the church be closed and demolished and that the events on the calendar be moved to the parish church, which today is the Cathedral of Gozo.

However, when one of the workmen was striking the first blow, he broke his arm. The event was considered an omen that the chapel should be salvaged and in fact, it was the first chapel to outlive the decree in which Monsignor Duzina ordered the demolition of other similar chapels on the island.

In 1858, the church changed owners and as a result the name also changed from "Of the Gentile" to "Ta' Pinu" which means "Of Phillip". This change took place because Pinu Gauci became the power of attorney for the church and in 1611 he generously gifted money for the restoration. The church was rebuilt, a stone altar was erected and decorations and useful objects for the liturgical functions were furnished. In addition, he commissioned the painting of the Assumption of Our Lady for the main altar. The work was completed in 1619 by Amadeo Perugino, who was probably a member of the Inquisition.

On June 22, 1883, Karmela Grima, a forty-five year old maiden woman, devoted to the Virgin Mary, heard a voice call out to her from the chapel while she was returning home one day.

"Come, Come", called out a heavenly female voice. Confused and afraid, she fled and went far from there. The voice called her again, this time Karmela understood that the voice was coming from inside the chapel and she went inside. She recited her usual prayers. Suddenly the Virgin Mary depicted in the painting seemed to come to life and said to her: **"Recite three Hail Mary's in honor of the three days that my body was closed in the tomb before my Assumption into Heaven"**.

Karmela obeyed that which Our Lady had asked of her. A little while later Karmela got sick and was bed ridden for more than a year. After that long period of time she decided to reveal her secret to a friend, Francesco Portelli, who at that time confided in her that during that same period he also had been hearing a woman's voice coming from inside the chapel asking him to pray. Shortly after that mysterious call, the mother of Francesco miraculously was healed through the intercession of Our Lady of Ta' Pinu. The small chapel became a place for pilgrimages for many people from the island and elsewhere. The Bishop Peter Pace was informed of these events and after speaking with Karmela and Francesco, he concluded that that voice had divine origins. The devotion of Our Lady of Ta' Pinu grew rapidly and numerous pilgrims began to flow into the chapel. In the meantime, the decision was made to construct an adequate shrine that could accommodate the large crowds that were coming to the shrine and in 1920 began the construction of a magnificent Roman style church. In 1932 the new church was blessed and opened to the public; in 1935 Pope Pius XI bestowed upon it the title of Minor Basilica. In the same year, the miraculous image of Our Lady was crowned by Cardinal Alessio Lepicier, per a signed decree from the Secretary of State, Cardinal Eugenio Pacelli, who later became Pope Pius XII.



A picture depicting the apparition



The miraculous picture of the Virgin of Ta' Pinu that spoke to the seer



The seer Karmela Grima



The Shrine of Ta' Pinu



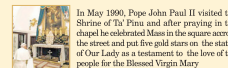
A detail of the mosaic that adorns the dome



Inside the Shrine



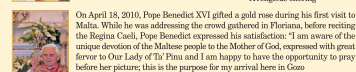
A religious offering



In May 1990, Pope John Paul II visited the Shrine of Ta' Pinu and after praying in the chapel he celebrated Mass in the square across the street and put five gold stars on the statue of Our Lady as a testament to the love of the people for the Blessed Virgin Mary



A religious offering



On April 18, 2010, Pope Benedict XVI gifted a gold rose during his first visit to Malta. While he was addressing the crowd gathered in Floriana, before reciting the Regina Coeli, Pope Benedict expressed his satisfaction: "I am aware of the unique devotion of the Maltese people to the Mother of God, expressed with great fervor to Our Lady of Ta' Pinu and I am happy to have the opportunity to pray before her picture; this is the purpose for my arrival here in Gozo"