



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

Apparition of the Virgin Mary at POMPEII



At the end of the XIX century especially in the academic environment, there was a strong anticlericalism and Bartolo Longo, after reading the book "The Life of Jesus" of the French philosopher Ernest Renan, adhered entirely to the anticlerical protest. He took courses in Literature and Philosophy of some openly anti-Catholic professors, whose lessons were guided by the dominant positivism, and therefore by the denial of the supernatural. He then got closer to a spiritist movement of satanic type and for about one year and a half he was a "satanic priest". Afterwards he converts to Catholicism to the point of becoming one of the founders of the Shrine of Pompeii.

Bartolo Longo is born in Lattiano (Brindisi) on February 10, 1841, and dies in Pompeii on October 5, 1926. He spends his youth denying his own Catholic education to get closer to spiritism and satanism. His life took a sudden turn after he had a night of nightmares. The next day he asked for help to Professor Vincenzo Pope, his fellow townsman and a very religious man, who sent him to Father Radente who belonged to the Dominican Order and became his spiritual director. After a short time Father Radente was able to have him join the Third Order of Saint Dominic. Characteristically of the Dominican Order is a special attention given to the prayer of the Holy Rosary and then to Our Lady of the Rosary. Bartolo Longo developed over time a strong devotion to the Holy Rosary and, finding in it a considerable spiritual benefit, he wanted to return to his former companions of spiritism to attempt, in vain, to get them on the right path and convert them. But he did not succeed in this attempt, and was much derided by the satanists. The first real contact of Bartolo Longo with the inhabitants of Pompeii occurred in 1872, when he went to the Valley of Pompeii to settle the economic matters between the counts De Fusco and the tenants of her properties. In this occasion he was able to observe the state of neglect in which the about 1,000 inhabitants of the area lived and noticed in what state of ruin was the Parish of the Most Holy Savior, a simple and ancient church, whose origins went back to 1093, and around which settled the first inhabitants of the Pompeian countryside. One day, wandering through those fields, in the Arpaia district, Bartolo Longo was taken by much fear regarding the destiny of his soul after death and suddenly heard a mysterious voice saying to him: "If you promote the Rosary, you will be saved!". And immediately afterwards he heard the echo of a distant bell that rang the midday Angelus; thus he knelt on the bare earth to pray until reaching a great interior peace, which he never experienced before. At that point he saw even more clearly the mission to accomplish. Thus he began to plan the establishment of a "pious society" dedicated to the Holy Rosary, to be realized right there in that abandoned valley. In this period Bartolo Longo developed his most original vision and that was: not only believing in the possibility of recovery for the children of prisoners, but counting on the fact that, in their turn, they could save their parents from despair.

Thus in 1892 the first stone was placed for the home of the children of prisoners. It was a difficult task, because it was hindered by the culture and the positivist science of the time, which did not recognize the educability of the child of an offender. The work of Bartolo Longo demonstrated the opposite. These projects were designed to receive and educate all the orphaned or abandoned children and youth, who did not have points of reference in their family for their own human and social growth.

Apparition of Pompeii
"If you want to be saved, you must promote the Rosary in your home."

To spread the devotion to the Holy Rosary, Bartolo Longo decides that he needed a painting of Our Lady of the Rosary. Therefore on November 13, 1875 he went to Naples having in mind to purchase one that he had already seen in a store. But things did not go like he had planned. In fact, Bartolo met Father Radente, who suggested to him to go to the request to the Conservatory of the Rosary of Portici and ask, in his name, for an old picture of the Rosary which Father Minelli had had two years earlier. Bartolo followed this suggestion, but was soon taken by dismay when the man showed him the picture: it was a woman curled and worn over time, and missing bits of color in several places. Bartolo Longo was at the point of declining the offer but he nonetheless returned the gift due to the insistence of the man himself. After the first restoration, where followed through the years, and for the first three years the picture was displayed in the Shrine of the Most Holy Savior.

Bartolo Longo at 22 years old
Bartolo Longo with the orphan children of Pompeii

A short time after his appointment, Bartolo Longo met the countess Marianna Ferrarone De Fusco-Monaldi, December 13, 1858 - Pompeii, February 9, 1924, a woman who was deeply committed to charitable work. She became a widow in 1864 at only 27 years of age, and with five young children. She needed an administrator and a tutor for the children. It was for this that Bartolo accepted to write himself in a house of the De Fusco to accomplish those tasks. This relationship reached its culmination in the life of Bartolo Longo, because he became the constant inseparable companion in her charitable works. This friendship however gave rise to a lot of gossip, whereby after an audience with Pope Leo XIII, the two decided to marry in 1885, but with the intention to live in chastity, as they had done up to that time.

Bartolo Longo with the children of prisoners
View of the Shrine
Shrine of Pompeii



ITALY, 1875
and some other apparitions of the Virgin of the Rosary of Pompeii

Miracle in Manduria: Grace obtained at the vigil of the first Saturday
An extraordinary sign of Heaven occurred in the town of Manduria in the Province of Lecce, on the evening of Friday, June 29, 1858. On June 30, in the Shrine of Pompeii and in many Italian and foreign cities, the pious practice of the Fifteen Saturdays of the Rosary was started, in preparation for the great solemnity of October. It was then the vigil of the first Saturday of the Rosary. Angela Manfrotta, a 20-year-old young woman, had been immobilized in bed already for three years and also with internal paralysis, severe and incurable. The physician did already give up on her, even to have her remove the Holy Viaticum and the Anointing of the Sick. However the woman had never ceased to recite the Holy Rosary and to invoke the Virgin of Pompeii. When she was already resigned to die, one evening she saw a Lady, unknown to her, near the door of her bedroom, who approached her bed as to visit her, and without saying anything she departed. Angela informed her relatives who, however, did not believe her. But on the evening of the sitting next to her. Initially, the young woman was taken by fear, not knowing who that mysterious woman was, and what she wanted; but she also noticed that the unknown Lady after getting up from the chair, placed on the bed her abdomen was filled with flowers in the shape of lilies, and without saying a word, placed some of them on the bed. These lilies were fifteen, and on each of them could be read something, as on a card. Angela read these two words: **Fifteen Saturdays**. The extraordinary Lady, who until then had acted in silence, turned towards the sick woman, and pointing to what was written with a finger, she spoke to her revealing herself. She was indeed the Virgin of the Rosary of Pompeii. At that point the divine Lady of Pompeii with ineffable kindness, removed the veil from her head and smiled with the sick woman who from emotion was unable to murmur any syllable. After that, the Virgin Mary collected the cards scattered on the bed, and turning towards the door of the one house, also went away walking, slowly, leaving traces of light behind her. Angela, feeling completely healed, got up from the bed and began again to walk. All had disappeared! There were no wounds, no infirmity, no paralysis, no traces of illness.

Miracle at San Benedetto del Tronto: The healing of Virgilio
The Virgin of the Most Holy Rosary, under the title of Our Lady of Pompeii, revealed and lived also on these shores of the pleasant Adriatic, amidst her grass here also like in every other part of Italy. On the first days of May of 1891, the married couple Alessandro Nocer Assolanti and Costanza Martelli were lamenting the impending loss of their lovely and charming boy named Virgilio, the child, stricken by a severe pneumonia, was abandoned even by the physicians, who had witnessed the absolute powerlessness and ineffectiveness of the healing remedies. His soul was near. The father, unable to spare the sight of the last sufferings of his little angel, awaited the sad announcement in another room. Then the desolate mother, collecting all her strength to conquer the most arduous of services, had prepared the white garment to cover the remains of her innocent child in the tomb. In the midst of much desolation, only one hope remained: the power of Our Lady of Pompeii. The sorrowful parents, trusting in the intercession of this precious Mother, had made recourse to public and private prayers, and had repeatedly implored Bartolo Longo, so that the boy would be ultimately entrusted to the prayers of this poor orphan girl and to Our Lady of the Rosary. On May 8, 1891, the father, on the day of the monumental Shrine took place the solemn Consecration of the Temple, dedicating it to Our Lady of the Most Holy Rosary, here in San Benedetto del Tronto the devout to the Virgin of Pompeii were gathered in the church of San Giuseppe, in front of the prodigious image of the Queen of Pompeii. Also the relatives of the sick boy were with them, and with tears implored the long-awaited grace. May the Lord be blessed a thousand times! At that moment the child starts to recover. The physician called for this purpose, upon seeing the unexpected improvement, could not contain himself from exclaiming: "This is a miracle!" Indeed within a few days, the dear boy, perfectly healed, went back to being the joy and consolation of his parents.

Miracle in Rafaela (Argentina): Instantaneous grace obtained for the devotion of the Fifteen Saturdays on the Feast of the Holy Rosary
On October 2, 1896, first Sunday of October, Feast of the great Solemnity of Our Lady of Pompeii, Mrs. Pasqualina Alorda herself describes in this way the miracle received: "My boy born on April 8, 1897 and baptized Christian on the 22nd of the same month, was crippled in both feet since birth. She called a physician who operated on him, but without result. I then went to Doctor Gerardo of Colonia Simbichela. This doctor, declaring himself powerless in curing the boy, suggested to me to take him to Buenos Aires, where I arrived after twenty-four hours on a steamer. I went to look for the well-known Doctor Ferrerone Garcia. He visited my poor son; but he too said that he was unable to treat him, and sent me to the large children's hospital. After twenty-two days of anxious attempts and treatments performed by the six physicians of the hospital, I had to return discouraged to Rafaela, with the boy still crippled. On July 18, 1898 I went to visit my brother Gerardo Martelli, who had a book on the Fifteen Saturdays. He said to me: "Have trust in the Blessed Virgin of the Rosary of Pompeii, practice fervently the Fifteen Saturdays with her Most Holy Rosary, and implored her divine assistance, you will see that your poor son will be healed." Receiving the book, I began immediately the pious practice of the Fifteen Saturdays. The first Sunday of October arrived, day of the feast of the Blessed Virgin of the Rosary. I was commemorating the tenth Saturday, when suddenly the boy began to walk. What consolation was that for me who am the mother of eight children! But even greater was the wonder of the people who saw my crippled child ..."