

FRANCE, 1433

Eucharistic Miracle of Avignon



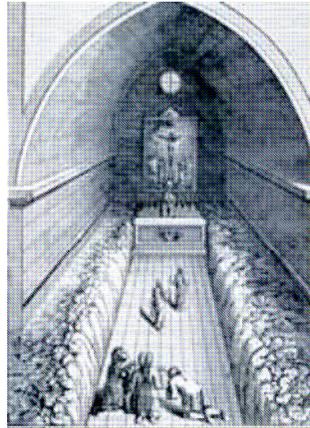
The Eucharistic Miracle of Avignon took place in the Chapel of the Holy Cross, the seat of the Confraternity called the “Gray Penitents,” whose beginnings go back to the distant times of the devout King Louis VIII, who, to celebrate the triumph over the Albigensian heretics, the ones who denied the Real Presence of Jesus in the Eucharist, had organized a solemn act of reparation for September 14, 1226, the liturgical Feast of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross. In the official report, still preserved in the chapel of the “Gray Penitents,” we read that on November 30, 1433, precisely while the Blessed Sacrament was exposed in the small chapel for public adoration, the small town of Avignon was cast into turmoil by a terrible flood which resulted from the overflowing of the Rhone River, provoked by the torrential rains of the preceding days. In the general confusion, Armand and Jehan de Pouzilhac-Farure, head of the Confraternity at that time, spent many hours before successfully reaching the chapel by boat in order to salvage the

monstrance containing the Blessed Sacrament. After arriving, from the gates overhanging the door, they looked toward the altar to see what may have happened to the monstrance and observed that the waters, which had risen to a height of over six feet inside the church, were divided in two to the right and the left of the altar as if to form two walls, and between them, the altar with the monstrance remained dry, protected from the flood. News of the Miracle spread rapidly and the whole population together with the authorities ran to the site, singing hymns of praise and thanksgiving to the Lord. Several hundred people were witnesses of this Miracle. Afterwards, the Confraternity of the Gray Penitents decided that the anniversary of the miracle would be commemorated each year in the chapel on November 30, the Feast of St. Andrew the Apostle.

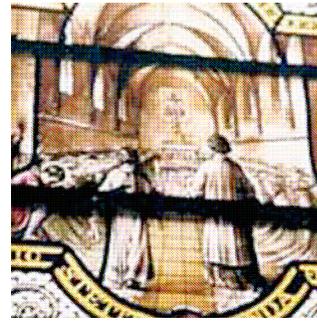
(1)



(2)



(3)



(4)



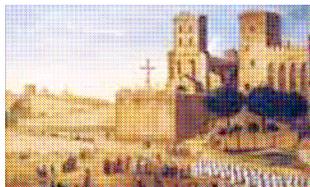
(5)



(6)



(7)



- (1) Altar where the Miracle took place
- (2) Early print depicting the Miracle of Avignon
- (3) Stained glass window in the interior of the church in which the Miracle is depicted
- (4) The façade of the Church of the Gray Penitents
- (5) Gabriel de Vidaud Latour, chief minister of the Gray Penitents
- (6) Fresco in the Chapel
- (7) Palace of the Popes, Avignon