



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

Apparitions of the Virgin Mary at CHIQUINQUIRÁ

COLOMBIA, 1586
and other apparitions

On February 28, 1529 arrived at Santa Marta the Spaniards Garcia de Larma, as governor, Antonio de Santana and 19 Dominican Friars as missionaries and evangelizers. In 1540 Antonio de Santana moved to the interior of Colombia settling at Tunja and in 1560 he was named responsible for the native settlements of Suta and Chiquinquirá. As a good Catholic and devoted to the Holy Rosary, he built a chapel dedicated to the Virgin of the Rosary, entrusting his collaborator Dominican Friar Andrés Jadrage, also a missionary in those lands, to find an image of the Virgin of the Rosary. The friar turned to the painter Alonso de Narváez, resident of Tunja, who depicted at the center of a 114 cm x 128 cm canvas - with tempera technique based on dyes extracted from colored plants and soil - an image of Our Lady of the Rosary, flanked on her right side by Saint Anthony of Padua and on the left by Saint Andrew the Apostle. Once completed (1582), the painting was brought to Suta and placed in the chapel that Antonio de Santana had built. Having been built with woven reeds, mud and straw, the chapel deteriorated rapidly and the picture remained exposed to the sun, wind and rain, becoming damaged up to the point of losing its color and showing holes and tears. In 1578 arrived at Suta the Presbyterian catechist Juan Alemán de Leguizamón, who ordered to remove the picture from the chapel (seeing that it was by then in an advanced state of deterioration) and to replace it with one of Christ on the Cross; Catalina García de Irlas, wife of Antonio de Santana, brought it to the hamlet of Chiquinquirá as if it had been an ordinary furnishing. Chiquinquirá is located in the Saravita Valley, in the central region of Colombia. Its name means "place of worship of the gods", although in the Muisca language it has also the meaning of "place of fog", due to the severity of the climate and the frequent thick fog covering it. It is said that the natives themselves refused to live there, bothered by the continuous and excessive cold. Pedro Santana, nephew of Antonio de Santana, arrived at Tunja in 1584, and the following year his wife María Ramos joined him together with her two children, his brother-in-law and a housekeeper. However María Ramos found her husband living with another woman and so, taking with her the two children, she went to Chiquinquirá, where they were received by Catalina García de Irlas, who since 1582 was widow of Antonio de Santana. María Ramos was a devout religious person and desired to give peace to her own suffering, thus she asked Catalina García to show her a place where she could pray when she felt the need; Catalina pointed out to her the chapel where there was the canvas of the Virgin, by now worn and dirty. María Ramos noted that the picture was neglected and was used only to dry the wheat; she was also moved to pity that the oratory was in a state of total abandonment. Therefore she decided to retrieve the canvas, and knowing that the image of the Virgin was painted on it, she placed it over the altar trying to arrange it herself. She was moved to see that she could neither distinguish with clarity nor identify from the paint brush strokes the image of the Virgin, to the point that during her morning prayers she was always asking: "Until when, Rose of Heaven, must you remain hidden? When will the day come in which you will manifest yourself and let yourself be seen, so that my eyes may enjoy your magnificent beauty, which fills my soul with gladness and joy?". On Friday, December 26, 1586 at 9 AM, after having been in prayer for more than two hours, María Ramos got up from her place to leave the chapel; at that moment a native woman, named Isabel, passed by there holding the hand of a boy named Miguel, who said to her: "Look, look". Isabel looked towards the altar of the chapel and saw that the image of Our Lady was standing on the floor and radiated a light filling the whole chapel. Filled with amazement, she said in a loud voice to María Ramos, who was leaving the place of prayer: "Look, look lady, the Mother of God has come down from where she was located and now has taken her place, and it seems that she is burning". María Ramos was captivated in seeing such a wonder and filled with astonishment she approached the altar crying and threw herself at the feet of the Most Blessed Virgin; fearful, she looked at her and saw her own wishes come true, because she saw the image of the Mother of God, slightly inclined towards the altar, in the same place where she was usually kneeling. Her beauty was incomparable and covered by extremely brilliant colors, and she radiated an immense light that was inundating all the saints surrounding her and the entire chapel. She had the face of a very bright color and the paint appeared completely restored. At this moment arrived Juana de Santana, Catalina García de Irlas and Ana Dominguez, who returned the picture to its place and ran to give the news of the miracle. All who had previously seen the canvas were witnesses of its restoration and the commissioners sent by Archbishop Zapata de Cárdenas, Father Juan de Figueredo, of Suta, and Father Gerónimo de Sandoval, of Villa de Leyva, and the officials Diego López de Castiblanco and Andrés Rodríguez, ratified, on January 10, 1587 and on September 12 of the same year, the authenticity of the miracle. Proofs were collected one after another until there was no more doubt, and the miraculous devotion to the Virgin of the Rosary of Chiquinquirá began.



Scene illustrating the miracle



Church of the Rosary where the Miracle took place. On December 26, 1586 occurred the miraculous event known as "Miraculous Resurrection". María Ramos, a poor woman who committed herself to making more worthy and welcoming the chapel where the image was kept, together with a native woman named Isabel and her son, were witnesses of the renewed splendor that the values of the canvas regained without the intervention of any human hands for their restoration

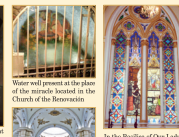


Virgos with native features, thus she decided to hang it on the wall. On Monday November 10, 1586 occurred the miraculous event known as "Miraculous Resurrection". María Ramos, a poor woman who committed herself to making more worthy and welcoming the chapel where the image was kept, together with a native woman named Isabel and her son, were witnesses of the renewed splendor that the values of the canvas regained without the intervention of any human hands for their restoration

Also in nearby Venezuela is venerated the Virgin of Chiquinquirá who appeared at Maracaybo. According to Venezuelan tradition, one day of 1748 a humble woodworker went to the vicinity of Lake Maracaybo to search for guano. Upon seeing the one wooden board floating on the water and she carried it home thinking that she should have used it as cover for the water container that she had in the hallway. On the following day the woman saw that on the board was reflected the outline of the body image of a elderly woman three times her age and strange noises, not towards the room where there was the board and not if radiated, illuminated by light spreading like a curtain, and distinguished clearly the face of Our Lady of Chiquinquirá. At that moment she took and exclaimed: "Miraculous Miracle!". The woman dashed into the street announcing the miracle and numerous people ran to her house to witness the marvel. The house of the humble woman rapidly transformed itself into a place of veneration, venerated by the Virgin, and then there originated the name of "Miraculous of the present road near the lake, where the house of the woodworker was located. After about time the authorities of Maracaybo decided to transfer the miraculous image to the Cathedral; however, during the procession, the board became so heavy to prevent the two men carrying it from continuing to walk. All the efforts were useless and one of the participants, through divine inspiration, suggested that perhaps the Virgin did not wish to be brought to the cathedral, but to the church dedicated to Saint John of God, as one of her brothers in the same direction, the image regained her normal weight and the procession resumed. On May 18, 1820, Pope Benedict XV designated the Church of Saint John of God, Major Basilica, 120 years after the miracle, on November 18, 1842, the Church revealed the notable apparitions of Our Lady of the Rosary of Chiquinquirá of Maracaybo and proclaimed its annual feast on that day.



Scene illustrating the apparition of the Virgin Mary to Saint Anthony and Saint Andrew



Interior of the Basilica



Exterior of the Basilica



Monument in honor of Our Lady of the Chinita



Altar where the miraculous picture is kept with a fresco illustrating the moment of the apparition



The miraculous picture



Interior of the Basilica of the Chinita in Maracaybo, Venezuela



Statue of the Virgin Mary illustrating the moment of the miracle



Exterior of the Basilica of the Rosary in Chiquinquirá



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