



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

Apparitions of the Virgin Mary in SVETA GORA

SLOVENIA, 1539



At an altitude of 680 meters, dominating the wide valley of Isonzo, sits the antique Shrine of Sveta Gora (Holy Mother). In 1539 the Blessed Mother appeared to Urška Ferligoj, a young shepherdess, and since this event the hill had taken its current name. The Latin inscription of the 17th century, engraved on the base of the statue of the Madonna with Baby Jesus, which is found in the chapel of the Annunciation, narrates the beginnings of the pilgrimages: "Thus appeared Mary in 1539 to Urška Ferligoj on Mount Skalnica, which is now called Holy Mountain, ordering her to: **Tell the people to build a house for me here, and to ask me for favors.**" Initially, the political authorities were skeptical and they imprisoned Urška in the castle of Salcano with the intention of making a diligent inquest, but the visionary was found praying on the Mountain. She was locked up again but twice more was found newly liberated by the Blessed Mother.

Meanwhile, the people began pilgrimages on Mt. Skalnica, where a wooden chapel was erected, and where a statue of Mary began to be venerated, which was created by the brothers Francesco and Pietro Floreani from Udine (Italy), following the visionary's descriptions. It is not known, however, what happened to that statue: the current one was brought to life by copying the original during the 17th century.

The unlimited devotion of the pilgrims began to lessen during the harshness of secular authority and, in 1540, the lieutenant of the Captain of Gorica, Hieronimus Attems, consented to allow the construction of a church on Mt. Skalnica. During the course of the digs for the foundation was discovered the famous stone plaque with ornamental carvings and the Ave Maria (Hail Mary) prayer. The archive of the State of Vienna preserves the documents that attest to the existence of a little church from the 14th century, probably destroyed by the Turks in 1470. During the war, 1915-1918, the church was burned to the ground and reconstructed in 1928 according to the plans of the architect Silvan Baricha. The Latin inscription on the title-page says: **"I instead am on the mountain just as before."** This inscription was placed on the facade of the church in 1793, the year in which, under the reign of the Emperor Joseph II, it was renovated after the devastation. The fame of the Walk of Faith spread notably, and in 1907 Pope St. Pius X conferred the title of Basilica upon the Shrine.



Painting that illustrates the apparition



Exterior of the Shrine



The Shrine of Sveta Gora. In reality, the Shrine was reconstructed in the 1920s after having been destroyed during World War I, but at the location a church already existed since the 14th century



Interior of the Shrine



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The painting of the Blessed Mother that is venerated in the Shrine of Sveta Gora



Ex note: Religious offerings of thanksgiving for answered prayers