



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

Apparitions of the Virgin Mary at GARAISON



FRANCE, 1515



At 17 km from Lannemezan there is Garaison. In the XVI Century there was nothing in this place where the Shrine is located today, except for an overgrown marshy field. Rather, the people believed that in these fields the Sabbath witches would assemble to perform their propitiatory rites. But Garaison changed appearance when in 1515 the Virgin Mary appeared three times to a young shepherd girl named Angléze de Sagazan. In fact a few years later, a chapel was built in the exact place of the apparition that became a destination for thousands of pilgrims. There were very many miracles that we know thanks to the writings by Pierre Geoffroy (chaplain of the church) of 1613 and to the book written by Father Poiré in 1630: *The Triple Crown of the Blessed Virgin Mary*. The miraculous story of Garaison was also shown in a series of paintings located under the portico of the church.

It all began in 1515, when a young girl about twelve years old who was looking after the sheep, sat near a fountain. The Mother of God then appeared to her and told her to inform, through her father, the consuls of Mont-Léon, a town one mile away, that in this place she desired a church be built in her honor. The exact words of the Virgin were these: "I am the Mother of God. Here I will spread my gifts", "I want that you build a chapel ...", "Do not forget to thank God for his graces". The consuls refused, not believing the story. Upon returning the next day to the spring, Angléze again saw Our Lady who repeated the request for her father. He obeyed, but still was not believed. Thus on the following day the girl went again to the spring but this time she was accompanied by some relatives and acquaintances. Mary reappeared to her and everyone could observe the miracle that she performed: the small black and dry bread that the visionary was carrying in a basket turned into a white and soft bread. The Virgin also told Angléze to inform her parents to open the storage trunk of their house because they would find it filled with bread and other provisions for the needs of their family.

The pastor of Mont-Léon, impressed by the miracle, went to speak to the authorities and succeeded in convincing them about the truthfulness of the apparitions and the need to obey the Virgin Mary. In 1540 the consuls then decided to build first a chapel and afterwards a beautiful church. The Miracles were so many that the Virgin Mary was invoked as Our Lady of Guérison (Healing), that in dialect became Garaison.

Thanks to the involvement of the religious of the time, Notre Dame de Garaison became an important place of pilgrimage until the French Revolution. After the Revolution this site will become a place of education and teaching. Today the institute Notre Dame de Garaison has about 600 students.



Golden bas-relief representing the third apparition of the Virgin to Angléze de Sagazan



Panoramic view from above



Exterior of the Shrine. The buildings around it have been transformed into a boarding school that holds almost 600 children



Entrance of the Shrine



Depiction of the first apparition. Afterwards the young shepherd girl retreated into a Cistercian convent in Fabas. She returned often to Garaison, but being pressed too much by the people who even wanted to cut her habit to make some relics from it, she limited her arrivals to once a year, on the day of the anniversary of the apparition of Our Lady



Interior of the Shrine where is preserved the miraculous statue that survived the fire



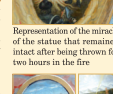
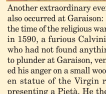
The miracles are shown in the frescoes adorning the portico of the church



Depiction of the second apparition



The fountain of the apparition. The waters of Garaison have the reputation of having miraculously healed many sick people



Representation of the miracle of the statue that remained intact after being thrown for two hours in the fire



Depiction of the third apparition



Votive offerings



Depiction of the miracle in which the black bread was transformed into white bread