

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

# The Miracles of the Virgin Mary in TINDARI



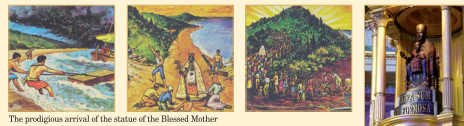
ITALY, 5th & 6th centuries



pius tradition exists regarding the ancient origin of reverence for Our Lady of Tindari which appears to date back to the era of the iconoclast persecution. According to tradition, a returning ship from the Orient carried, among other items stowed away in its hold, a statue of the Blessed Mother that was snatched in order to save it from the iconoclast persecution. While the vessel sliced through the waters of the Tyrrhenian sea, suddenly a tempest arose and for this reason the ship was forced to interrupt its voyage and take refuge in the bay of Tindari, today known as Marinello. When the storm calmed, the sailors decided to continue the voyage: they weighed anchor, hoisted the sails, began to row, but they were unable to move the ship. They tried and tried again, but she remained stuck there, as if she had run aground. They then thought to lighten the load, but only when, among other items, they unloaded the crate containing the venerated replica of the Virgin, was the ship able to move and again take up their chartered course on the placid waves of the calmed sea. The vessel departed, having abandoned her load, and the sailors of Tindari bay quickly made themselves busy attempting to beach that crate by floating it on the expanse of the sea. The crate was opened and, with much amazement and to the satisfaction of all, in it was found the precious sculpture of the Virgin. The problem then arose as to where to place that statue. It was decided to transport the replica of the Virgin to the highest and most beautiful point, on the hill of the Tindari, where for some time a flourishing Christian community already existed. The hill soon became the Holy Hill of Mary.

Considering the artistic style of the image and keeping in mind that the Blessed Mother held Baby Jesus in her arms, one can conclude it dates back to an era that followed the Council of Ephesus in which was defined the divine maternity of Mary; therefore the statue was probably sculpted in the Orient between the 5th and 6th century. In 1953, the existing Shrine became incapable of accommodating all the pilgrims and on the 8th of December 1957 was placed the first stone, which came from Greco-Roman antiquity, and was already blessed by Pope Pius XII on the 30th of December 1956.

Among the exceptional facts is remembered the double miracle the Blessed Mother performed for a woman whose daughter was gravely ill. She turned to the Madonna of Tindari, making vows for the healing of her child. Having obtained the favor, she went to Tindari to thank Our Lady, but having seen her dark face she remained disappointed and exclaimed: **"The sight of a black slave was truly not worth the discomfort of the long walk."** And she decided to go away in search of her beautiful Miraculous Madonna. Meanwhile the unattended little girl wandered off and the mother saw her lean over and fall from the top of the hill. The desperate woman then turned to the Virgin saying to her: **"If you are the miraculous Virgin who saved my daughter the first time, save her a second time."** Miracle: the little girl was down on the sandy beach and she was playing on a little patch that suddenly formed in the sea beneath her. A sailor who had rushed to get the girl brought her back safe and sound to her mother. Repentant and touched, she thanked Our Lady exclaiming: **"Truly you are the great miraculous Virgin."**



The prodigious arrival of the statue of the Blessed Mother



The Shrine of Our Lady of Tindari



Precipice from which had fallen the girl saved by the action of beach called "the dry sea"



The miraculous statue



Interior of the Shrine



The young mother, gone to Tindari to thank the Virgin Mary for having healed her daughter, was disappointed for the color of the face of the statue and exclaimed: **"The sight of a black slave was truly not worth the discomfort of the long walk"**



However soon after having uttered the irreverent invective, the girl who had been left alone for a moment, fell into the void below. The lady then asked pardon and implored the Blessed Mother to save her daughter again



Dome of the Shrine painted with fresco



Ex voto - religious offerings given as thanks for graces and favors received



But the miracle had already occurred: in the moment in which the girl fell into the void, the sea retreated and there, upon the soft sandy beach, unharmed and smiling, the girl was found happily playing