

Eucharistic Miracle of MORROVALLE

ITALY, 1560



In 1560 at Morrovalle, a huge fire destroyed the church of the Franciscans but spared a large Host contained in a pyx (which was also completely burned except for the lid). The Eucharistic miracle's Fourth Centenary was celebrated in 1960, and the City Council unanimously decided to place at Morrovalle's main gate the inscription, "Civitas Eucaristica" (Eucharistic City).



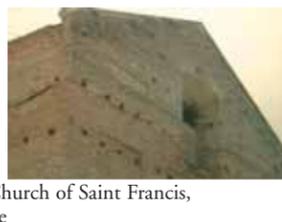
Church of Saint Bartholomew



Reliquary of the miracle



Convent annexed to the Church of Saint Francis, where the miracle took place



Morrovalle procession in honor of the miracle



The Bull "Holy Roman Church," of Pope Pius IV (1560) confirming the miracle



In Morrovalle, at about two o'clock in the morning of April 17, 1560, during the octave of Easter, Brother Angelo Blasi awoke with a start at the sound of violent crackling. Looking out the window of his cell, he saw the church was completely engulfed in flames, and he immediately ran to notify the other brothers. The fire was extinguished after seven hours, and in the following days began the work of clearing the massive pile of church ruins. On April 27, Father Battista da Ascoli was removing a piece of marble from what used to be the main altar and discovered the pyx in a wall cavity. Its corporal was scorched but the consecrated Host was still intact and in good condition. Father Battista shouted at the sight of the miracle, and many people immediately ran to the marvelous sight. For three entire days, the Blessed

Sacrament was exposed for public adoration. When Franciscan provincial Father Evangelista da Morro d'Alba finally arrived, the miraculous Host was placed in an ivory case.

The then-bishop of Bertinoro, Ludovico di Forlì, was immediately sent by Pope Pius IV to Morrovalle to investigate the authenticity of the event. As soon as he received the bishop's account, Pope Pius IV judged the occurrence to be without natural cause, and he authorized public devotion with the Bull "Holy Roman Church" (1560). The Bull proclaims the anniversaries of the fire and the discovery of the sacred Host (April 17 and 27) as feasts with plenary indulgences (so that they were known locally as the feasts "of the two pardons"). Because of the many faithful who came to the

celebrations, the church was later expanded. Today, the feasts are celebrated with exposition of the Blessed Sacrament and of the pyx on the main altar. The pardons, namely the plenary indulgences, are available at the church of Saint Bartholomew. The miraculous Host was conserved intact until 1600 but due to the vicissitudes of history every trace of it was later lost. All that remains today is the glass ciborium and the pyx lid which survived the flames.