

MARY OF THE ROSARY OF SAN NICOLAS

BUENOS AIRES, ARGENTINA 1983–1990

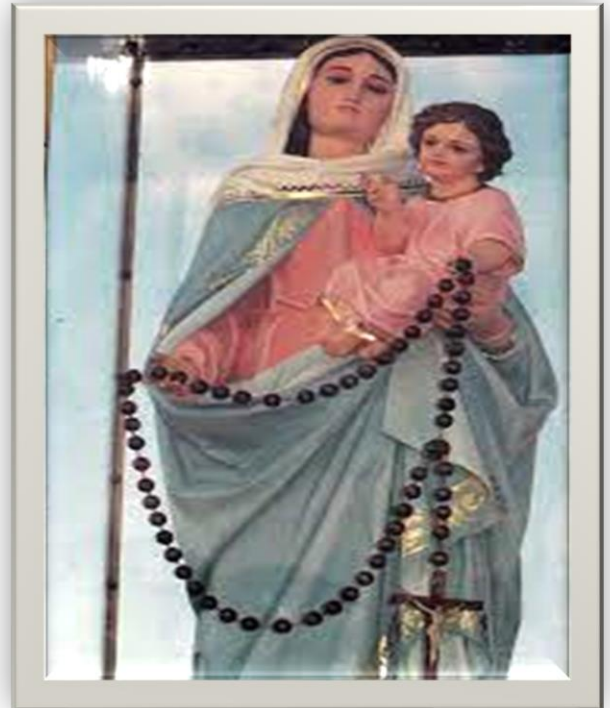
GLADYS Quiroga de Motto was a housewife, a mother of two daughters and a grandmother who had no knowledge of theology or the Bible, and had only a fourth-grade education. She kept to herself and was never comfortable with the attention she received as a result of her visions. No doubt because of her simplicity and humility, the Blessed Mother visited her numerous times during a period of seven years, requesting conversions, consecrations and the praying of the Holy Rosary.

THE FIRST VISION

A strange phenomenon introduced the appearance of the Blessed Virgin when

Gladys saw a gentle glow illuminating a rosary that hung on the wall of her bedroom; in the same place where the Blessed Virgin would later appear. This was witnessed by her neighbors, some of whom, sometime later, also saw their rosaries with a similar glow.

The first apparition of the Blessed Mother took place on September 25, 1983, and again three days later. But it was on October 7, the Feast of Our Lady of the Holy Rosary, while Gladys was praying the Rosary, that she spoke to the apparition for the first time. Gladys reports that, “I saw her (the Blessed Mother) and I asked her what she wanted of me.” The apparition remained silent and then faded away, but was replaced by the vision of a chapel. Gladys remembered, “I understood that she wanted to be among



us.”

Gladys discussed her experience with the parish priest who suggested that she sprinkle the vision with holy water. Later he advised her to write down all her experiences, including all the words spoken by the vision. Then on October 13, the Blessed Mother again appeared and spoke to Gladys for the first time. Because of the advice given her by the priest, Gladys sprinkled the apparition with holy water. When the sprinkling did not disturb the vision, Gladys inspected the vision carefully and described the Blessed Virgin in this way:

The Virgin’s figure glowed with light. She wore a blue gown and a veil and held the Baby Jesus in her arms along with a large Rosary.

Another time she gives more of a description:

Today I wish to say how I see the Most Holy Virgin Mary. Her beauty is not easy to describe, but she is beautiful, and in her the humility, the force, the purity and the love ... because all the love of the world I believe that it does not cover the love that she feels for her children. When she orders, I feel the force that she has. When she gives advice, I feel her maternal love. And when she says to me that she suffers for those that have moved away from the Lord, she transmits her sadness to me. All this leaves in me this wonderful Mother to whom I have consecrated my life. I do this so that my dear brothers can know somehow how our Heavenly Mother is.

An extraordinary event took place on the evening of November 24, when a shaft of light pierced the darkness and indicated the place where the chapel was to be built: a wasteland called Campito on the banks of the nearby Parana River. Not only did Gladys see the piercing light, but also many villagers as well. Three days later, during an apparition, the Virgin Mary referred to Exodus 25:8 which reads, “They shall make a sanctuary for me, that I may dwell in their midst.” This refers to the Israelites building an Ark of the Covenant as a dwelling for God, having obtained instructions from Him as to the design. In the church requested by Our Lady, it would be her Ark of the Covenant,



her dwelling place in the midst of her people.

Later that month, Gladys met with the newly installed bishop of San Nicolas, Domingo Salvador Castagna, who listened to her with great interest. Later, while in Rome on other business, he arranged for an interview with Pope John Paul II. As a result of this meeting in April 1985, a Commission of Inquiry was named.

A MEDAL IS STRUCK

In May of the same year, the Blessed Virgin requested that a medal be made.

You must strike a medal with my image and the words ‘Mary of the Rosary of San Nicolas.’ On the reverse side the Holy Trinity with seven stars. These represent the seven graces which my Son, Jesus Christ, will grant to all who wear it on their chest.

The medal was struck according to the Virgin’s instructions and gained enormous popularity. The foundation for the new sanctuary was laid on September 25, 1986, and it was on October 13, 1987, the anniversary of Our Lady of Fatima, that the construction of the sanctuary began in earnest. When Pope John Paul II was on a pilgrimage to Argentina, Bishop Castagna, on April 11, 1987, met him in the city of Rosario and once again consulted with His Holiness about the continuing apparitions and promised to conduct a full study, which was concluded in February 1990.

When the church was nearing completion, a statue of the Blessed Virgin was needed for the altar dedicated to her. It was then that the people remembered that a statue that had been blessed in Rome by Pope Leo XIII, the “Pope of the Rosary,” had been stored in the belfry of the cathedral because of damage and deterioration. It was taken down, repaired and placed on the altar reserved for it in the new church. When Gladys saw the statue for the first time, she exclaimed that it closely resembled the Blessed Virgin as she appeared in her apparitions.

Even before the sanctuary was completed, pilgrims came in procession from distant places. They continue to come, especially on the twenty-fifth of each month, which commemorates the anniversary of the first vision. Their confidence in Our Lady was rewarded with a number of spiritual and physical healings. The many answers to these prayers prompted Bishop Castagna, on July 25, 1990, to declare: “Undoubtedly this event of grace will continue to grow; it has proved its authenticity by its spiritual fruits.”

One month later, the bishop consecrated the sanctuary to the Immaculate Heart of

Mary and was pleased to issue an Imprimatur for the Spanish edition of the Messages of Our Lady to Gladys de Motta. A replica of the statue of Mary of the Rosary of San Nicolas holding her Son was blessed by Pope John Paul II at the Vatican in the year 2000, but it was Pope Benedict XVI who blessed the crosses that adorn the crowns worn by the Mother and the Child Jesus