

## **OUR LADY OF VICTORY WIGRATZBAD, GERMANY 1919 AND 1938**

### **THE FIRST APPARITION:**

In the year 1919, when Antonie Radler was twenty years old, she contracted the Spanish influenza and was desperately ill. The fervent prayers of her mother persuaded the Blessed Virgin to appear at the patient's bedside. When the apparition laid her hands on the young victim, Antonie was instantly healed.

Fully recovered, Antonie was working one day in her father's butcher shop when the Gestapo arrived and ordered her to replace the painting of the Virgin on the wall with that of the Führer. She was ordered to salute him in the Nazi fashion, saying, "Heil Hitler" instead of the usual Bavarian greeting of "Grüss Gott." Antonie refused and barely escaped several attempts on her life. She always maintained that her

Guardian Angel, in the form of a mysterious cyclist, protected her. The parents were so delighted and grateful with her escape from harm that they erected a small Lourdes grotto in their garden. This was blessed by Father Basch, pastor of their parish, on October 11, 1936, the feast day of the Maternity of Mary. The following month, while at prayer before the statue, Antonie saw Mary smile sweetly and heard the words, "O Beloved Lady of Victory, conceived without sin, pray for us." Then, while praying at the Lourdes grotto on December 15, 1936, during the octave of the Immaculate Conception, and while reciting the third sorrowful mystery of the Rosary, Antonie heard an "angelic chorus" singing, "O Mary! Immaculate, conceived without sin. Beloved Lady of Victory, pray for us."



## **THE SECOND APPARITION:**

The history of this appearance of the Blessed Mother at Wigratzbad now shifts to a young girl named Cecilia Geyer who, on February 22, 1938, about half past six in the morning, after hearing a murmur, saw the Blessed Virgin appear in a bright cloud. Cecilia said that suddenly,

I found myself in the little grotto of Antonie and heard this message, 'Build a chapel here for me. I shall trample underfoot the serpent's head. People will come here in large numbers and I will pour upon them a flood of graces. St. Joseph, St. Anthony and the souls in Purgatory will help you.'"

The Lady then directed, "Go now and worship my Son in the Blessed Sacrament." Realizing that all the churches were closed at that hour, Cecilia asked the vision where should she go? Then, "before my astonished eyes there appeared a chapel in the place designated by the Lady. Inside, on the altar, surrounded by beautiful rays of light was Jesus in a monstrance."

## **THE BLESSED VIRGIN APPEARS TO ANTONIE IN PRISON:**

The history of the chapel now reverts to Antonie Radler.

Work on the building of a chapel requested by Our Lady was begun on July 2, 1938, on land donated by her parents. All went well until the night of November 21, when Antonie was arrested by the Nazis and incarcerated in the local prison. She underwent numerous interrogations, but on the night of December 7 to 8 she beheld a large cloud arising in her cell. Suddenly the Virgin appeared to her and announced her impending release. She would spend Christmas with the family. Antonie was eventually released on December 18, the Feast of the Expectation of Our Lady.

Today, the chapel built at the sight of the apparitions is host to an estimated five hundred thousand pilgrims each year. Among the visitors in 1991, was Bishop Stimpfle, Archbishop of Augsburg, who assisted at the funeral of Antonie and delivered the funeral oration. No official statement was made by the bishop regarding the apparitions, but he was known to say, "I know that Wigratzbad is authentic!"