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TREVIGLIO

Ufficio Informazioni  
e Accoglienza Turistica  
di Treviglio e Comprensorio



## “TREVIGLIO”

### SANCTUARY OF THE WEeping MADONNA

Taken from “**Treviglio: storia, arte e cultura**” by Barbara Oggioni - *ed. Clessidra 2002*

The Sanctuary was built between 1594 and 1619 at the wish of community of Treviglio and is a constant reminder of heir devotion to Mary and of the miraculous episode on the morning of 28<sup>th</sup> February 1522 when the fresco of the Madonna and Child painted on the wall of St. Augustine's Monastery by an unknown artist began to drip with tears.

General Lautrec and his French troops had intended sacking the town that day, but on hearing of this event they withdrew an the town was saved. The town Council proclaimed the last day of February a Town Festival and decided to the Madonna between Via di Porta Torre and St. Augustine's Monastery. It was connected to the monastery by special request of the sacred image, which was removed from the monastery in 1619 in the presence of Cardinal Federico Borromeo. The Church was smaller than now, covering the area between the entrance and the transept, finishing where the barrel-vaulting ends. The enlargement work was done at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century following Cesare Nava's plans and included the addition of the transept, a crypt and presbytery and the cupola.

The facade is work of an unknown 18<sup>th</sup> artist and is simple, classical composition in a double arrangement above the main door, the medallion in bas-relief shows the Madonna and Child and is held in place by angels. To the side are scenes of the miraculous episode and at the top, angel-musicians surround the Glory of Our Lady of the Assumption in Heaven. Both the side doors and the central clerestory window are ornamented with a series of concave and convex lines, which are typical of formal Baroque style.

Inside the church, the visitor is immediately made aware of the event of 1522 in the decoration of the barrel-vaulted ceiling, the work of Gianluca and Carlo Molinari, which also gives some historical information in the depiction of Treviglio surrounded by crenellated walls.

On the left is the Penarojans Chapel named after don Rodrigo Penerojas, superintendent of Treviglio who, on his death in 1655, left his estate to the church to be used for its decoration. The chapel is dedicated to St. John the Baptist and contains the Penarojas



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family crest held aloft by two angels, a painting, The birth of St. John by Montalto, and it is decorated with Baroque motifs.

On the right is the Ferrandi Chapel, dedicated to St. Stephen and St. Paul, and ornamented in obviously rococo style from the 18<sup>th</sup> century. The central painting, The Conversion of St. Paul, is the work of Bernardino Galliari.

The walls of the Sanctuary are hung with paintings about the life of Madonna by Montalto and his sons Carlo Antonio and Andrea. The works were conceived to teach by telling a story, following the example of Federico Borromeo, and are arranged in a clockwise fashion showing episodes from the Annunciation to the crowning by the Trinity. The transept has a majestic cupola over the intersection with the aisle and above the four corner pillars there are four shrines, each one with its statue: St. Martin, the Patron Saint of Treviglio, St. Augustine, St. Monica (St. Augustine's Mother), St. Carlo Borromeo. Above the four central grand arches, four emblematic scenes from Mary's life surrounded by rectangular mouldings show: "The Purification of the Virgin" (on the side above the presbytery); "The Wedding at Canaan" (on the right); "The Holy Family" (opposite the presbytery); "The Pentecost" (on the left). They were painted by Giovanni Bevilacqua who painted the segments of the dome showing European Churches.

The transept has two chapels: on the left is St. Joseph's Chapel with its rose window depicting the Annunciation, on the right is the Sacred Heart Chapel whose rose window shows Mary visiting St. Elisabeth, also by Bevilacqua.

The focal point of the Sanctuary is the presbytery where the miraculous image now resides. On the left is the polyptych on its dais which used to adorn the altar. It is attributed to Nicola Moietta and depicts three episodes in the miraculous event, showing scenes of parts of the city. At the base of it are the Apostles with Christ in the center, while on the sides of these scenes there are the four beatified Augustine women.

The wall decorations in the presbytery in the semi-cupola and on the apse basin are the work of Gaetano Cresseri. A Nativity scene is painted on the left side of the altar and on the right is one of the Evangelists, seen at the corners of the cupola, while the apse basin decorations retell the story of the miraculous event.

To the right of the altar is the Sacristy where various Montalto canvases are kept, the most valuable of which is one of the Miracle, hung between two portraits of General Lautrec by an unknown artist. To the left of the altar is the Chapel of the Adoration with stained glass work by Paolo Furia.

The crypt lies under the presbytery and was added during the extension work at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. It is a small space with three aisles, the rib vaulting is supported by slim columns and Trento Longaretti embellished it with his mosaic work.

The bell-tower was constructed to the side of the entrance between 1835 and 1838.