

Brusa Nicolao, a local organist, commissioned the painting as a votive offering for the grace received during the disastrous flood that hit Ornavasso in 1839. On October 5th, at dusk, the S. Carlo river, swelled due to the continuous rains, flooded impetuously over the village. Luckily, a large landslide detached itself from the side of the mountain, right under the plain where the Sanctuary of our Lady of Miracles stands and blocked the flood temporarily. The roar alerted the inhabitants of Ornavasso who took refuge in the mountains and drew everyone to safety. The flood that followed was so wild that several buildings were razed to the ground and it even disinterred the bones of the corpses buried in the ancient cemetery of the town. The painting depicts the way the village looked right after the disaster. We can recognize many buildings that still exist and even some that fell into ruin years later (i.e.: the Visconti Castle called "The Octagon" and a church called the "Rotonda del Crocifisso"). The figure of the Immaculate Virgin, stands in the sky depicted as described in the apparitions of Lourdes.

The painting depicts St. Theresa, wearing Carmelites' clothes, in the act of writing. Above her, there is a dove, symbol of the Holy Spirit. Saint Theresa was born in Avila in 1515: she was a woman of exceptional talents of mind and heart. She combined intense contemplation with sustained activity as a reformer of the Carmelite Order. She also contributed to the renewal of the ecclesial community driven by the spirit of the Council of Trent. She was the author of many books based on her experiences as a true believer. She died in 1582. Pope Paul VI proclaimed her Doctor of the Church in 1970.

Santa Marta, depicted in the act of blessing, stands on a pedestal decorated with swirls, racemes, fruit and a central cherub. The statue is polychrome and gilded and it is composed of two pieces of solid wood vertically joined from the left shoulder up to the edge of the mantle.

A careful restoration work, ended in 2010, brought the statue back to its ancient splendor. The team of the Fabric Laboratory of Brera was able to restore the sixteenth century embroidered ribbon that holds the bucket.

The Gospels mention Saint Martha three times: twice when she invites Jesus to her home and another time in the occasion of the resurrection of her brother Lazarus. Santa Marta wears monastic dresses according to the classical iconography. In her right hand, she holds the sprinkler and in her left a holy water bucket.

These drawings contain in the footnote annotations made by the architect. They illustrate the construction projects of a Greek-cross form sanctuary with an octagonal dome. That project was so expensive that it had to be reviewed due to the lack of funds. The place where the Sanctuary was built is called "La Guardia" ("The watchtower") due to the presence of an ancient guarding tower dated back to the early 14th century. Before the construction of the sanctuary, a little chapel dedicated to the Virgin Mary stood in that place. The chapel was first transformed into an oratory and then into the church depicted in the drawings. Even if the church is still incomplete, its interiors amaze for the remarkable space and brightness brought by the large windows that open out on all sides of the building.

Architect Paolo Cesa Bianchi, mathematician and civil engineer, performed an intense patriotic activity as a volunteer in the second expedition to Sicily in 1860 and during the subsequent campaign of 1866. He belonged to an ancient Milanese family whose members, since 1850, had been important engineers, architects, doctors and lawyers. During his long career, he devoted himself to the design of numerous civil and religious buildings and to the restoration of some churches in Milan (i.e. San Babila and San Raffaele). Since 1877 he held the position of architect engineer in the Venerable Factory of the Duomo of Milan. In 1912 he was appointed as "council member and honorary architect". In those years, he had the opportunity to admire the Sanctuary "della Guardia" and, with far-sighted intuition, he decided to draw up a copy of the original projects of the church made by the architect Arrigoni in order to preserve them during time.

On the left side of the room, you can find the Parish Archive Library. It contains almost a thousand volumes, many of which come from the private library of Don Giovanni Cracchi, who was the priest of Ornavasso parish from 1850 to 1903. The books, some of which date back to 1500, deal with local history, science and philosophy as well as sacred subjects and theology. Among the sacred texts, there is the voluminous work of Bescapè "Novaria seu de Ecclesia novariensis, books duo, primis de loci, alter de episcopis" dating back to 1612. The collection also includes a "Biblia Sacra" ("Holy Bible") dated back to 16th century which was offered to the parish of Ornavasso by the Duchess of Visconti di Modrone in 1841. During recent years, some collections of local newspapers were added to the library.

On the right side of the room, you can find the parish archive that contains documents and registers regarding the life of the town from 1510 to the present day. In the archive, we can find documents related to the churches of the town, to the pastoral visits carried out by the bishops from 1712 on, the registers of inventories from 1618 onwards, the bulletins of the Sanctuary of Boden and the Parish Church written until the present day. The registers preserved in the archive regard: the christenings of the inhabitants of

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