

Don Pasqualino Fusco



SAN GENNARO

AND THE MIRACLE OF HIS BLOOD

"You died for Christ. You're a martyr of the Faith.

Are you the martyr of our Naples "

PATRON OF NAPLES AND CAMPANIA

"It is therefore most fitting that we love these friends and co-heirs with Jesus Christ and also our brothers and extraordinary benefactors, and that for them we render due thanks to God. In fact all our authentic certification of love made to the Saints, by its nature tends to Christ who is the crown of all the saints, and through Him to God, which is wonderful in his saints and is glorified in them "(LG, 50).

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INTRODUCTION

Today the world is populated by spiritually blind, who, despite being in a century in which they occur many miraculous events, deny definitely the miracle as something unacceptable. They strive to give a natural explanation to the miracles and, when fail, conclude: -Today this fact we do not know how to explain it; eventually with time science will find a way to explain it, but God does not exist! - Apart from the fact that no one has ever proven that God does not exist, science can never explain how a simple natural water (like that of Lourdes) can cure any kind of disease and instantly! It is really true that there is no greater blind as those who do not want to see!

LARGE NUMBER OF MIRACLES

There have always been miracles, more or less numerous, according to the needs of humanity; and since the time that we are crossing is difficult, God has increased the number of miracles. We establish miracles at Lourdes and Fatima and in many sanctuaries.

But there's more! Each year, the Supreme Pontiff rises to the honors altars of the new Blessed and new Saints, which can be ecclesiastic's or lay people, virgins or married, people with celebrities or hidden lives. The Church does not declare any Blessed, if after death God has not operated by the intercession of him at least two miracles; and it requires other two to write him in the number of Saints. The Church is not light in examining the miracles! It uses a committee, which includes the largest specialists, the most competent in material, even non-believers. For the study of some miracle may be employed also years. a miracle is stated that, in fact, if it happens **instantly**, if it **lasts forever** (and not temporary, so it takes years and years before declaring it miraculous) and that science says that fact is **scientifically inexplicable** .

A professor used to say to me: -I believe that God exists; I believe in miracles, which are the manifestation of Omnipotence of God. But I have desire of being present at some prodigious; I would want to see, touch and feel the emotions of the supernatural replied: -We can't expect God work miracles on demand of each. The Lord knows when and where to show his direct intervention.

But if you want to, you can attend some miracle, because, there are also today some supernatural phenomena which the Lord repeats periodically, to keep the faith alive.

- I'd go to the end of the world to assist to one!

- No need to cross oceans, because in Italy it occurs twice a year the miracle of the blood of Saint Gennaro in Naples. Anyone who goes there, sees the melting and boiling of the blood of the Martyr.

FIGHT AGAINST CHRISTIANITY

To better understand and appreciate more the "miracle of Saint Gennaro" is better to know a little 'history. Let's transport ourselves to the time of persecution, when the Roman emperors wanted to destroy the religion of Jesus Christ.

The Roman Empire, based on paganism, sustained its self on violence, with immorality, with the worship of hundreds of false gods; the economy of the empire was based mainly on the work of slaves. The emperors saw in Christianity nascent and growing the great danger of the empire, as the doctrine of Jesus Christ undermined paganism and, therefore, also the empire. The Romans conquered lands and peoples ruled by force, while Jesus taught meekness and gentleness. The Romans, like all ancient peoples were vindictive, Jesus, instead, spoke of love, forgiveness and recommended to return the evil with good. The Romans were too licentious and their immorality remained famous in history; Jesus, on the contrary, commanded the purity and prohibited also the look and t

immoral thought. Slaves were considered like beasts; the difference was that slaves spoke and beast's didn't.

Instead Christianity preached that we are all children of a same Father and the prayer of Christians was: "Our Father!" in front of God there is neither free nor slave; we are all equal in front of God and we are all brothers, because we are his children.

The Romans had a large number of divinities and invoked them so to Make them favorable, even in the evil that they intended to do; for wherefore they honored, for example, Venus, the goddess of dishonesty.

Jesus Christ, on the other hand stated that there is only one God, that was pure Spirit, Father, Just and Holy. Seen the great contrasts between paganism and Christianity, the emperors made use of their strength to fight the followers of Jesus. For three centuries in the Roman Empire there were persecutions and those killed were countless. During the persecutions, which slowed or intensified according to the cruelty of the various emperors, the Christians were imprisoned, stripped of their possessions, subjected to torture and, if they did not disclaim Jesus Christ, were killed in the most barbaric ways. To get an idea of the cruelty of those times, just remember the emperor Diocletian, who had killed so many Christians that they can't calculate the number and he killed his wife, his daughter and his own mother, who claimed to be followers of Jesus. In such difficult times lived Saint Gennaro.

FATEFUL CHILD

On 21st April of the year 272, while in Rome reigned Aureliano, was born in Naples a beautiful child, in a noble family and deeply Christian. Was soon baptized by the Bishop of Naples. The parents, to bring down God's blessing on the infant, took the decision to make a generous act of charity; for a week they offered a rich lunch to the city's poor Christians. for this good work, accomplished with living faith, and for the

prayers of the poor, came down certainly God's blessings on the child, who forever would have remained famous in the history of the Church: Saint Gennaro.

EUSEBIA

In a villa on the hill Antiniano you could see a lively child, intelligent, of a gentle appearance, who was distinguished between his peers for the goodness of life. He lived in that place for a long time to get healthy again. The mistress of the house, a certain Eusebia, she loved him as her own son; He had been entrusted to her by his mother Teonoria for a given time and nothing neglected that could benefit him in body and soul. Eusebia, as a women who sincerely loves a small, child she willingly entertained in his company, she spoke to him of a hundred of things. Maybe she will have also spoken of the exploits of some Martyr; but did not think that God would have linked her to that child, for a fact providential that would happen. In fact it was this woman, that the announcement the martyrdom of Saint Gennaro, took care to collect ampoule of blood of the martyr.

We must be grateful to God first and then to Eusebia, if today Naples possesses the treasure of the Blood of Saint Gennaro.

BRIEF HISTORY

From the morning you see the good day. Gennaro grew up over the years. Being called by God to fulfill a great mission, had in his heart many virtues. Felt much compassion of the misery of others and being rich could do good to all the poor. Jesus wanted to reward him. In fact one day showed up to beg a hungry child. Just received the bread, the child was transfigured, became so handsome and exclaimed: -I will return you one day what now you have given me .- and disappeared. In the large house, where he lived Gennaro, there was a kind of chapel, or home oratory. Here the youth gathered

in prayer reading holy books; willingly read the story of the Martyrs and he envied their destiny, unaware that one day soon would be numbered among them.

It made no wonder to the parents the decision, when it came the choice of the state: -I want to become a priest! - He introduced himself to the Bishop of Naples, Marciano, and was received among aspirants to the priesthood.

In the Pentecost of the year 302 he was ordained a priest. the Holy Spirit the Spirit of fortitude, came down from the altar on that day on the new minister and enriched it with his gifts.

It was so much the zeal demonstrated at benefit of souls, that after just a year of priesthood, having died the Bishop of Benevento, he was chosen to succeed him. Consecrated Bishop, left Naples and took Headquarters in Benevento.

THE EDICT IMPERIAL

It was the tenth year of the empire of Diocletian. The fierce emperor issued a decree for the extermination of the Christians; this was the most terrible persecution marked in history. The focal points of the edict were:

1. Destruction of sites devoted to religious worship of Christians.
2. Seizure of all holy book.
3. Arrest and imprisonment of Christians, especially the leaders, in every part of the Roman Empire.
4. Process against them, to force them to give up by any means to Jesus Christ and to sacrifice to the Roman gods.
5. Stripping them of goods and killing them, if they refused to burn incense in front of the gods.

The Christians, during the persecution for prudence did not manifested themselves publicly as followers of Jesus, but if they were recognized, courageously faced the torment and death.

CELESTE NOTICE

He celebrated Mass and a hundred Christians attended there.

The Bishop Gennaro celebrating the Holy Sacrifice. During the Gospel the deacon Fifth Sosio sang the Gospel.

As was approaching the day of martyrdom of this deacon, Jesus deign to show it to the Bishop. In fact, while he sang Sosio the Gospel, Saint Gennaro saw swirling around the head of the deacon a flame of fire, which was sending flashes of light. Finished singing, the flame disappeared. After the Mass, before the faithful went out from that sacred place, the Bishop said publicly to the Deacon:

- Martyr Of Christ, I salute you! And thou shalt give life for our faith, you will be the glory of our land! - and, so saying, hugged and He kissed him on the forehead.

Shortly after Fifth Sosio was imprisoned and died a martyr.

VISIT TO PRISONERS

Five clergymen of Benevento and many faithful, recognized as Christians, were put in prison. Saint Gennaro, a true Shepherd, endangering his life, he did everything to penetrate as a unknown in prison to comfort the next martyrs. Disguised went to the keeper of the prison that was a Christian soldier; therefore it was easily to enter the cell of the prisoners. Encouraged them and prompted them to give their lives for Jesus Christ. Three days later they were led to Nola to be judged by Dragonzio prefect. The Bishop followed them secretly. Resisting all threats, Christians were beheaded.

But the time of Bishop Gennaro was approaching, who was being sought by Roman soldiers and spies. In the prison of Pozzuoli were other Christians. Saint Gennaro managed to penetrate even there; but as he was about to leave, he was recognized by a spy. and immediately arrested was transported to the town of Nola. his judge would be Timothy Severiano.

Timothy was eager to know the Bishop Gennaro; he had heard that he belonged to a noble family, had spoken of His work assiduously for the benefit of Christians, the broad learning

and his strong spirit. Being Gennaro an influential person, was necessary to be able to move him from his faith, to break down the Christianity in that region.

- And you, Gennaro, -said Timoteo- what where you doing in the prisons of Pozzuoli? -

- You know it! Why do you ask me it? -

- Yes I know! You were trying to reduce to some Christians best perverse advice, whose impiety was fatale to them.-

- 'You've Made a mistake Timothy; I dissuade them from their purpose, indeed I encouraged them. And you must not call impiety their faith in Jesus Christ! -

- So, you also have the same faith? And would you refuse today to burning incense to our gods? -

- Neither now, nor ever will you bend me! -

- Think about what you say! Isn't not it nice to live and contemplate the sunlight? -

- I also say that living is a good thing, but it is best that life to which we Christians aspire. Beautiful is this light, but it is more beautiful the eternal light which emanates from God.-

- Enough! Our emperor commanded you to make the sacrifice according to the Roman ceremonies! -

- I do not do it! -

- Think twice! I urge you for the last time to burn incense to our gods. If you do not, I'll make you suffer horrible torments and you will be tortured cruelly. I know how to prepare such torments, to be frightening even to the God that you adore! -

- You do not know what you say! – answered smiling the Bishop- Know well that I will never to do any act of worship to the devil that you honor. the sacrifice I do it every day to the true God, who created the universe and can't be afraid of a poor man, which you are. He give me the strength to overcome any torment. You, however, mind not to insult Him, because the power of the divine arm is terrible and could reach you to punish you, even if you collapse in the bowels of the earth! -

- Miserable! – screamed Timoteo- dare say this before me. and I support you? We'll see if your God will put out the fire that I want to prepare you! Soldiers, lead to prison this rebel! Put him in chains and wait the torture! Go, Gennaro! A challenge has been open between you and me! We will see who will win! -

- In God is victory! - Exclaimed Gennaro.

Timothy gave orders to the officer: -Get prepared the furnace and fire is fed for three days; the third day introduce Gennaro and is incinerated. Thus way dies those who rebel against imperial laws! –

MAN CHALLENGE GOD

A pagan, ungodly, issued the challenge to the Almighty: - "Your God will be able to extinguish the fire that I will prepare you? "-

Even the king Nebuchadnezzar, when he found himself in front of three young Jews who refused to obey his orders to worship a gold statue; challenged God: -What God will flee from my power? You will be thrown into a burning fiery furnace! –

The king of Babylon was won, because, as it is said in the Holy Scriptures, the angel of the Lord came down in the furnace where they had been thrown and the three children where carried away from the flames (Daniel 2-49).

But the miracle that God worked in Babylon, which renewed for glorify other martyrs, he would have repeated it for the Bishop Gennaro? The orders of Timothy were immediately executed; the fire was fueled for three days; on the appointed hour Gennaro, surrounded by soldiers. was conducted to the furnace; many people followed him, mostly moved by pity. As soon as was opened the mouth of the furnace and Gennaro was thrown in, The Christians who were present invoked God: -Sir Almighty, mercy of our Bishop! - Given the vehemence of the fire, within minutes Saint Gennaro would have to be

incinerated. But after some time was heard a voice singing: -Bless, or fire and heat, the Lord! - It was the voice of Bishop. The officer warned the prefect Timothy, who commanded to open the furnace and to verify the occurred. Between flames appeared Gennaro, with arms raised, in prayer, saying loudly: - Praise the Lord, all ye heathen! Praise Him, O people of the earth! - he was perfectly unharmed. In the Roman Breviary, where recalled the martyrdom of Saint Gennaro, and said: -The flames will not touched his clothes and neither was burned even one hair.- The challenge of the tyrant had from God the answer!

SECOND TORMENT

Timothy would have had to convert to Christianity in front of this miracle, as many others had converted; but blinded from pride and irritated by the defeat, he brought before him the Bishop and filled him with insults: -You are a magician! ... You are a deceiver and perverting of the people! ... For now return to the prison; tomorrow you will be here before me! -

The next day the Bishop was brought back in front of the tyrant.

- I will not ever deny my God! -

- You insist again? ... That's beyond the easel and the plates on fire! -

The device was horrible. The Bishop was tied, lying on the stand and the limbs were stretched fiercely; nerves and tendons were thesis so heartbreaking.

- Deny your God and you will be free! -

- Never! -

After that, they were applied to the burning laminae its meat.

Despite the torments, the Martyr, praising God, which gave him so much strength to support this torture, was returned to prison for two days yet; here looked serene and fresh as if he had not suffered. He suffered for Jesus and the power of Jesus manifested itself in him.

TWO MORE HEROES

Two clergymen, the deacon Festus and the reader Desire, lovers of their bishop, standing in the crowd and could no longer hold back the indignation against the tyrant, cried out – unfair Man, what crime has Gennaro committed to treat him like that? -

The two were taken by soldiers and dragged before Timothy; as soon as they found themselves near their Bishop, exclaimed: -Father beloved! God save you, Confessor of Christ! -

The Judge asked Gennaro: -you know these two? Who are they? -

- One is my deacon; the other is my reader.-

- They too are Christians? They will have to immediately offer incense to the Gods.-

- Never! - Exclaimed the two -We, as Christians as Gennaro! -

- And as Gennaro will be chained. All will undergo a common condemnation, the one that was already spoken for the other infamous Christians, rebels who are waiting in the prisons of Pozzuoli. A great show I want to offer to residents of Campania, the faithful to the laws of the divine emperors. I want to give an example to the wicked Christians. Awaits the amphitheater! ... You will be food for the beasts and Your

bones will be crushed by the teeth of bears in front of the multitude! ... Tomorrow we leave for Pozzuoli! –

THE LAST NIGHT

It was already evening when they arrived in Pozzuoli. Gennaro, Festo and Desiderio entered the prison, to spend the night, waiting the next death.

In the prison of Pozzuoli were four other Christians. The meeting of the future Martyrs was an explosion of faith.

- Tomorrow we will be in Heaven! - Exclaimed Sosio.

- God will welcome us into his heavenly glory! - added another. The Bishop spoke words of comfort and encouragement: - My brothers generously fight against the devil and against his Minister Timothy! God sent me here so that the pastor is not separated from his flock. We are already at the end of our suffering. We remain faithful to our Divine Master Jesus! - The night passed in the serenity of prayer, while in the amphitheater there was intense preparations for the next show of blood.

IN THE AMPHITHEATER

On the outskirts of Pozzuoli you see the ancient Roman amphitheater. Here sixteen centuries ago gathered spectators to enjoy entertainment that they administered the Roman authorities. The amusements of the pagans were the performances of blood: see fight among them the wild beasts and the gladiators, who fought each other in armed, or struggling with lions, tigers and bears. But the favorite show, the more exciting was to see the amphitheater arena Christians given to wild beasts. Was the prefects way to empty the prisons, to entertain the people and to give a strong lesson, made them get leaded into the amphitheater to be torn to pieces. This was the fate of the Bishop Gennaro and other ecclesiastics.

Appeared 19th September of the 305, the celebrated day for all ages, intended by the church to commemorate the glory of the great Neapolitan Martyr. The amphitheater was beginning to be populated since from the morning. the crowd increased; were not only curious, but also the many Christians not yet recognized as such; went especially relatives, of Gennaro's admirers, both from Naples as from Benevento; did not miss the presence of Eusebia, the woman who so admired the Bishop and that for a long time as a baby had kept at him at her home. When the seven prisoners entered the amphitheater, the good prayed and wept. But the next Martyrs were smiling; and had the air of triumph. Was heard saying among the people: - You see how Christians they go happy to death !? Meanwhile, the steps of the amphitheater were crowded with people, impatient for the show. arrived the prefect Timothy; was acclaimed with enthusiasm and took the place of honor.

It was time of Bishop Gennaro and the other six convicted.

More than forty bears, held on purpose fasting, they should be fed with their meat. God had freed Gennaro from the torment of the fire. but would He release even from the mouth of the wild beasts? The sacred history records several such miracles. Centuries before the prophet Daniel had been thrown by King Darius in the lions' den and was unhurt, because God had sent an angel, who shut the mouths of lions and tamed them (Daniel 7-22). Everything is possible to the Creator, because He has everything in his hands.

GREAT PRODIGY

It was almost noon. The group of Christians appeared to the eyes of the spectators. Thousands of people rose to their feet as a sign of respect, and exploded shouting out : - Glory to you, heroes of Christ! - Bishop drew in air three times the sign of the cross, blessing everyone.

They stopped in the middle of the arena: Gennaro standing and the other kneeling around him, ready to be eaten. But these heroes suffer for Jesus Christ. And the Son of God is present in that fight. He wanted to show his power to the tyrant, wants to open eyes to faith to the many pagan present and wants to show his satisfaction to those who are willing to die for him. Here is a new prodigy!

Timothy ordered: -Out beasts! -

Mechanically open the shutters and came out the wild beasts and made their way to the arena. Despite the hunger, that devoured them and while feeling the smell of human flesh, the Bears did not run, but walked slowly, looking here and there, uttering some yawns and meek as lambs or faithful dogs came and crouched at the foot of the martyrs. They were immersed in prayer, but soon realized that God worked a miracle to free them from teeth of beasts and sang with joy in singing the verse of Psalms:

-My Fortress is the Lord, and my refuge! He was my liberator.

The scene aroused wonder, because it was known that the bears were hungry.

Many cried out: - It's a miracle! Viva Bishop Gennaro!

Long live the God of the Christians! -

With an impressive increasing voice, both the Christians as the new converted to the prodigy, that claimed the rights of the condemned that according to the Law! The Roman law in fact prescribed to set free those that were not torn to pieces by wild beasts. The prefect Timothy, full of anger, to overcome the affront, stood up from the seat and gave the order: - Incite the beasts! Provoke ! - Employees, armed with pitchforks, advanced with caution towards the bears to provoke them; but had to stop because the beasts tried pounce against them.

The prefect meanwhile had to submit:-be released! according to the Roman law, claimed by viewers: bring the bears in cages and let the sentenced free.-

There could not be bigger Shame of this for a tyrant!

But in his perfidy, he found a loophole. The prisoners are put in freedom. But they will have to undergo a new trial in front of the people. Timothy was confident that under the pressure of a new interrogation could have given a new sentence and so would have put them to death. The trial would be held at the court of Solfatara and Here the crowd poured out coming out from the amphitheater.

LAST JUDGMENT

The prefect, sitting at the seat of the court, in front of the people began the interrogation: -Your magical arts nothing will benefit you. This is the last time that I ask you. You persist in denying the worship due to our Roman gods and to the divine emperors? -

- We are Christians! - Answered the seven churchmen.

- You, Gennaro, who are the most authoritative of them, convince them to leave their madness! -

- There not crazy, but fear the living God! -

- So you want to go to death? -

- Not death, but eternal life! -

And then hear the sentence: - Ordered let them be beheaded that the sentence is carried out immediately here, in the court of Solfatara! -

Judgment impious! I front of the miracle occurred in the furnace in Nola and the other took place in the amphitheater, the prefect should have seen the hand of God and convert himself ; instead stubbornly refused to believe and did not accept the light that God sent him to get him to the good.

Resisting to the mercy of God, it felt immediately the justice.

Just as he pronounced the sentence of death, Timothy at once became blind; began to have a cold sweat and was seized by a irrepressible tremor.

- Punishment of God! - Cried out many of the crowd ..

The Bishop Gennaro, moved with compassion for the unfortunate, mindful of the teachings of Jesus, "Do good to those who do the evil "and" Pray for those who persecute you, "imitating Jesus who prayed for his executioners, lifted up to Heaven, a fervent prayer: -God Of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, return to this sinner sight so that the people present will know that You are God and there is no other God but Thee! -

The prayer was immediately answered; Timothy received his sight. the Miracle was so obvious that about five thousand pagans were converted to Christianity. Cries of faith uttered by the crowd: -We are Christians we too! hurrah Jesus Christ! -

Where converted a large number of pagans, but not converted Timothy; his heart was hardened. Like Pontius Pilate condemned Jesus for fear of antagonizing Caesar, so the prefect did not convert to Christianity to not become enemy of the Emperor condemned the Bishop. He said to the soldiers: -take away Gennaro by my presence and cut of his head! -

Given the order, of the secure execution, sure not to have more trouble, the tyrant Timothy suffered back in town; he was satisfied with the conclusion. But he did not think that he would have had to come to terms with God very soon; had struggled more than against Christians, against the God of the Christians, and now he was ready for the deserved punishment! He retired to his palace, he said that he didn't want to receive anyone, because he felt a great discomfort. In fact, happened that terrible pain of the internal organ began. began the agonizing cry. But before he could be rescued, in agony the unfortunate man died. Similar death before him had King Herod, who had cut off the head of Saint Giovanni Battista.

GLORIOUS END

The decapitation of the condemned was executed with much interest the crowd, among whom were several thousand Christians. Soldiers stopped the rush of the crowd and led

martyrs in to an open space, strewn with boulders.as it was used by the Roman blindfolding the condemned, therefore was given a small band to each and they adapted it. The Bishop before blindfolding his eyes looked at the sky and said: -In your hands, Lord, I commend my soul! -

- On your knees! - Screamed the executioner. The martyrs kneeled, to Just a few steps away from each other, with two soldiers nearby, waiting the fatal blow.

God could not release them from death for the third time?

Not freed Catherine of Alexandria, when she was placed at the wheel set with sharp swords? Was about to begin the martyrdom of Virgin of Alexandria and the horrible wheel went all to pieces in an instant!

But now God wanted to reward those heroes and wanted their head shone forever the crown of martyrs. And in particular wanted, that the martyrdom, of the bishop Gennaro was forever remembered and revered for the miracle of his blood. for this allowed them to be killed. The executioner raised his sharp ax and severed the seven heads, starting with the Bishop. The land was flooded with blood ... the blood of martyrs!

Almost simultaneously died the author of the massacre, Timothy. Jesus Christ, King of kings, as would honor the martyr Gennaro, who had given witness of fidelity?

The award God soles give is worthy of God! First of all Jesus welcomed into the Celeste Court Saint Gennaro, adding him to the glorious army of martyrs. But even on earth Jesus wanted to honor the great martyr, honor that would last forever. The Lord established to perpetuate memory with a miracle, which is repeated every year, so that all generations could say: -So Jesus Christ honor those who wants to honor! -

The martyr sprinkled the blood and Jesus chose the blood this object for the miracle.

EUSEBIA COLLECTS THE BLOOD

Seven decapitated bodies were lying on the ground. Usually the bodies of the prisoners were guarded by soldiers and delivered only to employees, who had the task of burying them. Among the gravediggers were also Christians, which easily yielded the task to the interested, to give them honorable burial to the bodies of the martyrs. When the news was spread of the death of prefect Timothy, the soldiers guardians of the beheaded, not getting any provision, slowed the supervision and allowed that the Christians could approach the killed.

Eusebia, the good lady who favorite Bishop Gennaro, the which had been following the unfolding of martyrdom, as soon as she could approached his corpse, and with worshiped and devotion in front of the severed heads and weeping exclaimed: -O dear son, that I bred for so long, there you are dead! You're dead, but you died for Christ. You're a martyr of the Faith! And you're the martyr of our Naples! - Following the natural instinct, but more than all favoring a divine inspiration, she wanted to take something as a souvenir of Gennaro. But what souvenir more precious of a little blood? Others admirers of the martyr bathed in the blood some diaper. Eusebia wanted to do more. Providing for the killing of the Bishop, had brought with her two ampoules and a sponge. With the help of youth Commodus, could soak the sponge repeatedly, pressing on the arteries of the neck, still bleeding. She managed to put in the ampoules almost a glass of blood. In consequence of the transfer, the hands are smeared with blood; as it was not possible to wash them instinctively she wiped them the better possible stroking them on a stone, almost smooth.

At first no one will bother of that stone, but later it was taken and preserved with devotion, because stained with the blood of St. Gennaro. Eusebia returned home, distressed by the death of Bishop, but pleased to possess his blood. Jealously guarded the reeds and who knows how many times she kissed it spraying

of tears. The blood following the natural law, went up to solid harden.

THE BURIAL

The Christians of Pozzuoli and Naples were concerned to take bodies of the martyrs. On the death of Jesus, a noble, Joseph of Arimathea, obtained from Pontius Pilate for permission to bury the body of Jesus in a tomb new preparation itself. The same thing happened for Saint Gennaro. A rich man, Claudio Marciano, showed up to the first magistrate and obtained the permission to bury the Bishop in his property, near the court of Solfatarata, in a tomb prepared for himself.

Difficulties arose. The people of Benevento said -Gennaro is Our Bishop, and not the Bishop of Pozzuoli or Napoli. We want to bring him to Benevento! -

The Neapolitans protested: -It is our neighbor, and his grave must be Naples! - they were stronger, for the reason that the relatives wanted him in Naples.

But given the distance between Pozzuoli and Benevento, under the circumstances of the persecution still going on, it was decided to bury Safe in the garden of Marciano.

In fact, during the night, by torchlight, the corpse of Saint Gennaro was wrapped in a large cloth, was placed on a stretcher strewn with flowers and was transported to the burial. As the coffin was placed in the tomb, Coma, who was the Bishop of Naples and had chaired the carriage, gave the salute to the Martyr in name of all the Christian -Rest in peace, or glorious brother! pray for us, or martyr of Christ! may Your example inflame our souls: so like you we will not fear the tyrant, but confessing the Holy Faith, is reserved to us also that crown of precious stones that God has placed on your head, oh exemplary Pastor, for your faithful flock, for your relatives and your hometown! May your spirit hovers blessed always above Naples, defense and aid forever -

THE PEACE OF THE CHURCH

The persecution that the Roman emperors had against the Christians, sowed the massacre on earth, but populated heaven of Martyrs, multiplied believers in Jesus Christ and showed more precious Faith. Each storm no matter how long it is, must end; so the persecutions, after about three centuries, finally ceased. It had been ten years from the death of Saint Gennaro, it was the year 313 and the Emperor Constantine, who had converted to Christianity, abolished the edict against the Christians. began an new era; no more Christian life hidden, no longer dwelling in the catacombs, but solemn religious processions and magnificent churches, open to the worship of the true God. The first built was the of the Holy Church of Salvatore, then that of St. John Lateran in Rome, Church the Emperor Constantine built next to his palace.

As long as there was the persecution the bodies of the martyrs were hidden and were honored privately; but when peace came, there was a great religious movement to research and identify these bodies and to give them a fitting home, possibly in the various churches. The history of many martyrs was known, because usually attending the martyrdom "a notary," the staff responsible, to record facts and spread them with the writings relevant news. the history of the Martyrdom of Saint Gennaro was famous in Campania, the more because were still alive many witnesses of the facts of Pozzuoli.

Coming peace, was a common desire to Naples, both of Ecclesiastical as of the faithful, to give to the body of a Saint Gennaro a honorable burial, worthy of the great fellow citizen. It was stable to exhume the body from the grave granted by Marciano and transport it in procession in an urn in Naples.

THE FIRST MIRACLE

It was the first Sunday of May, 315; the road that takes from Pozzuoli to Naples, was decorated with triumphal arches, improvised with branches and with flowers.

A long procession had left the meadows of the burial and headed to Naples solemnly carrying the urn with inside the body of Saint Gennaro. Several bishops were in the procession, many Ecclesiastical and many faithful. There were some relatives of the Martyr, including the Sister Agatha.

Christians knelt at the casket. When the motorcade came under the windows of the houses of Christians, often happened that they threw flowers and rose petals. From Naples was meanwhile another procession, led by the Supreme civil magistrate of the city, Archon Tito Caio Teodoro; was with him the Senate and a mass of people. It was the nationality of Naples which welcomed Saint Gennaro.

When the two processions met, the procession made a stop; it was not far from the villa of Eusebia, the lucky lady who had preserved the blood of the martyr. The pious woman pushed through the crowd and came forward with a bundle in her hands; arrived in front of the Bishop of Naples said: - Revered Father, to you and to the Church of Naples I consign these two ampoules, where I picked up the blood of the martyr Gennaro, which I kept for ten years in my house, which was also for much time Once the home of Gennaro also. The blood in the ampoules, as you now see, is clotted and solidified, but I assure you it is really that Blood that I collected from the neck and the head of the Martyr truncated.

Receive it and that it is his pledge and protection over the city and the people.-

The Bishop, picking up the two ampoules and lifting them to show them around, said: -A gift that is a real treasure, I receive from you, oh pious matron. You've delivered the blood of our hero, the blood that was shed for Jesus Christ. The memory of his martyrdom and the example of his virtues will revive in us

whenever we venerate this Blood. It will be treasured and nothing will remove from the heart of the people of Naples and the affection for the memory of the man, whose blood was burning with so much love for this city. And you, glorious Martyr, bless your people, hear our prayers and validates our intentions with your blessing! -

The surrounding then knelt and the bishop, raised the ampoules, was to draw a large sign of the Cross on the crowd. But his eyes, resting on that blessed Blood, saw something wonderful through transparent glass, those lumps buckets of blood color of dark quickly became dissolved to a bright red; The ampoules were filled with liquid, which moved at the slightest shock; it was as if it were coming from the veins at that moment, gurgled and bubbled.

The Bishop moved exclaimed: -Here, here Saint Gennaro here is here among his people! He really blesses us! It happened a Miracle! Watch the live blood of the Martyr! - The crowd was seized with strong emotion, enthusiasm was great, everyone wanted to kiss or at least see the Blood block. This was the first of the long series of the miracles of Saint Gennaro.

OTHER EVENTS

The body of the martyr was laid in a tomb of his family. Here the Neapolitans came to venerate the Blood and to implore thanks. With the passing of time, the relics were taken to Benevento, as a result of a siege proclaimed by Prince Sicone, Benevento. After many years, Frederick II wanted to plunder Benevento and then the Church authorities transported secretly the relics to Montevergine, to save them from desecration barbarians.

In 1496 the Archbishop of Naples, Alessandro, obtained from the Pope a decree to transfer from Montevergine to Naples the sacred remains of Saint Gennaro; thereafter the body of the saint remained in his city. When this final transfer took place,

Napoli was in pain, as a terrible plague reaped many victims. What could be more powerful intercessor in front of God for the cessation of the plague? Saint Gennaro, the patron of the city, would have saved. In fact, full of faith, the Neapolitans crowded around the body of the Martyr and soon the plague ceased.

It to be noted that when the body of the saint was in Benevento and then in Montevergine The head of the Martyr and the two ampoules with the Blood , remained always in Naples.

WORSHIP

The cult of Saint Gennaro spread throughout Italy, soon passed in Africa, then in England and gradually spread everywhere the Neapolitans went as immigrants. But the greater cult was and will always be in Naples. In the course of centuries if they are interested not only the clergy, but also the princes and kings.

Deserves to be remembered King Charles II of d 'Anjou, pious man, which towards the end of the thirteenth century built the present Cathedral of Naples. This king built the silver bust, where he closed the skull of Saint Gennaro. The son of Charles of d 'Anjou was interested because were built the tabernacle and the shrine of the two ampoules.

THE AMPOULES

To go with order in the exposure of the phenomena that occur the Blood of Saint Gennaro, present interesting details, fruit of long experience of many men of study. Before of all describes the reliquary. The Blood is contained in two ampoules of glass, enclosed in a glass case, or reliquary, circular, twelve centimeters in diameter. The reeds are of unequal capacity.

The largest is somewhat flattened, elliptical shape, and has the capacity of sixty cubic centimeters. The smaller one is of the form cylindrical, with a capacity of twenty-five cubic

centimeters. The case that encloses the interrupters is cylindrical; faces are constituted by two glass circular, much wasted for the continuous kisses by the faithful.

The amount of blood contained in the greater ampoules is little more half of the container. In the ampoules seen several small stains and various lumps Blood scattered along the walls; in past centuries have made it significant subtractions of Blood. In fact, in the Royal Chapel of Madrid there is a reliquary with a little of the Blood of Saint Gennaro; was made this gift to Philip Fifth, King of Spain.

All things of this world over time can go bad; the glass containers, because fragile, are more prone to breakage. However the ampoules, although many times in so many centuries have fallen, never have broken. Refers to the fact that a published historian James of Brand: "Never there has been so large earthquakes, such as the our time (December 4, 1456). In the kingdom of Naples have hit down about sixty-two thousand houses and died one hundred thirty thousand people. In the Archbishopric of Naples, where they were kept inners with the blood of Saint Gennaro, everything was destroyed. After the earthquake, made diligent research, under the stones of the walls collapsed, they found the ampoules. The soils and rocks were piled up, but the fragile glass they did not have any damage.

WHEN THE MIRACLE HEPPENED

The liquefaction of the blood takes place every year from various centuries, in three feast on a fixed date and in three categories of opportunities out of date fixed.

The first is that of May festivities, celebrations reminiscent transport solemn of the relics of the Saint from Pozzuoli to Naples. The festivity is always the first Sunday of May, but the miracle takes place on Saturday, the day before the festivity.

On that occasion, the Blood melts, at least ordinarily, in the Church of Santa Chiara, which is carried in procession from Cathedral. The time is usually between the hours of six and seven o'clock in the afternoon. Sometimes miracles happen just in the begin of the procession or during the journey. On Sunday morning, that is the day after the miracle, Blood is hardened.

The first miracle is followed by eight more, which occur after the nine o'clock in the morning of the eighth day, with different period of waiting in prayer by the people. During the eighth, the reliquary with ampoules is exposed, in The afternoon is put a veil over and remains so for three hours. Around 16:00 O clock it turns and starts over the veneration of the holy relic.

Several times, when it was unveiled, the blood was found hardened, after some prayer, it is liquefied again.

The second festival is September 19th, the anniversary of the martyrdom, day that the Church has dedicated to the feast of Saint Gennaro. The miracle takes place in the Cathedral. Also in September, the miracle is repeated for eight days, about nine o'clock in the morning, from 19th to 26th of the month. Throughout the day is possible to kiss the relic. are endless the queue of those who are waiting their turn to kiss the miraculous Blood.

The third feast is December 16th, the feast of the Patronage of Saint Gennaro. This feast was instituted by rating of the Neapolitans, in Memory extraordinary assistance received by the patron saint in terrifying eruption of Vesuvius in the year 1631; for more than a month, lasted until the eruption, the Blood remained loose. On this day. at about nine o'clock, is exposes the relic, expects if the miracle happens; after half an hour the relic storing monstrance, we celebrate the Mass, there is a procession votive around the cathedral, or the interior of the cathedral, if the weather does not allows, and until the evening the relic is exposed and you can kiss it.

During the feast, the miracle happens, but often very late; more than once the miracle has not occurred. In such rare during the Neapolitans are afflicted, because they believe that Saint Gennaro is not pleased with them and provide some serious misfortune.

OTHER OCCASIONS

Vesuvius was in explosive eruption. It was thought to exhibit the relic of the saint to be delivered from lapilli. But the Blood, even before be exposed, was found already loose and cases remained for two more days.

For about five months the rains were frequent, to the detriment to the campaigns. Blood was exposed, which immediately liquefied, for three days, until the sky cleared completely.

The miracle of the Blood has happened on the occasion of a seat of reliquary. In conclusion, the occasions on which happens the miracle, often, but not always, are: visits of famous people, public misfortunes and repairs of the reliquary. Other extraordinary occasions have happened and will happen. The Blood miracle happened when the relics of Saint Gennaro from Montevergine came to Naples; was repeated during the Mass that was celebrated in the Cathedral in thanksgiving of recovered health of the Archbishop Filomeno; there was also in the function of thanks for the cessation of the plague of February 2nd, 1957.

INTERESTING MODALITY

The passage of the Blood of Saint Gennaro from solid to liquid state presents various ways. The liquefaction generally begins to soften contemporary of the entire mass of the blood; sometimes softening goes from the periphery to the center, and rarely from the center to the periphery. Several times the mass of the blood formed a small hole and then Blood came out in the form of a jet. In many cases the liquefaction occurred very

fast, at a stroke. Blood has a loose fluidity variable; sometimes it is viscous, or is sticky to the glass; sometimes instead is fluid. In general, when the reliquary is tilted, the blood leaves no trace on the wall of bulb, while naturally it should. The liquid state lasts throughout all the day of the miracle; then the evening that the reliquary is preserved the blood is still liquid; the day after is almost always hardened.

During the 8th May and that of September, the blood is exposed every day around nine and mostly, after a few minutes it melts. The temperature of the environment in which it occurs liquefaction is very variable. It can have up to thirty degrees of heat, May or September, or you can have at least five degrees in the festivities of 16 December.

The color of the dissolved blood is not always the same; it may be bright red, yellow or red; sometimes is blackish. The surface of the mass of the dissolved blood often has a dense layer of foam, which is growing day by day; frequently formed on the surface are bubbles, small or large; it thus has the phenomenon of boiling. The blood volume is variable; may increase to fill the ampoule and can decrease rapidly. The variation in volume are accompanied by changes in weight, with a wobbling of 27 grams. The melting and boiling of the blood is a real fact that enters the divine supernatural. Note that, while happening the miracle in Naples, at the same time the miracle happens in the Church of Pozzuoli, where is kept the stone where Saint Gennaro was beheaded (and on which there are traces of his blood) that become bright red at the same time when the blood of ampoules melt.

ANOTHER PHENOMENON

Am very pleased to know that in Naples occurs another prodigious, but less known than that of Saint Gennaro; where there is the more, takes second place the least.

In Naples, at the Monastery of San Gregorio Armeno is the reliquary Saint Patrizia, which contains a bit 'of the Holy Blood. the blood is hardened; but the day of the festivity, while it is exposed, it melts. Who passes in Naples on August 25th, the feast of St. Patrick, may take part and witness this miracle.

NOVENA TO SAINT GENNARO

September 19th

Patron saint of Naples and of the Campania
(repeats the days 10th to 18th August
and September 9th to 18th)

- In the Name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. - Amen.

1. Glorious our Protector Saint Gennaro, we admire Your fervent zeal and pastoral care so that you professed concern for the spiritual advantages of your flock. Humbly please, you want now from Heaven provide for the needs of our city, as off our homes and families.

- Glory to the Father
- Saint Gennaro, pray for us.

2. Glorious our Protector Saint Gennaro, we admire your generous constancy with which confessed in front of the tyrant Timothy the Holy Faith for Jesus Christ. Humbly please bring us more and constancy and fidelity to confess and observe in front of everyone, in your example, God's holy law.

- Glory to the Father
- Saint Gennaro, pray for us.

3. Glorious our Protector Saint Gennaro, we admire your total trust in God when you signed yourself with the sign of Holy Cross, before being pushed into the burning furnace, from where you came out miraculously unharmed. Humbly please that, as you for divine help were freed from those fiery flames, so we are freed from the eternal Hell through your powerful intercession.

- Glory to the Father
- Saint Gennaro, pray for us.

4. Glorious our Protector Saint Gennaro, we admire your heroic suffering in bearing so many cruel torments incurred for the Christian faith. Humbly please obtain for us from God the strength and grace needed to endure with merit the sufferings of our lives and to bear witness in front of everyone and so deserve eternal life.

- Glory to the Father ...
- Saint Gennaro, pray for us.

5. Glorious our Protector San Gennaro, we admire the sublime glory that God has raised you for your lofty merits. Humbly please get us from Him who, living a holy life and imitating your heroic virtues, we can the ranks of the saints and of your glory in Heaven.

- Glory to the Father ...
- Saint Gennaro, pray for us.

PRAYER TO SAINT GENNARO

Glorious Saint Gennaro, / strenuous athlete of the faith of Jesus Christ / illustrious Patron of Naples / look kindly toward us / and deign to accommodate the desires / that with full confidence in Your powerful patronage / Today we depose at your feet.

How many times reminder / you came to the aid of your fellow citizens, / stopping the destructive path of the lava of Vesuvius / or freeing them from the plague, / by earthquakes, / hunger / and many others divine punishment. /

The perennial miracle /the liquefaction of your blood / is a sign safe and eloquent / that you live among us, / know our need / and protect us in a special way. / Pray for us to who we recourse, / sure to be heard / and deliver us from many evils that oppress us. /

Save us by the invasive disbelief / and do' that the faith, / for which you generously sacrificed your life, / always produce among us / abundant fruits of holy works. / Amen.

- Saint Gennaro

- Pray for us.

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