

HISTORY OF OUR LADY OF TRUST

- The picture of Our Lady of Confidence was painted by the great Italian painter **Carlo Maratta** (1625-1713) who was knighted by **Pope Clement XI in 1704** and made court painter by **Louis XIV the same year**.
- Maratta gave the picture to a noblewoman, **Clair Isabella Fornari** (June 25 1697- December 9, 1744), the Abbess of the Convent of Poor Claire of St. Francis in the city of Todi.
- The Abbess – today the Venerable Sister Clair Isabel Fornari – embraced a life of severe penance and was favored with many mystical graces. She had a great devotion to sacred images, especially those of Mary. She treasured the picture Maratta gave her and would meditate on it during her prayer time.
- Our Lady promised Sister Clair that she would give special graces to all those throughout the ages who would venerate the image of our Lady of Trust. “My Heavenly Mother assured me,” said the Abbess, “that she **would give a special tenderness** and devotion toward her to everyone who contemplated this image” (the original and copies).
- Sister Clair advised her spiritual director, Father Gazali, to take the picture with him whenever he traveled. Father Gazali always **found a great sense of peace and consolation** from it. He kept the picture until his death (July 29, 1762). After this his possessions, including the image, were given to the Sisters of the Monastery of St. Francis of **Todi** where they are today.
- In the Major Seminary in Rome there is an identical picture of our Lady of Confidence. How can this be? Sister Clair had another spiritual advisor, Father Crivelli, who was the spiritual director of the German College in Rome. While visiting Foligno, Father Crivelli became seriously sick, but was suddenly healed as soon as Sister sent him the original painting. He was so moved by this healing that he wanted a copy of the image which he took to Rome and then to the local seminary. From this simple beginning the devotion spread so that by the 1830’s Our Lady of Trust had become the patroness of the Major Seminary in Rome.
- Our Lady of Trust protected the seminarians in times of crisis. **In 1837**, the scourge of Asiatic flu claimed many lives. The seminarians and their families were put under the protection of Mary; not one of them contracted the disease! In thanksgiving, two crowns were fashioned in gold and placed on the images of Mary and the Child Jesus.
- During World War I, more than 100 seminarians were forced into the Italian military. The seminarians placed themselves under the special care of Mary of Trust. They all returned home safely. To repay the goodness of their Queen, the seminarians put diadems on the crowns of Mother and Child!

- The devotion to Our Lady of Trust has spread worldwide. The Feast of Our Lady of Trust is celebrated on the Sunday before Ash Wednesday.
- Bishop Giaquinta, who studied in the Major Seminary in Rome, had a great devotion for Our Lady of Trust. He chose her as patroness of both the Apostolic Oblates and the Pro Sanctity Movement. Bishop Giaquinta had a painter repaint the image with the finger of Jesus pointing to Mary's heart.
- The Pro Sanctity Family - Priests, Sodales, Apostolic Oblates, Cooperatives, Social Animators, and members of the Movement - love our Lady of Trust very much and foster devotion toward her.
- In 1973, when Pro Sanctity reached Omaha, Msgr. Peter Dunne was introduced to Our Lady of Trust. In 1974, when the first Bethany was opened, an image of Mary of Trust was placed in the Chapel. The sculptor, Mike Montag, has sculptured the first statue of our Lady of Trust.
- The future Chapel in Elkhorn will be dedicated to Our Lady of Trust, as Msgr. Peter Dunne has suggested!

**AD JESUM
PER MARIAM!**

TO JESUS THROUGH MARY!