



### **SAINT MARY'S BASILICA IN VADO**

Ferrara is also a city of "Miracles" where divine intervention has crossed the path of man leaving an indelible mark on history. The Basilica di Santa Maria in Vado is testament to this with its Miracle of Blood. At Easter mass (March 28, 1171), Prior Pietro da Verona broke the consecrated host and blood sprayed out staining the vault above the altar. The new temple was then created thanks to Ercole I d'Este.

The ancient vault is still a pilgrimage and devotional destination eight centuries later, the stains of blood still visible. He who approaches these places with faith and respect will find

peace and comfort and learn that through silence the soul is reawakened. The path of life becomes much less difficult if we allow ourselves to be transported by the beauty left by the artists and the grand suggestion of those fascinating divine little specks of blood so precious to the heart of the believer. Adjacent to the Basilica is the beautiful cloister made by B. Rossetti.

*Before leaving this Basilica a small gift for silent meditation will be presented to the visitor, enclosed in a box as something precious should be.*

## 2

### **SAINT LUKE'S CRUCIFIX** *Where mystery becomes life*

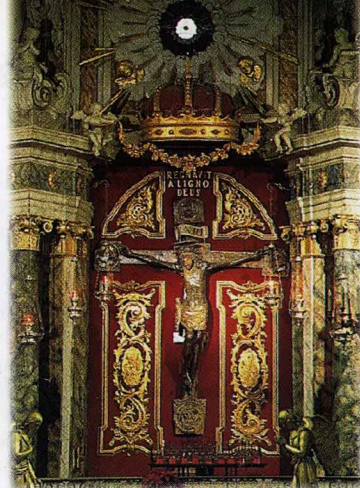
In the ancient Saint Luke's Church, a crucifix is venerated with particular fervor; a wooden sculpture, possibly from the Longobard era and most certainly the oldest in Ferrara. According to tradition, at dawn on Holy Friday, in 1128, the crucifix miraculously emerged from the waters of the Po River and was retrieved and transported here. The widespread piety and religiousness which one takes in in the Holy Crucifix sanctuary is the reigning of divine providence open to hope.

Before leaving here the visitor should not forget to ask a "blessing" for themselves and for their loved ones with the certainty that it will be granted if it is for their own spiritual good. Faith and history have made poetry here. Silence and light compete, but above all the unreal figures

which seem to meet us at the walls: miraculously-cured people in the votive paintings, so simple that they reflect a dream.

This church is truly one of a kind with its silent revelations jealously kept between the ancient walls which defend them from noise and have stopped time.

*There are places where contact between sky and earth, that is between man and soul, is made easier.*



### **CORPUS DOMINI CONVENT**

*Visit enchanting places:  
to be touched, to dream, to remember*

## 3

The days are clearly articulated by the prayers inside the beautiful Convento del Corpus Domini. The church and the Clarisse monastery were founded by Sister Bernardina Sedazzari in the first decade of the 15th century. The most celebrated guest to have stayed here was Saint Caterina Vegri who, while here, wrote "Il libro delle sette armi spirituali" (The book of the seven spiritual arms). It is here that we can still admire the oven where the miracle of bread took place.

*When the entrance doors close at the end of the visit and you return to the outside world, everything will seem different and without a doubt you will carry the word of Saint Chiara in your hearts: In front of lowly Jesus, look, meditate, contemplate, and everything will become simple.*





## SAINT ANTHONY'S MONASTERY IN POLESINE

Having returned within the walls from Via XX Settembre you arrive at Vicolo del Gambone for an enchanting visit to the Monastero di Sant'Antonio in Polesine. If there is a place in Italy where the angels have blended in with the people it is the monastery of Sant'Antonio, united with dry

land in the mid-fifteenth century when the southern branch of the Po River was filled in.

This retreat saw the death of princess Beata Beatrice II, daughter of Azzo VII Novello, who lived here and devoutly passed away in 1245. The adoration and widespread devotion of Beata Beatrice is still alive in our time. The water which comes forth from her

sepulchral slabs is believed to be miraculous: the story goes that premonitory sounds would be heard coming from the sarcophagus of Beata on the eves of happy or sad events in Ferrara. This monastery of St. Antonio and Beata Beatrice was built in 1268 and a still-working 15th century clock is located at the end of the Benedictine monk's dormitory. In the monastery's external courtyard, a centuries-old cherry tree dominates and in springtime flowers before all the others, establishing its prevailing color.

*To enter into the S. Antonio in Polesine conventual complex is like passing through a door into another world. It is the silence which speaks. A type of silence which is more eloquent than a thousand books or words.*

5 SAINT GIORGIO'S CATHEDRAL  
OUTSIDE THE WALLS

Ferrara's first cathedral, San Giorgio, formerly "outside the walls", exists from the 7th century and was the home of the bishops who transferred here from Voghenza. The three-naved Church contains the remains of Saint Maurelio in an urn which was formerly adorned with silver plates. These

silver plates are now kept in the convent. The visitor will be entranced by Bishop Roverella's sepulchre, one of the masterpieces of Renaissance sculpture in Emilia. Near the bell tower entrance is the simple and unadorned tomb of Cosmè



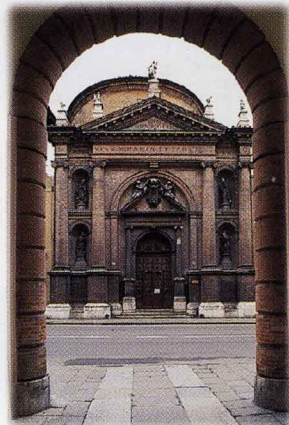
Tura, founder of Ferrarese painting. Here you will find the Olivetan monks who pray, strolling through the beautiful cloister with its open arcade. The sacristy, where classical music concerts are often given, is also interesting.

*Prayer: Father, make our monasteries resound once again with music and song. Let them be green oases for the wanderer and allow every man to find rest in their solitude.*

## SAINT CARLO'S SANCTUARY 6

Having returned to the city center, we recommend stopping at the Santuario di San Carlo located at the beginning of Corso della Giovecca. Inside you will find the beautiful painting by Torricelli depicting San Carlo Borromeo, the valuable terracotta of San Sebastiano and the Host of the Holy Sacrament which is always displayed on the altar.

*What a better place than to say "thank you".*



## SAINT PAUL'S CHURCH 7

In Via Porta Reno, the Saint Paul's Church is certainly worth a visit not only because of the frescos by Scarsellino and Bastianino or the important paintings by Girolamo da Carpi, but for the numerous tombs of celebrated Ferrarese men: Dosso Dossi, the poet Guarini, and the humanist Veronese. The bell tower is to be admired being the last survivor of aristocratic towers which once rose above the city. The convent, now excellently restored, was used as a prison from 1799 until 1912. One breathes Renaissance air inside the double cloister. Even if it is currently home to public offices, it deserves a visit.





## ANNUNCIATION ORATORY



Also known as the Oratorio della Buona Morte (Oratory of Sweet Death), it was the home of the Company of Sweet Death, a brotherhood of laymen who assisted and comforted prisoners in their final hour.

*We like to imagine a place soaked with suffering and spirituality.*



place of Faith and centrality in the city's religious life.

**Cathedral Museum:** On the left-hand side of the Cathedral entrance one may enter the Museum where it is possible to admire relics, paintings, sculptures, but most of all stop to contemplate the Madonna del Melograno (Our Lady of the Pomegranate) by Jacopo della Quercia. It seems to watch over the visitors like a mother watches over her own children. The delicate way in which she holds the baby makes one think of the greatest love of all: maternal love.



*... and leaving, a memory of these walls remains, churches and convents which have seen the stories of monks and saints, of common people...*

*"We remained in Ferrara the entire day and visited many beautiful churches, gardens, private houses, and all that was indicated as notable; among other things, the Jesuata, a rose garden which produces flowers all year round..."*

*Ferrara, Via Madama - (Commemorative epigraph of Michel de Montaigne's walk through Ferrara on 16 November 1580).*

## 9 SAINT FRANCIS' CHURCH



If time is available we recommend that you visit the Saint Francis' Church, Patron Saint of Italy, in Via Terranuova. In addition to all the influential town names of the Este era found in the Church, it is also known for the drama of Ugo and Parisina.

*Awaiting you in the church is a special and personal prayer dedicated to St. Francis of Assisi. It will help you rediscover "true joy", so important in each of our lives.*

## 10 CATHEDRAL, MUSEUM AND ARCHBISHOP'S PALACE

The itinerary closes with a visit to the Cathedral, Bell Tower, Cathedral Museum, and Archbishop's Palace. Many scholars have dwelled upon the origins of Ferrara's Cathedral. We don't want to repeat what has already been widely published. We just want to insert it into the itinerary as a