

Black Madonna of Bavaria

“The Madonna Has Helped”

These four words signify Mary’s special intercession for the people of Bavaria and beyond and adorn the Chapel of Grace built in 1263. In 1489 two miracles were recorded. “A three year old boy fell in the water in Altoetting and after half an hour is pulled out dead. The mother, professing great trust in the Virgin Mary, carries the dead child to the Chapel of Grace and lays him on the altar, falls softly to her knees and begs for her child’s life to be extended. No sooner said than done the child comes back to life.” (Report by the dean of the cloister Johannes Scheitenberger 1623-1648)

“A farmer from Altoetting led a cart of oats to his house and sat his six year old son on the horse; the child fell from the horse under the cart, and was so badly crushed that there was no more hope for him. A prayer was said and the Virgin Mary addressed and the next day the child was fit and healthy again.” (Chronicle of the Jesuit Jakob Irsing from the 17th century) These miracles and many others have made this a favorite shrine of Our Lady in Bavaria.

Rumors speak of a Celtic place of worship which was converted into a Christian church or a baptistery. St. Rupert is supposed to have brought the miraculous image of the Virgin Mary to Altoetting... However, after 500 years of specific historical investigation the truth is still hidden in the dark. (Altoetting City Guide, Stefan Konig, 2005)

It is also a place for newlyweds to visit on their honeymoon. One School Sister of Notre Dame, S. Arimathea Kreidl mentioned in her autobiography that her parents prayed to Mary at Altoetting on their honeymoon that one of their daughters would be a sister. And their prayer was answered through her vocation to the School Sisters of Notre Dame.