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THE FLYING SAINT

THE LIFE OF ST. JOSEPH OF COPERTINO



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Revised Edition

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Photos of the archive of the Sanctuary

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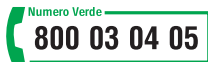
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Osimo - The main altar

THE LIFE OF ST. JOSEPH OF COPERTINO

Little Bethlehem

Like Christ and St. Francis of Assisi, St. Joseph of Copertino was born in a stable. His father, Felix Desa, a skilled carpenter and caretaker of the castle belonging to the Pinelli Dukes, was a good-hearted and easy going man. Going bond for his need yet welching friends, he found himself burdened with debts which later forced him to leave his home and hide so as not to fall into the hands of the law.

On numerous occasions, the police had come to his home to arrest and carry him off to prison. It was on one of these occasions that Franceschina Panaca, his wife, who was about to give birth to another child, fled from the approaching officials of the tribunal to a stable nearby. There, in misery and pain, a miracle of life took place.

Joseph was baptized on 17th June, 1603. Together with his sister Livia – there were four other children who died at a tender age – he was piously educated by his mother who was an exemplary Franciscan tertiary. It is perhaps due to his family misfortune that Franceschina's life was characterized by a tone of excessive severity. Nonetheless, she possessed the virtue of faith, good example, and