

This is translated to English from Italian...

## The Via Angelica



Designed by Father Marcello STANZIONE, the Via Angelica is a pious exercise, entirely dedicated to the angels, messengers of the living God. I, Rolando Quaranta, translated this idea into painting, winding the "Via Angelica" as a "Via Crucis". It is composed of 14 canvases, in which each image touches various passages of the Holy Bible, going from the Old Testament to the New, including the Acts of the Apostles. In order to paint this work, I have documented the various episodes that dealt with it.



The first station is that which, as in Genesis (where God creates the world), so in his immense love he gives life to his heavenly Angels children. The image reproduced on the canvas is that of the awakening of these beings who live by divine light.



The second station concerns the battle that took place in heaven when St. Michael the Archangel, with his cry: "Who is like God?", Launched into the fight against Lucifer, defeating him and driving him into the depths of Hell. In this work I referred to the prayer dedicated to St. Michael in the passage in which he recites "shackle Satan and drive him back into the abyss, with all his rebellious spirits, ... who roam the world to perdition of souls".



The third station, however, speaks of the divine intervention in the life of men. The doubtful Moses does not know - after the liberation from the Egyptian yoke - where to bring his people. Here God sends him an Angel, who shows him the way to the promised land.



The fourth station speaks of Jacob's dream: the tired young man falls asleep and God, by means of a staircase of light, shows him ranks of Angels that rise and fall there, thus showing his Glory.

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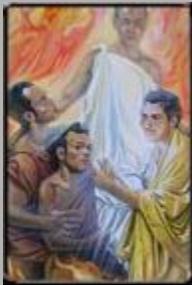
The fifth station speaks of the prophet Elijah's escape to the desert, threatened with death by idolaters, sent by Queen Jezabel. Disheartened, he wants to let himself die, but the infinite love of Heavenly Father does not allow him and sends him through an Angel, every day, the bread and water that nourish and strengthen him (refers to the mercy of God who does not never abandon his children in difficulty).

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In the sixth station, the archangel Raphael accompanies Tobias. Here too the divine intervention is mysteriously hidden, so the Archangel does not make himself recognized and accompanies the young Tobias. Various episodes occur on this trip, such as the continuous protection of the young person; the capture of the fish in the Tigris river, from which he extracts an ointment that will restore sight to the blind father, and the gall that removes the unclean spirit from his future wife, his cousin Sara. God, through the Archangel, is He who intervenes, who guides, protects and heals.

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The seventh station speaks of a very painful passage in the history of Israel, when the entire chosen people were chastised by God and were enslaved by the Babylonian people. It tells of the three "righteous" young men who, for not having adored their idols, were thrown into a burning furnace, but an Angel intervenes and saves them from the fire. This episode makes us understand that God loves us even when we are far from him.

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The eighth station deals with the prophet Daniel in the "Lions' den". This episode speaks of the condemnation of the prophet condemned for not having bowed in worshiping the Babylonian king and was thrown into the pit full of wild beasts for being devoured, but God does not allow it and sends an Angel to close the mouth of the lions, thus saving the his prophet from certain death. This is the last episode of the Old Testament.



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The ninth station concerns "The announcement of the archangel Gabriel to the Virgin Mary intent on daily living practices. The Angel approaches her and announces the "Will of God" to her. The whole image is full of symbolism: from the red and blue robe of Mary, which indicates her royalty and suffering, to the jar with honey and the bee, which represent the resurrection. Mary is the one who says "yes" to God's plan; She is the Mother from whose Son all humanity will be redeemed. In the simple house there is a lamp lit with oil in the bottle: it is an invitation to feed the faith, waiting for Christ. Wheat indicates the Eucharist. There is a dialogue between the Angel and the Virgin. She is not afraid. Indeed, she welcomes Jesus through the imposition of the hand of the Archangel which is suspended on her lap.



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The tenth station sees the angels announcing the "Good News". The divine Word is welcomed by simple men of good will, by the suffering, by the disinherited. The Angels announce that God does not abandon anyone, that each of them is in his Heart and that it is up to man to accept his Word since He will keep his promises.



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The eleventh station sees Jesus consoled by an Angel in the Garden of Gethsemane. It is a scene full of tension, despair and acceptance. Jesus alone, in his anguish, abandoned by all, is consoled by an Angel who, metaphorically, offers him a full cup. Jesus is caught in the act of accepting the bitter fate of death on the cross. The devil, who had tried to distract him from the divine plan, defeated pushes him with anger, as if to say to him: "Go and die for this ungrateful humanity". In the lunar glow, where trees are silhouettes and a cloud crosses a branch, soldiers descend from the holy city. The Angel and Christ are reflected in a source of water that reflects their clothes. Christ personifies humanity that suffers: He alone is the Comforter; from him alone there is peace.



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In the twelfth station, the Pious Women find, on the empty tomb of Jesus, an Angel. The promise came true: Jesus rose from the dead. The bee shows us that only with him there is life, made of love and light; only with Jesus is evil defeated. Where He is there is no darkness and that, with his resurrection, He gives all humanity the hope of a life that goes beyond death. The Gospels end with this scene.

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The thirteenth station is part of the Acts of the Apostles and narrates the episode in which the Angel frees the Apostles from prison. God frees man from anguish. Only in him is there consolation, being He beside all those who have chains in heart and in life; he is close to those who suffer from the evil of evil men; whoever trusts him will be freed.

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The fourteenth station deals with the glory of San Michele and the "righteous". God's promises come true: all those who in their life have witnessed to him with love; all those who gave their lives for justice will be part of the glory of all the saints and angels. God never fails in his words, only in him the hope of eternal life becomes certainty.

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#### **ROLANDO QUARANTA**

Salerno painter and art master, whose paintings have also been appreciated by the last two supreme popes. In September 2003, in Castel Gandolfo, he received the blessing from St. Pope John Paul II together with the painting of the Madonna of Pompeii and, in August 2005, his work, entitled "Peace", was donated to Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI through the Association. Finally, note that this art is from the Campania region.

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