

Maximilian kept the portrait for a time and then gave it to the Carmelite Fathers of Munich. Shortly thereafter, the Superiors of the Province loaned it as a token of gratitude to the Emperor Ferdinand II, a great benefactor of the Order, having founded the convents of Vienna and Prague. By virtue of this loan the miraculous portrait arrived at the Imperial Court of Vienna in 1631. It was received with great joy by the Emperor and his wife, Eleanor, who placed it in the private chapel of the palace. There they richly decorated it. Ferdinand had perfect confidence in the portrait, and in all his difficulties he never ceased to invoke Our Lady's intercession. It is said that he even took the picture with him on all his travels.

Upon the death of Ferdinand, Eleanor retired to the convent of the Discalced Carmelite nuns which she had founded in Vienna. She had the holy picture transferred to the same convent and placed over the high altar. Upon her death on June 27, 1655, the picture was returned to the Carmelite friars.

Having been restored to the veneration of the public, Our Lady did not cease to draw multitudes and to bestow on them singular favors and graces in accordance with her promise to those who honor her image. The miraculous portrait was transferred on December 14, 1901 to the new church and monastery that the Discalced Carmelites had built on Silbergasse, Silver Street. The first altar erected in this church, by the generosity of benefactors, was dedicated to "Our Lady of the Bowed Head," and here the treasure of the Viennese Carmel is kept and venerated.

The Reverend Dominic of Jesus and Mary, who was favored with the animation of the portrait and the promise of Our Lady, became the fifth General of the Discalced Carmelite Order. He died in Vienna on February 16, 1630. His cause for beatification was introduced 46 years later, on January 29, 1676. Following a study and examination of his heroic virtues, Dominic of Jesus and Mary was declared Venerable in 1907 by Pope St. Pius X. \*(excerpted from: Joan Carroll Cruz, *Miraculous Images of Our Lady*)

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## ***Our Lady of the Bowed Head***

**(Mother of Grace)  
Vienna, Austria  
1610**



**Virgin most holy, Mother of the Word Incarnate,  
Treasurer of graces and Refuge of sinners; we fly to thy motherly affection  
with lively faith, and we beg of thee the grace to do the will of God.  
Into thy most holy hands we commit the keeping of our hearts,  
asking thee for health of soul and body, in the certain hope that thou,  
our most loving Mother, wilt hear our prayer.  
Wherefore with lively faith we say: Hail Mary *three times*.**

Prayer taken from a holy card by the Monastery of Discalced Carmelites, New Orleans, LA, with Nihil Obstat and Imprimatur dated March 5, 1949

## OUR LADY OF THE BOWED HEAD

\*One evening in the year 1610, Venerable Dominic of Jesus and Mary was inspecting an old, dilapidated house that had been purchased with the intention of converting it into a monastery for the Discalced Carmelite friars. While walking around the outside of the building he passed a heap of rubbish, but paid no attention to it. But when he was examining the rooms of the building, he had an interior impulse that attracted him to the heap of rubbish and made him return to it. He lit his lantern and carefully examined the trash until something in the shadows attracted his attention. What he saw was an oil painting depicting Our Lady.

Being a devout child of Mary, Dominic was grieved to see a picture of her in such poor condition. After begging Our Lady's pardon for the ill treatment her portrait had endured, he carried it off, cleaned it, repainted the damaged parts and placed it in his cell. There he venerated it with great confidence.

One evening, after having swept his cell, Dominic noticed that dust had settled upon his treasured picture. Regretting what had happened, he begged Our Lady's pardon, and taking his woolen handkerchief he dusted the picture, saying with childlike simplicity: "O purest and holiest of Virgins, nothing in the whole world is worthy of touching your holy face, but since I have nothing but this coarse handkerchief, deign to accept my good will."

While he continued dusting the picture with great care and humility, the face of Our Lady suddenly became animated. She smiled at Dominic and nodded her head in token of her gratitude. Because Dominic was deeply confused and feared that he might be experiencing a diabolical illusion, the Queen of Heaven dispelled his concern with the words: "Fear not, my son, for your request is granted." (Dominic had earlier requested a favor of her.) "It will be accomplished, and will be part of the recompense that you are to receive for the love that you bear my Divine Son and myself." Our Lady then told Dominic to express to her with all confidence any favor he might desire. Dominic fell on his knees and offered himself entirely to the service of Jesus and Mary, and knowing by revelation that the soul of a benefactor was suffering in Purgatory, he asked its deliverance. The most Holy Virgin promised the soul's release if sacrifices and several Masses were offered for the soul. The apparition then ended.

Dominic hastened to do as Our Lady had requested, and a short time later, as he was kneeling before his miraculous picture, Our Lady appeared to him with the soul of the benefactor, which had been delivered from Purgatory. The benefactor thanked Dominic for his prayers and sacrifices. Then the Mother of God encouraged Dominic to ask for yet more favors. The holy religious asked Our Lady if she would listen mercifully to the prayers of all those who honored the picture and invoked her aid. Our Lady offered this assurance:

***All those who implore my protection, devoutly honoring this picture, will obtain their petitions, and will receive many graces. Moreover, I shall hearken in a special manner to the prayers that shall be addressed to me for the relief of the souls in Purgatory.***

Since the promise was intended for all Our Lady's devotees, Dominic felt that he could no longer retain the picture for his own personal use. For this reason he had the portrait placed in the Oratory of St. Charles, connected to the Church of Santa Maria della Scala. It remained there until his death, becoming the object of fervent veneration, which was rewarded with many singular favors. Reproductions were made of the portrait, and soon it was venerated in several places.

A close friend of Dominic and the Carmelite Order was Maximilian, Duke of Bavaria. As a personal favor, he asked the Reverend Father Nicholas of the Immaculate Conception, who was the Vicar-General of the Order, if he might borrow the portrait. His request was granted.

The picture was brought to Munich by a pious lay brother, Brother Anastasius of St. Francis, who had been Dominic's traveling companion for more than 15 years. Brother Anastasius of St. Francis wrote and signed under solemn oath a document attesting to all that he had heard from Dominic concerning the picture and the miraculous events relating to it. The document is dated August 7, 1631.