



Above: In circle is the star chandelier of Loreto, to be installed in the new Shrine on October 15th.

I used to think of the star in the Basilica of Loreto as a symbol of a new phase in the history of the Holy House: the phase opened by a providential priest especially prepared by God and by his Community to establish the Loreto apostolate throughout the world.

Pope Journeys to Loreto

It was just ten years after Fr. Modestus had been put in charge of the Universal Congregation that Pope John XXIII called the attention of the world to Loreto by announcing a Vatican Council and that he [the Pope] would make a pilgrimage to Loreto to ask Our Lady's intercession for that Council's success.

A few weeks before the Council opened, Pope John kept his promise (October 4, 1962). On that occasion His Holiness said:

"May this Shrine of Loreto be like a window opened to the world to recall souls to the sanctification of family life."

"House of Miracles" Once Again

The window was opened. And largely through the instrumentality

The STAR of LORETO COMES to AMERICA

by JOHN M. HAFFERT

of Fr. Modestus...marked by his own miracle-star...the star of Loreto began to shine throughout the world. His magazine was widely diffused. Larger and larger pilgrimages came. There were so many cures that once again the world remembered to call the Holy House the "House of Miracles."

Wondered at God's Providence

Now the star has come to America.

How many times in the past twenty-four years I have personally gazed at the star on the forehead of Fr. Modestus and wondered at the Providence of God in choosing certain persons for certain works at certain strategic moments of history. I felt as did Archbishop Capovilla... who first came to Loreto as the secretary of Pope John and is now the Pope's administrator there...and who said of Fr. Modestus:

"Remain with Us!"

"...A discreet presence, a faithful servant 'fully competent and well equipped for all good works' (2 Tm. 3:17), a cordial friend..."

And when the star came to Washington, N.J., I felt as though it

was from Fr. Modestus, who had gone to his reward only weeks before.

I felt that Archbishop Capovilla's prayer at the funeral of Fr. Modestus was already being answered:

"Fr. Modestus! Remain with us! Ask the Lord, that good and merciful Judge, to continue to carry on here... the fervent and fruitful service you gave."

"A Holy Mission..."

As the many faithful come from all over America to this beautiful new Shrine rising on the hill beside the Holy House, U.S.A. and look at the star shining in the center of the soaring tower as it had previously shone throughout this century over the Holy House in Loreto, may its light penetrate their hearts with a sense of continuity and peace...not only as a light from Loreto itself but a star which speaks of our responsibility to open the window of this Mystery of the Incarnation upon America... even as Fr. Modestus saw that same star imprinted upon his own forehead as the symbol of a divine responsibility—a holy mission.

Below: Pope John XXIII leaves Loreto after his visit of October 4, 1962.

