

# The body of Saint Faustina, Roman Martyr, carried to the Guadagni Chapel in Florence

Dear Guadagni cousins and family,

The exciting story of the bringing of the body of a martyr from the Roman times (close to 2,000 years ago) to the Guadagni Chapel in Florence has come to a happy conclusion. There are more questions to answer and things to discover but we now know where Saint Faustina's body is exhibited and we can go and see it if we go to Florence or/ and we can pray "our" Saint for necessary graces.

I enclose below the first two emails I sent to the Guadagnis and Family concerning Saint Faustina's body's transferral to Florence by Marquis Neri Guadagni. First of all, Marquis Neri Guadagni is in reality Marquis Neri Andrea Guadagni (1673-1748), in case you want to check him in the Family Tree. Andrea is the name of a girl in English but it means "Andrew" in Italian, "Andreina" is the Italian name for girls.

In 1683, Neri Andrea's father, Donato Maria Guadagni, 3<sup>rd</sup> Marquis of San Leolino, bought the ancient and grandiose palace of the Dei family, whose line had died out a few years before. The palace is located in Piazza Santo Spirito. Donato Maria restored the old palace and decorated in a noble fashion. It is the most famous of the Guadagni palaces and the most imitated and copied palace of Florence. Neri Andrea was 10 years old when the palace was bought and probably was excited to move into this new beautiful house, as were his parents and his seven siblings.

When Donato Maria died in 1718, Neri Andrea became the 4<sup>th</sup> Marquis of San Leolino and inherited the palace. The palace had a private chapel. Probably Neri Andrea thought at first to get a relic of a saint to adorn the chapel. However, Neri Andrea's brother, Bernardo, was Cardinal Vicar of Rome (i.e. did the Pope's job when the latter was absent from Rome) and his uncle, Lorenzo Corsini, was the Pope Clement XII himself. So maybe Neri Andrea thought: "Why not a whole Saint, instead of just a finger or a bone?" And so, in 1735, he carried to Florence the miraculously kept body of Saint Faustina, Martyr of Rome.

Maybe, after a few years or a few decades he, or one of his descendants, thought the miraculous body of Saint Faustina could be seen and venerated by more people than just the Guadagni Family. So he moved it to the Church of San Miniato a Pagnolle, which was under the patronage of the Guadagni Family, and is located only a few miles from the Guadagni villa of Masseto.

My nephew, Gian Antonio Profilo, emailed me the following page on the Church of San Miniato a Pagnolle, from which I got part of my information. Below it you will see my second email about Saint Faustina, sent me by our French cousin Daniel Thuret. It is a beautifully preserved body but it is a different Saint Faustina, kept in Viterbo, Italy, a small historical town close to Rome.

I will translate in English what might be of interest on the Church of San Miniato a Pagnolle. However, I want to add something first. As far as I know, before today, no Guadagni knew about the Guadagni appropriation and transfer to Florence of the miraculous body of Saint Faustina, except obviously in Neri Andrea's time. If Vieri had not asked me to translate all the Guadagni Family history in English, and gather as much information on the family past as I could find, this important and fascinating detail would have been lost forever. So, thanks to Vieri, we are not only translating history we are writing history. Thank you Vieri, from all the Guadagnis of the present and the future.

# Popolo di S. Miniato a Pagnolle

## Town of San Miniato a Pagnolle

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*Il restauro della chiesa ha lasciato intatto il portichetto frontale  
The restauration of the church has kept the front little portico (cloister?) intact.*

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La Parrocchiale di S. Miniato a Pagnolle

The Parish Church of San Miniato a Pagnolle

### Storia e architettura

History and Architecture

La chiesa di S. Miniato è ricordata in due bolle papali, una di 1102 di papa Pasquale II e l'altra del 1134 di Innocenzo II.

The church of San Miniato is mentioned in two Papal Bulls, one of Pope Pasquale II in the year 1102 and the other of Pope Innocent II in 1134.

Se ne ha notizia nel decimario vaticano del 1274.

It is mentioned in the Vatican Document of 1274.

Nel 1301 la troviamo già costituita a parrocchia.

In the year 1301 the church is already a parish.

Fino dal 1436 era unita al Monastero di S. Martino a Maiano dal quale ne fu staccata nel 1606.

Since 1436 it was united to the Monastery of San Martino a Maiano. It was detached from it in 1606.

In seguito ne ebbe il patronato la famiglia dei Marchesi Guadagni.

After that, it was under the patronage of the family of the Marchesi Guadagni.

Ha pianta a capanna con coperture a capriate di legno; il porticato esterno fu aggiunto nel corso del XVI sec. La cella campanaria presenta una caratteristica merlatura.



*l'interno/ the interior of the church*



*La facciata e il portico/ the façade and the portico (cloister?)*



*Il campanile a vela/the bell tower*

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## Gli arredi interni

### Interior decorations

Al suo interno sono conservati una *Madonna con Santi* di scuola bolognese del XVII sec., e un dipinto raffigurante *S. Miniato* con la propria testa in mano.

Inside the church you can find a 17th century Bologna School Madonna with Saints and a painting of beheaded Saint Miniato holding his head in his hands.

Tra gli arredi segnaliamo un calice del XV sec. di Benedetto da Maiano e un reliquario cinquecentesco.

There are also a chalice of the 15<sup>th</sup> century made by Benedetto da Maiano and 16<sup>th</sup> century relics.

Sotto l'altare si trova l'urna con il corpo mummificato della martire S. Faustina.

Under the altar of the church there is the shrine containing the mummified body of Martyr Saint Faustina.



**Teca con Santa Faustina  
Shrine with Saint Faustina**



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## Il martirio di S. Miniato



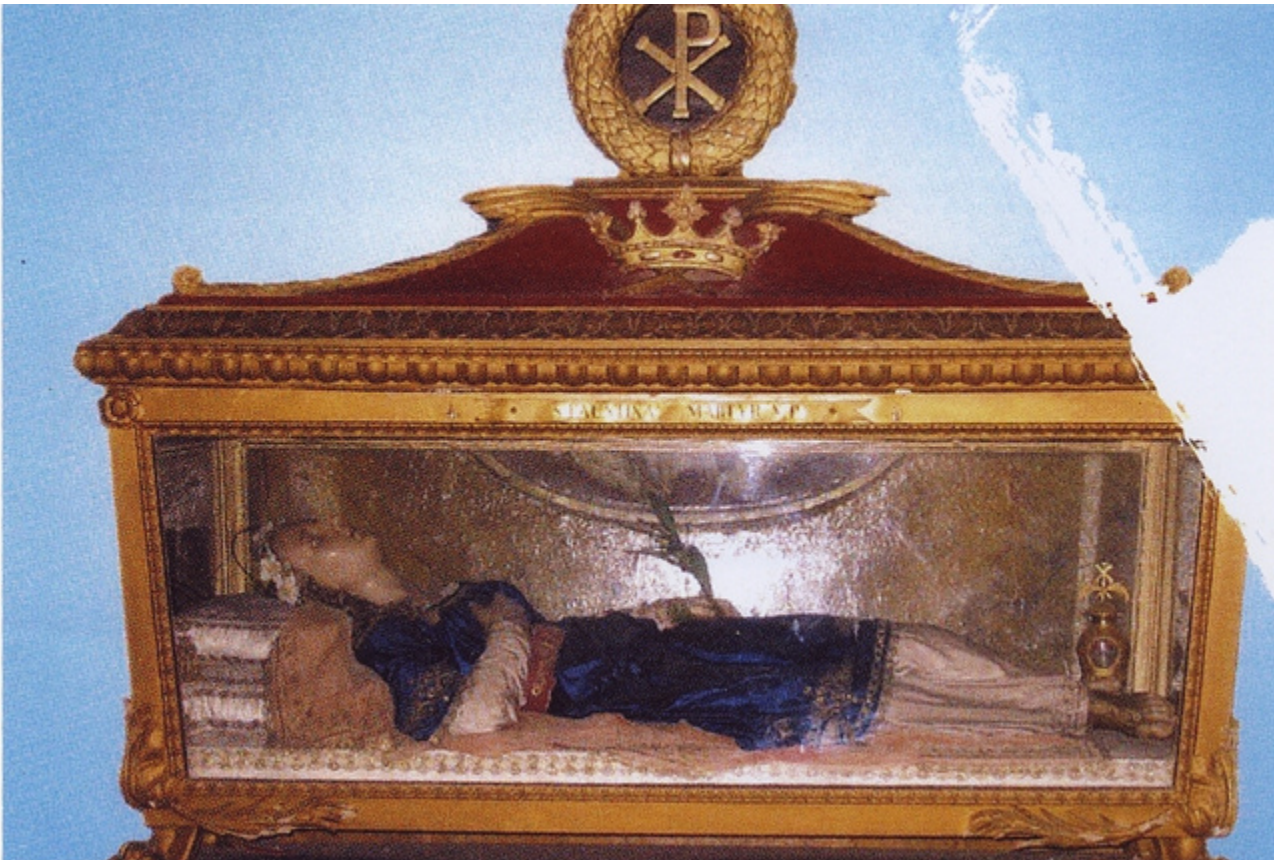
*Il martirio di S. Miniato, tela di ..., sec  
The martyrdom of Saint Miniato, canvas by...century....*

If you enlarge it you can see decapitated Saint Miniato calmly walking away holding his head in his hands.

## First Email

**Sent:** Friday, May 31, 2013 3:48 PM

**Subject:** Emailing: Santa Faustina Flickr - Photo sent by Daniel Thuret (crown of Marquis, maybe Guadagni? on the coffin!)



# Santa Faustina

## Second Email

From: **Francesco Carloni**

Sent: **Thursday, May 30, 2013 11:00 AM**

Subject: **FW: Guadagni Archives 1: the body of Saint Faustina, martyr**

Dear Guadagni cousins,

Two days ago I started reading the huge list of documents contained in the Guadagni Archives. These archives were kept in a large room on the second floor of Masseto. When the villa was sold by Chuck Guadagni in 2005, the Archives, which still belong to our branch of the Guadagni, were transferred to the Florentine State Archives, under the supervision of Lawyer Aiazzi. In the Internet I was able to get the list of all of them (just the list of the documents contained in the Guadagni Archives is over 200 pages long) and I am reading through them. In page 23, the title of a document caught my attention; I am translating it in English: "Expenses sustained by Marquis Neri Guadagni to carry the body of Saint Faustina Martyr, from Rome to Florence, in 1735, and put it in the Chapel of the Guadagni Palace." Neri (1673-1748) was the grandfather of Luigi, grandfather of our Great-grandfather Guadagno Guadagni, from whom we all descend.

What happened to the body of Saint Faustina, killed in the Colosseum, either devoured by the lions or burned alive at the stake, or slaughtered by a gladiator, under the amused look of the Roman Emperor? and maybe preserved miraculously intact? Where is it now? It belongs to our family. I will tell you more as soon as I find out.

Francesco

P.S. One of the greatest joys of my life was when Vieri made me historian of the Guadagni Family. It is mind-boggling!