

Saint Joseph is the virginal spouse of Mary and the virginal father of Jesus. He is a perpetual virgin. Saint Joseph is your virginal father!

Santo Anello

Divine union between Our Lady and the glorious St. Joseph!
By means of this union that good of eternal goods, Our Lord himself, belonged to St. Joseph as well as to Our Lady.¹

— St. Francis de Sales

“Santo Anello?” Who is that?
Actually, Santo Anello is not a person. Santo Anello is a thing: the “holy ring” that St. Joseph gave Mary on their wedding day!

Yes, you read that right. The wedding ring that St. Joseph gave to Mary is still in existence today. It is reserved in a special gold and silver reliquary in the Cathedral of San Lorenzo in Perugia, Italy. Many people who go on pilgrimage to Assisi, Italy, are unaware that only a short distance away from Assisi (14 miles) is the holy ring.

The holy ring has been in Perugia since the 19th century. Prior to its term in Perugia, the ring was housed in various other locations throughout Italy. Until recently, the existence of the ring was not known to many people outside of Perugia. Even many saints did not know about the holy ring.

Thanks to the mystical visions of Blessed Anne Catherine Emmerich, people around the world now know about the Santo Anello and its exact location. Interestingly, Blessed Anne Catherine herself never saw the ring in person. She only saw the holy ring in her mystical visions, but never knew where the ring was located. Information about its precise location only came to light after her death.

Here’s how.

It was reported that on July 29 and August 3, 1821, Blessed Anne Catherine received visions concerning the holy ring. Prior to the visions, she had had no idea that the ring St. Joseph had given Mary was still in existence. She said:

[July 29, 1821] I saw the Blessed Virgin’s wedding ring; it is neither of silver nor of gold, nor of any other metal; it is dark in color and iridescent; it is not a thin narrow ring, but rather thick and at least a finger broad. I saw it smooth and yet as if covered with little regular triangles in which were letters. On the inside

e of Mary and the virginal father
t Joseph is your virginal father!

nello

and the glorious St. Joseph!
of eternal goods, Our Lord
well as to Our Lady.¹

— St. Francis de Sales

a person. Santo Anello is a thing:
e Mary on their wedding day!

wedding ring that St. Joseph gave
It is reserved in a special gold and
of San Lorenzo in Perugia, Italy.

ge to Assisi, Italy, are unaware that
San (14 miles) is the holy ring.

Perugia since the 19th century. Prior
to housed in various other locations

the existence of the ring was not
of Perugia. Even many saints did not

visions of Blessed Anne Catherine
of now know about the Santo

through, Blessed Anne Catherine
the only see the holy ring in her

the ring was located. Infor-
light after her death.

August 3, 1821, Blessed

the ring. Prior to

given

was a flat surface. The ring is engraved with something. I saw it kept behind many locks in a beautiful church. Devout people about to be married take their wedding rings to touch it.

[August 3, 1821] In the last few days I have seen much of the story of Mary's wedding ring, but as the result of disturbances and pain I can no longer give a connected account of it. Today I saw a festival in a church in Italy where the wedding ring is to be found. It seemed to me to be hung up in a kind of monstrance which stood above the tabernacle. There was a large altar there, magnificently decorated; one saw deep into it through much silverwork. I saw many rings being held against the monstrance. During the festival I saw Mary and Joseph appearing in their wedding garments on each side of the ring, as if Joseph were placing the ring on the Blessed Virgin's finger. At the same time, I saw the ring shining and as if in movement.²

According to the visions, Blessed Anne Catherine learned that the wedding ring was in a church in Italy, but she never knew what church or town in Italy, and she died without ever finding out. A few years after her death, people began searching for the locations of many of the things that Blessed Anne Catherine reportedly saw in her visions. Incredibly, the ring and its location were discovered! The ring was found in the Cathedral of San Lorenzo in Perugia, Italy. It was discovered to be housed in a beautiful reliquary resembling a monstrance, exactly as Blessed Anne Catherine had stated. The ring had been there for some time, but almost nobody outside of Italy knew about it. Her description of the ring was true as well. The ring appears iridescent and dark in color, a dark amber or yellow. On occasion, if there is a lot of sunlight in the Cathedral, the ring can appear to be milky white.

A fascinating aspect of Blessed Anne Catherine's reported visions are the dates that she saw the ring. Her visions of the ring occurred on July 29 and August 3. Unbeknownst to her, these dates coincide with the time of year when pilgrims visit the Cathedral in Perugia as they make their way to Assisi for the annual celebration of the Feast of the Holy Angels of the Portiuncula on August 2. The end of July and/or early August see large groups of people venerate the ring in a special way. Married couples, as well as those about to be married, are allowed to touch their wedding rings to the Santo Anello to receive a blessing on their marriage. Blessed Anne Catherine apparently witnessed this happening in her visions!

Today, pilgrims from around the world travel to Perugia to see the relic and venerate it. Blessed Pope Pius IX venerated the ring on May 10, 1857, when visiting Perugia; he also celebrated Mass at the Cathedral.

O, what pure love the virgin spouses had for each other! More than Adam and Eve in the early days of their innocence, Joseph and Mary were the delight of the Lord, the ecstasy of angels in the humble home of Nazareth. Nazareth was similar to Eden in the first days of creation: everything was holy, everything was innocent, everything was beautiful!³

— Blessed Bartolo Longo