



History of Our Lady of the Pillar

The advocacy to Our Lady of the Pillar dates to the first years of evangelization on the Iberian Peninsula of the European continent. It is also considered "the oldest Marian apparition recognized by the Church" ([Catholic News Agency](#)) and it is represented with a small bronze statue of the Virgin with the Child Jesus in her arms on a jasper pillar.

The account of this apparition as shown on the archives of the Cathedral of Zaragoza in Spain is as follows: "The tradition of the apparition of the Virgin in Zaragoza in mortal flesh is the central issue that gives meaning to everything that surrounds the world of "the Pillar." It is about a pious tradition, according to which, the apostle James the Great was in Cesaraugusta, on the banks of the Ebro River, along with a small group of converts who had heard and believed his preaching. But the natives were quite hard of hearing and heart, and so the apostle saw their strength falter and they began to wonder if it made sense to continue preaching the message of Jesus on this earth. When his weakness, due to discouragement, made him lose his integrity, he saw Mary, the Mother of Jesus, in a glorious apparition (Mary had not died yet), surrounded by angels who, from Jerusalem, came to comfort him and renew his spirits. The Blessed Virgin gave James the jasper Column that today supports her image as a symbol of the strength that his faith should have. This happened at dawn on January 2, 40 A.D. Mary talked with James and asked him to build a temple in that same place. According to the same tradition, the Column (Pillar) that the Virgin gave to James has remained in the same place since then." ([Catedral de Zaragoza](#))

The intercession of Our Lady of the Pillar to help the Apostle James to continue his evangelizing task in the old continent, is seen again on October 12, 1492, with the arrival of Christopher Columbus and the many missionaries who brought the message of Christ to the Americas. For this reason, Saint John Paul II "recognized the Virgin of the Pillar as Patroness of all Hispanic peoples" during his visit to the Cathedral of Our Lady in 1984. ([Catholic News Agency](#))

The feast of Our Lady of the Pillar is celebrated on October 12 with great devotion in many Spanish-speaking nations with chants and flowers as a remembrance of the figure of Mary, not only as the union between two continents, but also as the column of our faith in times of difficulty.

Catholic News Agency [Meet Our Lady of the Pillar, the first apparition of the Virgin Mary in history | Catholic News Agency](#)

Catedral de Zaragoza [La tradición de la venida - Catedrales de Zaragoza \(catedraldezaragoza.es\)](#)

Catholic News Agency [Nuestra Señora del Pilar \(Our Lady of the Pillar\) \(catholicnewsagency.com\)](#)