



Šilva Shrine

13/12/2015

Šilva

M. Jurgai#io str. 2 - Šilva - Lithuania



From the oldest of times to the present, a steady stream of pilgrims has been flowing to Šilva. The feast of the Nativity (or “Birth”) of the Blessed Virgin Mary has been celebrated here for nearly 500 years, each time drawing many thousands of pilgrims from all of Lithuania and beyond. Pious visitors throng to the Chapel of the Apparition of Our Lady of Šilva, which stands in the exact place where 400 years ago Mary appeared. The Blessed Virgin Mary appeared in Šilva in 1608. Children from a nearby village who were keeping sheep in the land of the old church saw, atop a large rock, a young woman holding a baby in her arms and weeping bitterly.

Altogether, about a quarter of a million pilgrims pass through Šilva each year. The largest groups gather in early September during the annual eight-day indulgenced feast known as Šilin#s.

The current red brick church of Šilva was built and furnished around the middle of the 18th century. It is an example of late baroque sacred architecture, with an interior that has been preserved almost entirely unchanged for more than two centuries.

The Basilica’s iconography develops three main themes: Mary as she who brought the Saviour into the world, Christ as the Founder of the Church, and the Church itself. The main altar features the miraculous painting of the Mother of God and Child.