

## **The Portiuncula (St. Mary of the Angels)**

In the valley below Assisi, a small chapel used to stand among some oak trees. Hermits from Palestine had built it early in the Christian era. In the 6<sup>th</sup> century the land was donated to St Benedict. It was known as “The Portiuncula” i.e. “The little portion”. The chapel was a quiet place of prayer...

When Francis was told to “rebuild my church”, the Portiuncula was one of the first chapels that he restored. The chapel was dedicated to St. Mary of the Angels. Francis lived there and rebuilt it with his own hands. IT became a special place of refuge for him. It is considered the cradle of the Franciscan Order.

At the present time this “Little Portion” stands within the large church in the valley below Assisi. The large structure protects the little church from the elements. Its paintings and simple style make it a quiet, respectful place to pray. The spirit of Francis lingers here and touches those who come to pray.

This excerpt from Fr Lester Bach, *Catch Me A Rainbow*, (1990), p. 60.  
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