

La "Fradese" di Grizzo. La chiesa e la confraternita, ed. Paolo Goi, texts by Roberto Castenetto, Paolo Goi, and Egidio Roveredo. Fiume Veneto: Edizioni GEAPprint, 2001. 117 pp., 34 illustrations. L. 20,000

In the spring of 2001, the newly renovated church of Santa Maria della Fradese reopened its doors to the parishioners of Grizzo, a small town in the region of Friuli (Italy). To mark this special occasion, the parish of San Bartolomeo Apostolo, to whom the *fradese* (confraternity) now belongs, published this volume to commemorate the sodality's history, its architecture and the artwork it possesses, some of which dates back to the early medieval period. The book contains three articles. The longest is by Roberto Castenetto, who provides extensive information on the history of the *fradese* and its surroundings. Egidio Roveredo examines the architecture of the parish documenting its various stages of development from the late 1300s to 2001. The final chapter written by Paolo Goi, the editor of this volume, is devoted entirely to the artworks in the church. Drawings of the architecture and illustrations of the artworks are included in the last two articles.

During the mid fifteenth century, the church of the *fradese*, along with other local enclaves such as Malnisio and Montereale, was part of the diocese of Concordia. However, by the late fifteenth century, conflicting opinions and inadequate spiritual services from the central parish (Montereale) led to the building of new churches and to growing popular interest in the *fradese* as an alternative to standard, parish-based religious services. In keeping with medieval practice, these parishes also provided a variety of civic services, especially touching on real estate transactions, and this soon became a plentiful source of income.

The church of the *fradese* could not have served the community so well had it not been for the efforts and dedication of its confraternity members. Unfortunately, because of the scarcity of sources, little is known about the origins, purpose or the early organization of the confraternity. This leads Castenetto to rely, instead, on later documentation, generally from documents dating from the mid-sixteenth century to the end of the seventeenth, when the *fradese* went into decline. In the appendix, the author includes transcriptions from the *Catapan* (that is, the register where the confraternity's documents and activities were recorded), including two statutes (one dated 1576 and the other c. 1644), an exaltation to the members (1644), and a list of indulgences (possibly from 1644). Though these works provided a good amount of information as to the obligations and administrative aspects of the confraternity, they are but a few pieces to a complicated puzzle.

The statutes of 1576 lay out the duties of council members and those of the confraternity. On the Marian feast days of 8 and 12 September, the confraternity elected two administrators, one of which always came from either Montereale or Malnisio. Castenetto includes a record of elected officials from 1570/1 to

1595–1596 and their place of origin. The statute contains no information as to how these officials were elected. The duties of these administrators (*camerari*) included the collection of fees owed by the membership and of all other contributions to the church and to the organization. As the author indicates, the job was not an easy task since late and missed payments were inevitable.

Other duties of the confraternity involved the upkeep and decoration of the church, particularly in preparation for liturgical celebrations. The lighting of the church by both oil and wax was expected after the statutes of 1576. This became crucial during three specific times of the year (the Feast of the Nativity of Mary, All Saints, and Easter) when all the funds from the confraternity were directed towards the illumination of the church and to pay the celebrant priest. According to Castenetto, the church depended on the confraternity rather than the reverse. The confraternity received income from various sources: the annual contribution of members, collections during feasts, rented property, celebrations of anniversaries and fines from those who had infringed against the statutes.

Despite the Fradese's founts of income and many council meetings, the contemporary spiritual malaise soon engulfed the institution.

The Council of Trent and its regulations eventually led to a profound transformation in the *fradese*. New statutes were drafted (possibly around 1644). Prospective members were now required to go to confession prior to joining the sodality. During Mass all members of the *fradese* were required to recite seven Our Fathers and seven Hail Marys. When praying for the deceased the numbers of prayers were multiplied to thirty for each. Members were expected to participate in the funerals not only of members of the association, but also of members of the community of Grizzo. In 1644 an exhortation was issued to all members providing them with a list of conditions and obligations. The most important of all was a pledge of obedience and devotion to the Virgin Mary. Other conditions involved the prohibition against blasphemous language or the slandering or insulting of fellow members. Under no circumstance were they to leave the church without permission during services. Other duties included the giving of alms to the poor and providing for church renovations. There is no indication, however, of what disciplinary action would be taken against those who disobeyed. After these reforms, the fradese enjoyed a period of renewed vitality; at one point the membership rose to about 400. Such vitality did not last long, for at the turn of the eighteenth century the confraternity began to decline, so much so that by the latter part of the century it was finally dissolved.

Rosaria Moretti
University of Toronto