

## VareseNews

### Sanctuary, statues on the ground after 500 years. The restoration begins

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The 20 wooden statues from the Sanctuary **are not in good shape**. After 500 years of being exposed to **dust and sudden changes in temperature**, they need to be restored.

Today, Tuesday, they have been **taken down from their places around the Sanctuary's dome**, where they were a part of what many call the **most beautiful frescoed Paradise in Europe**, by Guadenzio Ferrari. It took two days to get the statues down. The excitement inside **the Sanctuary, among the onlookers and people in charge, was evident**.

Now, these works **will undergo initial restoration work**, to make them safe, but **thousands of euros** will be needed to complete everything and return them to their original splendour. An initial contribution, following the warning given by the Curator of the Sanctuary's Historical Archive, Giuseppe Colombo, came from Saronno town council. "Interest has also been **shown by the Cariplo Foundation**," the Curator explained. "Now, we're asking for help from anyone, private individuals and companies, because it's important for the town of Saronno. It's already taken quite a lot of money to get the statues down. We must try to pass on these important works in a better condition."

**The statues date back to 1535**; they were sculpted by **Giulio Oggioni** and painted by **Alberto da Lodi**, the man who painted and made the ornaments of **The Last Supper and of the deposition**. "They all have to be examined," explained **Carola Ciprandi**, the restorer employed to retrieve them. "No one has ever seen them close up. One interesting fact is that the ornaments are similar, even identical to those of The Last Supper. It will be very important to make comparisons, because, as these statues have been so high up, **they've never been touched**."

It is still not possible to say how long the restoration work will take. For the moment, an initial intervention will be done to make them safe **and to stop them from losing any ornaments**. It will be possible to establish a timetable on the basis of the funds.

"Once the statues have been repaired," Colombo concludes, "**the ideal thing to do will be to redo the lighting in the dome**. We have the most beautiful frescoed Paradise in Europe, it's not just the concert of angels. I think it really deserves the attention. But this is going to cost money."

Redazione VareseNews  
redazione@varesenews.it

