



## Shrine In A Convent Cemetery, Rovereto, Italy

LUCIANO BALDESSARI, ARCHITECT

Advocates of "living memorials"—and we are on record as among them—cannot but include in this category the infrequent instance of the shrine of a purely symbolic or sentimental nature which, in the hands of an inspired designer, is imbued with vitality and artistic integrity of continuing worth—a "living memorial" in the broadest sense of the term. Such a one, we believe, is the little convent shrine shown here.

Reverently conceived, beautifully executed, this serene monument marks the burying ground reserved for the Sisters of the Blessed Virgin Mary. Set in a simple field within the cemetery grounds, the shrine is bordered by orchards of peach and cherry trees, seen against a typically sparkling Italian backdrop of rounded hills, blue sky, and bright sunshine.

The symbolism of the design is a joyful expression of faith: from the windowed wall—the convent—a flock of doves which represent the souls of the departed Sisters is arranged in flight toward the Cross, draped with the sudarium. Built on a base of slabs of red-purple porphyry edged with brick, the symbolic windowed wall is topped by terra cotta roof tile; the doves, the work of the sculptor Voltan, are of green-toned hand-wrought copper; the iron Cross is enameled in green. A small garden, made up of a series of flowerpot receptacles, is enclosed in a low stone wall; a laurel tree and a midget cypress stand in back of the enclosure.

