

The itinerary starts at an altitude of 410 m from Poggiolo, a structure which has been officially opened on the occasion of the massacre's 50th anniversary, where the Visitor Center of the Parco Storico di Monte Sole and the didactic hall are located.

Following the path up to the conjunction with the asphalted road, one goes on the left to reach the San Martino fork, a connection point between the Reno Valley and the Setta Valley. Right by the fork there is the Scuola di Pace (point 1, altitude 423 m), officially opened in 1999, which is composed by an observatory for the permanent research on the causes of the war and on the peace conditions in the contemporary world, and by a laboratory to foster and realize initiatives for peace training and education.

From the visitor center, near a majestic pubescent oak (*Quercus pubescens*), a small road leads to the S. Martino Cemetery, where a memorial stone was laid to remember Father Giovanni Fornasini, one of the five priests killed during the Monte Sole massacre, whose body was found here on April 21 1945. The route continues towards the small hill where one can still see the remains of the church and houses of San Martino (point 2, altitude 436 m), seat of the Parish church as early as 1612. After the war's destruction, only the perimeter of the church was visible. Today, following a recovery project carried out by the park authorities, you can also observe a stone staircase, the perimeter walls of a number of houses and the remains of an ice-house. On September 30 1944 about forty people had gathered in the church. When the German troops arrived, they forced everyone out of the church and made them stand in front of a farmhouse, where they were shot to death. 37 bodies were later found in the mass grave at San Martino.

Return to the crossroads at San Martino and proceed on a long uphill stretch, travelling NW, towards Casaglia, until you reach a large iron cross on the ridgeline. You can follow the trail on the left and hike up to the hilltop, which is an excellent observation point, fitted with a wooden bench (point 3, altitude 475 m), where you can enjoy a commanding view stretching over the horizon from SE to NW and when visibility is good you can even see the highest peaks of the Mount Cimone mountain range. Starting from the left, the most prominent landscape features are the summit of Mount Venere, with its mountaintop antenna jutting into the sky, (157°N), the conical shape of Mount Acuto Vallese (170°N) and the imposing bulk of Mount Salvaro (222°N), which terminates further down at Mount Sterlese (240°N). In the distant horizon lies the mountain range that starts from the right side of Mount Salvaro and extends from the Corno alle Scale to Mount Cimone (233°/250°N), shielded by Mount Calvenzano (244°N) in the foreground.

The return route follows the ridgeline until it joins the road to Casaglia (point 4, altitude 473 m). Mount Caprara's sheer cliff stands in the foreground, facing north, and you can clearly see its distinct horizontal rock strata. The Reno Valley's left slope emerges behind the sharp outline of Mount Castellino and Mounts Vignola (300°N), Medelana and Luminasio (322°N) are visible along the ridge. Until it reaches the rocky crags at Mount Caprara, the route travels along the ridge between the Reno and Setta river valleys, with wide open views along the NW-SE axis: on the left you'll see the town of Sibano down at the valley floor and looking south, the badlands at Rio Cavallaccio come into view. The route climbs sharply (16%) for a short stretch, then turns east and continues along an almost flat sections to Caprara (point 5, altitude 505 m). The ruins of the ancient town of Caprara di Sopra can be seen above the road. On the right, below the road is the town of Caprara di Sotto, which was the seat of the Municipality of Caprara sopra Panico until 1882. On September 29 1944, 65 people were murdered at Caprara, mainly women and children who were killed with hand grenades in the local tavern. The route continues on a gentle slope along the southern side of Mount Sole to the bend in the Rovinacci Stream (point 6, altitude 485 m) and to the counter bend at Poggio (point 7, altitude 496 m), proceeding down from here to the Casaglia Church (point 8, altitude 485 m).

Evidence of the existence of the church at Casaglia can be found in records dating as early as the 1300s. It was extensively damaged during World War II and now only the base of the church tower, the perimeter wall, the apse, the altar and the ruins of the side chapels remain. On September 29 1944 many of the parishioners had gathered in the church. When the Germans arrived, they killed the parish priest, Father Ubaldo Marchioni, on the altar and a

disabled woman. The others were forced out of the church and amassed in the nearby cemetery, where they were executed. 71 victims were found in a mass grave in the cemetery (point 9, altitude 490 m). Today, the Casaglia Cemetery is the final resting place of Father Giovanni Dossetti, whose religious community was founded in 1984 in the monastery of the Piccola Famiglia dell'Annunziata, and of Monsignor Luciano Gherardi, who wrote "The oaks of Monte Sole".

The route ends here.