Preface

The year 1988 marked the beginning of the International Workshop on Cardiac Arrhythmias. This biannual series of meetings was initiated with the following goals: (1) to present technological advances in the field of cardiac arrhythmias, (2) to publicise the results of current research, and (3) to assess the impact of new diagnostic and therapeutic approaches. In addition, by bringing together experts in this field, controversial aspects in the diagnosis and treatment of cardiac arrhythmias could be discussed, allowing a consensus to be reached regarding the evaluation and management of specific disease conditions. The success achieved in reaching these goals and the utility of the workshops have been confirmed by their increasing recognition and level of attendance.

The Proceedings of the Ninth Edition of the Workshop is a compilation of the topics presented at the most recent meeting, which was held in Venice at the Fondazione Giorgio Cini from the 2nd to the 5th of October 2005. The book is divided into eight sections, each addressing a different aspect of cardiac arrhythmia: Supraventricular Arrhythmia and Atrial Flutter; Atrial Fibrillation: Pathophysiology, Clinical and Therapeutic Aspects; Atrial Fibrillation: Catheter Ablation and Other Non-pharmacological Therapies; Hereditary Arrhythmogenic Syndromes; Sudden Death: Prediction and Prevention; Cardiac Resynchronisation Therapy: Indications and Results; Cardiac Pacing: Technical and Clinical Aspects; Syncope: Evaluation and Therapies.

By presenting a comprehensive and up-to-date overview of all pertinent aspects of cardiac arrhythmias, this book provides a highly valuable source of information for general cardiologists, internists, and medical students, as well for researchers involved in all aspects of the field of cardiology. The knowledge and expertise offered by the various contributors will improve our understanding of cardiac arrhythmias and motivate further developments in the field.
This volume is the result of the efforts of several authors, each of whom deserves recognition and thanks. In addition, I thank Springer and its staff, in particular Donatella Rizza, Executive Editor, for their highly professional editorial efforts. I am especially grateful to Rita Reggiani, Project Manager of Adria Congrex, for her exceptional skills and enthusiasm in preparing the workshop. I would also like to thank my colleagues at Umberto I Hospital, Drs. Bonso, Gasparini, Themistoclakis, Giada, Rossillo, Corrado, Rigo, De Piccoli, Di Pede, both for their help and support in organising the meeting and for their continuous scientific and clinical collaboration.

The personal engagement and invaluable assistance of Susanna Orbolato, Stefania Damiani, and other members of the secretarial and nurse staff at my institution are gratefully acknowledged. I also extend my gratitude to Professor Piccolo, whose example and advice have provided a continual source of guidance and inspiration. Finally, I sincerely thank my wife Carmen and my children, Francesca and Michele. Their encouragement and support were essential to the successful preparation and completion of both the meeting and this book.

Antonio Raviele
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