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Nuestra Señora de la Salud: The Powerful Health of the Sick



(<https://pintakasi1521.blogspot.com/2016/09/nuestra-senora-da-la-salud-powerful.html>)

Within the confines of modern Quezon City, there is a precious treasure that was once one of great importance of Old Manila's Glorious Past. This principal treasure is the dark image of the Blessed Virgin, under the title of "Nuestra Señora de la Salud" (Our Lady of Health) brought by the Recollect missionaries to the Philippines in 1634. In the olden days, the Virgen de la Salud is one of the most celebrated Marian images in the country with numerous miracles were attributed to this Dark Virgin of Old San Nicolas Church. So numerous and well known that even high government officials of the time are in attendance and one of most awaited in the summer and it somehow rivals that of the Virgin of the Santo Rosario of Old Intramuros (now will be venerated in her new Shrine in Quezon Avenue, Quezon City.).

However, after the ravages of World War 2, though the image was safe and kept by her custodians, the devotion her seemed to be forgotten by almost majority of the faithful over the past decades. Now, with the recent developments on the devotion, Let us rediscover the rich history and devotion to this miraculous Lady, who became known as the "Health of the Sick".

The image of Nuestra Señora de la Salud is that of the image of the Madonna and a Child with the head of the Virgin is that of wood and the hands and the Child Jesus was made of darkened Ivory.

The nearly 400 year old image of "La Salud" wears a corona y rostrillo de oro and a tunic of beaten silver and gold encrusted with precious stones. The Image of the Virgin stands with the measurement of 63.5 cm. with the inclusion of the base and crown while the Child Jesus stands at 13 cm.

History

The Order of the Augustinian Recollects, a Reformed Order of the great father and Doctor of the Church, St. Augustine, entered Manila in the year 1606 and began their evangelization work. The apostolic zeal of the order has attained abundant results from their labors, in the reduction of the most barbarous islanders, and in the exemplary lives of their reformed religious. Years later, several batches of the Augustinian Recollect Order came to the country, the seventh group arrived in 1634 bringing with them the dark image of Nuestra Señora de la Salud. The venerable image was first enshrined in the Church and Convent of San Juan de Bagumbayan (now Luneta), however, the the Virgin was transferred to to main Church of San Nicolas de Tolentino of Intramuros three times due to different circumstances: first during the Chinese uprising, second was the demolition of the Bagumbayan Church by the Governor General Sebastian de Corcuera, and lastly, upon the threat of the British invaders in Manila. Regardless of the transfer of location, the Virgin of Health's popularity at that time never waned and pilgrims continuously flock her on those two churches. It also noteworthy that an author wrote that in the late 1600's "it is certainly that the image that has more devotees in the entire islands." This is proven with the existence of the devotion in Laguna, some parts of Luzon and in Bicol Region.

The Celebrated Past and Devotion to the Lady

When the people of Manila heard the miracles that the Virgin granted to the missionaries while sailing to Manila, they clamored that the Virgin must be enthroned in San Nicolas Church and she was later enthroned in her own

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— St. Augustine, Genesis in the Literal Sense Page 1

altar in that church and "ex votos" filled her altar. What made the Virgen de la Salud more famous was due to the miracle that she wrought during the infamous Chinese uprising in the middle of the Seventeenth Century. The desire of the Governor General of the increase of royal revenues led to the Second Chinese Revolt that lasted for five months. It was from this event that the image of Nuestra Señora de la Salud was moved from her first church in San Juan de Bagumbayan to San Nicolas Church in Intramuros. The transfer was done, not only for safekeeping, but also to have a novena for the health of the army and to establish peace. The prayers were held with grand solemnity, attended by no less than the Archbishop of Manila, the city officials, the Royal Audiencia, and the great multitude of the faithful, who profited much from the devotion to the Virgen de la Salud. She generously granted that which they asked for. On March 15, 1640, the revolt ended with the surrender of the rebels and in thanksgiving, the image was returned to San Juan de Bagumbayan Church with much pomp and solemnity.

Details of the Nuestra Señora de la Salud

With that particular miracle attributed to the petite image of the Virgin of Health, devotees grew over the centuries. Pregnant women seek her powerful intercession for safe delivery of their offspring and the sick were immediately cured through her intercession. One of the most prolific devotees of the Virgin was the great St. Ezekiel Moreno whom he invokes as "Nuestra Señora Salud de los Enfermos" and sought her Patronage. In thanksgiving to her help, the devotees gave her several "ex votos" as a sign of their thanksgiving. The "ex votos" that were given by her devotees ranging from priceless heirlooms from prominent families, jewels and some "medallions" bearing body parts of the devotees that were cured by the Virgin. Tuesdays was assigned as the devotional day to Nuestra Señora de la Salud and pilgrims flock San Nicolas Church to seek her intercession.

The Feast of the Virgen de la Salud was transferred to several dates over the centuries. Her Feast was first celebrated every Third Friday of Lent then transferred to a fixed date of April 28, then again in February 2 and November 17 then lastly to Saturday nearest to the Solemnity of St. Joseph. The reasons of the ever changing feast day are still unknown yet the people attended her fiesta to give thanks to her unconditional help to her devotees. Not satisfied with the ever increasing devotion to the Virgin of Health, a confraternity was started in her honor was known as "Confradia de la Transito de Nuestra Señora".

The Fate of the Virgin During and Post War period

During the Second World War, most of the Churches in Manila were destroyed, the old San Nicolas church is not spared. All the beautiful miraculous images that were housed in San Nicolas Church disappeared in smoke, except to the images of Nuestra Señora de la Salud, Santo Cristo de Casiguran, an ivory image of St. Michael the Archangel and a Chalice given by Pope Leo XIII. Majority of the stately churches—including the Recoleta Church—were destroyed in this destructive episode of Philippine history. Despite the old popular belief that the Virgin disappeared, the image was actually kept first in the sacristy of Basilica Minore de San Sebastian since 1945 until she was transferred to their new Monastery in Quezon City and was later donated to their museum in the same city in 1988 up to the present. Consequently, the devotion came to the oblivion due to her long absence in the public eye.

The revival of the devotion

Year later, there were clamors of some faithful who studied and remembered the Glorious history of Old Intramuros and those who recently discovered the almost forgotten devotion to the Black Virgin, to revive the devotion and expose the miraculous image once again for public veneration. And sometime in 2006, the Virgin came out to from the Museo for the first time for the International Order of Augustinian Recollects Mission Congress held at San Sebastian Church and the whole Recoleta family saw her for the first time in decades and this ignited the desire to revive the devotion to her. A decade later, in 2016, the Virgen de la Salud made a triumphant comeback to Intramuros where she graced the Grand Marian Procession 2016 and the public finally saw her for the first time since her shrine was destroyed during the Second World War. As of this writing, efforts are being made to restore the devotion to Nuestra Señora de la Salud by the Augustinian Recollect Order so that the people may once again experience the miracles that the Lady showered to her devotees centuries ago. On November 4, 2017, after 72 years since her church was destroyed, she finally found a new home in the Parish of San Nicolas de Tolentino in Congressional Ave, Quezon City where the Filipino faithful can finally give their love and devotion to their Beloved Mother, the Lady of Health, just like what their ancestors did centuries ago. Her feast day is currently celebrated every **November 17**.

Nuestra Señora de la Salud today

Since her re-enthronement, numerous miracles were immediately reported and duly recorded. One of the most recent miracles of the Virgin was when she cured a dying man from coma when he and his family prayed the novena in her honor. As of this writing, other cases of healings from different diseases and illnesses were also reported through her miraculous intercession. Truly, the revival of the devotion to Nuestra Señora de la Salud is very timely, as if it's designed by Divine Providence. She returned when our generation is plagued with diseases of the body and of the soul that we need a lasting cure, comfort and strength and once again experience her motherly care as she did centuries ago.

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We end this with a prayer to the Lady of Health:

Sovereign Empress of heaven and earth, Mary, Mother of God, inexhaustible sea of health, on whom all your children and devotees pinned their greatest consolation, all of us prostrate before your holy altars, we offer you our humble gift and brief tribute of the holy novena, and we would like to have an ardent love and fervent devotion, with which the Seraphs in glory praise you, and all the Saints praise you, and the just on earth, so that it may be pleasing before your eyes, and for the great benefits that we owe you.

For all these we all give you endless thanks, confident that with your clemency, our sins may not hinder the love that you always have for us. Never stop looking at us Our Lady, if your eyes look at us, it is impossible that they will stop helping us. Watch over the Supreme Pontiff, take care of the universal benefit of the Church, the promotion of the Holy Catholic Faith, the eradication of heresies, and for all the souls in Purgatory who from thy prison of fire implore your patronage.

And finally, because you are the most sweet Mother bestow on us all your abundant blessing, and grant us health of body and soul, so that we may celebrate you later on in the Kingdom of Glory.

Amen. Nuestra Señora de la Salud, pray for us!

Everyone is invited to join in the Nov. 17 - Fiesta Mass in honor Nuestra Senora de la Salud at 3 PM at the Oratory of St. Nicholas of Tolentino.

YULO BAGS THE SILVER MEDAL IN THE INT’L MATH COMPETITION

Grade 11 student bags silver medal in International Mathematical Olympiad. Jeniña Claire M. Yulo, a Grade 11 student from SJ01-STEM, was hailed as silver awardee in the Thailand International Mathematical Olympiad (TIMO), held in the Philippines from October 25-November 6, 2020. “I truly felt honored to have represented not only UNO-R but also the Philippines in my endeavors — I felt a sense of purpose, knowing that this is bigger than me, and I felt myself improving.” Yulo stated as she shares her pride and honor in joining the said international contest. In addition, Yulo also participated in the Virtual Topic-Appropriate Mathematics Program and Simulation (VTAMPS) where she obtained a high distinction award. The event took place on September 12- October 18. (<https://www.facebook.com/starlightunor>)



CCJE HOLDS OUTREACH ACTIVITIES

In this time of pandemic, one of the typical things that we do is to be empathetic with those who are in need. In this time of crisis, It is also the time of sharing, offering, and be mindful of others. As a community and part of our social and religious obligations to humanity, The College of Criminal Justice Education shared “little things” with two (2) institutions as our benefactors. The CCJE faculty and staff shared their blessings in the form of these activities. They have chosen Handumanan National High School and Corazon L. Montelibano Elem. School as recipients. Five reams of bond papers and three pieces of black inks each school.

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Parreño; and faculty members, Mr. Edwin Moradilla (UCDO CCJE Asst. Coordinator) and Mr. Phillip Hilado. (news and photos from CCJE)

These is a little help for these schools in the printing of modules. We are happy to ease the burden of the public-school teachers in providing quality education to our brothers and sisters in their community. The little gifts were received by the Principal of Handumanan National High School, Dr. Richard Gelangre with his Asst. Principal and Dr. Richelda B. Tan, Principal of Corazon L. Montelibano Elem. School with her faculty members. The UNO-R CCJE family was represented by the College Dean, Dr. Jasmin L.

International work teams promote the EDUCAR network



One of the conclusions of the last EDUCAR meeting, held in Rio de Janeiro (Brazil) in November 2019, was the constitution of four work teams to promote the objectives and activities of the international educational network of the Augustinian Recollect family. After several meetings, during the month of October 2020 these four teams were formed, focused, respectively, on formation, pastoral care, communication and projects.

The four work teams of the EDUCAR network are made up of directors, teachers and other collaborators from

Augustinian Recollect educational centers around the world. Therefore, they represent a wealth of perspectives and experiences to share. This is, in fact, one of the main achievements of this work methodology: the internationalization of our educational work and continuous learning between one another.

What are the objectives of each work team?

The objective of the pastoral team is to prepare the materials that, each year, make up the motto and pedagogical-pastoral objective of the course, in addition to promoting pastoral initiatives at the national, regional and international levels. The training team focuses on training resources for new staff, ongoing teacher training and proposals for management teams. The communication team is in charge of promoting EDUCAR's corporate image, maintaining the website and social networks, and publicizing the activities of the educational centers. And the project team has selected as priorities the empowerment of alumni associations, the convening of cultural and academic contests and competitions, national and international activities between students and teachers, and the monitoring of existing plans such as the protection of minors in school settings, or the measurement of the impact of the Augustinian Recollect charism in schools. Each of the work teams has a coordinator at the head, who is in charge of monitoring the objectives and activities set out.

The proposals of these work teams are presented as a great impulse for networking that leads towards the creation of other structures at the national or regional level to optimize the management of Augustinian Recollect educational centers. Although most of the members of the work teams speak Spanish, the meetings also use Portuguese and English, which makes these meetings truly international experiences. Each work team has set its objectives and evaluation meetings for the coming months. As a work methodology, each team has been divided into small groups that will focus on specific aspects, thus facilitating the development of objectives. All of this will be shared in the next joint meetings, with the prospect of the next international EDUCAR meeting, scheduled for the end of 2021. (Fray Antonio Carron, OAR)



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