

Procession of Our Lady of Fatima

Procession of Our Lady of Fatima in Macao

Every year, on 13 May, the Catholic Church celebrates the veneration of Our Lady of Fatima, in memory of the apparition of Our Lady to three little shepherd children in Fatima, Portugal, on 13 May 1917. Our Lady asks the world to recite the Rosary daily for the repentance of sinners and peace in the world.

The “Feast and Novena of Our Lady of Fatima” in Macao was first celebrated in 1929, and the “Procession of Our Lady of Fatima” was inscribed on the List of Intangible Cultural Heritage of Macao in 2019. With the reverence and enthusiasm of the Diocese of Macao for the veneration of Our Lady of Fatima, it is an important event not only for the Diocese of Macao, but also for Macao. Every year, many citizens and overseas Catholics come together in Macao to participate in this event.

Historical Origin

The devotion of Our Lady of Fatima in Macao was initiated and promoted by two Jesuits, Pe. António Roliz, S.J. and Pe. António Maria Alves, S.J. The devotion only lasted for three days at that time, starting on 10 May. On 13 May 1929, Bishop José da Costa Nunes presided over a Solemn Pontifical Mass, followed by the Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament until the afternoon. The sermon was followed by a procession of Our Lady of Fatima. The first procession of Our Lady of Fatima started from St. Dominic’s Church, marched to the Cathedral, then passed through the Senado Square, and finally returned to St. Dominic’s Church. During the procession, the parishioners recited the Rosary and sang Marian songs. In order to continue this devotion, on 13 December of the same year, the “Congregation of Our Lady of Fatima” was established and has been the annual procession since then.

The following year, in 1930, the devotion expanded into a Novena, and the route was changed to starting at St. Dominic’s Church, to the Chapel of Our Lady of Penha. The devotion was originally conducted in Portuguese only, but in the wake of the liturgical reforms of the Second Vatican Council, the devotion became bilingual in 1978, being now conducted in Chinese and Portuguese. During World War II, the procession continued uninterrupted, and more people joined in to pray for peace.

The “Procession of Our Lady of Fatima” is not only a religious custom with a history of nearly a century in Macao, but it also has an identity-building role. Through the collective experience of a long period of time, it creates an identity for the faithful of the Diocese of Macao, expressing the Christian faith in a unique way and with a unique idea. In this way, the “Procession of Our Lady of Fatima” is a symbol of the vitality of the Diocese of Macao.

Macao Catholic Culture Association
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