

International Mission for the Holy Face of Manoppello

Antonio Bini (September 09, 2015)



Vancouver, Canada, is where the new international mission of the Holy Face will begin, bringing to ever more people the knowledge of this extraordinary image venerated at the Shrine of Manoppello and considered the true-icon of Christ.



On September 5, Father Carmine, rector of the Shrine of Manoppello, will be busy in the church of Saint Patrick at Vancouver, British Columbia. After the Mass, concelebrated by Fr. Bonifacio (Ted) Lopez, a priest originally from the Philippines, who will accompany Fr. Carmine for the entire mission, an artistic reproduction of the Holy Face will be enthroned in the Church. This act will begin the reverence of the extraordinary image. Representing Archbishop Michael Miller will be Fr. Joseph Nguyen, vicar general of the Archdiocese of Vancouver. This gathering will be preceded by a similar one to be held the day before in the city of Delta, followed by a meeting with Fr Abbot John Braganza in the Abbey of Westminster of Mission City, British Columbia. It must be recalled that in the early nineteen seventies it was the emigrants from Abruzzo who were the first to introduce the cult of the Holy Face in Canada, at Richmond Hill, a town in the metropolitan area of Toronto, where every first Sunday of August is held a procession of the Holy Face.

After the meetings in Canada the mission will continue on to the United States, to Duarte close by to Los Angeles on September 8 and the next day in the city of Los Angeles, as already announced on August 15 by the newspaper Asian Journal. A reproduction of the Holy Face, coming directly from the Shrine of Manoppello, will be honored throughout the day of September 9 at the Our Lady of Angels Cathedral of the American metropolis. The date coincides with the 165th anniversary of the admission of California as the 31st state of the United States of America. The days in Southern California dedicated to the Holy Face come just two weeks before the pastoral visit of Pope Francis to the USA, during which- among other things - Pope Francis will canonize Fr. Junipero Serra, the Franciscan founder of a number of missions in California. Among the first missions Fr. Junipero founded was San Juan Capistrano (1776), which he dedicated to the Franciscan saint of Abruzzo, St. John Capistrano, named for the town of Capestrano in Abruzzo located a short distance from Manoppello which is twinned with the eponymous California town
- <http://www.sanjuancapistrano.org/index.aspx?page=1211> [2]

In the USA and Canada there are spreading Facebook pages and websites which are dedicated to the Holy Face, often drawing on the information and images on the blog
<http://holysfaceofmanoppello.blogspot.com/> [3] started in 2008 by Raymond Frost of San Francisco.

But it is mainly in the Philippines that the mission will develop intensively on the following dates:
September 12: Bulacan, Bethlehem House of Bread Orphanage Baliuag; September 13 - Lipa, Batangas - Montemaria, "Mother of All Asia" Shrine; September 14 and 15 - Taguig, Enthronement of the Holy Face of Manoppello at Sagrada de Familia Church; September 16 - Nampicuan, Nueva Ecija - September 17 - Quiapo, Basilica of the Black Nazarene, September 18 - Baclaran Church; September 19 - Manila, San Augustin and Manila Cathedral; September 20 - Bagumbayan, St. Martin Chapel Mahogany.

Fr. Carmine and Fr. Bonifacio (Ted) Lopez, will be accompanied by Paul Badde, veteran journalist and writer, author of two books on the Holy Face published recently in the United States, "The Face of God" and "The True Icon" (both by Ignatius Press of San Francisco) who will illustrate for the public a historical outline as well as his own research of the Holy Face, which is identified with the legendary Veronica, and in close relationship with the Shroud of Turin. Paul Badde, who is currently on assignment in Rome for the American Catholic television network EWTN, will be accompanied by his wife Ellen, who collaborates with him in the historical research. The dioceses being visited were informed of the Mission by Bruno Forte, archbishop of Chieti-Vasto, the diocese to which the Holy Face shrine of the Capuchins of Manoppello belongs.

Before departure Fr. Carmine Cucinelli stated "I remember with emotion the previous mission in 2014, especially in the Philippines, for the warmth and the enthusiasm with which the Holy Face was greeted by thousands of devoted people. The organization of the program required the involvement of many volunteers to whom I extend my most heartfelt thanks. I can not forget the role played by Mrs Daisy Neves, an American of Filipino origin, to whom we owe not only significant financial support for the project but also the indefatigable network of relationships with host groups in the various cities visited by the mission, composed of people who are devotees of the Holy Face ". What do you consider the most significant stage of your journey? - we ask Fr. Carmine: "I think it is the town of Nampicuan, where I will be present on September 16 to celebrate one year from last year's visit, which turned the church into the Shrine of the Holy Face, the first in Asia honoring the image of



Manoppello."

The shrine has become a pilgrimage site for people from throughout the Philippines and has established on May 31 a volunteer group "Servants of Holy Face" - as well as a website <http://www.holyfacenampicuan.com/> [4] for purposes of spreading devotion to the Holy Face and welcoming pilgrims. "In recent months some miracles were also registered," reports Fr. Carmine. "It's amazing what is happening. It's as if the Holy Face had decided the time and manner of dissemination of his image by involving people from different countries, each with their own participation and contribution of faith." On the feast of the Holy Face of Nampicuan, which will see the presence of Mrs. Mercedes Tuason, Philippine ambassador to the Holy See, the use of a new precious reliquary for the image of the Holy Face will be inaugurated.

According to writer Paul Badde "the mission will be a trip to the future. It's very important to bring a copy of the image of the Holy Face, the true icon, to Los Angeles, which is the world metropolis of images and of the digital revolution, very close, by the way, to Hollywood and Silicon Valley. In my opinion, this pilgrimage will be an essential step forward in the process of the rediscovery of the Most Holy Sudarium of Jesus Christ. It is really an "iconic turn" in the history of Christianity that makes one think of "the living image of the Father's mercy", as Pope Francis recalled during his announcement of the upcoming extraordinary Holy Year of Mercy".

The initiative is promoted by the Shrine of Manoppello with the financial and organizational support of a group of devotees in the US and the Philippines. In addition to Mrs. Daisy Neves there can not be forgotten the spouses Lenlen and Ernest Alzate, all to be regarded as generous and tireless pioneers of the devotion of the extraordinary image in the world, which is registering the participation of hundreds of people in the organization of the events. The movement that is being created is the most obvious result of the international mission begun last year with the effects most pronounced in the Philippines, a country of reference for Catholics of the Asian continent.

Before concluding their trip to the Philippines Fr. Carmine and Paul Badde will meet with Cardinal Luis Antonio Tagle, Archbishop of Manila and leading figure of Catholicism in Asia. With a message of greeting on August 19, 2015 Cardinal Tagle expressed his satisfaction for the anniversary of the enthronement of the Holy Face at Nampicuan begun last year and stated his encouragement for the new mission of Fr. Carmine.

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[2] <http://www.sanjuancapistrano.org/index.aspx?page=1211>

[3] <http://holysfaceofmanoppello.blogspot.com/>

[4] <http://www.holyfacenampicuan.com/>