



Virgen Milagrosa de Badoc, Cause of Our Joy

Virgen de Milagrosa de Badoc
St. John the Baptist Parish
Badoc, Ilocos Norte
March 20, 2012

* This photo was taken during my Ilocos vacation last March 19-22, 2012. I included in my itinerary to visit the image of Virgen Milagrosa de Badoc, Cause of Our Joy which is enshrined in St. John the Baptist Parish in Badoc, Ilocos Norte.

I was given the opportunity to kiss the image inside Her altar. My warmest thanks to the parish secretay, Ms. Yoli Lerio.

In addition, Ms. Lerio gave me the history of the Virgen Milagrosa. The image has a very fascinating story. Pls. take time to read.

La Virgen Milagrosa de Badoc
Cause of Our Joy
Patroness of Ilocos Norte

During the Spanish Colonial Days the route which connected the coastal towns of the Ilocos was called camino real (the king's highway). This highway of the king is bedecked with the images of the Queen of Heaven and Earth.

The Pangasinenses have Our Lady of Manaoag while the residents of La Union seek the intercessions of Our Lady of Namacpacan in Luna and Our Lady of Charity in Agoo. Those from Ilocos Sur call on Our Lady of Charity in Bantay. (The Cagayanos have Our Lady of Piat and those from Isabela flock to Our Lady of Guibang.)

The devotees of Province of Ilocos Norte have also their own patroness, La Virgen Milagrosa de Badoc, thus putting the entire Ilocano Region completely under the titular guidance of the Mother of God.

The image of La Virgen Milagrosa de Badoc, cherishes a uniquely beautiful story. Estimated to be 400 years old, it is enshrined and venerated in the more than two-century-old brick and stone baroque Catholic Church of the parish of St. John the Baptist in Badoc, Ilocos Norte.

About the 1620s, a number of fishermen were doing their trade in the cove off the barrio of Dadalaquiten which borders Badoc and Sinait. As they were tending their nets, they saw a large wooden box bobbing out of the tide. They hauled the mysterious object to the shore.

At the beach, the fisherfolk forced opened the box and discovered a life size statue of the Santo Cristo Milagroso and a smaller than life sized and delicately hand painted image of the Blessed Virgin Mary with jovial infant Jesus together with two statuettes of angels and violin.

A heated dispute among the finders ensued. The contending populace of both towns laid claim to the prized treasure for their own houses of worship. To avoid further discord both parties finally agreed to apportion the contents equally.

The residents of Badoc wanted to take the crucified Christ while those from Sinait wanted to take possession of the Virgin. To their surprise, the statues could not be moved from their places. After several futile attempts, they agreed to exchange their images and only then that they could lift them. Finding the images unusually light, these simple folks came to the realization that the Crucified Christ was truly destined for Sinait while Badoc was the Virgin's choice.

It is widely believed that the image came from Japan as its facial features would also attest. In the 17th century there was a persecution of Christians in this still feudal Land of the Rising Sun. It was at this time that St. Lorenzo Ruiz was martyred. Fearing destruction of their sacred images, the Japanese Christians jettisoned them into the sea and currents brought them to our shores.

A number of miracles are attributed to the virgin of Badoc. In 1776, Moro pirates raided badoc and burned the town including the church. It is said that the privateers tried to behead the image of the Virgin but were unsuccessful. This left a scar over the image's left eye. They fired up their anger and they toppled the wooden statue into the fire but the flame was extinguished. Taken aback by what they witnesses, the pirates scampered away in fear.

Muslims marauders came back in 1836 again raiding the town and burning and looting ensued including the church. Having been forewarned of the impending attack the people fled but when they came back they saw their church in ruins. Not to their surprise they found the image of the Virgin unscathed.

We are also told by Fr. Pedro Vivar, OSA in his account on the Ilocos Revolt (1762-1763) that in 1656 and 1660 a terrible epidemic struck the province. The image of Our Lady was brought to Vigan and the people prayed to her. The epidemic stopped.

The images of the Virgin and the crucified Christ were brought back to Dadalaquiten on May 01, 1980, perhaps the first time that the two images went back to the place where they landed more than three centuries before. It was a joint celebration between the people of Ilocos Sur with their pastor Archbishop Juan C. Sison and Ilocos Norte with their shepherd Bishop Edmundo M. Abaya. This was made through the initiative of Rev. Raymundo Gracia and Rev. Juan Ballesteros, parish priest of Sinait and Badoc, respectively. A marker and replica of the Santo Cristo now stand in the place where the reunion was enacted.

In a celebration of the Eucharist on May 02, 1980, the Most Rev. Edmundo M. Abaya, Bishop of Laoag proclaimed La Virgen Milagrosa de Badoc under the title Cause of Our Joy, Patroness of Ilocos Norte.

The image was brought to Manila in June 1980 where it was restored to its original by the Tallares de Maximo Vicente. A mass was celebrated at the Malate Church on July 20 of the same year as a joyous thanksgiving for the successful restoration of the sacred image.

For two months (October and November 1980) the image was brought in a pilgrimage to all the parishes of the Diocese of Laoag and some parishes in La Union and Ilocos Sur. And finally on December 08, 1980 the image of La Virgen Milagrosa de Badoc, Cause of Our Joy was canonically crowned by Nueva Segovia Archbishop Juan C. Sison and Laoag Bishop Edmundo M. Abaya.

Thus December 8th every year is always a celebration in the Sanctuary of Our Lady of Badoc with a concelebrated Mass presided by the Bishop of Laoag with his presbyterium. It is attended by devotees from all the parishes of the Diocese of Laoag. This is to commemorate the joyful event of her coronation and to offer thanksgiving to the Father who chose that lowly and humble lady from Nazareth to be the Mother of the Savior, to the Son who was cuddled and nurtured by that same faithful lady, and to the Holy Spirit who overshadowed that woman from the time of the Annunciation to her Assumption into Heaven.

Adapted from the Commemorative Program on the Canonical Coronation of La Virgen Milagrosa de Badoc

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