

OUR LADY OF THE MOST HOLY ROSARY

This world-famous statue of Our Blessed Mother and the Infant Jesus is one of the rarest treasures of the Philippine Islands. Carved by pagan Chinese under the supervision of Captain Hernando de los Rios, the renowned image was presented to the Dominican Fathers in 1595 by Luis Perez Das Marinas, Governor of Manila. The masterpiece, more than seven feet in height, represents Our Lady tenderly bearing the Child Jesus in her left arm. The face and hands of both Mother and Son are of delicately carved, solid ivory. A third figure, Saint Dominic, completes the group. He is seen kneeling at the foot of the statue, receiving the Rosary from the Queen and King of heaven and earth.

Enshrined within the "Iglesia de Santo Domingo," Manila's proto-church, the image has been exposed to the same dangers that on many occasions have completely destroyed the great Dominican edifices. Fire (1645), earthquake (1863), and Japanese bombs (December, 1941), each took turns beating down those venerable structures, but the image has never been damaged, even in the slightest degree. This is one of the reasons why Filipinos attribute miraculous powers to it. For nearly three and one half centuries they have placed themselves under the protection of Mary, Queen of the Rosary. And today, more than ever before, they have turned to her image in the charred ruins of Santo Domingo for guidance during their present trials and for a comforting sign of peace for the future.

Q.McS.