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Holy Week Rite As Held On Mindanao

(Written for N.C.P.C. Easter Supplement)

With the major portion of the Philippines now in Japanese hands there is considerable interest in the following account of the traditional Holy Week and Easter Sunday observances of Cotabato on the Island of Mindanao. The ceremonies are rich in traditions recalling the days of the early Spanish Padres.

On Good Friday the faithful of Cotabato gather in their parish church, conducted by the Oblates of Mary Immaculate, for ceremonies in memory of the Redeemer's three hours' agony on the Cross. The statue of the Saviour is then carried to a sepulchre by the men of the parish, amid flowers, lighted candles and a silent guard of honor. The women, dressed in mourning, gather about the image of Our Lady of Sorrows, and a band plays traditional melodies. This ceremony closes with a sermon on Our Lady's watch at the sepulchre of her Son.

On Easter Sunday morning at three, a group of musicians march through the city playing triumphantly and announcing the resurrection of the Saviour. At the instance of the entire population, Catholic, Protestant, Mohammedan and pagan, the band invariably returns a second time, playing even louder, with its triumphant message resounding: "Christ is risen!"

By 4:30 a. m. the church is crowded, and two processions are formed. The men march through the lower city carrying a beautiful statue of the Risen Christ. The women go in the opposite direction, carrying the statue of Our Lady. It is the same one as on Good Friday but now dressed in white. A black veil falling to the shoulders is the only remaining sign of mourning, signifying that Our Lady has not yet seen her risen Son.

The two processions meet in a wide street, and the statue of the Virgin is placed on a platform under a colorful arch of triumph. Young girls dressed as angels beseech the statue with flowers. The arch above the statue is then opened and a child dressed as a cherub appears, intoning the "Regina coeli laetare." removes the veil of mourning from the statue and carries it upward. Kneeling before the two statues, of the Risen Christ and His Virgin Mother, priests lead the throngs in prayer. The two processions then fuse into one and move towards the church. The ceremonies end with celebration of the Solemn Easter Mass.

Spain Marks Holy Week

(Continued from Page 2)

out in detail. The favorite is observed in almost all of them. A dozen poor men or boys are gathered from the streets and the Bishop, pastor or some civil authority washes their feet. This ceremony is followed by the procession of the Mesa Eucaristica, or Last Supper. Cowed men carry the float on which life-size images of Christ and the Apostles are seated at a table on which are bread and wine; and there is, no one so ignorant as not to know that this depicts the origin of the Holy Eucharist, the cardinal point of Catholic dogma. This is the favorite pastime of children and the imprint made upon their impressionable and receptive minds, persists through life.

In times past the allegation was made that the traditional Holy Week ceremonies at Seville were preserved more as a tourist attraction than as a religious observance. Under present conditions, there are no tourists in Europe; only armies and refugees are on the move. The answer to the allegation is found in the fact that Spain's traditional Holy Week observance continues, with increased splendor and fervor; and those who line the streets, as well as the participants are Spaniards.

Pioneer Dies at 79

Los Angeles.—Pioneer engineer and contractor of the Pacific Southwest and for two terms a member of the Los Angeles Board of Education was Charles E. Crowley, 79, for whom regular Mass was celebrated in the Church of the Transfiguration prior to his burial in Calvary Cemetery. Mr. Crowley was responsible for the building of much of the city's transportation lines as well as the Arroyo Seco Railway.

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