



In Antipolo, Archbishop Fisichella celebrates Mass one month after the official establishment of "Our Lady of Peace and Good Voyage" in the Philippines as an International Shrine

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This morning the Pro-prefect of the Dicastery for Evangelization, Archbishop Rino Fisichella presided at the Eucharistic celebration at the International Shrine of Our Lady of Peace and Good Voyage in Antipolo, in the Philippines. A month ago, on January 26, the Antipolo Shrine was formally declared an International Shrine.

The Mass with Archbishop Fisichella, and the Apostolic Nuncio to the Philippines, Most. Rev. Charles John Brown, followed three days of prayer and thanksgiving to mark the historic event, from 23 to 25 February. Also present at the celebration were the Cardinal Archbishop of Manila, His Eminence Jose Forte Advincula, the bishop of Antipolo, Bishop Ruperto Santos, the rector of the shrine, Br. Reynante Tolentino, and other bishops from the dioceses of the Philippine, who were joined by priests, deacons, seminarians, consecrated men and women and thousands of lay faithful.

"The presence of a shrine like this is a sign of grace that calls all of us to a profound witness of faith," said the Pro-prefect during the homily. He continued: "We are in the shrine dedicated to the Virgin Mary, the Mother of God who intercedes for us, first and foremost, so that peace can reign throughout the world and in our homes. The pilgrims who come to the shrine of Our Lady of Peace and Good Voyage, know that they cannot leave the Sanctuary without taking home with them the message of peace that the Mother of God gives. The pilgrimage to the International Shrine has the mission of spiritually uniting Christians with all believers throughout the world. Being an International Sanctuary is not just a privilege that is granted, but a mission that must be shared."

Archbishop Fisichella concluded his homily with a challenge: "May this house of God therefore be a place where faith becomes stronger through the incessant prayer that rises towards the Father through the intercession of the Virgin Mary; a place where hope is strengthened for the journey we must take until we reach our final goal; and a place where charity be lived in abundance recognizing the many forms of mercy that the Lord has left us."

Next year, on the occasion of the 2025 Jubilee, His Excellency recalled, the pilgrims from Antipolo who arrive in Rome for the Holy Year will also have the responsibility of being "Pilgrims of Hope".

At the beginning of the Mass, the Pro-Prefect placed the "Golden Rose" in front of the image of the Virgin Mary, which had been offered as a gift to the Sanctuary by Pope Francis. It is the first time that a Marian sanctuary in the Philippines, indeed in the entire Asian continent, has received such recognition from the Holy Father. "On the occasion of this honor granted to our Sanctuary," they wrote in the final prayer of thanks, "may we truly become bearers of the word of God and the love of God, demonstrating devotion to the Blessed Virgin of Antipolo and engaging in charitable works".