

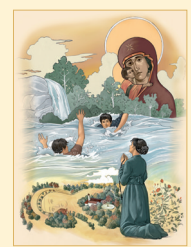


THE APPEALS OF OUR LADY
APPARITIONS AND MARIAN SHRINES IN THE WORLD

Apparition of the Virgin Mary in NAMYANG

KOREA, 1984

It can be said that the history of the Catholic Church in Korea is a history of persecution. In the first 100 years of its establishment, there were numerous periods of persecutions that followed, especially during the Great Byungjin Persecution. Begun in 1886, it brought over ten thousand faithful to martyrdom. The severity of the persecution is evident from the fact that at the time the number of Catholics in Korea was somewhere around 23,000! The place called Rosary Hill in Namyang is one of the spots in which many Catholics were martyred during the Great Byungjin Persecution. Many statements and depositions on the first church in Korea report how often the martyrs invoked the help of Mary and recited the Rosary in order to overcome the cruelty of the persecution. The same relics of the martyrs found afterward give witness as to how many martyrs gripped the Rosary beads in their hands as they met their death. By the request of Bishop Enbert Bum, the second bishop of the Korean Diocese, on the 22nd of August 1847, Mary became, together with Joseph, the Co-Patron Saint of Korea. The Shrine of Our Lady of the Rosary of Namyang, known also as Rosary Hill, emerged in the very spot where so many Catholics were martyred during the Great Byungjin Persecution. To commemorate their martyrdom as proof of their faith, Namyang was declared a Sacred Place on the 7th of October 1991, a feast day dedicated to the Blessed Virgin of the Rosary. For the first time in the history of the Catholic Church in Korea, a location was dedicated exclusively to the Holy Mother of God and to prayer for peace. In a short time the Shrine was transformed into a center of continual prayer, by way of the "24-hour Rosary Chain Movement," dedicated to peace and brought forth by all those who demonstrated their love for the Holy Mother of God by praying the Rosary. The characteristics and the symbols of Rosary Hill include the merciful aspect of the statue of the Holy Mother of Namyang and the road of the 20 decades of the Rosary, a pleasant path surrounded by trees and bushes. The Road of the "Five Joyful Mysteries," which resembles the very grace of Our Lady, is considered a miraculous place in its unique structure. It is truly surprising how, from up above, the Road of the "Joyful Mysteries" of the Shrine mysteriously resembles the Blessed Mother with Baby Jesus held in her arms close to her as portrayed in the icon of Vladimir that depicts the profound love between the Blessed Mother and Jesus. It is as if the icon had been raised and traced in order to form the road with her shape! This resemblance could have been vaguely distinguished in the site's diagram when it was completed in 2002, but it became clearly distinct in November of 2005, when an aerial photograph from a helicopter was taken for the brochure. Those who were on the helicopter remained astonished at seeing the resemblance between the path of the Rosary Road, place in which so many believers invoke the name of the Blessed Mother and recite the Rosary, with Vladimir's famous image of "Our Lady of Grace." "Ah! The Holy Mother of God is right here with us, on the Rosary Hill of Namyang!" exclaimed the people who were emotionally moved. They continued to take photographs completely fascinated, as if they were present at a real apparition of Mary, so much was the similarity between Rosary Road and the icon that it left little doubt to anyone. That which is truly surprising and mysterious, to not say majestic, is the fact that the likeness was absolutely by chance and not intentional; in fact, none of the plans from the very beginning included anything like this for the Road!



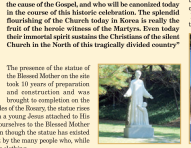
In 1897, Fr. Francis Xavier Song Guk Lee survived a frightening incident after having thrown himself into the churning rapids to save a questioner. Later he found out that his mother had prayed the Rosary for an entire day on the day of the missing following three apparitions of the Blessed Virgin Mary in a dream who said when "I must receive one of your three children." After hearing of this event, Fr. Lee was convinced that his maternal Mother, His Immaculate provided to have solemnly dedicated his life to accomplish something meritorious for Mary Most Holy, even if it was one act of what it would have been. Assigned to the parish of Namyang in 1898, which includes the place of the apparition, he considered this duty as a confirmation of his devotion to the Blessed Mother of God and he dedicated himself to the development of the site known as Rosary Hill. He asked the late Bishop Norbert Kim to declare Namyang to be Korea's first Catholic holy site dedicated to Mary. Fr. Lee has taken care of the holy site of Namyang ever then and spends his days by spreading the devotion to the Holy Mother of God with the "24-hour Rosary Chain Movement."



End of May 2003. Erected at the end of the Road of Twenty Decades of the Rosary, the statue once with her arms extended, opened toward all who love her, with a young Jesus attached to His mother. The statue expresses the desire of all to be in constant contact with the Blessed Mother and also that desire of embracing her as our little Jesus. Even though the statue has existed for a relatively short time, it already shows the faithful signs left by the many people who, with praying, touch with their hands the little image of Jesus and his clothing.



On the 6th of May in 1984, during the consecration ceremony of the 100 Rosary martyrs, Pope St. John Paul II said: "This impetuous Church, so young and already so strong in its faith, has realized diverse waves of fraternal persecutions. It was in this manner that, in less than a century, it could have already been able to commemorate several tens of thousands of martyrs. The years 1793, 1803, 1807, 1838, 1848 and 1868 will forever bear the mark of blood shed from your martyrs, and they are forever impressed upon your heart. The first Christians in the first fifty years were taken care of by only two priests, from China, and only for a brief period of time nevertheless, they deepened their unity to Christ through prayer and fraternal love. They did not make distinctions of class and they embraced religious vocations, and they sought an ever greater number of priests, your directors, who were to direct them. After having pleaded for the dispatch of a greater number of priests, your directors welcomed the first missionaries from France in 1836. Some of them even figure to evangelize those Martyrs, who open their hearts to the cause of the Gospel, and who will be remembered today by the course of this historic celebration. The splendid flourishing of the Church today in Korea is really the fruit of the heroic witness of the Martyrs. Even today their immortal spirit sustains the Christians of the silent Church in the North of this tragically divided country."



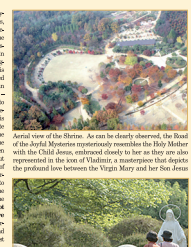
The presence of the statue of the Blessed Mother on the site took 10 years of preparation and construction, and was brought to completion on the 1st of May 2003. Erected at the end of the Road of Twenty Decades of the Rosary, the statue once with her arms extended, opened toward all who love her, with a young Jesus attached to His mother. The statue expresses the desire of all to be in constant contact with the Blessed Mother and also that desire of embracing her as our little Jesus. Even though the statue has existed for a relatively short time, it already shows the faithful signs left by the many people who, with praying, touch with their hands the little image of Jesus and his clothing.



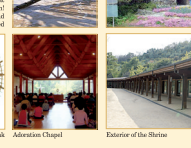
Blessed Paul Yun Jo-shung, Ap-geon, and 210 Companions, heroically killed for their faith between 1793 and 1868 during the persecutions against the Christians. Blessed Paul was born in 1759 into a noble family of Chung-gang-do, Seoul. During his studies, Paul became interested in the Catholic faith and upon the conversion program, which - after Baptism - meant that he was to be a family serving when he came in Korea. Upon the death of his mother, Paul decided to substitute a Catholic chapel and began the construction of the Catholic chapel, according to the last wish of the deceased. When the local Court came to find out about it, it punished the faith of the king, investigated and interrogated. He was even sentenced to abandon the faith and to give the names of the other Catholics. The reply was that "The faith cannot be abandoned for any reason whatsoever." The king then ordered the execution of Paul and eleven, who had embraced Christ and the Virgin Mary.



The Shrine of Vladimir and the Shrine of Namyang. It was long thought to the presidential refusal of the lawmakers where the Shrine was eventually built. If the faith of the Shrine was to be approved, which today is now able to be admitted on the road in the form of the Blessed Mother, as portrayed by Vladimir. The Rosary Road was actually built around that tomb which could not be moved. The fourth and the tenth centuries were built, as an indication of the earth and the tomb were hidden by time. Nevertheless, it is precisely this remarkable element that comprises the feet of Mary and the head of Jesus on the road. If it had been possible to remove the tomb, upon Rosary Road the issue of the Shrine of Vladimir would not have been formed.



Aerial view of the Shrine. As can be clearly observed, the Road of the Joyful Mysteries mysteriously resembles the Holy Mother with the Child Jesus, embraced closely to her as they are also represented in the icon of Vladimir, a masterpiece that depicts the profound love between the Virgin Mary and her Son Jesus.



As the Shrine of Our Lady of the Rosary of Namyang, the heart of the Rosary on earth, and delicate the brother of the fields. The Road of the Rosary descends from the hills to reach the bottom of a valley.



The Rosary beads, precisely 40 meters in diameter, are placed at a height of 4.5 meters over the ground and the faithful can and can walk through the flowers of the field, proving the Rosary with passing the ages.



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