

Ceremonies, dating back to the fourteenth century, will be reenacted in Saint Anthony's Parish following the 10:30 o'clock Mass on Sunday, when the crown of the Holy Ghost, a symbol of Queen Isabel of Portugal, will be carried in solemn procession through the streets of the local community.

Each year, upon the Feast of the Pentecost, in a public act of reverence for the Third Person in the Blessed Trinity, and in memory of their sainted Queen, Portuguese people and their descendants throughout the world, carry on a Brotherhood that was instituted in Alenquer, a small village situated about thirty miles from the capitol city of Lisbon, in the year 1322.

Saint Isabel was born in the year 1271, daughter of D. Pedro III, King of Arago and from her earliest years displayed a true spirit of piety and humility. At a tender age she was betrothed to D. Diniz, the King of Portugal and from the day when she ascended the throne until the hour of her holy death she was revered throughout her kingdom for her acts of piety, humility, charity and devotion. Known as the "Angel of Charity", because of her love and devotion to the poor, she was also hailed as "Mother of Peace" by her subjects because of her saintly intervention in the hour of battle when, unaccompanied, she personally entered the battlefield and reconciled kings and princes, converting into Christian love the hatreds and enmities that had culminated in the horror of war.

It was upon her return to Alenquer where she had gone to rest after having successfully intervened and saved the fate of Portugal that the command to establish a Brotherhood of the Holy Ghost was given to her. One night in her dreams, a voice from heaven proclaimed that she should establish this new cult, in memory of the peace obtained, and build a temple in honor of the Holy Ghost in the village.

Upon arising the next morning the Queen called one of her chaplains and urged him to celebrate Mass immediately. While assisting at this Mass with her customary devotion, a vision appeared to her elaborating further upon the project which she had been instructed in her dreams to initiate. Immediately she met with her carpenters and workmen and communicated her desires to them, ordering them to proceed immediately to the site indicated to her in her dream. Miraculously, when they reached the area designated, they found the foundations already opened and the plan of the building in outline. This unexplainable and prodigious event was witnessed by her husband the King and by the entire village of Alenquer.

Many miracles happened during the time of construction, attesting to the fact that this actually was in answer to a Divine purpose. In a very short while the entire work was completed and stands today as one of the most beautiful and richest in the world. The King ordered all of the most precious and costliest altars, vestments and furnishings and with great pomp and solemnity the first Mass was celebrated on Pentecost Sunday. On that day, the sovereigns instituted the Brotherhood of the Holy Ghost, to insure that until the end of time, there should never cease to exist cults of the Holy Ghost in that sumptuous and beautiful sanctuary. A beautiful procession was held on that first Feast of the Holy Ghost in which the entire court and nobility took part. Games, tournaments and bullfights were enjoyed. One of the statutes of the original Brotherhood stated that seven bulls should be run and that their meat, highly ornamented, together with a loaf of bread should be distributed to the poor. Since that day, throughout the centuries, the Feast of the Holy Ghost has been celebrated in Alenquer with great festivities and devotion.

Each following year while she lived, Queen Isabel came personally to offer to this church a great candle which burned before the main altar during the octave of Pentecost. Later on in years when a great famine and epidemic invaded Lisbon and the surrounding towns, including Alenquer, and hundreds of people were perishing daily, a great penitential procession was held in which the candle offered by the Queen was carried, and immediately the epidemic began to diminish until it ended entirely.

Also, as an act of humility during the Pentecostal season, when she returned to her beloved village of Alenquer, on the pretext of resting by the river, she would descend to its edge and with her own hands, wash the soiled linens of the sick and the poor of the village. Many were the witnesses to these acts of humility and after her death the river was held in veneration and the waters were known to possess miraculous curative powers.

Many more miracles were attributed to Queen Isabel following her death on July 4, 1336. Immediate steps were taken on behalf of her canonization. On June 1, 1616, Pope Paul IV declared her Blessed and gave permission to the people of Portugal to carry her crown and relics through the streets in solemn procession. From this original crown worn by Saint Isabel, have been fashioned the hundreds of crowns still in existence. Made of pure silver, they have on them the emblem of the Holy Ghost, in the form of a

dove on the top of the crown and on the sceptre, in memory of her great devotion to the Third Person of the Blessed Trinity.

All of Spain and Portugal continued to clamour for her canonization and finally after many miracles had been attested to, including two which he himself had experienced, Pope Urbano III, in one of the most magnificent spectacles ever witnessed in Rome, canonized her a Saint on Trinity Sunday, of May 25, 1625.

From this original Brotherhood have been derived the hundreds of cults in existence throughout the world today. Splendid feasts are planned, where meat and bread are distributed, solemn processions are held, and the day is spent in feasting and rejoicing.

A trace of this religious heritage will be evidenced in Lowell next Sunday when under the direction of the following officers and committee members the annual feast of the Holy Ghost will be celebrated: