

Tridentine Community News

August 25, 2024 – Fourteenth Sunday After Pentecost

The Miraculous Medal Shrine, Philadelphia



Continuing in last week's theme of a visit to Philadelphia, and as a follow up to our September 10, 2023 column on the Miraculous Medal, this week we pay a visit to one of the best-known churches in that city, the Basilica Shrine of the Miraculous Medal. While not a church that offers the Latin Mass, the Shrine is well-known to Catholics of middle age or older from the relentless promotion it used to do in the 1980s and before, under the organizational name, the Central Association of the Miraculous Medal. Magazines and medals were mailed out, invitations to enroll loved ones in Novenas arrived often in one's mailbox, ads appeared in Catholic periodicals...you simply could not escape this church. Its rector at the time, Fr. Robert Cawley, C.M., was a one-man ambassador for Our Lady's medal.

The Vincentian Fathers enthusiastically promoted this devotion as an offshoot of the seminary they operated on the same campus as the church. However, as vocations to their order declined, the seminary closed, and as the Internet became the preferred method of getting the word out, priests stopped fronting for the Central Association, laypeople took over, physical mailings were no

longer a priority, and the devotion ceased having the prominence of place it used to enjoy in the minds of North American Catholics.



The Shrine, however, continues its mission, albeit in a more modest way. Every Monday is devoted to multiple Masses and devotions. The church is beautiful and clean, albeit in the rather isolated Germantown residential neighborhood almost 30 minutes north of downtown Philadelphia. A large and ornate traditional Side Altar, pictured, is devoted to the Miraculous Medal. An outdoor Rosary Walk with several shrines invites meditation. Just one thing is surprisingly absent, given the church's history: print literature. Visit their web site for more information: <https://miraculousmedal.org/>



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