One Life, One Rose

Our Lady of Guadalupe Silver Rose Program

The Story of the Silver Rose

Our Lady of Guadalupe has done so much for her people and Mexico that the Columbian Squires in Monterrey, Mexico, wanted to give something back to her.

The group headed by Brother Miguel Martinez Estrada, Grand Knight Andreas Saucedo and Fray Margil De Jesus of Knights of Columbus Council 2312 in Monterrey, Mexico, came up with the idea of running a rose to Our Lady of Guadalupe in Monterrey. They wanted to invite Squires from two other countries on the North American Continent to participate. They contacted Squires from Laredo, Texas, to London, Ontario, Canada.

London Squires asked to start the relay running of the Rose from there through the United States and finishing up in Mexico.

The first Rose was blessed by Bishop John C. Cody in London. It was then flown to New York where it was received by Grand Knight Joseph Thomasen, who in turn took it to Supreme Knight Luke E. Hart who then took the Rose to Dallas, Texas, and delivered it to district officers of the state of Texas. Brother Knight Jack Collerin received the Rose and sent it to Laredo, Texas where the Rose was received by Squires from Monterrey, Mexico at the International Bridge in Laredo.

The Squires then ran the Rose from the International Bridge to Monterrey, ending the Rose run at the Basilica of Our Lady of Guadalupe in Monterrey.

The First Rose was a natural rose. The Squires wished to make yet another relay run in 1961, but due to the condition of the Rose it could not be used again. Grand Knight Arthur Mount at Council 1134, Reverend Edward Gatfield and Bishop John C. Cody decided to make a bronze rose and sent it to the Basilica of Our Lady of Guadalupe in Monterrey, Mexico.

When Fray Antonio de Jesus Sacedon and the Squires of Circle 660 in Monterrey heard of the bronze rose, they decided to call upon Brother Miguel Martinez Montoya (owner of Joyeria Rosine) in Monterrey to make them a silver rose because silver is one of Mexico's precious metals.

The jeweler saw a beautiful bed of roses in a garden owned by Mrs. Shirla Ostwowk. He asked if he could have a rose as a model for the making of the "Silver Rose." Mr. Montoya explained what had happened to the original rose in 1960 and what Canada was doing for Our Lady in Monterrey. Once she heard about the making of the "Silver Rose" she gladly gave him the rose and the stem to which it was attached as a model. Subsequently, Mr. Montoya made all of the "Silver Roses" from 1961 to 1997.

The first "Silver Rose" was blessed by Bishop Alfonso Espino Silva. This rose was then sent on to New Haven to the Supreme Council Office. The Bronze Rose was blessed by Bishop Cody. It was received by Supreme Knight Luke E. Hart. Archbishop Francis J. Spellman of New York so admired both roses he kept them for a special Mass before having them flown o Dallas, Texas. There the Knights again sent the roses to Laredo where they were transferred to Mexico in the middle of the International Bridge on their way to Monterrey.

From 1961 until the early 1990s, Knights from Mexico, Texas and the Our Lady of Guadalupe Province of the Fourth Degree kept the Silver Rose tradition alive. In the 1990s Supreme Knight Virgil C. Dechant decided to make the Silver Rose a Supreme Council program. The first effort consisted of one route carrying a Silver Rose from London through the central U.S. to Texas for transfer to Mexico. Soon there were three Silver Rose routes, one mimicking the original route; another starting in Manitoba and moving to British Columbia, then down to the Pacific Coast before turning east into Arizona and on to Texas; and a third route starting in New York, then down the eastern seaboard, then to several southern states to Texas. After meeting in Laredo, the three roses were transferred to Mexico for the closing prayer service at the Basilica in Monterrey on Dec. 12, the Feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe.

In 2001 Supreme Knight Carl A. Anderson shaped the program as a culture of life effort at the 119th Annual Meeting of the Supreme Council in Toronto. The annual effort "is a perfect program for the Knights of Columbus," said Supreme Knight Anderson. "Through it we honor not only Our Lady of Guadalupe and express the unity of the Order, but we also reaffirm the Order's dedication to the sanctity of human life. It is to the Blessed Mother that we turn in prayer as we work to end the Culture of Death that grips our society. As we think in terms of 'One Life, One Rose,' it is most appropriate that we turn to Our Lady of Guadalupe who made known her will through Juan Diego and the miracle of the roses."

In 2016, one Rose began its journey in Saskatchewan, moving south through the Rocky Mountain and Plains states to Texas. A second Rose started its route in Manitoba, moving south through the Upper Plains states and then further south to Texas and Mexico. A third Rose began in Alberta, moving westward to British Columbia and then down the Pacific coast through California before turning eastward to Arizona, New Mexico and Texas, before crossing into Mexico. The fourth Rose started in Ontario, moved south to Kentucky and then east to end in Washington, D.C. The fifth Rose moved from Virginia south along the Eastern Seaboard and then west through the Gulf states to Texas. The sixth Rose traveled from Maine through New York and New England to conclude its journey at St. Mary's Church in New Haven, birth place of the Order. This year's program ends on Dec. 12, 2017, the Feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe.