



**Catholic News Service**

### **Mary honored in 'grand procession' marking Los Angeles' 230th birthday**

LOS ANGELES (CNS) -- The Grand Marian Procession started inside La Placita Church during the early afternoon of Sept. 3, a day before the 230th anniversary of the founding and dedication of Los Angeles to Our Lady of the Angels. "Here is where Los Angeles was born. Here is where our great city came to be," said Claretian Father Roland Lozano, pastor of Los Angeles' first church near what is now Cesar Chavez Avenue and Main Street. Then the 300 modern-day pilgrims --- representing the 44 people of Spanish, Indian and African-American ancestry who started their trip in Sonora, Mexico, and then, accompanied by four soldiers, trekked from the San Gabriel Mission to colonize the new settlement of "El Pueblo de Nuestra Senora la Reina de los Angeles" (the Village of Our Lady Queen of the Angels) on Sept. 4, 1781 --- processed down Main and Temple Streets to the Cathedral of Our Lady of the Angels. On an ornate wood carriage, six members of Hermandad del Senor de Los Milagros (Brotherhood of the Lord of Miracles), dressed in flowing colored robes, carried an almost life-sized statue of the Blessed Mother cradling a toddler Jesus. Aztec dancers performed to the pounding beat of a single drum. Bagpipers from the LAPD's Emerald Society of Pipes and Drums played. And the slowly moving assembly sang "Ave Maria" and other hymns to the mother of God. "I think it's important that we recognize the history of Los Angeles and how our Catholic faith played a big part in that history," said walker and L.A. City Council member Tom LaBonge. "And at the cathedral many times when we have marched it's very sad, because we marched for a police officer's or firefighter's funeral. But today is a celebration."

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