

Flores de Mayo (Spanish for "Flowers of May") is a festival held in the Philippines in the month of May. It is one of the May devotions to the Blessed Virgin Mary and lasts for the entire month.

In the Philippines and other countries, Mary is fêted in May with the *Flores de Mayo* ("Flowers of May"), where devotees collect colourful flowers with which to decorate the parish church's altars. Catholic communities often congregate to pray, to offer flowers to an image of the Virgin Mary, and share homemade delicacies and snacks.

The celebration is highlighted by the *Santacruzán*, a procession celebrating the Finding of the Holy Cross. Young ladies, often known as *reynas* ("queens"), are chosen to represent certain biblical and historical figures (such as Saint Helena), Marian titles taken from the Litany of Loreto (e.g. *Rosa Mística*), and other traditional figures (e.g. *Reyna Emperatriz*). The *reynas*, dressed in their finery, walk in procession (with the *Reyna Elena*) escorted by a young boy playing Constantine and escorted by children dressed as angels.

The Filipino community of Sunraysia re-enacted this tradition at the 9 am Mass at Sacred Heart Parish Mildura on May 22.



Some of the children taking part in the annual re-enactment



There were flowers in abundance to decorate Mary's statue and the Sanctuary for the annual Flores de Mayo, traditional Filipino celebration in Mildura



This celebration each year enriches our parish Life. A wonderful delicious morning tea was offered to all parishioners after the Mass.

Sr Rosemary Graham rsm