



Our Lady of Arras or Hertogenbosch

Feast Day: July 7

In 1380, workers who were renovating St. John's Cathedral in Hertogenbosch, Netherlands discovered a four foot tall old wooden statue that was dirty and damaged. It was in such terrible shape that they could hardly tell that it was an image of the Blessed Mother.

The statue was placed in the cathedral of St. Martin. Many parishioners did not like having such a decrepit statue exposed for veneration. A priest tried to remove the statue but found that it had grown very heavy.

People who spoke disparagingly of the image of the Blessed Mother became ill, developed strange pains, grew weak and some fainted. One woman became partially paralyzed when she mocked the statue. She prayed and received a vision of the Lord who told her to repair the statue of the Blessed Mother. As soon as she began the repairs, her condition improved. The statue began to be referred to as the Kind Lady or Our Sweet Lady.

Meanwhile, faithful parishioners prayed in front of the statue and asked Our Lady for her intercession. Miraculous healings and conversions took place.

A year later, a priest found children playing with a little wooden image of the Christ Child. He recognized it as the missing piece to the four foot statue of Our Lady. He brought the two pieces together, both made of oak. The Blessed Mother is standing with arms extended. She holds the Divine Child in the left hand and an apple in the right.

In 1484, the new church of Our Lady of Arras was erected and the statue was housed there. The statue was moved from place to place and was kept hidden from 1566 to 1810 due to various invasions. At one point it was sent to Belgium for safekeeping. The statue of Our Sweet Lady was returned to St. John's cathedral in 1878 and crowned by the bishop in the name of Pope Leo XIII.

Mary, [the Mediatrix of All Graces](#), the model disciple, shows us how to receive and bear the Word to the world. For more on Year 2 preparation, visit: www.arlingtondiocese.org/goldenjubilecelebration/