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St. Raphael is one of the seven Archangels who stands before the throne of God. He is also one of only three angels whose names have been revealed through Sacred Scripture. His name in various translations means God heals, Divine Healer, or Medicine of God, for he has received his healing mission from the Lord. He is the patron saint of travelers, blindness, all bodily ills, doctors, nurses, medical caregivers, and joyful meetings. His feast day is now celebrated along with St. Michael and St. Gabriel on September 29. St. Raphael is generally believed to be the angel of healing mentioned in John 5:4 who came to the pool of Bethsaida. St. John explains that an angel of the Lord descended at certain times, stirring the waters, so that those who washed in them were healed. This reference is present in some versions of the Catholic bible such as the Douay-Rheims and is a footnote in others such as the RSV and NAB-RE. [[5718]] The Old Testament Book of Tobit tells the beautiful story of the healing power of St. Raphael the Archangel. Tobit was a righteous and faithful man of God who lost his sight in later years. In agony over his blindness, he begged God to take his life. At that very same moment, the Scriptures tell us, Tobits young kinswoman Sarah was also beseeching God for his help. Seven husbands had died in her bridal chamber on their wedding nights at the hand of a demon. The deaths brought shame and despair to Sarah and her family. As these two devout souls prayed, God heard the cries of their hearts. And in his incredible mercy and love, He sent St. Raphael, disguised as a man named Azariah, to heal them both. St. Raphael presented himself as a kinsman of Tobit and his son Tobias, offering to accompany Tobias to recover a debt owed to his blind father in a faraway territory. In the midst of this journey, they came to a stream, and encountered a large fish that attempted to swallow the foot of Tobias. St. Raphael (whom Tobias thought was Azariah) instructed him to seize and kill the fish and remove certain organs. Its gall, heart, and liver are useful for medicine, he said. St. Raphael then helped Tobias discern that his kinswoman Sarah would make a fine wife. He eased Tobias fears about the death of her previous seven husbands. The disguised Archangel and the young Tobias proceeded to travel through Sarahs homeland and then stopped to rest on their long journey. Tobias asked Sarahs hand in marriage and the young couple wed. On their wedding night, Tobias used the organs of the fish in a remedy that St. Raphael taught him, causing the demon to flee. [[17411]] St. Raphael pursued the demon secretly and bound him. He then finished the journey to collect the debt for Tobit on his own, while Tobias celebrated his marriage to Sarah, and the three soon traveled home to Tobit and his wife Anna. On the journey home, St. Raphael told Tobias that he must smear the gall of the fish on the eyes of his blind father. They arrived safely, and were greeted, and Tobias used the gall on his fathers eyes as he had been instructed. Tobit was healed and rejoiced with great thanksgiving to the Lord. Only then did St. Raphael reveal himself as the angel of the Lord, explaining that he was one of the seven angels who stand before the throne of God. It was he who had presented their petitions to the Lord when Tobit and Sarah prayed from their hearts. God had sent him to heal them both. This beautiful account assures us that God sends his angelic messengers to lead, guide, and guard us as we undertake earthly journeys and aspire to heavenly ones. Cultivating a relationship with a healing saint like the Archangel Raphael is a wonderful way for us to grow in our faith. When we seek the intercession of the saints, we exercise great trust in God and in them by binding ourselves more closely to heaven and the Church. It opens another door for Our Lord to work even more powerfully in our lives. After all, we are inviting God to work through our heavenly friends, which gives glory to Him in a very particular way. It shows faith and hope in what He has done in and through their lives. It shows the confident expectation of what He can and will do in ours. Our Loving God has given St. Raphael the angelic mission to heal minds, bodies, and situations. This is his role in the Heavenly Court and before the throne of God. We can have recourse to this powerful archangel in our own brokenness, illness, and suffering. Who better to turn to when we are in need of healing than the one God Himself has chosen for us? St. Raphael, like any saint, exists to serve the will of God. Of course, as we invite the Archangel to come to our aid, we must be mindful that our own definition of healing may not be exactly what our good God intends. Healing comes in many forms, and perhaps that which we suffer is necessary for our sanctification. Perhaps it can be used by God on behalf of souls. Since St. Raphaels name means God Heals, he will bring healing to your situation, even if it is not done as you expect. He may gain for you or your loved one the virtues and graces needed to suffer well. His healing may come in the form of helping you peacefully embrace Gods will. If complete physical healing does not come through your prayers, or if your healing comes in another form, do not despair. Be like Tobit and Sarah. Ask St. Raphael to carry the cries of your heart to the throne of God. Then trust that he is working on your behalf. Gods Medicine is not always in the form we expect, but through the intercession of this powerful Archangel, it is a remedy for our many ills. At this time, our world and our Church are undergoing great suffering and purification. St. Raphael is a powerful Divine Healer for the world, the Church, and for us. Together, let us lift our prayers to him. Let us ask his intercession before the throne of God, that we might have faith that the Lord will hear and respond to the prayers of our hearts as he did for Tobit and Sarah. A Prayer to St. Raphael the Archangel Glorious Archangel St. Raphael, great prince of the heavenly court, you are illustrious for your gifts of wisdom and grace. You are a guide of those who journey by land or sea or air, consoler of the afflicted, and refuge of sinners. I beg you, assist me in all my needs and in all the sufferings of this life, as once you helped the young Tobias on his travels. Because you are the medicine of God I humbly pray you to heal the many infirmities of my soul and the ills that afflict my body. I especially ask of you the favor (here mention your special intention), and the great grace of purity to prepare me to be the temple of the Holy Spirit. Amen. On September 29, the Catholic Church celebrates the Feast of the three Archangelswho have been venerated throughout the history of the Church: Michael(from the HebrewWho Is Like God?), who defends the friends of God against Satan and all his evil angels;Gabriel(thePower of God), chosen by the Creator to announce to Mary the mystery of the Incarnation; andRaphael(theMedicine of GodorGod Heals), the archangel who, in the book of Tobit, takes care of Tobias on his journey.These archangels, all of whom play cameo roles in the Scriptures, have been venerated since the early days of the Churchbut its Raphael I want to talk about today.Raphael has been called the Patron of Healing. Raphael is also the patron of the blind, of happy meetings, of nurses, of physicians, and of travelers.ST. RAPHAEL IN THE SCRIPTURESThe Old Testament book of Tobittells the story of how Tobit, a devout Jew in exile in Assyria, and his son Tobias (sometimes called Tobiah) were rewarded for their piety and good deeds.Two fervent prayers for helpAgainst the orders of the evil king Sennaherib, Tobitwho respected the Jewish burial customsburied the bodies of Jews who had been executed by Sennaherib in Nineveh. Because of this, the king ordered Tobit to be captured and killed. Tobit fled and hid among his kinsmen. One day, Tobit was looking toward the sky when some bird droppings landed in his eyes and blinded him. No longer able to work because of his blindness,Tobit did not curse God, but instead prayed for God to end his life.As Tobit was praying for release from this life,a young widow named Sarah also prayed to God to end her misery.Sarah had had seven husbands, but each of them had been killed by a demon on their wedding night. Sarah feared that she was cursed and could never have a husband and family of her own.In answer to these prayers, God sent the Archangel Raphael to Earth to help them.Tobias embarks on his missionTobit, unable to work because of his blindness, sent his son to the town of Media to request repayment on a loan. Tobit instructed Tobias to hire a guide to accompany him on the journey; soTobias enlisted the assistance of Azariah, who was really the archangel Raphael in disguise.But why is he portrayed with a fish?When the two companions reached the Tigris River, Tobias stopped to wash. As he knelt on the bank, a great fish leapt out of the water and frightened him. Raphael instructed Tobias to seize the fish by the fins, kill it, and remove its heart, liver and gallbladder. He revealed to Tobias that burning the heart and liver would drive away evil spirits, and that the gallbladder could cure blindness. So Tobias salted the organs to preserve them, and wrapped them safely for their journey.Azariah (Raphael) and Tobias then traveled together toward Media. Along the way, Raphael told Tobias about Sarah and encouraged him to take her as his bride, since he was her only eligible kinsman. Tobias was afraid to marry her, fearing that he would die like Sarahs seven other husbands; but Raphael assured him that the fishs heart and liver would protect him.Tobias agreed, and he and Sarah were married. After the ceremony Sarahs fathersaddened because he believed Tobias would suffer the same fate as Sarahs seven other husbandsdug a new grave beside their house, beside the seven other graves. But when Tobias and his new wife Sarah went to their bedroom that night, Tobias unwrapped the fishs heart and liver and laid them upon the hot coals in the fireplace. The evil spirit appeared, as he had seven times before; but Tobias fanned the bitter smoke toward him and the spirit ran shrieking from the room.The next morning, the newly married couple emerged whole and smiling from their room. Sarahs parents, filled with joy, celebrated with them for fourteen days. Sarahs father gave the newlyweds half of his property, with a promise that they would inherit the other half upon his death. Then the couple started home toward Nineveh.A joyful homecomingAs they approached Tobits house, Tobias saw his blind old father stumbling toward them in the road.Tobias ran forward and anointed his fathers eyes with the fishs gall, and Tobit regained his sight. He embraced his son and his new bride and welcomed them joyously into his home.When Tobias told his father how Azariah (Raphael) had helped him on his journey and had cured Tobits blindness, Tobit sent for the guide to reward him. But when Raphael stood before Tobit, Raphael revealed to them who he really was and then suddenly vanished from sight.Prayer to St. Raphael, the ArchangelBlessed Saint Raphael, Archangel,we beseech you to help us in all our needs and trials of this life,as you, through the power of God, restored Tobits sightand gave guidance to young Tobiah.We humbly seek your aid and intercession,that our souls may be healed,our bodies protected from all ills,and that through divine grace we may become fit to dwellin the eternal Glory of God in Heaven.Amen.St. Raphael is one of the seven Archangels who stand before the throne of the Lord, and one of the only three mentioned by name in the Bible. He appears, by name, only in the Book of Tobit. Raphael's name means "God heals." This identity came about because of the biblical story that claims he "healed" the earth when it was defiled by the sins of the fallen angels in the apocryphal book of Enoch.Disguised as a human in the Book of Tobit, Raphael refers to himself as "Azarias the son of the great Ananias" and travels alongside Tobit's son, Tobiah. Once Raphael returns from his journey with Tobiah, he declares to Tobit that he was sent by the Lord to heal his blindness and deliver Sarah, Tobiah's future wife, from the demon Asmodeus. It is then that his true healing powers are revealed and he makes himself known as "the angel Raphael, one of the seven, who stand before the Lord" Tobit 12:15.The demon Asmodeus killed every man Sarah married on the night of the wedding, before the marriage could be consummated. Raphael guided Tobiah and taught him how to safely enter the marriage with Sarah.Raphael is credited with driving the evil spirit from Sarah and restoring Tobit's vision, allowing him to see the light of Heaven and for receiving all good things through his intercession. Although only the archangels Gabriel and Michael are mentioned by name in the New Testament, the Gospel of John speaks of the pool at Bethesda, where many ill people rested, awaiting the moving of the water. "An angel of the Lord descended at certain times into the pond; and the water was moved. And he that went down first into the pond after the motion of the water was made whole of whatsoever infirmity he lay under" John 5:1-4. Because of the healing powers often linked to Raphael, the angel spoken of is generally associated with St. Raphael, the Archangel.St. Raphael is the patron saint of travelers, the blind, bodily ills, happy meetings, nurses, physicians and medical workers. He is often pictured holding a staff and either holding or standing on a fish. His feast day is celebrated on September 29, along with St. Michael and St. Gabriel. Page 2 Founder of the Franciscan Order, born at Assisi in Umbria, in 1181.In 1182, Pietro Bernardone returned from a trip to France to find out his wife had given birth to a son. Far from being excited or apologetic because he'd been gone, Pietro was furious because she'd had his new son baptized Giovanni after John the Baptist. The last thing Pietro wanted in his son was a man of God -- he wanted a man of business, a cloth merchant like he was, and he especially wanted a son who would reflect his infatuation with France. So he renamed his son Francesco -- which is the equivalent of calling him Frenchman.Francis enjoyed a very rich easy life growing up because of his father's wealth and the permissiveness of the times. From the beginning everyone -- and I mean everyone -- loved Francis. He was constantly happy, charming, and a born leader. If he was picky, people excused him. If he was ill, people took care of him. If he was so much of a dreamer he did poorly in school, no one minded. In many ways he was too easy to like for his own good. No one tried to control him or teach him. As he grew up, Francis became the leader of a crowd of young people who spent their nights in wild parties. Thomas of Celano, his biographer who knew him well, said, "In other respects an exquisite youth, he attracted to himself a whole retinue of young people addicted to evil and accustomed to vice." Francis himself said, "I lived in sin" during that time.Francis fulfilled every hope of Pietro's -- even falling in love with France. He loved the songs of France, the romance of France, and especially the free adventurous troubadours of France who wandered through Europe. And despite his dreaming, Francis was also good at business. But Francis wanted more..more than wealth. But not holiness! Francis wanted to be a noble, a knight. Battle was the best place to win the glory and prestige he longed for. He got his first chance when Assisi declared war on their longtime enemy, the nearby town of Perugia.Most of the troops from Assisi were butchered in the fight. Only those wealthy enough to expect to be ransomed were taken prisoner. At last Francis was among the nobility like he always wanted to be...but chained in a harsh, dark dungeon. All accounts say that he never lost his happy manner in that horrible place. Finally, after a year in the dungeon, he was ransomed. Strangely, the experience didn't seem to change him. He gave himself to partying with as much joy and abandon as he had before the battle.The experience didn't change what he wanted from life either: Glory. Finally a call for knights for the Fourth Crusade gave him a chance for his dream. But before he left Francis had to have a suit of armor and a horse -- no problem for the son of a wealthy father. And not just any suit of armor would do but one decorated with gold with a magnificent cloak. Any relief we feel in hearing that Francis gave the cloak to a poor knight will be destroyed by the boasts that Francis left behind that he would return a prince.But Francis never got farther than one day's ride from Assisi. There he had a dream in which God told him he had it all wrong and told him to return home. And return home he did. What must it have been like to return without ever making it to battle -- the boy who wanted nothing more than to be liked was humiliated, laughed at, called a coward by the village and raged at by his father for the money wasted on armor. Francis' conversion did not happen over night. God had waited for him for twenty-five years and now it was Francis' turn to wait. Francis started to spend more time in prayer. He went off to a cave and wept for his sins. Sometimes God's grace overwhelmed him with joy. But life couldn't just stop for God. There was a business to run, customers to wait on.One day while riding through the countryside, Francis, the man who loved beauty, who was so picky about food, who hated deformity, came face to face with a leper. Repelled by the appearance and the smell of the leper, Francis nevertheless jumped down from his horse and kissed the hand of the leper. When his kiss of peace was returned, Francis was filled with joy. As he rode off, he turned around for a last wave, and saw that the leper had disappeared. He always looked upon it as a test from God...that he had passed.His search for conversion led him to the ancient church at San Damiano. While he was praying there, he heard Christ on the crucifix speak to him, "Francis, repair my church." Francis assumed this meant church with a small c -- the crumbling building he was in. Acting again in his impetuous way, he took fabric from his father's shop and sold it to get money to repair the church. His father saw this as an act of theft -- and put together with Francis' cowardice, waste of money, and his growing disinterest in money made Francis seem more like a madman than his son. Pietro dragged Francis before the bishop and in front of the whole town demanded that Francis return the money and renounce all rights as his heir.The bishop was very kind to Francis; he told him to return the money and said God would provide. That was all Francis needed to hear. He not only gave back the money but stripped off all his clothes -- the clothes his father had given him -- until he was wearing only a hair shirt. In front of the crowd that had gathered he said, "Pietro Bernardone is no longer my father. From now on I can say with complete freedom, 'Our Father who art in heaven.'" Wearing nothing but castoff rags, he went off into the freezing woods -- singing. And when robbers beat him later and took his clothes, he climbed out of the ditch and went off singing again. From then on Francis had nothing...and everything. Francis went back to what he considered God's call. He begged for stones and rebuilt the San Damiano church with his own hands, not realizing that it was the Church with a capital C that God wanted repaired. Scandal and avarice were working on the Church from the inside while outside heresies flourished by appealing to those longing for something different or adventurous.Soon Francis started to preach. (He was never a priest, though he was later ordained a deacon under his protest.) Francis was not a reformer; he preached about returning to God and obedience to the Church. Francis must have known about the decay in the Church, but he always showed the Church and its people his utmost respect. When someone told him of a priest living openly with a woman and asked him if that meant the Mass was polluted, Francis went to the priest, knelt before him, and kissed his hands -- because those hands had held God.Slowly companions came to Francis, people who wanted to follow his life of sleeping in the open, begging for garbage to eat...and loving God. With companions, Francis knew he now had to have some kind of direction to this life so he opened the Bible in three places. He read the command to the rich young man to sell all his good and give to the poor, the order to the apostles to take nothing on their journey, and the demand to take up the cross daily. "Here is our rule," Francis said -- as simple, and as seemingly impossible, as that. He was going to do what no one thought possible any more -- live by the Gospel. Francis took these commands so literally that he made one brother run after the thief who stole his hood and offer him his robe!Francis never wanted to found a religious order -- this former knight thought that sounded too military. He thought of what he was doing as expressing God's brotherhood. His companions came from all walks of life, from fields and towns, nobility and common people, universities, the Church, and the merchant class. Francis practiced true equality by showing honor, respect, and love to every person whether they were beggar or pope.Francis' brotherhood included all of God's creation. Much has been written about Francis' love of nature but his relationship was deeper than that. We call someone a lover of nature if they spend their free time in the woods or admire its beauty. But Francis really felt that nature, all God's creations, were part of his brotherhood. The sparrow was as much his brother as the pope. In one famous story, Francis preached to hundreds of birds about being thankful to God for their wonderful clothes, for their independence, and for God's care. The story tells us the birds stood still as he walked among him, only flying off when he said they could leave.Another famous story involves a wolf that had been eating human beings. Francis intervened when the town wanted to kill the wolf and talked the wolf into never killing again. The wolf became a pet of the townspeople who made sure that he always had plenty to eat.Following the Gospel literally, Francis and his companions went out to preach two by two. At first, listeners were understandably hostile to these men in rags trying to talk about God's love. People even ran from them for fear they'd catch this strange madness! And they were right. Because soon these same people noticed that these barefoot beggars wearing sacks seemed filled with constant joy. They celebrated life. And people had to ask themselves: Could one own nothing and be happy? Soon those who had met them with mud and rocks, greeted them with bells and smiles.Francis did not try to abolish poverty, he tried to make it holy. When his friars met someone poorer than they, they would eagerly rip off the sleeve of their habit to give to the person. They worked for all necessities and only begged if they had to. But Francis would not let them accept any money. He told them to treat coins as if they were pebbles in the road. When the bishop showed horror at the friars' hard life, Francis said, "If we had any possessions we should need weapons and laws to defend them." Possessing something was the death of love for Francis. Also, Francis reasoned, what could you do to a man who owns nothing? You can't starve a fasting man, you can't steal from someone who has no money, you can't ruin someone who hates prestige. They were truly free.Francis was a man of action. His simplicity of life extended to ideas and deeds. If there was a simple way, no matter how impossible it seemed, Francis would take it. So when Francis wanted approval for his brotherhood, he went straight to Rome to see Pope Innocent III. You can imagine what the pope thought when this beggar approached him! As a matter of fact he threw Francis out. But when he had a dream that this tiny man in rags held up the tilting Lateran basilica, he quickly called Francis back and gave him permission to preach. Sometimes this direct approach led to mistakes that he corrected with the same spontaneity that he made them. Once he ordered a brother who hesitated to speak because he stuttered to go preach half-naked. When Francis realized how he had hurt someone he loved he ran to town, stopped the brother, took off his own clothes, and preached instead.Francis acted quickly because he acted from the heart; he didn't have time to put on a role. Once he was so sick and exhausted, his companions borrowed a mule for him to ride. When the man who owned the mule recognized Francis he said, "Try to be as virtuous as everyone thinks you are because many have a lot of confidence in you." Francis dropped off the mule and knelt before the man to thank him for his advice.Another example of his directness came when he decided to go to Syria to convert the Moslems while the Fifth Crusade was being fought. In the middle of a battle, Francis decided to do the simplest thing and go straight to the sultan to make peace. When he and his companion were captured, the real miracle was that they weren't killed. Instead Francis was taken to the sultan who was charmed by Francis and his preaching. He told Francis, "I would convert to your religion which is a beautiful one -- but both of us would be murdered."Francis did find persecution and martyrdom of a kind -- not among the Moslems, but among his own brothers. When he returned to Italy, he came back to a brotherhood that had grown to 5000 in ten years. Pressure came from outside to control this great movement, to make them conform to the standards of others. His dream of radical poverty was too harsh, people said. Francis responded, "Lord, didn't I tell you they wouldn't trust you?"He finally gave up authority in his order -- but he probably wasn't too upset about it. Now he was just another brother, like he'd always wanted.Francis' final years were filled with suffering as well as humiliation. Praying to share in Christ's passion he had a vision received the stigmata, the marks of the nails and the lance wound that Christ suffered, in his own body.Years of poverty and wandering had made Francis ill. When he began to go blind, the pope ordered that his eyes be operated on. This meant cauterizing his face with a hot iron. Francis spoke to "Brother Fire": "Brother Fire, the Most High has made you strong and beautiful and useful. Be courteous to me now in this hour, for I have always loved you, and temper your heat so that I can endure it." And Francis reported that Brother Fire had been so kind that he felt nothing at all. How did Francis respond to blindness and suffering? That was when he wrote his beautiful Canticle of the Sun that expresses his brotherhood with creation in praising God.Francis never recovered from this illness. He died on October 4, 1226 at the age of 45. Francis is considered the founder of all Franciscan orders and the patron saint of ecologists and merchants. Province in Mimaropa, PhilippinesThis article needs additional citations for verification. Please help improve this article by adding citations to reliable sources. Unsourced material may be challenged and removed.Find sources:"Occidental Mindoro"news newspapers books scholar JSTOR (October 2012) (Learn how and when to remove this message)Province in Mimaropa, PhilippinesOccidental MindoroProvince(from top: left to right) Iglit-Baco National Park, Occidental Mindoro Sports Complex, Sitio Mabuhay, Camburay, San Roque and Devils Mountain in San Jose.FlagSealLocation in the PhilippinesOpenStreetMapCoordinates: 1300N 12055E / 13N 120.92E / 13; 120.92CountryPhilippinesRegionMimaropaFoundedNovember 15, 1950CapitalMamburaoLargest MunicipalitySan JoseGovernmentTypeSangguniang PanlalawiganGovernorEduardo Gadiano (PFP)Vice GovernorDiana Apigo-Tayag (PFP)RepresentativeLeody F. Tarriela (PFP)LegislatureOccidental Mindoro Provincial BoardArea[1]Total5,865.71km2 (2,264.76sqmi)Rank11th out of 81Highestelevation (Mount Baco)2,488m (8,163ft)Population(2020 census)[2]Total525,354Rank58th out of 81Density90/km2 (230/sqmi)Rank71st out of 81DemonymsMindoreoMindorenseDivisionsIndependentcities0Component cities0Municipalities11 Abra de IlogCalintaanLoocLubangMagsaysayMamburaoPaluanRizalSablayanSan JoseSanta CruzBarangays164DistrictsLegislative district of Occidental MindoroTime zoneUTC+8 (PHT)ZIP Code51005111IDD:areacode+63(0)43ISO 3166 codePH-MDCSpoken languagesTagalogMangyanEnglishWebsiteoccidentalmindoro.gov.ph Occidental Mindoro (Tagalog: Kanlurang Mindoro), officially the Province of Occidental Mindoro (Tagalog: Lalawigan ng Kanlurang Mindoro or Lalawigan ng Occidental Mindoro), is a province in the Philippines located in the Mimaropa region. The province occupies the western half of the island of Mindoro. Its capital is Mamburao, but the most populous municipality is San Jose. Sablayan is its largest municipality in terms of area, occupying almost half of the entire province. As of 2020, Occidental Mindoro has 525,354 inhabitants.The province is bordered on the east by the province of Oriental Mindoro, and on the south by the Mindoro Strait. The South China Sea is to the west of the province and Palawan is located to the southwest, across the Mindoro Strait. Batangas is to the north, separated by the Verde Island Passage, a protected marine area and the center of the world's marine biodiversity.Mindoro Island was originally known to the ancients as Ma-i. It was formally called Mait, and known to the Chinese traders before the coming of the Spanish. Its existence was mentioned in the old Chinese chronicles in 775 A.D. and more elaborately in 1225.The natives of Mindoro were called Manguianes by the Spaniards. But the natives refer to themselves by their ethnic or clan identification. There were seven such ethnic or clan distinctions, which are differentiated by language and areas where each can be found. There are no authentic documents in existence explaining the origins of the Mangyan, but later theoreticians postulate that they migrated from Indonesia before 775 A.D. They hopped from island to island, until finally settling down permanently in Mindoro. It appeared[original research?] that clan settlements existed in the North as well as in the southern ends of the island. By 779, the southwest coast of the island was already a known trading center, and its fine natural harbor frequented by Arab, Indian and Chinese maritime traders who plied the route. The first semblance of a political system in Mindoro's experience was provided by China in the 13th century. Chinese imperial forces under Admiral Cheng Ho with a powerful armada of 60 war junks visited Mindoro and other parts of the archipelago in the 13th century, with the purpose of gaining more trading favors for Chinese merchants. Cheng Ho tried to exert some effort of rule as a prelude to annexation. Internal trouble in the China, however, recalled the armada, and the attempts to annex the archipelago did not materialize.Some time afterwards, Islamic influence reached the island, probably,[original research?] through Suluanons who traded with the natives. Moslem peoples, possibly[original research?] - Orang Dampuans (economic refugees from Sulu) crossed Mindoro Strait from Paragua (now Palawan) and settled along the coastal areas, developing progressive maritime communities.In 1570, the Spanish began to explore the island and named it Mina de Oro ("mine of gold") after finding some of the precious metal, though no major gold discoveries were made. In 1572, Captain Juan de Salcedo of the Spanish expeditionary army set sail from Cebu and explored the west coast of the island, encountering the Mangyans, who appeared used to seeing foreigners and were unsurprised at their arrival. Instead, Salcedo and Martin de Goiti were surprised to see cross designs on the clothing and basketwork of the natives, and thought some early Christian missionary had been there before them. But later scholars believed the design was Indic in origin and had no religious meaning.The Spaniards also encountered Moro settlers in Lubang Island that were vassals of and paid tribute to the kingdom of Maynila in the North, under Rajah Sulayman. This was the first real political system in the island. The Moros, who apparently had heard of the invaders from their kinsmen in the south, engaged the small Spanish force who landed on their shore, but the Spaniards' arquebuses and cannon fire from the ships hoved-to broadside to the island took the field. The Moros fled to the hills, and Salcedo burned their village. After the defeat of Sulaiman in the same year, Mindoro and other vassal states of Maynila became subject of Spanish rule. The island was officially referred to from then on as Mina de Oro, compressed later on into Mindoro. The ancient name, Ma-i, fell into disuse. The Spanish-Moro war continued in Mindoro until the end of the Spanish regime in the 19th century. In 1602, Moro forces plundered the most important Spanish towns along the coasts of Mindoro and Southern Luzon, and subsequently reestablished their hold in Mindoro by constructing a fort at Mamburao. From 1720 onwards, Moro raids became devastating not only to the island's Hispanized communities but to other parts of the archipelago as well. In 1757, the Moros, more particularly, the Iranuns organized a war fleet of 74 fast native ships called prahus. They destroyed several settlements in the island, carrying off their inhabitants to be sold as slaves in Jolo. The fact that a Moro fort at Mamburao threatened Manila, the capital of the colonial government, embarrassed the conquerors in the eyes of their native subjects, which was politically intolerable to the Spanish administrators. So in 1766, the Spaniards gathered a large force of 1,200 marines, augmented by a large army of native mercenaries, and burned the Iranun fort. But the Moros simply fled into the hills to escape, and came back when the counter-raid was over and the raiders returned to Manila.The Moros not only plundered goods, but also took prisoners of war which they sold as slaves. Many Islamic leaders in Mindanao supported piratical raids with arms, ammunition and food, not only because it was a patriotic act, but also because it was profitable. They received part of the "prisoners of war" when a successful raider returned, which earned them huge amounts. Most of the raids were successful because of the fast watercraft in the employ of the raiders. It was not until the commission of the vapor, fast steamships, in the mid-18th century that the Spanish navy successfully patrolled the archipelagic waters, and fared well against the wind-powered native seacraft of the pirates. Many pirate fleets were sunk at sea, or confined to their hiding places. The invention of machines during the Industrial Revolution, which gradually replaced manual labor, and the consecutive abolitions of slave ownership in many liberalized countries, caused a great decline in the demand for slave labor. Many of the pirate markets closed, and prices fell severely for captives. With losses to the Spanish navy increasing, and the eventual fall in profits from slave selling, raiding became less appealing to the Iranuns and their supporters. The pirate fort in Mamburao was abandoned, and the Moros retreated to Mindanao to consolidate their forces and continue the resistance in Mindanao. The Spanish presence in Mindoro was strentgthened.In 1896, the Philippine Revolution broke out. In 1897, the Spaniards posted a rifle company of 140 troops and 51 marines to Calapan to secure the island from the forces of General Emilio Aguinaldo and his revolutionary army, then beginning to overrun Spanish positions in the archipelago. In 1898, the revolutionaries attacked and overwhelmed the settlement of Bongabong and western Mindoro. Finally, they marched against the capital of Calapan with some 1,000 ill-armed foot soldiers, However, the Spanish defenses held. It was only the arrival of 1,000 regular army troops with artillery, all under the command of Miguel Malvar in Batangas, that compelled the surrender of the Spaniards under Governor Morales. On July 1, 1898, Spanish rule in Mindoro Island, lasting for 328 years, ended.A new battalion "Mindoro", with two rifle companies, was formed under the command of Captain Ruperto Hernandez and Estanislao Cayton, both from Batangas. The revolutionary political reins were held by the elite, who also held the same reins under the Spaniards (and later under the Americans).In 1910, the successor United States politico-military administration granted over 50 square kilometres (19sqmi) of land to the Welch and Fargo Sugar Company in what is now San Jose, which built the first modern and biggest sugar mill in the Far East at Siete Central (now barangay Central). In the same year, the boldly developing community of sugar cane planters, mill workers, company professionals and businessmen enabled the creation of San Jose as an official town.In 1950, the province of Mindoro was divided into Oriental Mindoro and Occidental Mindoro by virtue of Republic Act No. 505.In April 2023, the provincial government placed the entire province under a state of calamity due to recurring 20-hour daily power outages.[3][4]Apo ReefOccidental Mindoro covers a total area of 5,865.71 square kilometres (2,264.76sqmi)[5] occupying the western section of the Mindoro island, and includes outlying islands in the northwest.General land surface features that characterize Occidental Mindoro are mountains, rivers, hills, valleys, wide plains and some small fresh water lakes. The taller mountains can be found in the interior that it shares with Oriental Mindoro. Mountain ranges converge on the two central peaks, Mount Halcon in the north, and Mount Baco in the south. There is also a mountain known as bundok ng susong dalaga, the "Maiden's breast mountain", that looks like a reclined woman.[6]The northern part of the province has relatively fewer plains, while the southern parts have wider flatlands. Most of the plains are cultivated fields, with few remaining untouched forests. Significant hilly areas can be found rolling off in Santa Cruz in the north, and in San Jose and Magsaysay in the south. These are grassed-over rather than forested.There are several major drainage or river systems flowing on a generally westerly course: Mamburao River[ceb], Pagbahan, Mompong, Biga, Lumintao, Busuanga and Caguray. Swamp areas are restricted to the south, specially, along the river mouths.The province is also home to one of the most popular coral reefs in the Philippines, Apo Reef.Occidental Mindoro has two distinct weather types: rainy season and dry season. Rains begin to fall in the province in late May, intensifying through June, July, August, September and October, then gradually subsides in November.[citation needed] The months of August and September are the wettest period, with storms directly passing through the area.[citation needed]On the other hand, dry season starts in November, with rainfall subsiding in intensity, and altogether ceasing in January, February, March and April. March and April are the driest period, with cloudless skies and parched earth characterizing the general area.Temperature range is from 26C (79F) in the windy uplands to 32C (90F) in the lowlands.Climate data for Occidental MindoroMonthJanFebMarAprMayJunJulAugSepOctNovDecYearMean daily maximum C (F)29.3(84.7)29.9(85.8)31.4(88.5)32.6(90.7)32.6(90.7)32.3(90.1)31.8(89.2)31.8(89.2)31.9(89.4)31.4(88.5)30.8(87.4)29.5(85.1)31.3(88.3)Mean daily minimum C (F)22.1(71.8)22.2(72.0)23.2(73.8)24.1(75.4)24.2(75.6)23.9(75.0)23.7(74.7)23.9(75.0)23.7(74.7)23.5(74.3)23.4(74.1)22.6(72.7)23.4(74.1)Average rainy days151087111515131316171815 8Source: Storm247 [7]Occidental Mindoro comprises 11 municipalities and 2 legislative districts.Municipality[i]District[5]Population%p.a.Area[5]Density(2020)Barangay(2020)[2](2015)[8]km2sqmi/km2/sqmi132641N 1204334E / 13.4446N 120.7262E / 13.4446; 120.7262 (Abra de Ilog)Abra dellog1st6.7%35,17631,306+2.24%533.70206.066617010123417N 1205627E / 12.5713N 120.9407E / 12.5713; 120.9407 (Calintaan)Calintaan2nd5.7%30,19029,826+0.23%382.50147.6879200713431 2N 1201500E / 13.7200N 120.2499E / 13.7200; 120.2499 (Looc)Looc1st1.5%7,80210,1174.83%132.3051.08591509135134N 1200721E / 13.8595N 120.1226E / 13.8595; 120.1226 (Lubang)Lubang1st3.3%17,43718,8031.43%113.1043.6715039016121825N 1210839E / 12.3069N 121.1441E / 12.3069; 121.1441 (Magsaysay)Magsaysay2nd7.6%39,76736,016+1.90%296.70114.5613034012131321N 1203546E / 13.2226N 120.5962E / 13.2226; 120.5962 (Mamburao)Mamburao1st9.1%47,70542,975+2.01%283.51109.4617044015132456N 1202744E / 13.4155N 120.4623E / 13.4155; 120.4623 (Paluan)Paluan1st3.5%18,56616,025+2.84%564.50217.95338512122730N 1205750E / 12.4584N 120.9638E / 12.4584; 120.9638 (Rizal)Rizal2nd7.7%40,42938,263+1.05%242.5093.6317044011125029N 1204631E / 12.8414N 120.7753E / 12.8414; 120.7753 (Sablayan)Sablayan1st17.6%92,59883,169+2.07%2,188.80845.104211022122110N 1210358E / 12.3529N 121.0662E / 12.3529; 121.0662 (San Jose)SanJose2nd29.2%153,267143,430+1.27%446.70172.4734088039130503N 1204301E / 13.0843N 120.7169E / 13.0843; 120.7169 (Santa Cruz)SantaCruz1st8.1%42,41737,484+2.38%681.40263.096216011Total525,354487,414+1.44%5,865.712,264.7690230164ProvincialcapitalMunicipality^ The globe icon marks the towncenter.Population census of Occidental MindoroYearPop.% p.a.1903 13,2231918 28,193+5.18%1939 39,039+1.56%1948 43,149+1.12%1960 84,316+5.74%1970 144,032+5.49%1975 185,787+5.24%1980 222,431+3.66%1990 282,593+2.42%1995 339,605+3.50%2000 380,250+2.45%2007 421,952+1.45%2010 452,971+2.62%2015 487,414+1.41%2020 525,354+1.48%Source: Philippine Statistics Authority[8][9][9][10]The population of Occidental Mindoro in the 2020 census was 525,354 people,[2] with a density of 90 inhabitants per square kilometre or 230 inhabitants per square mile.The indigenous people in the province are the Mangyans (Manguianes in Spanish, Maguianes in Old Tagalog), consisting of 7 distinct tribes. They occupy the foothills and interior. The Mangyan have inhabited the island since pre-history. They are believed to have originally traveled from Indonesia and settled down for good in the island.There is much evidence, historical and geophysical, that the Mangyan tribes formerly lived near the coastlines. They were compelled, however, to move into the interior jungles of the island when the inter-island immigrants came, in order to avoid confrontations, which the peace-loving tribes wished to avoid at all costs. They also wished to avoid cultural changes and to preserve their way of life.Today, the Mangyan number to only around 80,000 (freely moving in and out in both provinces of Oriental and Occidental Mindoro). But there is no accurate accounting of them since many still live elusively in the upper regions of the island, avoiding contact with lowlanders.[citation needed]Major languages spoken are Tagalog and the Mangyan languages. Tagalog is usually spoken with Batangas dialect both due to its geographical contact with Batangas and Batangueo residents in the province, with great influences from native Mangyan and Visayan languages. Ilocano, Visayan, and Bicolano, are varyingly spoken by people who migrated from the provinces where they are spoken. Occidental Mindoro is a cultural melting pot, populated mostly by recent immigrants.Like the Eastern half of the island, most of the population of Occidental Mindoro are of Roman Catholic conviction (82%)[citation needed] while minor religions are usually represented by various Christian denominations, Islam, indigenous Philippine folk religions, animism, and atheism.Poverty incidence of Occidental Mindoro1020304050602000 21.742003 50.502006 43.172009 35.882012 38.102015 41.662018 21.752021 23.00Source: Philippine Statistics Authority[11][12][13][14][15][16][17][18]Occidental Mindoro is an agricultural area devoted to the production of food. Its economic base is rice production (Oryza sativa culture), a Philippine staple crop. It is the leading activity and source of seasonal employment in the province, participated in by almost 80 per cent of the population, including children.Wetland or lowland rice is a rainy season crop, heavily dependent on water and therefore produced from July (planting season) to October (harvest season). Tobacco, onions, garlic and vegetables are grown during the dry season (November to May) since they are not water-intensive crops, and require longer photoperiodicity.Rice, corn, onions, garlic, salt, fishes (both wild and cultured) are some of the relatively significant surpluses produced in the province in exportable quantities. Mangoes, cashew nuts, cooking bananas (saba) and some other fruits grown in upland orchards are among the other exports of Occidental Mindoro that have traditionally contributed to its income. Peanuts are also grown in some parts of the province, as well as cassava, sweet potatoes, ginger and other minor cultivars.Forest resources include timber and minerals, among them gold, copper, silver, chrome, and non-metallic minerals such as lime for making cement, and greenstones for ornaments. Timber groups include many species of hardwoods, such as mahogany, and other types of trees in high demand for durability.There is no large industry in the province. The government is the biggest employer, absorbing most of the off