

# 10,000 IN BARE FEET ARE PILGRIMS HERE

## Italian Devotees Crowd Church of Our Lady of Mt. Carmel in Annual Celebration.

### MANY SLEEP IN PARK

### Gifts Brought by Travelers in Hope of Expiating Sins Committed During the Year.

Ten thousand Italian men, women and children, all bare-footed, made their way on Friday and yesterday, many of them having left their homes the evening before, to the Church of Our Lady of Mount Carmel, 449 East 115th Street, on their annual pilgrimage in celebration of Our Lady of Mary's Day.

The pilgrims made the journey from all parts of the Bronx, Manhattan, Brooklyn and many points in North Jersey and Long Island, to worship before a statue of the Blessed Virgin in the basement of the church, which is a landmark in Little Italy.

The clergy, under the direction of the Rev. Anthony Mueller, the pastor, endeavored to arrange the hours for masses and other devotions so that all could attend. The other members of the Fathers of the Pious Society of Missions, in charge of the church, are the Rev. Scipio Tofini, the Rev. Henry Mezzatesta and the Rev. Hector Messena.

Masses began at 4 o'clock in the morning and were offered each hour up to noon, on both days.

Hundreds of the pilgrims, here overnight, slept in Jefferson Park. Others rested in stores and shops of the neighborhood, practically all of which kept open. The pilgrims traveled bare-footed to expiate sins committed during the year.

Although all Italian business was suspended, chairs and tables were supplied and the stores kept open for visitors from a distance. Thursday and Friday nights Jefferson Park contained about 5,000 Italians, and five blocks in First and Second Avenues were crowded with men and women waiting their turn to get into the old church.

The majority of pilgrims carried wax reproductions of various parts of the human body, representing parts afflicted with disease or disfiguration. The bearers laid the pieces of wax in the church in the belief that the Blessed Virgin would obliterate the physical defects. Many of the pilgrims also carried huge wax candles ornamented with religious pictures and symbols. They brought gifts of money also to express their thanks for the blessings of the year.