Acadian 3-Day Fete Starts in St. Martin

ST. MARTINVILLE—The historic Church of St. Martin was the setting today for the solemn opening of the three-day Pilgrimage of the Acadians to the Mother Church of the Acadians. In this church, one of the oldest in St. Martinville, a High Mass was offered to launch the second major biennial event during the yearlong celebrations in Louisiana.

Along with Canada, Louisiana is celebrating the 200th anniversary of the survival of the Acadian people following the expulsion from Acadia (now Nova Scotia) in 1755.

Today's schedule included a pageant of the history of the St. Martin Church which was presented by Our Lady of Mercy students following the solemn Mass, a historical program of Acadians by the St. Martin Parish school of St. Martin Bridge, a power show and a French and English program by the Warren Easton High School.

Tonight's event is the unique Choral Concert in which children's choirs from the Church exist in St. Martinville. Following the concert, there will be a street festival and street dancing at St. Martinville High School.

The calendar of events is as follows:

*Tomorrow*

5 a.m. —Pageant of Louisiana by St. Martinville High School in the rear of the old Castille Hotel near the Evangeline Oak.

11 a.m. —The Acadian Pilgrimage, a dream come true, by Cecile High School in the rear of the old Castille Hotel near the Evangeline Oak.

1:30 p.m. —“Joi de Vivre des Acadiens” by the Bruen Bridge High School in the rear of the old Castille Hotel near the Evangeline Oak.

2 p.m. —French play by Southwestern Louisiana Institute in the St. Martinville High School multi-purpose room.

7:30 p.m. —Selection and presentation of “Evangeline” with dance following at the St. Martinville High School football field.

Sunday

3:30 p.m. —Wedding of the Daughters of Charles Dorval in the St. Martinville High School multi-purpose room.

5:30 p.m. —Ceremonies in honor of the St. Martin Catholic Church to depart for the May Day at the Lighthouse-Evangeline Memorial Park.

There will also be the traditional “Ride of the Bayou Teche” riding tours on horseback and a point of interest along the way and tours of historic St. Martinville.

Another addition to the biennial event is an art exhibit by Dutch artist, Hendrik W. Vanderswerck, who will be showing 50 pieces of art from Louisiana and Acadian history.

The show opened today in the St. Martinville Woodman of the World Hall and will continue through the biennial pilgrimage which ends Sunday night with the traditional Mardi Gras Pageant at the Lighthouse-Evangeline Memorial Park.

Daily Advertiser
April 9, 1955
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