

Vox Populi

30 September 2026

On 7 October 1571, navy ships from a coalition of southern European Catholic maritime states sailed to meet the powerful Ottoman fleet in what would become the Battle of Lepanto.

They were on their way to rescue Christian outposts in Cyprus, which had been besieged by the Ottomans.

Faced with a material disadvantage in this liberation effort, Pope Pius V called for all of Europe to pray the Rosary and led a Rosary procession in Rome, asking for the intercession of Our Lady.

Despite the odds being against them, the Catholic forces won the naval battle against the Ottomans, devastating the Ottoman Empire and liberating Cyprus.

While the victory was originally celebrated under patronage of “Our Lady of Victory”, within two years, it was being commemorated as the Feast of the Most Holy Rosary of the Blessed Virgin Mary, celebrated on the first Sunday of October. It is now celebrated on 7 October each year.

The Memorial holds a special place within the Diocese of Broken Bay. It is the patronal feast of the Diocese’s Cathedral at Waitara but also the patronal feast of the parishes of Wyoming and The Entrance.

Our Lady of the Rosary’s intercession is not one of victory through violence, but rather, one of praying for peace, and the liberation of all people from violence and oppression.

In his recent visit to the Sanctuary of Our Lady of Lourdes in France, Pope Leo XIV urged people to pray the Holy Rosary with the intention of establishing peace.

He called for them to pray the Rosary “with the particular intention that wars may cease and that peace may be established among peoples in conflict.”

“Let us accompany this prayer with concrete acts of penance and mercy, committing ourselves always to fostering dialogue and reconciliation,” he said.

Our Lady of the Rosary, pray for us.