



Heading into Easter, Christian Flag flying in Central Park for first time ever in New Britain

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NEW BRITAIN – The New Britain community gathered in Central Park despite the dreary weather Thursday afternoon to witness the raising of the Christian Flag by the New Britain Hispanic Community of Faith.

“As I look around I must reflect on the community, the Christian community; they were here way before us,” said Minister Carmelo Rodriguez, president of New Britain Latino Coalition and event organizer. “They built the beautiful places of worship that we have. These are families, people from all over the world that came to New Britain because they knew it was a good place. They came to worship to praise and to come together. I think about those families, Armenians, Polish, Italian and so many others that came to this great city and the work that they did; they believed in what they stand on their religious beliefs and values. Today we reflect and honor them.”

City officials and alderman were in attendance and showed support for what organizers say is a historical moment in the city and statewide.

“The Christian Flag symbolizes the gospel of Jesus Christ, his death on the cross, his burial in the tomb and his resurrection from the grave,” Alderman Kristian Rosado said.

The Christian Flag was introduced on September 26, 1897 at Brighton Chapel on Coney Island in Brooklyn N.Y.

“The flag has a white field with a red Latin cross inside a blue canton,” Rosado said. “The shade of red on the cross symbolizes the blood Jesus shed on Calvary. The blue represents the waters of baptism, as



Minister Carmelo Rodriguez, President of New Britain Latino Coalition and organizer Photo Provided By Ciara Hooks

well as the faithfulness of Jesus. The white represents Jesus' purity."

Reverend Alex Lopez, president of the New Britain Hispanic Community of Faith, addressed the audience in Spanish.

"Today I am proud. I commend Carmelo and I commend the clergy at the Community of Faith to take this day of the most sacred week in Christianity to raise that flag in the name of Jesus," said Rev. Abraham Hernandez, national chapter director of the National Hispanic Christian Leadership Conference.

The flag was raised as Nancy Rodriguez, director of the Siena Learning Center, said a prayer.

"This is definitely a good day," she said. "We pray as people walk through this week and that flag is waiving that it may bring peace."

Rodriguez also led the Christian Pledge and welcomed others to join.

"When I was a child I remember reciting the pledge for the Christian Flag, putting my hand on my heart and saying it," Hernandez said. "If there's a time in which this country and this state needs love and the church to live out the true gospel it is now."

Carmelo Rodriguez shared they wanted the opportunity to raise their flag as every other organization had.

"We approached the mayor in conjunction with the support of Alderman Kristian Rosado in bringing the flag just in representation of our city religion and people. We are a part of the community," he said.

Rosado said the flagpole at Central Park has been the center of recognizing the diversity of the community.

"The Christian community is a large part of our city comprised of the many churches, faith based organizations and congregates that attend services," he said.

Mayor Erin Stewart's office extended well wishes to those celebrating Easter.

"We certainly are glad to be here today for the raising of the Christian Flag," said Edward Ford, special projects coordinator for the mayor's office. "This is a very important event. It's important to our hearts and to the values of this office and the city. We wish you a very happy Easter."