

Irosin Paray Festival

“*Paray*” is the local term for palay or rice grain. *Paray* Festival was coined in 2001 to replace the Hin-ay Festival, “*Hin-ay*” being the name of pioneering community of original settlers which later became Irosin. The term *paray* was adopted for its dual symbolism: it aptly depicts Irosin as land-locked rice producing agricultural community and the Festival of *Palay* is a celebration for a bountiful harvest. And taking into account that Irosinians are predominantly Roman Catholics, *Paray* Festival coincides with the September 29 celebration of the feast of St. Michael the Archangel – the patron saint of the local parish church. The *Paray* Festival of Irosin centers on three major themes:

Harvest Festival

Rice is the primary food crop of Irosin. Rice production surpasses the local food requirement and surplus production is exported to neighboring towns and provinces. September, the month of *Paray* Festival, is the start of the rice harvest for the wet planting season. The harvest festival reaffirms the productivity of Irosin’s agricultural lands in providing sustenance to many rice farming households. The festivities also means increased economic activity – thereby promoting trade and commerce in the locality

Viva San Miguel! Street Dancing

The primordial battle between the Army of God against Satan’s forces is a recurring theme in *Paray* Festival activities. In Christian tradition, St. Michael is the prince of light leading the forces of good in a war against evil which resulted in Satan being thrown from heaven. The victory in the war in heaven is celebrated and St. Michael’s divine intervention is sought for the continued blessings and protection from evil.

Culture and Sports

The *Paray* Festival also serves as a venue for the promotion of local heritage, culture and sports development. Cultural events, showcasing of local talents, sports and recreational activities are integrated into the month-long festival.

The yearly *Paray* Festival plays a pivotal role in promoting multi-sectoral participation in community endeavors. Festival activities are planned and implemented by different schools, organizations, barangays and sectors of Irosin. *Paray* Festival is a reaffirmation of the unity of Irosinians as a community.