

## LEGION OF MARY AT ST. ISIDORE PARISH

*The mission of the Legion of Mary is "to glorify God and bring the world to Jesus through Mary by fostering holiness in its members via prayer and active cooperation in the Church's evangelization efforts, serving the sick, lonely, and marginalized, and bringing Christ's love to all, working under priestly guidance for spiritual growth and the salvation of souls." Members, called legionaries, perform spiritual works of mercy, like door-to-door evangelization, Pilgrim Virgin statue home visitation, praying the rosary and offering the Eucharist to residents in the nursing homes, promoting rosary prayer after daily masses, encouraging the frequent visitation in Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament, extension works such as launching and forming a Legion of Mary presidium in churches, and many other works.*

What has the Legion of Mary accomplished so far at St. Isidore?

1. **DAILY ROSARY AFTER MASSES.** Since after Covid, the weekly Saturday rosary after mass had not resumed. One St. Isidore parishioner who is a member of the Legion of Mary of another parish asked if anyone would like to join her in praying the rosary after mass one Saturday. Many expressed their appreciation of the opportunity to pray the rosary together, so the rosary prayer group was eventually formed, and many joined and prayed the rosary on Saturdays after masses. Then we added praying the rosary every Fridays after morning masses. And since one of our **legion works is recruiting people to lead the rosary after masses**, we asked one of the regular daily mass goers if anyone can lead the rosary on the days that I have work and I could not lead the rosary. One of our parish staff now leads the rosary after morning masses on weekdays. Many of the rosary prayer group members are now auxiliary members of the Legion of Mary. Another member also started the rosary after the 12 noon masses. Many parishioners expressed their joy and gratitude that they are now able to pray the rosary as a community inside the church after masses.

Why is community rosary prayer important?

*Mary's primary request at Fatima over 108 years ago, was for all people to pray the Rosary every day to obtain peace for the world and an end to the war. While the Rosary can be prayed individually, it is also a powerful community prayer. Jesus said, "For where two or three are gathered in my name, there am I in the midst of them." Large gatherings to pray the Rosary especially in churches, or in prayer groups, are moments of spiritual communion between believers, strengthens the bond between members of the Church, who pray together for the same intentions. We remember the biblical story from Exodus 17:8-13, [Moses held up his hands \(with a staff\)](#) during a battle against the [Amalekites](#), and the Israelites won as long as his arms were raised, symbolizing prayer and divine intervention; when his arms grew tired, his companions [Aaron and Hur](#) held them up until sunset, securing victory. This emphasizes the importance and the power of community intercessory prayer.*

2. The Legion of Mary Pilgrim Virgin Home Visitation Program: Another Legion of Mary works is the pilgrim virgin home visitation program. *"It involves a statue of the Blessed Mother (often Our Lady of Fatima/Holy Rosary) visiting a family's home for a set*

time, usually a week, to inspire prayer, devotion, and evangelization, where families gather to pray the Rosary, sing hymns, and invite neighbors (Catholic or not) to join, fostering faith and bringing Mary's presence into the household. Legion members coordinate the visit, provide prayer guides, and offer welcome and farewell prayers, strengthening family spirituality and drawing people closer to the Church. " One of our parishioner who is a Legion of Mary member donated a statue of our Lady of Fatima and asked if any parishioners would like the pilgrim virgin to visit their homes. **Since February, our Lady of Fatima pilgrim virgin has visited 41 homes.** Every home our Lady of Fatima has visited, the family reports feeling Mary's presence in their homes, many reports a sense of tranquility in their homes in her presence. Some may not be familiar with the recitation of the rosary, and so as part of our evangelization work, we bring them pamphlets on how to pray the rosary, give out blessed rosaries and miraculous medals and explained the history of the miraculous medals and why the rosary is important. We guided the parents and their children how to pray the rosary. We encouraged them to invite friends and family to pray the rosary with them. Family members and friends tend to sign up for hosting the Pilgrim Virgin in their homes too after experiencing and attending the pilgrim virgin rosary in the homes. We have seen men and women shed tears as our blessed mother leave their homes after a week stay. They felt sad that she was leaving. We reassured them that our Queen mother would like them to continue praying the rosary as a family daily and they will always feel her presence when they pray the rosary. Many expressed their plans to continue to pray the rosary as a family and even invite extended family and friends at least monthly. It warms our hearts as legionaries to witness lives transformed by our mama Mary by her pilgrimages to people's homes. Parents reports how their children would volunteer to lead the rosary. Since many may not be able to go to Portugal to visit her, she comes to the homes of those who requests for her and surely blesses everyone in the homes she visits. She brings everyone closer to her Son Jesus by the recitation of the rosary. Even pets behave favorably in her presence. One family reports their dog typically would urinate in their dining room just for fun despite training the dog not to. During the whole week that Our Lady of Fatima was at their dining table, the huskie never wet the carpet in the dining room. A week passed by and as we were leaving with the statue, the huskie was moaning as he followed us as if complaining why we are taking his Lady out of the door. Recently, a home had birds in their cage chirping during the rosary as if joining us in prayer. Then after our rosary, they were quiet. Anyone interested to host the pilgrim statue in their homes may contact the Legion of Mary in the link provided in the church website.

3. DOOR-TO-DOOR HOME EVANGELIZATION: *"Door-to-door evangelization is a core apostolate of the Legion of Mary, where lay members, guided by pastors, visit homes to*

*invite lapsed Catholics back to the Church, bring non-Catholics to the faith, offer sacramentals (like Miraculous Medals, rosaries), distribute Catholic literature, as well as offering to pray with the residents; inviting them to return to Mass, receive sacraments especially confession, or learn about the Catholic faith.*

Our Legion of Mary members always go in pairs. We typically go knock on doors for an hour covering an average of 15-20 homes or a block each Saturday. For an hour, we would go door-to-door and invite people to return to church for those who have not been back to church, those who recently moved to our neighborhood, and even non-catholics to check out our church and the website to learn more about what our church offers. We have met non-Catholics who engaged in friendly conversation about faith and love for Jesus and expressed their appreciation for doing the door-to-door to invite people back to church.

Last November 15, I was training the president of the Spanish Presidium of another parish in doing door to door evangelization. She requested to train with me so she can also initiate this most important legion work in their parish area. She is Venezuelan. In all our legion works, we begin with prayer to the Holy Spirit and our blessed mother for wisdom, guidance and protection. I usually ask our blessed mother to send us where she wants us to go. I typically randomly pick a street or block to cover. While we were knocking on one door, nobody answered but a mail delivery guy came by, so we said hi to him and thought he was the owner going to the front door of the house. He explained he's just delivering mail. Our Venezuelan legionary picked up his accent and started talking to him in their dialect. She invited him to visit our church and I gave him the bulletin we brought with us. We continued to knock on nearby doors. In one of the houses we went to, a lady opened the door. I started introducing ourselves and shared our purpose of visiting the neighborhood. Again, our legion member picked up the accent of the homeowner and confirmed that the lady is another fellow Venezuelan. It turns out she didn't know about St. Isidore parish and was interested when she found out we have Spanish masses. We told her we do have bilingual priests and have a large Hispanic community. The lady was happy to learn about it and she told us she will bring her family for 11:30 am Mass that Sunday. One guy opened the door but refused the bulletin and claims he doesn't believe in God and closed the door. We prayed to Mary to intercede for him. We try our best with our legion works. We offer to Mary to complete the work we couldn't accomplish successfully. We pray for all the homeowners of all the doors we knocked on.

I strongly believe nothing is a coincidence. That day, none of our Legion of Mary members were able to join me in the door-to-door due to family engagements. Mary reminded me that morning at church that there was a Legion member from another church that wanted to train with me. So I contacted her. I believe it was by Mary's promptings, that she was actually in church for the mass and confession that Saturday. When I asked her if she wants to go, she was excited to do the work! I believe in my heart that it was Mary's promptings that made me pick that street of the many streets and sent her Venezuelan legion member there so she can speak the dialect of

the lady with a family of four, so she can invite her to the Spanish masses of St. Isidore and not miss the mass that Sunday. I gave the lady 4 miraculous medals and rosaries as welcome gifts. We legion of Mary members felt we have accomplished our mission that hour we spent doing door-to-door. Even if many doors did not open, some are non-Catholics and may not be interested to strike a conversation with us, it was still worth it to bring one family back to church. **Since the Legion of Mary was launched in June, our Legionaries have visited 240 homes.** We could cover larger areas and more homes and hopefully bring back more families to church if we have more members. May more parishioners answer Mary's call to join her legion and do the legion works for her.

4. VISITING THE HOMEBOUND AND NURSING HOME RESIDENTS: Since the start of our Legion of Mary here at St. Isidore, we have coordinated with 2 nursing homes: Alden Gardens Assisted Living and Sunrise Nursing home and once a week, our legion members come and meet with some residents to pray the rosary with them and brings the Eucharist to those who are able to receive our Lord. We gave them miraculous medals which they so happily wear. We gave them rosaries which they greatly appreciated. The senior residents expressed their appreciation that they are remembered that they can still serve our lady in praying and interceding for their families and friends. They felt a sense of purpose having found a mission to pray together and intercede for loved ones. Many pray for their children to return to the catholic faith, for their children's conversion and good health.
5. OFFERING/COORDINATING THE RECEPTION OF SACRAMENTS/home blessings or Divine Mercy/Sacred Heart enthronement. Since June, our Legion of Mary members have promoted and helped parishioners in their needs of the sacraments. We have arranged for anointing of the sick of some parishioners, clarified with one parishioner that after many years of not receiving the Eucharist because of a misunderstood instruction, that one was able to avail of confession and receive the Lord again in Holy Communion. We also arranged for home blessing and Divine Mercy and Sacred heart of Jesus enthronement, and the family was very grateful. We provided pamphlets for examination of conscience and encouraged monthly confession especially within the week of the first Saturday devotions which we also promote. We have given out pamphlets and prayer cards of how to pray the divine mercy chaplet.
6. Promotion of Marian feasts and Eucharistic celebrations: Legion members help decorate Mary's altar and offer flowers on her feast days. One legion member initiated the rosary procession during the feast day of our Lady of the Rosary in October of 2024. This year in October, it has become a church wide event participated by various ministries. The Legion of Mary also led the rosary rally last October 11, in solidarity with the 23, 000 other rosary rallies across America to pray the rosary for peace in America. The rosary rally of prayer was simultaneously done nationwide at noon that day. A legion of Mary member helped coordinate for the international pilgrim virgin of our Lady of Fatima (the statue have visited several states including Canada for over 75 years), to come to our parish for the first-time last June. A legion member also initiated and helped coordinate with the parish and other ministries in the return of the Corpus Christi

celebration after Covid in 2024. Many parishioners expressed their appreciation of the Eucharistic celebration. Some admitted it was their first time experiencing such event. Corpus Christi celebration is now an annual church event again. We continue to promote the Holy hour devotion to everyone.

We the Legion of Mary members hope parishioners will join us in doing Mary's legion works. If anyone is interested in checking out the Legion of Mary, we meet every Monday nights at 7pm at the Ministry Center room 104. We pray for many parishioners to answer Mary's call and help her in bringing all her children closer to Jesus.