

# The Parish Visitor

holy family  
of  
nazareth



intercede for  
all families

# The Parish Visitor

Parish Visitors of Mary Immaculate  
Contemplative—Missionaries  
Door-to-Door & Catechists

Daily each Parish Visitor of Mary Immaculate prays:

*O Divine Lord, Whose merciful love reaches to the ends of the earth, we thank You for inspiring the heart of Julia Teresa Tallon with the love of Your own Heart. Through her, You brought forth a new institute in the Church and called us to imitate the sacrificial mission of Your Son the Good Shepherd, Who, in steadfast union of heart with You and loving zeal for the most neglected of his little ones, gave His life to seek and save the lost and straying.*

*We humbly ask You to continue to expand the work You have begun in her. Fulfill her ardent longing to promote sanctity in each heart, to restore family life, calling all to full participation in the life of the Church and arousing the conscience of your people in loving concern for the most neglected and spiritually abandoned in our midst.*

*May she who asked always – “What more can I do for God?” – find now new ways to glorify You. Grant, Lord that she who loved and cared for the least of Your little ones on earth may now be glorified by You Who lives and reigns with Jesus Christ Your Son in the unity of the Holy Spirit world without end. Amen.*

In this issue, we are highlighting the underlined phrases.

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P.O. Box 658, Monroe, NY 10949

Phone: (845) 783-2251

[www.parishvisitorsisters.org](http://www.parishvisitorsisters.org)

# Connecting Families to Christ and His Church



By Mother Maria Catherine, P.V.M.I.

“To restore family life, calling all to full participation in the life of the Church...” These words, from the Parish Visitors daily prayer for the “Extension of the Charism of Servant of God, Mother Mary Teresa Tallon” (quoted on the inside front cover) are two very dynamic aspects of our missionary charism.

In this issue you will read stories of the Sisters’ evangelization among the families in the parishes to which they are assigned. You will also read Father Miller’s article on the meaning of “full participation in the life of the Church.” Allow me to share with you the heart and soul of our missionary evangelization, from the words of Mother Mary Teresa.

In the early days of the Congregation, the Sisters used the spiritual census as a means of gaining access to the homes and discovering the spiritual status of their souls. Today, while many do not use the actual “census card” every Parish Visitor of Mary Immaculate has in her mind the important questions needing to be answered to ascertain the spiritual state of her people. Hence, we read from Mother’s writings:

“The census is, in a way, an excuse for the grand spiritual apostolate of the PVMI. However, the census does accomplish far more than the primary objective sought by the Sisters – the bringing back of needy souls to Christ. ...It brings the souls of hundreds who have been unknown to the pastor into close touch with him; it opens up wonderful possibilities for a strengthening of the bonds between the members of the parish....” (page 84, PV Directory)

As the article “I Am a Bridge” tells us, the Parish Visitor is a bridge: first of all, between the person and God – drawing to that “communion of love” of which Sister Mary Eileen spoke of in her article “Belonging”; secondly, between the person and the parish priest. What a privilege it is to be such a bridge! It is in this very missionary work that the Parish Visitor of Mary Immaculate is the means of “restoring family life and calling all those she meets to full participation in the life of the Church.”

“We should, therefore, continue to give our lessons until our clients become so imbued with a conviction of the truth that they will want to go to Mass and the Sacraments. When once they return to Church, they will begin to be instructed by the liturgy and by the sermons which they hear. Grace will be given them plentifully in the Sacraments of Penance and the Holy Eucharist. They will place their children under instruction, and they will become zealous helpers of the PVMI in saving other souls.”

The whole purpose of our vocation is to bring every soul we meet into communion with the Blessed Trinity. In reality, this means bringing every member of the family into the sacramental life of the Church – for it is there that sanctifying grace (the grace of communion with the Trinity) is imparted!

Why is this so important to the Parish Visitor of Mary Immaculate? Because she knows that life without the God of Life, the Creator of Heaven and Earth is an empty life, a restless life. As St. Augustine has said: “You have made us for Yourself, O Lord, and our hearts are restless until they rest in Thee.”



It is not enough for the Parish Visitor of Mary Immaculate to bring one person of the family back to the fold, but her mother’s heart reaches out to each member until they are safe again in the embrace of their Good Shepherd. Mother Foundress says: “When the work of our sister-missionaries has, to a certain extent, been

done, Jesus Himself takes charge of these beloved lambs of His precious fold.” (p. 98, PV Directory)

What a joy it is for each Sister when the family she has visited, whose members have been away from the Church for some time, realize the truth and beauty of her teaching on the love of Jesus for the lost sheep; or her words of encouragement when they may harbor some hurt or resentment toward a member of the Church.

Today, when family life is beset with many challenges and temptations; when persons have forgotten the beauty of the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass, and the Real Presence of Jesus in the Eucharist, how refreshing for persons to welcome a Parish Visitor Sister into their home and hear her invitation to “come home” rather than sit on the sidelines. How beautiful the missionary apostolate that imitates that of the Good Shepherd – reaching out to persons, face to face and heart to heart!

“Many turn to the Parish Visitor of Mary Immaculate with relief and gladness, understanding that she is a real friend in need. Souls having need of someone in whom to confide when harassed by many and various troubles, will often open their hearts to the Visitor and disclose things in their past and present history which the Visitor, in her role of Christ-like confidante, will correct and relieve, experiencing a holy joy and gratitude in so doing.” (p. 105, PV Directory)

In the words of our Foundress, Servant of God, Mother Mary Teresa Tallon, we pray: “...that all God’s people may grow in greater appreciation of the blessed truths of the Holy Faith; that they may learn to know and love God, the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, the Blessed Virgin Mother, the Angels and Saints. Let us make use of the treasury of Christ’s true Catholic Church, the Church founded by His all-powerful love, perpetuated, through all time by His mercy, and fed through His holy Sacraments and graces forever until the consummation of the world.” (PV Missionary, pp. 4-5)

# Full Participation in the Life of the Church

By Father Frederick L. Miller, S.T.D.

One of the goals of the Parish Visitors of Mary Immaculate is to promote full participation in the life of the Church. What exactly does that mean?

We become members of the Church at the moment of our Baptism. In that holy bath, we were grafted onto Christ like branches grafted onto a vine. We live in Christ. Christ lives in us and unites us to His Father in Heaven through the power of the Holy Spirit. This communion with the Holy Trinity initiates communion with all the other members of the Church on earth and also with the men and women who from the beginning have died in Christ's friendship and now enjoy the vision of God in Heaven. Baptism also places the baptized person in loving communion with the holy souls in purgatory who are being prepared to see God face to face in heaven. Our prayers help them on their journey to the Kingdom of Heaven.

So, the Church is much larger than most people imagine. It is made up of everyone in Heaven, all the holy souls in purgatory, everyone baptized in Christ on earth. Another term for this mystery is the communion of Saints. In a sense, this communion becomes visible and operative whenever Catholics gather for the celebration of Holy Mass.

What we **do** at Mass tells us a great deal about what it means to participate fully in the life of the Church:

First of all, we **hear and ponder** the Word of God. Jesus teaches us through the readings from Scripture at Mass and the instruction of the priest. The more we understand the Word of God and seek to internalize it, the more fully we participate in the life of God

which is the life of the Church. For this reason, Parish Visitors are catechists and encourage everyone to know the Catechism of the Catholic Church.

Second, *at Mass* through Baptism the faithful are empowered to **offer** Jesus to the Father and to offer themselves and their personal sacrifices with Him to the Father for the salvation of all. We **worship** God at Mass and beg him to bring all men and women to faith, conversion, and the possession of God in Heaven. Parish Visitors want to help everyone understand that the Mass is a sacred action that brings forgiveness and healing to many people.

Third, when we **receive** the Body and Blood of Christ at Mass, He visits us, strengthens us in the love of God and the love of neighbor and inspires us to perform the spiritual and corporal works of mercy which are the *hallmarks of the Church of Christ*. When we fail, when we sin, we participate in the life of the Church through the Sacrament of Reconciliation.

### *The Key to Doing Works of Charity*

In short, to participate fully in the life of the Church means to allow Jesus to form us through His word, to offer Him and ourselves with Him to the Father in Eucharistic worship, to generously perform the works of charity for our brothers and sisters, especially those who are most in need of our help.



*Mother Maria Catherine with  
Father Frederick Miller to  
whom she presented the  
Mother Mary Teresa Tallon Award.*



# *That's My Daughter!*

By Sister Mary  
Emmadoña, P.V.M.I.

When I entered the Parish Visitors of Mary Immaculate community, I really didn't know much about Mother Mary Teresa except for the fact that she founded this beautiful community. But during my discernment period with the Sisters in the Philippines, I remember being so impressed at hearing her words before supper. And as I read her written works, I was more convinced that this woman made a lot of sense and that she was a saint.

Mother Mary Teresa embodied a true disciple of Christ. She has put her trust in God and had such an abounding confidence in Him. She was a woman of prayer and because of that she understood exactly what God wanted her to do. I learned of the pain Mother Mary Teresa had to endure to fulfill God's will in establishing this contemplative-missionary congregation. None of us will ever know how much she truly suffered for this community. The process was long, hard and slow yet Mother didn't lose hope, she stuck with Jesus because she knew that God was her surety.

Most of our Sisters now have never met Mother Foundress in person and yet she continues to guide all of us, in becoming faithful daughters of the Church. I am truly amazed, when I hear stories from Sisters or even read about them, just how closely each Sister has lived or is living the spirit of Mother Mary Teresa. Why is that? It is because we are her spiritual daughters. The graces God bestowed on Mother Foundress still flows abundantly to us, her spiritual daughters.



In school programs wherein a child plays a part, it's not surprising to hear someone from the crowd shout "That's my boy!" or "That's my girl!" And when a child is born, it's always automatic for parents to look for their features in their child. Why? Because parents can't help but be proud of their offspring. Parents see themselves in their child. Interestingly, Fr. Bruno M. Hagspiel wrote in his book "Live in the Holy Spirit," that a religious has four Mothers: 1.) her biological mother, 2.) her community/ foundress 3.) Holy Mother Church and 4.) the Blessed Mother. If this is true, then all four of them, including Mother Foundress will also look for their resemblance in me. Will they be proud to say that I am their daughter?

I can only hope and pray.

*May I live my life according to the rule of this community. May I sincerely and eagerly proclaim the truth and faith. May I remain faithful to my vows even if I have to struggle all my life. May I follow the good example Mother Mary Teresa left for me. May my name be written in the Book of Life and be rewarded everlasting joy in God's presence. And I also pray that in the end, all my "four mothers," will beamingly say, "That's my daughter!" ☺*



# The Fruits of Door-to-Door Visitation

Sr. Mary Beata, P.V.M.I.

As Parish Visitors of Mary Immaculate, we go out in the footsteps of the Good Shepherd, seeking to bring God's love to others.

We visited over three hundred homes on a recent temporary mission in Ohio. Our mission is not to convert people to our Catholic faith, but rather to encourage Catholics to live their faith to the full. Many Catholics are not registered in a parish and may not practice their religion, so we knock on every door, seeking them out. Our reception was positive.



A Baptist woman opened her door to us and congratulated us for "going out and finding those lost sheep for our Lord." She promised to pray for our ministry. A parishioner opened another door. He was thrilled to share with us the marvels that God has been doing in his life. We met

a Catholic woman who had been away from the Church for a long time. She was in tears when we told her the door was always open for her to come back. An elderly couple who had newly moved into the area was happy to receive a bulletin and learn the Mass schedule. A Protestant searching for a solid relationship with God couldn't find it in his congregation. We were able to share the fullness of Truth in the Catholic faith with him. One of the most memorable experiences was with a Catholic woman who felt hurt by the Church. Our conversation began through a closed door. Before it ended, she called her children to come out and meet us. She expressed interest in some of the activities offered by the Church.

It is a joy to share the love of the Good Shepherd!

# Prayer for your Family

by St. John Paul II

God from whom originates every paternity in heaven and on earth, Father, you are Love and Life may every human family on the earth become, through the mediation of Your Son, Jesus Christ, “born of a Woman” and through the mediation of the Holy Spirit, source of divine charity, a true sanctuary of life and love for the generations that ever renew themselves.

May your grace guide the thoughts and the works of spouses towards the good of their families and of all the families of the world.

May the younger generations find in the family a strong support for their humanity and their growth in truth and love.

May love, strengthened by the grace of the sacrament of Marriage show itself to be stronger than every weakness and every crisis, through which, at times, our families pass.

Finally, we ask you through the intercession of the Holy Family of Nazareth, that the Church amidst all the nations of the earth may fulfill fruitfully her mission in the family and by means of the family.

Through Christ our Lord, the way and the truth and the life, for ever and ever. Amen.

# “Messengers of Grace”

By Sr. Debra Marie, P.V.M.I.



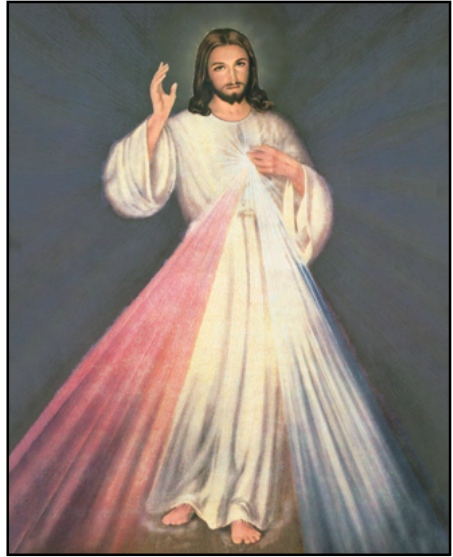
“Sister, I don’t think I can knock on a stranger’s door and just enter into a conversation about our faith....” Two months after that statement, I had knocked on nearly 200 doors and entered into many meaningful conversations, and joyfully shared with my sisters how eager I was to go out again. What changed my perspective? The awesome power of the Holy Spirit!

By nature, I’m rather shy. As I accompanied my sister on my first visitation experience, I was shocked at her boldness in her attempts to enter into conversation with people. When no one responded to the door, she went over to the gate where she could hear voices and called out to the people there. A woman responded and, through the closed gate, recounted a negative experience that she had with the Church. Sister listened attentively and responded to her kindly, and I thought the visit was over, but Sister kept talking. At first, I thought she was crazy. This woman was very clear about her sentiments, and I felt our conversation would make her angrier, but I was wrong. Yes, the hurt and the anger were very clearly present, but as my sister continued to share her joys about our life and ask questions to learn more about the woman, slowly, she began to change. As she realized that someone was taking an interest in her and reaching out to her, she lost the sharpness in her voice and became more open with what she shared with us. By the end of our visit, she had opened the gate and had her children come out to meet us. As we left, she had a smile on her face and accepted the information about our youth ministry program.

**“Think what a privilege it is to be our Lord’s messengers of grace!”**

– Mother Mary Teresa Tallon

After that visit, I was convinced of the need for our door-to-door ministry. I began to feel compelled to go out. As I started knocking on doors, I wasn't entirely sure what to do, but I quickly learned that the Holy Spirit would lead me. There was one house that I had gone to three times, but there was no reply. There was an image of the Divine Mercy on the door, so I was rather sure a Catholic family was there and really wanted to visit, but I had to move



on to other areas. One day I was doing a follow-up visit nearby and thought I'd try one more time. When a Filipina woman came to the door, she was delighted and welcomed me in. The whole family was very devoutly Catholic and loved sisters. As I sat down, she told me with a big smile that today was her birthday and that Jesus had just given her the best birthday gift she could ask for by sending her a sister to visit with her.

The Holy Spirit was not just working in sending me to the people whom He wished me to visit but also in putting the words He wanted me to speak into my mouth. As I was talking to one woman, I began to converse in a way I had never done before and felt a little surprised by it, but it was just what she needed to hear, and she was able to open up and share her story with me. I realized that it was the Holy Spirit that was speaking through me. I began to pray with confidence as I knocked on each door. I asked Him to give me the words He wished me to say. I learned that I wasn't visiting strangers, but rather, God was visiting his children through me.

**"I will give you words and a wisdom that none of your opponents will be able to withstand or contradict."**

**Lk 21:15**

# Belonging

By Sister Mary Eileen, P.V.M.I.

Why do we want to belong?

There's something about being human that makes us want to be a part of something with other humans. We are not meant to be alone. We want to belong.

Ideally, this first happens in the family we are born or adopted into. We know we are an essential part of this family and from it, we get a healthy sense of our identity. If the family is not functioning well, this des-



perate need to belong doesn't go away. This is why troubled youth sometimes join gangs.

We are blessed that our deepest need is met by a deep reality: We belong to God! *"Blessed the people the Lord*

*has chosen to be his own" Ps 33:12* The Lord has chosen us, through our baptism, to belong to Him. We are His people and He is our Father and



God forever. We don't have to search or wander or struggle to find where we should go to find our home and our identity...we belong to God! He knows us personally and follows every aspect of our lives to lead us to our fulfillment which is found in the deepest union with Him.

Do we realize who we are and Whose we are?

When we do, we know where to turn first in every struggle or trial. When we do, we want to present ourselves as His children, confident in His love and ready to share it with those we

meet. When we do, we are not tossed about by every wind that blows because we know that Our Father is watching over us and working all things out for good (Rom 8:28). When we do, we want to stay in loving friendship with His other children, bearing one another's burdens and sharing one another's joys, as His family.

We recall that God is a communion of love... Three Divine Persons so united in a communion of love that they are One. We are created in the image of God, which means we are created by Love and for love. We are created for belonging.



# *Litany of the Holy Family*



Lord, have mercy.

Christ, have  
mercy.

Lord, have mercy.

Christ, hear us.

Christ, graciously  
hear us.

God, the Father of  
heaven,

have mercy on us.

God the Son, Redeemer of the world,

have mercy on us.

God, the Holy Spirit,

have mercy on us.

Holy Trinity, one God,

have mercy on us.

**Jesus, Son of the living God,**

help all families to live as faithful sons and  
daughters of our heavenly Father.

**Holy Mary, Mother of God,**

help all mothers to love and nurture their children.

**Joseph, Spouse of the Mother of God,**

help all husbands to faithfully love and cherish their  
wives.

**Jesus, Mary and Joseph** most obedient to the will of the  
Father,

help all families to strive to live the desire of the  
Father's heart.

**Heart of Jesus, sacred temple of God,**

remind all family members that God dwells in them  
through the grace of Baptism.



Mother most pure,

help all mothers to form their families to be pure in heart.

Joseph, head of the Holy Family,

help all fathers to be spiritual leaders in their homes.

Jesus, model of virtue,

help all families to build their lives on the solid foundation of virtue.

Mary, Mother of Good Counsel,

help mothers guide their children to make wise decisions in life.

Joseph, glory of home life,

help fathers to be present to their families and to build them up in love.

Heart of Jesus, patient and most merciful,

help parents to be patient with their children and to be always ready to forgive.

Mary, health of the sick,

help all mothers to do all they can to promote the spiritual as well as the physical health of their children.

Joseph, lover of poverty,

help families to value the treasures of the faith and to have a right attitude toward material goods.

Heart of Jesus, burning furnace of charity,

be the bond of love in all families.

Mary, most powerful,

help all families know the strength of your maternal intercession.

Joseph, model of artisans,

help all families to know the value and dignity of labor done in love.

Jesus, our way and our life,

lead all families to their true home in heaven.

Mary, Gate of Heaven,

help families to love heaven and to prepare  
to dwell there.

Joseph, pillar of families,

keep all families united in love.

Lamb of God, who takes away the sins of the world,  
spare us, O Lord.

Lamb of God, who takes away the sins of the world,  
graciously hear us, O Lord,

Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world,  
have mercy on us.

V/ Intercede for us Most Holy Family,

R/ that all families may be made worthy of heaven.

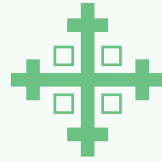
Let us pray

Most Holy Trinity, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, you gave us the Holy Family of Nazareth, Jesus, Mary and Joseph, to show us the beauty of your love. Grant that all families aspire to live that communion of love more deeply in their hearts and in their homes and so multiply Nazareth. We ask this through Christ our Lord.

Amen.

*Compiled by Sr. Mary Josita from invocations in the litanies of the Sacred Heart, Blessed Virgin Mary and St. Joseph.*

## Pray for Us – We Pray for You



- April 2 Sr. Mary Julianna Roche, 1967  
4 Sr. Mary Sophia Le Riche, 1975  
4 Sr. Mary Marcian Brennan, 1997  
4 Sr. Mary Altrude Burkhart, 1990  
4 Sr. Mary Gertrude Keating, 1941  
6 Sr. Mary Cecilia Long, 1981  
11 Sr. Mary Clare Dolan, 1932  
12 Sr. Mary Eugenia Keaveny, 1970  
13 Sr. Mary Angela Martin, 1946  
13 Sr. Mary Frances Cervone, 2016  
24 Sr. Mary Philomena Hammond, 1936  
30 Sr. Mary Adelaide Nienhaus, 1996
- May 3 Sr. Frances Walter, 2003  
3 Sr. Mary Alphonsus Eisenmenger, 1985  
3 Sr. Mary Imelda Lorrain, 1945  
4 Sr. Mary Patrice McFadden, 1986  
5 Sr. Mary Alicia Tompkins, 1997  
14 Sr. Mary Fidelis DeGrootd, 1979  
15 Sr. Marianna Clotilde Del Signore, 2000  
16 Sr. Josephine Marie Kittel, 2001  
19 Sr. Mary Eudes Broeniman, 1942  
21 Sr. Anne McQuaid, 1999  
31 Sr. Mary Monica Decker, 1980
- June 2 Sr. Maria Veronica Tivador, 1996  
3 Sr. Mary Ellen King, 1973  
4 Sr. Mary Agatha Wheeler, 1953  
5 Sr. Mary Celine Jakiel, 2002  
8 Sr. Mary Clara Black, 1972  
10 Sr. Mary Florian Lenherr, 1988  
11 Sr. Mary Denise Jacobi, 1977  
11 Sr. Mary Dorothea Castner, 2001  
24 Sr. Mary Paula McJennett, 1977

A VISIT

A FACE

A CONVERSION



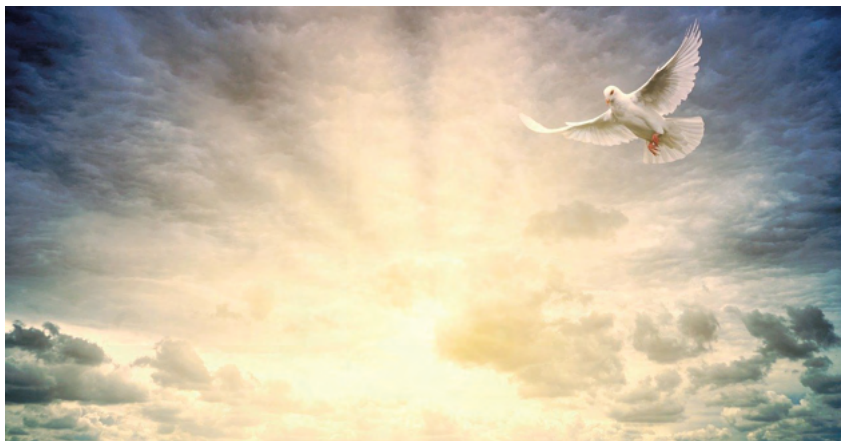
By Sister Mary Roberta, P.V.M.I.

This little story spans five decades. It began in the 1960s when we visited each home in a small town in Pennsylvania. I met Margie with her five little children while daddy was at work. I barely remember the visit, but she impressed me enough that I recalled she said they had no religion other than maybe her husband had been baptized as a baby. I presume I told her about God sending Jesus to earth, among other reasons, to teach mankind how to live so we can enjoy eternity in Heaven with Him. I suggested how great raising their beautiful family in the true Faith would be. With words of encouragement and giving her a few pieces of spiritual reading, I departed.

In the late 1970s, Margie and her husband attended a charismatic conference somewhere in New York. A Sister from Marywood traveled with them in the car. Margie and her husband began sharing how they and their children became Catholic. They told of the short visit I had made to their home years before. Following the visit, Margie began very frequently seeing her mind's eye my FACE. It went on almost daily for quite some time when she started questioning the significance of this experience. Talking it over with her husband, they decided to investigate the Catholic Religion. They did, and in time the whole family was within the Church.

The Sister urged Margie to let me know they had entered the Church, but she did not know my name. Margie recalled that her former next-door neighbor had become a friend of mine and successfully located her to get my name and address.

During the 80s and 90s, Margie and I occasionally exchanged letters. The children were now grown, and in the notes, she related little anecdotes which told me that she and her family were active in their parishes.



In the 2000s, I went to a charismatic convention in Scranton. Knowing that Margie now lived there, I anticipated meeting her once again in person. Arriving in Scranton, I telephoned her home. Her husband answered. He knew who I was but responded that hospice was helping him care for Margie. He gathered their family to await the Lord coming for her. Could it be of some significance that I would plan to see her on the very day she died? God used a Visit, A Face, and the Grace of Conversion to bring an entire family to Himself.

*From the writings of Servant of God,  
Mother Mary Teresa Tallon*

(The example of the Holy Family) “is the best picture we can set before the families we visit. Let us show them the Queen of Heaven and earth accepting every circumstance cheerfully; let us show them holy Saint Joseph with benign patience going about his simple plans for the Holy Family...If we look into the minds of Blessed Mary and Joseph, we shall probably read the words, ‘May the most holy, most just and most Divine Will of God be done in all things.’”

# I AM A BRIDGE



By A Parish Visitor Sister

A bridge? Yes, a unique kind of bridge connecting humans with their God.

Try to picture the scene – God, the Father of us all, is looking at His creatures. God made them in His image and likeness, and He is waiting for their love. The Father loved them so much that He sent His only Son to live and die for them. He sees His children, about their daily work, home, school, factory, office, church – wherever they may be – He sees and loves.

Then look at mankind – so many people do not know their Creator; others ignore Him or are careless. Many want to love Him but do not know how. The mother wants to teach her children and realizes her lack of knowledge. The workman desires to come back to God but doesn't know how

to go about it. Some need a little urging, like the teenager who needs someone to help her, the good people who lack encouragement in their struggle against temptations, the children who need instruction, the many more who need someone to guide them to God.

Here is where the bridge comes in. God's love is ready and waiting, and the bridge is a means to connect people with Him. Serving God and working for His honor and glory, the bridge is only doing its duty of connecting. Even the unseen bridges – the Sisters in training, the sick or retired, those not in the active mission field – bring people to God by prayer and sacrifice.

It is a beautiful privilege to bridge to gap between God and His children – the privilege of each Parish Visitor of Mary Immaculate.



# AD DEI GLORIAM!

## TO GOD BE THE GLORY!

by Sister Maria Arlene, P.V.M.I.

*"Ginusto ng Diyos!"* (God willed it!) These words naturally come out of my lips when family and friends remark how amazing it is to see our new Formation House in Barangay Sto. Toribio, Lipa City.

We thank our almighty God for the generous support and sacrifices of all our families and benefactors, Associates, and friends who have offered their financial assistance and prayers to complete this major project. They are all God's gifts to us, and we keep them in our daily prayers.



*Groundbreaking, Nov. 2018 l. to r. Altar servers from San Isidro Labrador Parish, Deacon Jajo, Archbishop Gilbert Caceres of Lipa, Cardinal Gaudencio Rosales, Sister Maria Arlene, Father Jimmy Marquez, Architect Eric Pambid, Engineer Dennis Castillo, Father Philp Ibasio, Architect Roy Racelis.*





*Our first Christmas party with the children from our neighborhood.*

In September 2014, the sisters assigned in the Philippines seriously began looking for a parcel of land to build a Formation House that will serve our mission in Asia. Our search led to an offer from a community friend. I remember the evening the sisters and I discussed whether we should go ahead with the “Deed of Sale” contract knowing full well that we barely have any funds at hand. “God will provide,” one Sister remarked! “We only need to trust in the Lord!” echoed another Sister. These words sometimes are too easy to say but hard to live.

And yet, with eyes set on God’s promise of faithfulness, the years that followed surprised all of us. We were filled with awe and wondered at how the Hand of the Divine Architect moved countless generous hearts to come to our aid. We are eternally grateful to God for them!

It is a miracle that the construction work continued during the Covid-19 pandemic, and the building was completed. We are not only blessed with a new home, but we also have the blessing of our first candidate. Gen entered the 11th of February.



*Most Rev. Cardinal Gaudencio Rosales, center, recently returned for his first visit with the Sisters since the groundbreaking in 2019. At the far left is our candidate Genizza Mae Hallada.*



*Formation House and Marian Shrine*



*Formation House Chapel*



FOR EVERYTHING YOU'VE DONE FOR US

# Our Love and Thanks

Your support made this Formation House a reality.  
Thank you very much! God bless you!  
Sincerely,

Parish Visitors of Mary Immaculate - Philippine Mission

And so, what used to be a dream is now a reality. *Ad Dei gloriam!*  
To God be the glory!

# The Church On Mission



By Sister Maria Leah, P.V.M.I.

When the Philippine government declared strict community quarantine during the pandemic, work stopped, malls and theaters were closed, public worship and any form of mass gatherings were prohibited. The church buildings may have closed, but the Church did not. It immediately responded to the needs of the time. Online Masses and devotions were made available through various media platforms. The bishops encouraged parishes to set up their own Social Communications Ministry to reach out to their parishioners.

Many families were able to attend Mass online every day. Parishioners were encouraged to dress for Mass and set a time to watch online. By following the gestures and making the responses, they transformed their home into a chapel, a house of prayer

Whole neighborhoods prayed the Rosary every day using a loudspeaker. Some lit candles outside their homes to signify they were praying along. With the lockdown, many went back to praying the Rosary as a family. *"A family that prays together stays together."* – Father Patrick Peyton

Since face-to-face classes were not allowed, children and parents worked from home. Aside from helping the children with school, parents also had to teach them the truths of the faith. One father related how embarrassing it was when his daughter asked him about Easter. It challenged him to read the Bible to ensure his answers did not confuse the little girl. He resolved to study the catechism, initially to avoid the same feeling in the future, and now for his self-enrichment.

Because there were no group baptisms during the lockdown, individual baptisms took place with the child, the parents, and godparents. It may have been more work for the parish priest as baptisms were spread out during the week, but the fruits of this arrangement were tremendous.

The same was true with marriage. Couples chose to be married in Church despite the restriction that only ten people could be present. It witnessed the value they placed on receiving the Sacrament of Marriage. Many said it was less stressful as they focused more on what was genuinely essential than the externals that used to accompany wedding preparations. The event became more intimate and solemn. *“Don’t let yourselves get swallowed up by a society of consumption and empty appearances. What is important is the love you share, strengthened and sanctified by grace. You are capable of opting for a more modest and simple celebration in which love takes precedence over everything else.”* (Amoris Laetitia, 212)

The Church is never closed. The Mystical Body of Christ continues the mission to spread the Good News. Jesus is alive, and so is His Church. Blessed be God!



# FAMILY VIRTUES

Scripture gives us many resources to help us form our families to live lives of virtue. Here are just a few.

One of the Scribes asked Jesus which was the greatest commandment. He answered: "You shall love the Lord your God, with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind, and with all your strength.

The second is this: You shall love your neighbor as yourself." – Mk. 12:29

St. Paul's 1<sup>st</sup> letter to the Corinthians gives us a great starting place as he unpacks the primary virtue for everyone – LOVE.

Love *is* patient  
kind

Love *is not* jealous  
arrogant

proud

rude

selfish

quick-tempered

Love *does not* brood over injury  
rejoice over wrongdoing

Love rejoices in the truth.  
It bears all things,  
hopes all things,  
endures all things.

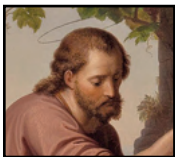
Love never fails.

In Gal. 5:20, he lists the fruits of the Holy Spirit as:  
charity, joy, peace, patience, kindness,  
generosity, faithfulness, gentleness,  
self-control.



# SAINTS FOR THE JOURNEY

Reading the lives of the saints can inspire us on our journey to the Kingdom. Here are some saints who exercised lives of virtue within their families.



St. Joseph tops our list as one whose fidelity and ready obedience to God's will served him well as head of the Holy Family.

St. Eugene de Mazenod became a saint despite living in a dysfunctional family.



St. Margaret of Scotland gave birth to eight children and, with her husband, cared not only for her children but also for the poor in their realm.

St. Elizabeth of Hungary's in-laws disapproved of her great charity to the poor.



St. Monica's prayers for her wayward pagan husband bore fruit when he accepted baptism before he died. Her unremitted prayer won conversion for her son, Augustine.

Saints Louis and Zelig Martin were the first married couple canonized together. Their daughter, Therese, is not only a canonized saint but also a Doctor of the Church.



St. John Bosco, his Salesians, with his mother, "Mama Margaret," provided a loving family atmosphere for the street children in Turin, Italy.

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