

# ST. ELIZABETH ANN SETON CATHOLIC CHURCH

A WELCOMING & INVITING PARISH • ALWAYS CHRIST-CENTERED AND WORD-BASED



## *Legion of Mary:* Spiritual Army Defeating Satan and Spreading Our Gospel

The Legion of Mary is a powerhouse ministry at St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Parish, driven by its devotion to our Blessed Mother Mary. Through her inspiration, they draw closer to Christ in communal prayer and serve the parish and local community through evangelistic outreach.

Parishioner Dave DiNardi is the President of the St. Augustine Legion of Mary praesidium (the local chapter or group), which has the official title of Our Lady of the Rosary.

"We are the spiritual army of our Blessed Mother, working to defeat the Devil in this world," Dave says.

The Legion originated in Dublin, Ireland in 1921 and is a global apostolic association of lay Catholics with over 1 million members in 170 countries. The Legion's structure imitates

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*Legion of Mary members (from left) Deborah Knowlton, Dave DiNardi, Maryse Toussaint, Antonia Dermody, Amelia Regalado, Any Lubin, Mary DiNardi, Beatrice Sousa, and Antonio Sousa (not pictured — Denise LaFrance, Sheila Thompson, Alicja Sulczynski, Jim LaFrance, Mikie Matuciana, and Karen Kielwasser)*



# Legion of Mary

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the Roman army, which is why Latin terms like *praesidium* are used to describe their local groups and other aspects of their ministry.

"In our group, we have 17 members and meet every Tuesday at 9:30 a.m. in the Rectory Meeting Room," Dave says. "Our meetings last about 90 minutes. We pray a Rosary together and read from the Legionary Handbook, then one member gives an *allocutio* (talk) on the section of the handbook we just read, and we finish with a discussion and report on upcoming ministerial activities."

The group's primary activities occur outside of the weekly meetings where they serve the local community. Their service consists of visiting the numerous assisted living facilities and evangelizing the Palm Coast area. At the assisted living homes the legionaries will visit with the residents and have Mass. To share the Gospel with the Palm Coast community, they go house by house talking with people and sharing the love of Christ.

"We deal directly with the people in the world," Dave says. "We are a service group that leaves the walls of the Church to bring people into a relationship with God. We do this by going out two by two, just like Jesus commissioned His disciples, knocking on doors to evangelize the Palm Coast residents."

When the legionaries do their door-knocking outreach, they bring St. Elizabeth Ann Seton

bulletins and Catholic resources. Their goal is to share Christ's love with others and encourage people to go to church. Their immediate objective when knocking on someone's door is to provide hope and a message of love and peace. They are not trying to win arguments or convert people — although they do hope that their conversations will lead others to turn to Christ and the Catholic Church.

"We receive a variety of responses when we knock on people's doors," Dave says. "Some don't answer the door, some conversations are very short, and others will talk to us and we have fruitful conversations. A lot of the time we will receive objections to the faith, and we provide more information and recourses that meet those specific objections."

Dave admits that the door-knocking can be quite nerve-racking because you never know how you will be received, but he has seen the fruit of such missionary activity.

"I once met a man who was going through difficult times and hadn't been to church in years," Dave says. "After speaking to him, I invited him to one of the Legion of Mary meetings — he came, and now he comes to St. Elizabeth's regularly for Mass."

Dave has even seen people join RCIA and become Catholic because of their door-knocking outreach.

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— DAVE DINARDI

*All are welcome to join the Legion of Mary. Becoming a member is simple — all you need to do is attend one of the Tuesday meetings. You will be welcomed by the current members and given more information about the group and the service requirements to become a legionary.*

## A Letter From The Pastor

# If Not Stewards, Then What Are We?

Dear Parishioners,

As a stewardship parish, it is important to ask how well we understand the message of stewardship that keeps surfacing in all we do in our personal life and the life of our parish. If not stewards, then what are we? If not disciples of Jesus Christ, then what purpose do we serve as members of His Holy Catholic Church? Aren't these intriguing questions for any believer? And if not, why aren't they?

God's goodness and the gifts given to each of us shouldn't be taken for granted and our lives should be motivated by our gratitude for all we have, including every opportunity that gives glory and honor to God. Those opportunities are given at each moment of each day. Wait for them and expect them to become obvious. The idea of being a steward of those gifts and opportunities isn't new to the realm of believers in the Old Testament or the New Testament. And certainly, the Gospels of Jesus Christ make it quite clear that our Lord views us to be the stewards He expects us to be. His stories and parables confirm it. So, if you cannot or will not see yourself as "that" steward He invites you to be, then what are you? I am curious about those who reject being that steward. I am even more curious about what they believe are the other options.

I am still in awe of the first line in the U.S. Bishops' pastoral letter, *Stewardship: A Disciple's Response*, that boldly states: "Once one has decided to be a disciple of Jesus Christ, stewardship is not an option." They were so convinced that the stewardship way of life is a disciple's way of life. And yet, that is what we are and have always been.

"If not stewards, then what?" remains a challenging statement to invite us to reflect on what our Catholic faith is calling us to experience and participate in for the time we are given on



this earth. It challenges us to face our reflection in the mirror of this life given to us by God and see what our Lord sees in us, and then embrace the opportunities being handed to us each day of our lives. Blessings and challenges await us, and no matter what the balance may be from day to day, our God equips us with all we need. He created us and sees us as stewards. Why would we dare resist seeing ourselves in the way our God sees us?

Connecting stewardship and discipleship is inevitable in my book.

For that matter, it is inevitable in the "Good Book," which we identify and recognize as the Word of God. It matters to our God what we do with the gifts He so generously gives to each of us. Why would it not matter to us? I ask you to take some time to refocus, reevaluate and recommit yourself to the faithfulness of the life, the time, the talent, and the treasure you have been given.

We are the stewards of those precious gifts. What are we doing with them?

Sincerely yours in Christ,

Fr. Jose Panthaplamthottiyil, CMI  
Pastor



# EDGE MIDDLE SCHOOL YOUTH

## *Offers Valuable*

Youth groups are an integral part of the parish community. As kids grow to become more independent and develop their peer relationships, youth groups play an important role in their social development. The Edge Ministry provides events that are rooted in faith and filled with fun!

The Edge Ministry is for kids in sixth through eighth grades. Dinner is provided first and then the evening events follow with games, activities, and faith formation.

"Our main goal is to have a safe place for kids to come and be together," says Jeremy Vest, Director of Youth Ministry. "We just have a lot of fun. Early adolescence is their first foray into deciding what they want to believe in. They are beginning to establish some independence and starting to come up with their own beliefs. So we do a lot of kinesthetic learning. We get up and move — we enjoy being crazy and silly. We cover basic concepts of faith and religion and we reinforce that with community and friendship."

Edge meets every other Friday from 6-8 p.m. Volunteers from the high school youth group help out with the events and activities.

"At this age, it is never cool to be 'into your

faith,'" Jeremy says. "But we bridge the gap between the older kids, the priests, and the volunteers from other ministries within the church. Through this, they become more involved in the life of the parish."

The biggest part of the youth group is the fun and wild activities that they take part in. Their St. Patrick's Day activities had them building the best beards with shaving cream and Lucky Charms.

"We are making a safe space for them so they can come and have fun and explore their faith," Jeremy says. "I can't get kids into Mass or serving in the ministries if they don't feel safe or welcome at the parish. This group is about building them up and coming back to God's love through the Church and the sacraments."

All kids are welcome, whether they go to private school or public school, or are homeschooled. It doesn't matter if they are Catholic and attend the parish or not. Anyone in this age group is welcome!

Parishioners can help with this ministry in a wide variety of ways. First, praying for our youth and for this ministry to be fruitful is a very important part of supporting the youth of the parish. Donating food, snacks or drinks is another



(From left) Faith Moten, Delaney Parsons, Peyton Lynn



(From left) Janie Allio, Kate Collins, Chloe Cheek, Ava Robinson

# GROUP

## Opportunities to Share Faith in Safe Space



(From left) Alexis Chandlee, Caprice Araque, Lucas Castorino



(From left) James Troy,  
Shane Lynn



(From left) Samantha Allio,  
Fr. Knight, Tristyn Fulton



Shawn Lynn II (standing in front, blue shirt) enjoying  
an activity with other group members



Kate Collins giving a gift

great way to help.

"Working with teens is a special calling," Jeremy says. "We have all sorts of ways to get people involved if they feel called to do that. We do have background checks and Safe Environment training that needs to be done. You don't have to lead a lesson or activity to get involved, even just setting up or cleaning up is a huge help to our ministry. We can find some way for you to be involved. If you have a love for kids and sharing Jesus, I can help with all the other stuff. There is never a lack of opportunity."

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— JEREMY VEST, DIRECTOR OF YOUTH MINISTRY

*If you would like more information on events, please refer the parish website and calendar at [seaspcf.org](http://seaspcf.org). To get involved or help with this ministry, please contact Jeremy Vest at the parish office, 386-445-2246.*

## STEWARDSHIP:

# Windfalls Offer Chance to Share Gifts

A businessman sells some property for a nice profit. A woman retires from a 20-year career at age 43. A high school student discovers he has an exceptional talent for playing the piano. What do they have in common?

Each person has recently received a windfall — an unusually large gain of money, time, or talent. Now each must answer a question — what to do with this newfound gain?

The businessman, already somewhat financially successful, finds that the profit from the sale of rental property is unexpectedly large. For the first time, he feels an urge not to save it, but to share it. The next Sunday, even though he already contributes to his parish, he puts a larger sum in the offertory basket. He also knows of a local charity that supports low-income mothers, and mails them a generous donation.

After her retirement from the Air Force, a woman finds she has a large amount of time during the day. Her husband works full-time and her two children are in high school. She hears a quiet voice asking, “How can you give back for all that you have received?” She calls her pastor and explains that she has the time to play a significant role in a parish ministry. He asks her to re-invigorate their newcomer’s ministry and visit

each new family, to which she happily agrees.

In his high school music class, a 10th-grader discovers an amazing talent to play piano. After encouragement from family and friends, he joins the ensemble at the Sunday morning Mass. He even volunteers to play at special functions at the parish when needed.

In all three cases, the businessman, retiree and student have received something of value, and have made deliberate choices to share it with others, particularly within their parish.

Of course, it could have been different. The businessman could have taken an especially extravagant vacation. The woman could have done any number of things with her free time (couldn’t we all?). The young pianist could have used his talent to form a band or make a recording. And the truth is that they can still do all those things. But having received such wonderful gifts, their gratitude compels them to share a *portion* of them. After all, what do they lose by sharing what was already a gift to them from God?

We’re all gifted and are called to share on a daily basis. But when the big blessings come, let’s pray for the grace to be even more generous than ever.



GIVE

# USHER MINISTRY

## Fostering Atmosphere of Hospitality and Warmth in Parish



Members of our Spanish Ushers Ministry include (left side) Eddie Velasquez, Jesus Roman, and Carmen Roman; (right side) Monserrate Teron, Rosendo Hernandez, and Marina Medina. Not pictured are Freddy Gomez and Vilma Merlos

When you arrive for Mass at St. Elizabeth Ann Seton, you will likely receive a warm welcome from one of our many ushers, dressed in a red shirt and white pants.

"We're working all to achieve the same thing — to make the church a friendlier place to go to," says Thomas Brand, captain for ushers at our 8 a.m. Sunday Mass.

Although Thomas typically attended a different Mass, around six years ago, a friend invited him to attend the 8 a.m. Mass. Thomas attended, and the Ushers Ministry needed someone to fill in. Thomas agreed to help out, and the person in charge at the time asked him if he would consider joining the ministry to serve regularly, so he did. When the ministry needed a new leader, Thomas stepped into the role.

"I said, 'Yeah, but we're going to make some



Members of our Ushers Ministry include (back row) Paul Danier, Tom Brandt, Jamie Burns, Jim Boyd, Rene Fonesca, John Petkewicz, Henry Cabrera, Tom Snider, Mike Gyorkos, Pete Digeorgio; (middle row) Levi Moore, NEED NAME, Sal Dellaventur, John Brailsford, Bob Sendelback, Jim Adrido, Diane Snider, Pat Palumbo, Juan Nieto; (front row) Mary Austin, Beverly McGowen, Nancy Costa, Ann Moore, Sara Hammond, Al Krier, Sue Shierling, Rosie Passaro, Michelle Petkewicz. Not pictured are Joe and Bida Lethy, Charlie and Sue Salarano, Ann Homich, Alise McKinny, John Williams, Liz Fonte, Carlos Cadet, Flo McCarthy, George Speare, Endia Walton, Jose Vazquez, Domingo Pereira, Elaina Smalley, Georgian Bothwell, Mark and Debbie Crameans, Bob McMahon, Mary DeFoe, Ray Williams, and Carmen Bongiovanni

changes," Thomas says. "The first thing we did was, we'd get to know each other."

Under Thomas' leadership, the ushers began going for coffee together — something that is now a regular weekly commitment for the ministry members. Then, he began streamlining the schedule for ushers, and ensuring that if someone cannot help out, there would be another person to take his place.

"Now we have about 20 ushers for 8 o'clock and we're all friends with each other," Thomas says. "We get along really well."

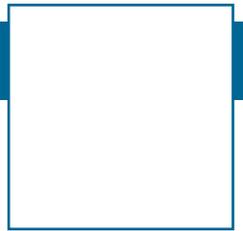
Hospitality is the first of the four pillars

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A Welcoming & Inviting Parish • Always Christ-Centered and Word-Based



4600 Belle Terre Parkway  
Palm Coast, Florida 32164  
www.seaspcfl.org  
(386) 445-2246

## USHER MINISTRY *continued from page 7*

of parish stewardship. Our ushers are a welcoming group of people who make our parish a friendlier, warmer place to come for Sunday services. Their dedication to the ministry helps our mission in creating a more hospitable environment for our parishioners.

"I think the importance is that when you are an usher, you are the person that is the Church, you are showing them what the Church is all about with what you're doing," Thomas says. "That's how I feel about it."

Ushers consist of men and women of all ages who are dedicated to serving God and their parish. Their primary responsibilities are welcoming parishioners and guests at Mass, assisting in seating them, taking up the

collection, and facilitating the reception of Holy Communion. At St. Elizabeth Ann Seton, some of our ushers take up other responsibilities such as setting up the coffee for after Mass, assisting those in wheelchairs, and serving at special events or Masses.

"You are part of the service, you're part of everything that goes on," Thomas says.

Thomas and the ushers for our Masses enjoy the camaraderie of being part of the ministry.

"It's something you look forward to," Thomas says. "I think if everyone felt that way, we'd have more and more people go to church, but that's how I feel. I would say 99 percent of the ushers feel the same way."

*If you would like more information about the Usher Ministry,  
please contact Thomas Brand at 386-446-9628.*