

WELCOME TO THE SHRINE OF OUR LADY OF THE GREEN SCAPULAR!

This shrine, which gives special honor to the Immaculate Heart of Mary, serves as a place to experience the loving presence of our Lord Jesus Christ through the intercession of His Blessed Mother. Under her Immaculate Heart and through the Green Scapular devotion, the Blessed Virgin Mary will obtain great favors from her Divine Son— especially in the areas of physical health, peace of mind and spiritual conversion.

You are invited to come and pray, placing your requests and needs before the Immaculate Heart of Mary, which is full of goodness and compassion. The heart of Mary is a safe shelter and the channel through which our Lord bestows graces and dispenses blessings.



HISTORY OF THE GREEN SCAPULAR DEVOTION AND SHRINE

The Green Scapular is a treasure of our faith, given to us by the Blessed Mother herself, through a humble soul named Sister Justine Bisqueyburu over 180 years ago.

January 28, 1840: The Virgin Mary, dressed in a long white gown and a light blue mantle with no covering on her head, appeared to Justine while she was on retreat at the chapel in Rue du Bac in Paris. At the end of the retreat, the Virgin Mary appeared to Justine again, and the vision recurred five times during her novitiate with the Daughters of Charity. Each time, the vision was the same, and each time, our Lady said nothing.

September 8, 1840 (Feast of the Nativity of Mary): Now wearing the habit of the Daughters of Charity and serving as a teacher, Sister Justine was at prayer when the Virgin Mary again appeared, holding in her right hand her heart surrounded by flames, and in her left a type of scapular consisting of a single piece of green cloth strung on green cords (depicted in the mosaic on the main entrance of our church building. See photo at left).



On the cloth was an image of the Virgin as she had appeared to Sr. Justine, holding her heart in her right hand. On the cloth's reverse was "a heart all ablaze with rays more dazzling than the sun and as transparent as crystal". The heart was pierced by a sword, surmounted by a gold cross and with words in the shape of an oval around the heart: "Immaculate Heart of Mary, pray for us now and at the hour of our death."

Sr. Justine heard an interior voice say that the Virgin Mary wished the scapular to be promoted widely as an instrument in the conversion of souls. Sr. Justine told her superior and spiritual director about the visions.



The Scapular may be worn about the neck, placed under the pillow, kept in a wallet, or placed in one's clothing. The prayer, "Immaculate Heart of Mary, pray for us now and at the hour of our death", should be prayed with confidence. The Blessed Mother said that "The greatest graces come from using the scapular but these graces come in direct proportion to the degree of confidence in me which the user has."

The Blessed Mother also provided the following promises for those who will wear or carry the Green Scapular: 1) Conversion of those who do not have the faith, 2) Reconciliation to the Church for those who have lost/strayed from the faith, 3) Assurance of a happy death, 4) Strengthening of the faith for those already in the Church, 5) Protection from Satan for those who wear or promote the scapular.

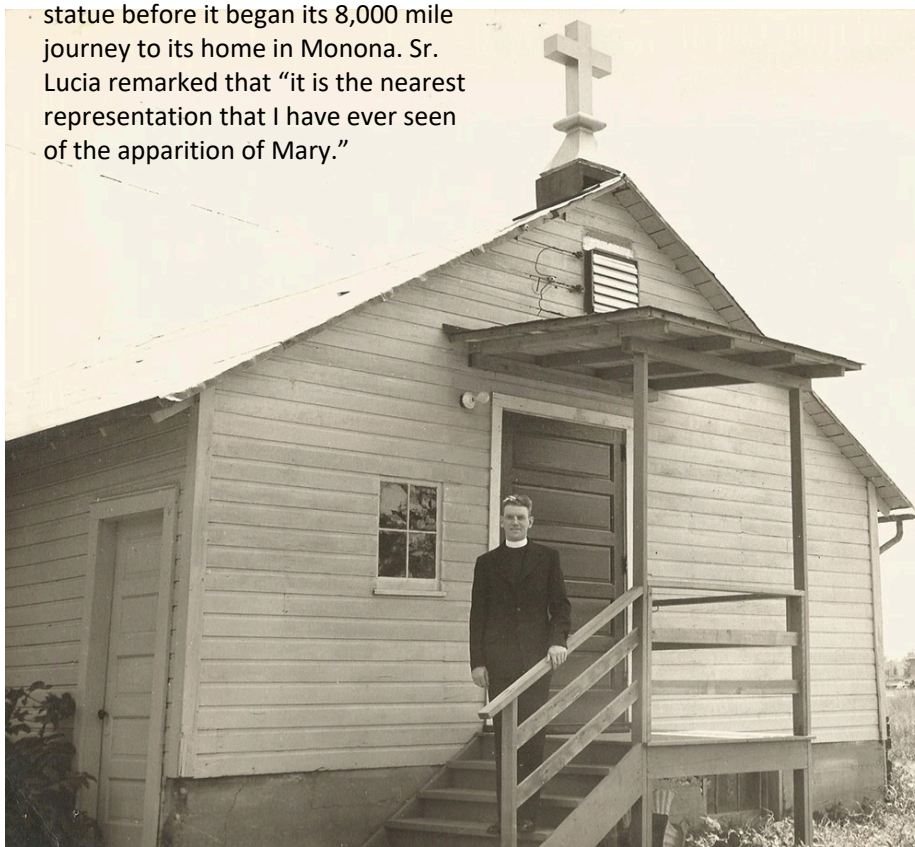
1854: Pope Pius IX proclaimed the Dogma of the Immaculate Conception.

1863 and 1870: Pope Pius IX provided approval of the Green Scapular devotion, giving his blessing and full permission for the Green Scapular to be made and distributed. Over time, numerous answered prayers were reported through devotion to the Green Scapular.

June 13, 1917: Second Apparition of our Lady of the Rosary to three children (Lucia, Francisco and Jacinta) at Fatima, Portugal. Our Lady asked the children to pray the Rosary daily. To Lucia, Mary gave the mission of establishing devotion to her Immaculate Heart. "My Immaculate Heart will be your refuge and the way that will lead you to God." On that occasion Our Lady revealed her Immaculate Heart, surrounded by thorns, outraged by the sins of humanity, and seeking reparation for them.

1950: Bishop William O'Connor of the Diocese of Madison announced the formation of Immaculate Heart of Mary Catholic Church in Monona, appointing Fr. Jerome Mersberger as the founding pastor. That spring, a dilapidated chicken coop on West Dean Avenue in Monona was refurbished to serve as the temporary church building. Membership in the new parish began to grow rapidly.

Inspired by the traveling Pilgrim statue of Our Lady of Fatima, Fr. Mersberger commissioned a Portuguese artist named Jose Ferreira Thedim to carve a special statue for the church in honor of the Immaculate Heart of Mary, depicting her as she appeared at Fatima. Sister Lucia, the only survivor of the three children, was able to view the statue before it began its 8,000 mile journey to its home in Monona. Sr. Lucia remarked that "it is the nearest representation that I have ever seen of the apparition of Mary."

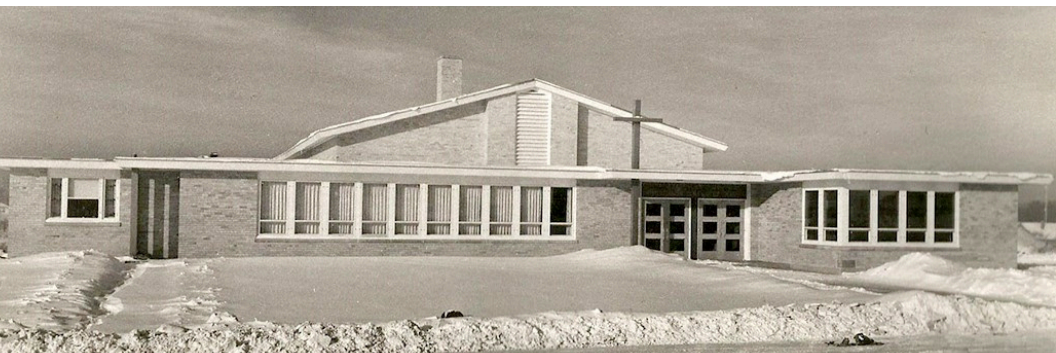




October 13, 1950: The statue was blessed in Fatima on the 37th anniversary of the Miracle of the Sun. It then visited many places throughout Europe, was blessed by Pope Pius XII, and was venerated by thousands of people before arriving in Monona.

December 3, 1950: The statue was unveiled and enshrined to the side of the altar in the chicken coop church in a formal ceremony officiated by Bishop O'Connor, who presented Fr. Mersberger with several Green Scapulars, asking him to spread this particular devotion to the Blessed Mother. The devotion spread quickly, and the small shrine began to attract many visitors, many saying they had received spiritual and physical strength through Mary's intercession.

September 23, 1951: The newly built (yet temporary) church building on Schofield Street in Monona was dedicated. It served as the church, parish hall, rectory and gymnasium (now part of IHM Catholic School). A side chapel housed the statue of Our Lady and was used for weekday Holy Mass. The statue was honored under the official title of Our Lady of the Green Scapular.



Fall 1954: Immaculate Heart of Mary Catholic School opened for classes to serve the Catholic education needs of the rapidly growing population of the parish.

May 14, 1961—Mother's Day: Bishop O'Connor presided at the dedication of the new, permanent church building (our current church building). There were now over 1200 households in the parish, with over 200 baptisms being performed per year. The statue was enshrined to the left of the sanctuary, surrounded by candles. The church became known as the World Shrine of Our Lady of the Green Scapular, drawing pilgrims from throughout the country and the world.



PRAY THE GREEN SCAPULAR DEVOTION
TO THE IMMACULATE HEART OF MARY
FOR CURES AND CONVERSIONS





1962 to 1968: As the parish grew and thrived, the building projects continued under the direction of Fr. Mersberger, including an addition to the school, a convent, and a new rectory. Millions of the Green Scapulars were distributed and Fr. Mersberger received letters from all over the world, many requesting the scapulars, along with those telling of answered prayers.

April 25, 1967: Bishop Cletus O'Donnell is named second bishop of the Diocese of Madison, replacing Bishop O'Connor.

May, 1968: Fr. Mersberger was re-assigned to St. Mary's Catholic Church in Palmyra, Wisconsin, and the World Shrine of Our Lady of the Green Scapular was located in a side shrine at St. Mary's Church. Fr. Mersberger continued to spread devotion to the Green Scapular, first through the Green Scapular Travel Club, and later through the founding of the Green Scapular Crusade, which was housed in a separate building just down the road from the church. The shrine statue of Our Lady was moved from St. Mary's Church to this new building. Father Mersberger retired as a diocesan priest in 1976, continuing his Green Scapular ministry through 1996, as his health began to fail.

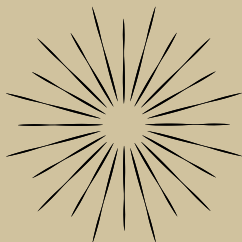
Fr. Mersberger died in 1998 at the age of 81, with his funeral being celebrated at Immaculate Heart of Mary. For two more years, Marianne Zeier, who had worked alongside Fr. Mersberger since the shrine's beginning, continued to oversee the shrine until her death in 2000.

November 2000: The shrine building in Palmyra and all its contents were transferred to the Schoenstatt Sisters, with the agreement that it would no longer exist as a shrine. The large collection of Marian statues, including the shrine statue, was donated to the Marian Library at the University of Dayton in Dayton, Ohio. In the years which followed, the shrine statue of Our Lady was removed from the Marian Library. Its current whereabouts are uncertain.

Following 1968: Although Immaculate Heart of Mary Catholic Church no longer carried the identity of being a shrine, the church décor, both inside and out, remained as a reminder of our former identity. The mosaics on either side of the front entrance tell the story of Our Lady giving the Green Scapular devotion to Sr. Justine Bisqueyburu. The green marble found in the altars, Communion railing and baptismal font represent the green color of the scapular, and the upper stained glass windows depict the Queenship of Mary. Over the years, the parish office continued to receive requests for the green scapulars from parishioners and others, near and far. A supply of blessed scapulars was always kept on hand.

The departure of the shrine and its statue was not easy on many of the parishioners at IHM. Many charter members of the parish longed to have the shrine back.

In 2013, one of those charter members, Rita Noble, passed away. Her family wanted to do something for the parish in her honor, with the support of IHM's Parochial Administrator, Fr. John Silva. They donated a new custom-made statue designed to closely resemble the original shrine statue. This statue was carefully handcrafted in Porto, Portugal, the same place the original statue was created.



June 28, 2014: A special Mass at IHM celebrated the Feast of the Immaculate Heart of Mary, officiated by Fr. Eric Sternberg, who at that time was a priest in-residence. Fr. Sternberg (at the request of Fr. John Silva) blessed the new statue, led the congregation in consecrating the parish to the Immaculate Heart of Mary, and blessed a large quantity of green scapulars for distribution. The new statue was solemnly installed on a wall in the sanctuary.



November, 2017: Our Lady of the Green Scapular Knights of Columbus Council 16863 was formed at Immaculate Heart of Mary. The council has grown significantly, forming men in the faith and in service to our parish and community in numerous ways.

February 2022: In recent years, there has been a growing desire to rediscover the history of IHM parish, the former shrine, and the Marian devotions for which the parish was once known. Over the course of many discussions with parishioners, current pastor Father Chad Droessler realized that there was widespread interest in, and overwhelmingly positive feedback for, the idea of re-establishing the Marian Shrine at IHM. After months of prayerful consideration, parish consultation and discussions with the diocese, Fr. Droessler requested that IHM once more be designated a shrine.

February 3, 2023: Bishop Donald Hying issued a decree approving Immaculate Heart of Mary as a diocesan shrine, "to which the faithful may make pilgrimage, especially through the Green Scapular, without prejudice to the existing use of the church by the faithful of the parish, to the patrimonial rights of the parish, or to the duties of the pastor towards those faithful."

June 18, 2023: Solemnity of the Immaculate Heart of Mary: Re-establishment of the Shrine of Our Lady of the Green Scapular, celebrated by Bishop Donald Hying, with a solemn Holy Mass, followed by a picnic on the church grounds. This patronal feast day of the Immaculate Heart of Mary will be celebrated annually, along with an annual retreat and day of pilgrimage.

July 1, 2023: In conjunction with the "Into the Deep" initiative in the Diocese of Madison, Immaculate Heart of Mary united with Christ the King in McFarland and St. Patrick in Cottage Grove to become Stella Maris Pastorate, with each church retaining its individual identity.

June 1, 2025: Stella Maris Pastorate was officially established as Stella Maris Parish.



There is much more to the story of Fr. Jerome Mersberger, Immaculate Heart of Mary Parish, and the Shrine of Our Lady of the Green Scapular. A book entitled "Our Lady of the Green Scapular" written by Nico Fassino, was published in 2024 and may be purchased by emailing shrine@stellamarisparish.org



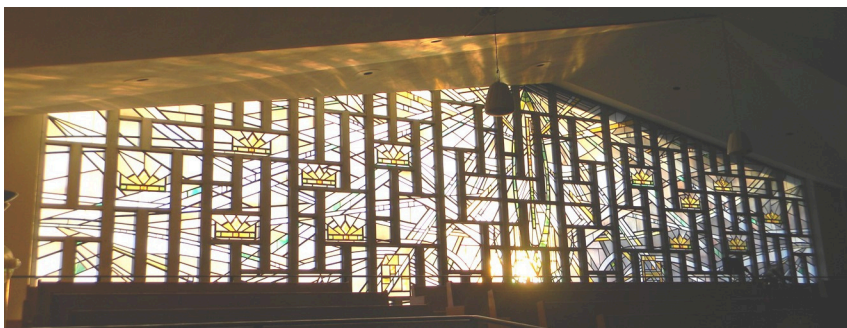


VISITING IMMACULATE HEART OF MARY CATHOLIC CHURCH

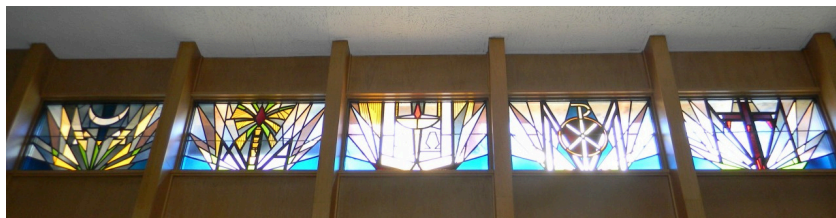
As you approach the main entrance of the church, you are welcomed by a 20 foot tall **statue of Mary**. This statue, weighing 12 tons, was originally designed with arms outstretched in blessing. However, due to the weight of the limestone material, Mary's arms and hands were placed close to her body in order to avoid future breakage.

The church's **bell tower** is 57 feet high, surmounted by a 16-foot anodized aluminum cross, and contains three automatically-pealed bronze bells, cast in Holland, weighing a total of 1,585 pounds.

The **mosaic murals** under the main entrance awning are made of colored Italian glass and were patterned in West Berlin, Germany. The left side panel depicts Mary, escorted by angels, leaving heaven on September 8, 1840 (Feast of her Nativity) bringing the first Green Scapular to earth. The right panel depicts Mary showing Sister Justine Bisqueyburu the Green Scapular that same day in Blangy, France.



The images on the façade window in the choir loft include symbols found in Our Lady's Litany. In its center is a blue crescent moon, representing Mary. Arising from it, in green, is the Chi Rho monogram of Christ. Between them, in gold, is the gate of heaven. The 12 golden crowns in the upper section of the window refer to the Queenship of Mary, as spoken in her Litany. Other symbols pertaining to Mary's titles are also depicted.



The small stained glass windows found on either side of the choir loft contain symbols of the motherhood of Mary from titles found in her Litany.

The 14 **Stations of the Cross** are depicted in the stained glass windows on each side of the inner walls of the church. They are illuminated by fluorescent lighting between the interior and exterior of the windows.





THE SANCTUARY

The main **Altar** is made of solid marble and weighs seven tons. The altar is designed in the shape of a bridge, suggesting that the altar is a bridge between heaven and earth.

The side altars and main altar contain relics of Saint Verecundus and Saint Blanda, martyrs of early Christianity. The altar at left is the Sacred Heart altar, and the altar at the right is the St. Joseph altar.

The **mosaic** behind the crucifix symbolizes the arms of pilgrims raised in prayer. The blue tiles represent Our Lady's loyalty. The green tiles represent Her Green Scapular. The gold tiles represent our prayers rising to God. You will notice some areas are in the shape of crosses, representing the crosses carried by each one of us. Above the crucifix are five gold tiles, representing the five wounds of Christ.

Front and center, the **Tabernacle** is the sacred dwelling place which houses our Lord, fully present in the Holy Eucharist—Body, Blood, Soul and Divinity. Following Communion at Holy Mass, the consecrated Hosts are kept safely and reverently for future distribution and Eucharistic Adoration.

The **Crucifix** reminds us of our Lord's great sacrifice for the salvation of our souls.

The red **Sanctuary Lamp** votive candle remains lit perpetually to indicate the presence of our Lord in the Tabernacle.

The **Altar Rail** (Communion Rail): The Altar rail guards the sacredness of the sanctuary and is a place to reverently receive our Lord in the Sacrament of Holy Communion. The center of the altar and altar rail at IHM contain the design of the Miraculous Medal. The rail also contains symbols of the 12 disciples of Christ.

The **Baptismal Font** is made of solid marble and weighs nearly one ton. In gold mosaic are fish symbolizing all those caught in the net of Christ through the Sacrament of Baptism.

PRESENT YOUR PRAYER REQUESTS
TO THE IMMACULATE HEART OF
MARY BY HAVING A CANDLE LIT
FOR YOUR INTENTION.
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