

# Our Lady of Fatima

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PARISH NEWSLETTER

APRIL, 2017

## ST. ISIDORE OF SEVILLE April 4

This saint was born in 556. Isidore's two older brothers, Leander and Fulgentius, became bishops and saints, too. Their sister, Florentina, a nun, is also a saint.

Isidore's family was probably Roman in roots. Isidore was to become bishop of Seville, Spain. This is where he made a great impact on the Church of his day. He was bishop of Seville for thirty-seven years. During that time, he took up the work of the former bishop, his brother, St. Leander. These two brothers were responsible for the conversion of the Visigoths to the Catholic Church.

As a child, Isidore had received a first-rate education. His older brothers saw to that. He was supervised by Leander. Little Isidore thought Leander was just about the meanest person in the whole world. All he did was push the boy to do his lessons. But the day came when Isidore realized that Leander had really been a wonderful friend. He taught Isidore that we can do so much good for Jesus' Church when we take our education seriously. Isidore lived long before the Council of Trent, which started seminaries to train priests. But St. Isidore believed that every diocese should have a seminary and a Catholic school for advanced learning. Both of his dreams would some day come true when the great Catholic universities as well as seminaries would be started.

St. Isidore was a great organizer, too. He was asked to direct two important Church meetings called Councils. The first was in Seville, Spain, in 619, and the other in Toledo, Spain, in 633. These Councils helped the Church be more united. This saint wrote many books, too. He wrote a history of the Goths. He wrote about Bible heroes and heroines. He even wrote a dictionary.

Bishop Isidore was available for his people. The poor of Seville knew where to go for help. There was a continuous line every day, all day, at the bishop's house. Isidore prayed and led a life of sacrifice, too. He really was a holy and much loved bishop. He died in 636. St. Isidore was proclaimed a Doctor of the Church by Pope Innocent XIII in 1722. *St. Isidore reminds us that God has given each of us a mind. It is a gift that we want to use with diligence. We can ask St. Isidore to help us apply our minds to what is worthwhile.*

## DEAR SAINTS, TEACH ME...

St. Ann, teach me to love your daughter, Mary.	St. Francis of Assisi, teach me humility.
Holy Mary, teach me to become more and more worthy of the promises of Christ.	St. Francis Xavier, teach me zeal for the missions.
St. Joseph, teach me the virtue of silence.	St. Phillip Neri, teach me cheerfulness.
St. Daniel, teach me wisdom.	St. Thomas More, teach me to "keep my head."
St. Michael, teach me to conquer the devil.	St. Anthony, teach me to "find" sanctity.
St. John the Baptist, teach me mortification.	St. Pascal, teach me love of the Blessed Sacrament.
St. John the Beloved, teach me pure love of Jesus.	St. Wenceslaus, teach me love of the Holy Mass.
St. Peter, teach me fidelity.	St. John Vianney, teach me respect for the holy priesthood.
St. Paul, teach me zeal for the salvation of souls.	St. Thomas Aquinas, teach me love of divine contemplation.
St. Thomas, teach me to overcome doubt.	St. Albert the Great, teach me love of heavenly Wisdom.
St. Stephen, teach me the spirit of martyrdom.	St. Vincent de Paul, teach me love of the poor.
St. Simon of Cyrene, teach me love of the Cross.	St. Elizabeth, teach me to break bread for the downtrodden.
St. Veronica, teach me concern for the afflicted.	St. Camillus, teach me to visit the sick.
St. Mary Magdalene, teach me repentance.	St. John Bosco, teach me love of youth.
St. Dismas, teach me how to "steal" Paradise.	St. Margaret Mary, teach me love of the Sacred Heart.
St. Agnes, teach me purity.	St. Therese, teach me the value of "little things" & how to do all for the honor and glory of God.
St. Maria Goretti, teach me resistance to temptation.	Amen.
St. Jerome, teach me love of the Holy Scriptures.	
St. Monica, teach me steadfastness in prayer.	
St. Augustine, teach me respect for a mother's prayers.	
St. Francis Borgia, teach me to despise earthly vanities.	
St. Francis de Sales, teach me always to smile.	

~ Holy Spirit Adoration Sisters

## VOCATION INTERCESSION FOR APRIL

*That we may proclaim Christ Risen through lives of prayer  
and service, we pray to the Lord.*



## Minute Meditation

Lord, keep me in your care. Guard me in my actions. Teach me to love, and to help me to turn to you throughout the day. The world is full of temptations. As I move through my day, keep me close. May those I encounter feel your loving presence. Lord be the work of my hands and my heart. Amen.

### **Publisher**

Rev. Arlindo Paul Da Silva  
Pastor

### **Editor**

Pat Lorenc

### **Staff**

Jeanette Horai  
Sue Ellen Bibby  
Roberta Maurer

### **Contributors**

The Lazarus Ministry

### **Editor email**

babc4@verizon.net

**The Newsletter will  
be published  
monthly**

## Spotlight on Parish Ministry

Our Lazarus ministry members have been serving bereaved families in our parish community for the past four years. This ministry has become very popular throughout the United States. The concept is based on the story of Jesus and his good friend, Lazarus. We all know the gospel story of how Lazarus died and Jesus arrived too late. His friend was already buried and St. John tells us that “Jesus wept”. This gives us great insight into Jesus’ humanity and helps us realize that he personally knows our suffering in times of grief. This ministry is offered as the continuation of our Lord's ministry of compassion and healing as He manifested in the Gospels. It also enables us to put into practice the Spiritual and Corporal Works of Mercy of comforting the afflicted, praying for the dead, and burying the dead.

The ministry is comprised of several teams who would help grieving families at various stages of bereavement after the loss of a loved one. Initially, within twenty-four hours of the parish office being notified of a death of a parishioner, members of the First Responder Team will call the family with condolences on behalf of the parish community and offer an optional visit by a two member team at the convenience of the family. During the visit, the team will make the family aware of the services provided by the Lazarus Ministry such as help in planning the funeral liturgy. If the family declines assistance, we will respect their wishes.

The Funeral Day Team will serve as greeters, ushers, lectors, Extra Ordinary Ministers of Holy Communion and support the prayer, and movement of the congregation.

Then over the course of the next year, a Follow -up Care Team reaches out to the family after the immediate period of grieving. They may send cards or notes to the bereaved at intervals, as appropriate and feasible, to express the parish's continuing concern for the grieving family and to lend additional support, if needed such as when bereavement groups in the diocese meet. The goal is to keep in touch with the family in case they need help and to assure them that they are not alone during this very difficult time.

A final ministry team is responsible for ensuring the continued life of the Ministry through periodic bulletin announcements and invitations to parishioners to participate in the Ministry. The team may arrange for speakers to educate, motivate and develop the Ministry as well as provide seminars for the parish on related topics. The Diocese Office of Respect Life, a local funeral parlor, the Office of Cemeteries and an assisted living facility have all provided parish seminars thus far.

The Lazarus Ministry plans and coordinates the activities of our Parish’s Annual Memorial Mass held in November of each year to recognize and pray for people who have died within the year. A reception follows the Mass and support materials are available for all in attendance. It is always well attended and received by bereaved family members.

What are the qualities that one should possess to serve in this ministry? First of all, a person should possess a caring and compassionate nature and be comforting, consoling and show concern to the families who are suffering extreme pain due to the loss of their loved one. One should also have the ability to demonstrate kindness, gentleness and patience in some challenging circumstances. Dedication is also an important quality because this ministry requires on-going service. For further information, please call 732-752-4979.

## Adoration Chapel

Guardians are  
needed for the  
following hours:

Wednesday  
6:00, 7:00, 8:00 AM,  
7:00 PM

3:00 PM, 7:00pm &  
Saturday 12 NOON

Sunday 11 PM

Please call:

Gerry 732-266-4145

Or

Pat 732-752-4479

*O heart of Jesus in the  
Most Blessed Sacra-  
ment, burning with love  
for us, inflame our  
hearts with love for  
thee.*

## THE BATTLE OF PRAYER

Prayer does not always come easily or naturally for anyone. It can be a real struggle to maintain a habitual life of prayer and to trust that our prayers are effective.

The *Catechism* refers to this as the “battle of prayer.” This *Close Up* presents some common struggles in prayer and how to overcome them.<sup>1</sup>

- Lack of time**, or too busy to pray. This view arises from the failure to see prayer as an essential element in our lives. Prayer is not something optional or superfluous; it is absolutely vital. We should make time for prayer and maintain this schedule as rigorously as we do for other, less important activities.
- Distractions**, or difficulty concentrating on prayer. Distractions are real, and they can make concentration difficult. We lose count of our Rosary beads, or our minds wander while we are reading Sacred Scripture. The solution is not to give up but to be persistent and continually refocus on God. We can offer him these frustrating distractions with humility and view them as opportunities to grow in virtue.
- Dryness**, or aridity, in prayer. We all can have “arid” moments, sometimes referred to as “desert experiences,” in our prayer life. Nothing is working, our prayer feels hollow and even futile, and we become apathetic about our spiritual growth. Even St. Teresa of Calcutta (lovingly known as “Mother Teresa”) experienced aridity in her prayer life. When we experience dryness, we can think of Christ’s own desert experience—his forty days in the wilderness. Temptations abound, but we can be purified in the desert by the Holy Spirit so we can seek God’s glory above all else and emerge on the other side with renewed spirit and energy.

- Uninspired**, or not knowing what words to use. If we have been away from prayer for a while and it feels awkward, we can devote ourselves at first to the rote prayers: The *Lord’s Prayer*, the *Hail Mary* and the like. Try to meditate on the meaning of the words. Spontaneous personal prayer will come along soon enough. Or, if it is difficult to pray, begin by telling God how difficult it is. Explain why you find it so difficult, and ask the Holy Spirit to show you how to pray.

*Likewise the Spirit helps us in our weakness; for we do not know how to pray as we ought, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with sighs too deep for words. (Rom 8:26)*

1. Cf. CCC 2752, 2755.