

Bead peddler spreads faith

During prayer, some use the rosary. Catholics can now support two causes while praying on two special rosaries produced by Sandy Paluzzi, a St. Michael the Archangel, Overlea, parishioner and owner of The Bead Peddler, an internet wholesale/retail bead supply company.

“Being able to pray on a rosary made specifically for their cause can give them added comfort,” said Ms. Paluzzi. “I’m proud to be a part of that.”

The five-decade rosaries Ms. Paluzzi makes include a miraculous medal centerpiece and metal crucifixes. Fiber optic beads stand for the Hail Marys; clear beads for the Our Fathers.

Ms. Paluzzi, who has owned The Bead Peddler since 2000, designed yellow rosaries to signify American troops in Iraq and pink rosaries supporting breast cancer. Her company donates 10 percent of sales to the American Cancer Society and www.anysoldier.com, a Web Site that allows visitors to send care packages to soldiers (most without families) who do not receive mail.

“My heart goes out to our military men and women,” said Ms. Paluzzi. “While our troops need our emotional support, they also need our prayers.”

Active for many years with the American Cancer Society, the bead peddler said she wanted a rosary people would notice. “There’s a lot of stuff out there with the pink ribbon but nothing that appealed to people’s spirituality.”

The fresh rosary project is now getting off the ground with marketing efforts in The Bead Peddler’s office, operated from Ms. Paluzzi’s Parkville home. Imported handmade beads are its primary business with the company earning about a quarter million dollars annually.

Ms. Paluzzi’s 77-year-old mother Susan McEntire, also a St. Michael’s parishioner, has been involved since day one; she fills and packages orders to The Bead Peddler’s national and international clients: jewelry designers, schools, bead stores, interior designers, and Web sites.

Another rosary-related product in The Bead Peddler's line is the rosary kit, international in itself. Inside the plastic bag, a purchaser will find "seed" beads from Japan, thread and a needle from the U.S., crucifix and medallion from China, and written instructions from Canada. Rosary bracelets are another product manufactured for The Bead Peddler.

"I'm always looking for new projects," said Ms. Paluzzi. "If you stay open in your ideas, it's amazing how many opportunities there are out there."

To order rosaries at \$12 each or \$6 each for quantities of six to 99, visit www.thebeadpeddler.com or call 410-882-5973.