

# Christ the King parishioners evangelize neighborhoods

✕ GLEN BURNIE – Fourteen-year-old Ingrid Perez knocked on doors with her brother and parents in newly constructed neighborhoods to spread the Good News.

She was among 30 parishioners of Christ the King Catholic Parish in Glen Burnie who took to the streets March 17 for door-to-door evangelization. Each home was given a warm welcome and a bag that included a medal, prayer card and information about the parish; unopened doors were left with the gift on the doorknob.

“It’s important for us, as a church, to get outside the box,” said Father C. Lou Martin, pastor. “Sometimes, we just have to go out of our comfort zone and welcome them (people).”

The day began with a Mass at Holy Trinity Church before parishioners travelled to Church of the Crucifixion, where they then carpooled to neighborhoods along Marley Neck Boulevard. Some members remained at both churches to support the evangelizers in prayer.

“God made you the way you are, and that’s how he uses you,” Father Martin said in a commissioning of the evangelizers. “God will plant the words in you.”

The evangelization effort also served as a combined ministry for the Hispanic and English-speaking parishioners.

“It’s good for us to be enriched by each other,” Father Martin said.

Deacon German Flores recalled that after immigrating to the United States from Venezuela in 2002, and settling in Maryland the following year, it took him three years to find a Catholic church with a Spanish Mass. He said the United States’ Hispanic population is growing faster than any other minorities, and churches need

to build communities.

“You have to build bridges,” Deacon Flores said. “The bridges are walking right there – the children.”

He gestured to the Hispanic children brought by their parents, including Ingrid and her brother, Edduan, 8. Their parents, Veronica and Ovidio, are immigrants from Honduras and Guatemala, respectively. Ingrid is bilingual and can serve as a translator connecting parishioners.

For Veronica, the event was an opportunity for the children to learn more about God, and to encourage them to not be embarrassed of their faith. Ovidio said he is proud of his children and loves answering their faith-related questions.

The evangelists went out in groups comprised of English- and Spanish-speakers, as well as those who are bilingual, so that they were prepared for what awaited on the other side of the doors. This also served as an opportunity to create bonds between members of both communities.

Rose Lis, president of the pastoral council, grew up attending Holy Trinity Parish (now part of Christ the King) and school (now Monsignor Slade Catholic School), but said this is the first time the community has done an event such as this.

She said she wants to do her part to fill the pews of Christ the King Parish, which resulted from the merger in 2017 of the Glen Burnie parishes of Holy Trinity, Church of the Crucifixion and Church of the Good Shepherd.

“They won’t (come to the church),” Lis said, “unless we invite them to come and worship with us.”