

Bishop Celebrates New Marian Feast and Blesses Stations of the Cross Walkway at Queen of Heaven Parish



Bishop Nelson Perez traveled nearly 50 miles to Queen of Heaven Parish in Uniontown on May 21 to celebrate Mass, enjoy fellowship and a parish dinner and to bless the new outdoor Stations of the Cross walkway.

The visit coincided with a new feast, the Memorial of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Mother of the Church. The bishop said the timing of his visit was appropriate since the parish is named for Mary.

“The Blessed Mother has a central place in our hearts and we want to make her our own,” Bishop Perez said in his homily.



In the reading about Adam and Eve, the bishop said God warned them not to eat the fruit from the forbidden tree, but they ignored his command. “Adam blamed Eve and she blamed the serpent,” he said. “They passed the buck.”

Mary is at the other end of the spectrum, he said, explaining that she listened and kept things in her heart – even if she didn’t understand. Adam and Eve were disobedient, but Mary was obedient.



He said when the angel visited her to announce that she had been chosen to be the mother of God, her reaction probably was one of fear and doubt. “She was told that with God, nothing was impossible. She had to figure things out,” he said. “She had to unfold the news. She kept these things in her heart.” He said Mary probably also had some uncomfortable conversations with her parents and Joseph about her miraculous pregnancy – but she remembered the angel’s words: “Nothing is impossible with God.”

“She was told her baby would be the savior of the world; the king of kings; the wonder counselor – but he looked just like any other baby,” Bishop Perez said, adding that Jesus played in the streets of Nazareth and did everything other children did.



“Then fast-forward 12 years and he gets lost for four days. Mary and Joseph are frantic and search everywhere before finding him in the temple. He tells them he was doing his father’s work. They probably weren’t too happy with him, but Mary kept these things in her heart,” the bishop said.

As Jesus becomes an adult, Mary watches him turn water into wine, walk on water, cure the sick, raise the dead and other miraculous signs, Bishop Perez said, adding that Mary kept all these things in her heart – and she always remembered the angel’s words.

“She saw him tortured and crucified and she held his dead body. But she always had the words of the angel in her heart: “Nothing is impossible with God.

”Bishop Perez said earlier in the day he celebrated a Mass at Mary Queen of Peace School in Cleveland and he asked the students what a mother does. “They said she feeds protects and teaches – all things that Mary did for Jesus and does for the Church.”



He said Jesus gave his beloved mother to the Church and she continues to care for us.

After Mass, the bishop, Father David Durkee, Queen of Heaven pastor, the servers, congregation and Knights of Columbus processed from the church along the parish's new Stations of the Cross walkway. The concrete walkway runs from behind the parish pavilion and inclines to where the original Stations of the Cross Garden was established. The 12th station is portrayed by a 12-foot, above-ground crucifix to which a life-size statue of Jesus is affixed. The cross was a memorial gift from a parishioner and her husband to honor her parents.



Jason Selby of Boy Scout Troop 334 at the parish chose the Stations of the Cross Garden as his Eagle project after a suggestion by Father Durkee.

The new Stations of the Cross Walkway, which will be known as "The Way of the Cross," was chosen by Troop 334 Boy Scout Bryan White.



The walkway and garden are part of the features on the 18-acre parish grounds. Nearby is an Angel Garden, dedicated to those who suffered from the loss of a child, and a Marian grotto with benches and a place to pray or reflect. Father Durkee showed both to Bishop Perez.

After the walkway was blessed, the group moved to the parish pavilion for a catered dinner and conversation. ■