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(At left) Antonio DeCaires (left) and Manuel DeCaires of St. Augustine Parish, Rochester, carry a statue of Our Lady of Fatima during a Portuguese-style procession May 20, while John Pinto follows along. (At right) Elaine Gburski, 6, (right) and Sophia Nobrega, 8, of St. Augustine, adjust their halos upon the procession's arriving at St. Monica's Church. The procession began at Our Lady of Good Counsel in Rochester. It also took place May 13 and 27.

# **Soldiers for Mary**

Numerous diocesan Catholics have devoted much of their time to serving Jesus through a devotion to Mary.

Among these Catholics are the members of such organizations as the Legion of Mary, which has parish chapters each called "presidium."

Joan Stanton, a parishioner at Our Mother of Sorrows Parish, Greece, is president of the Rochester Comitium, which oversees the Legion of Mary throughout the diocese. Stanton said the Legion serves parishes by engaging in evangelization and outreach through a variety of means. Those means include calling on the families of newly baptized infants and giving the families catechetical literature, as well as visiting the sick, shut-ins and nursing-home residents. She added that Legion members recently helped her home parish conduct its census.

Although members actually dedicate themselves to the Holy Spirit, they see Mary as their model of service, Stanton

"She was very obedient and very giving, and she did whatever our Lord asked her

Organized in Dublin, Ireland, in 1921, the Legion is a worldwide lay apostolate whose members pray the rosary daily and regularly meet to pray and discuss spiritual topics, according to Leanne Stephen, who attends St. Joseph's Church, Athens, Pa. The parish is just south of Waverly in the Rochester Diocese, and Stephen serves as director of the Legion's Southern Tier Curia, a regional grouping of presidia from parishes in the dioceses of Scranton and Rochester. Among the many evangelical activities the presidia members engage in is giving rosaries to children who have received first Communion, she said.

She added that she saw Mary as a role model for women in the church who need to take more action and volunteer for such duties as lectoring and being eucharistic ministers, Stephen said.

"I think that Jesus liberated women

through his mother," Stephen said, pointing out how Jesus obeyed Mary when she came to him during the wedding at Cana and asked him to do something about the lack of wine.

Another group that serves to work for Jesus through Mary is the World Apostolate of Fatima, or Blue Army, which promotes devotion to Our Lady of Fatima, a Marian apparition that took place in Portugal in 1917 (Web site: http://www.bluearmy.com). In the Rochester Diocese, Mary Kelley, a parishioner at St. John of Rochester, Fairport, is one of the coordinators of the apostolate's activities.

Most recently, her group organized a rosary march at St. Jude's Church, Gates, on Sunday, May 6, attended by 100 people. While participants attended Mass and processed around the church praying the rosary, thousands of other Catholics across the globe in the apostolate were doing the same thing, she said. Blue Army members pray the rosary daily and wear scapulars, she said, noting that they pray for such things as world peace and the stemming of communism.

A number of parishes regularly host public recitations of the rosary, including Our Lady of Perpetual Help, Rochester. For 10 years, parishioner Jerry Sullivan has organized a novena to the parish's patroness on Mondays in May and June that sometimes includes the rosary, and that also includes Scripture readings, prayers and Benediction.

"It's a spiritual uplift," Sullivan said, calling Mary a "role model."

"As a mother, she cares for her son all the way to his death," he said.

On that note, Marian devotees repeatedly point out that their interest in Mary stems from the fact that her son is their Re-

"Mary's greatness comes from her connection to Jesus," Obark said. "A devotion to Mary brings us to Jesus."

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