

## ***Saint Rose of Lima Youth Group's Special Pilgrimage on February 8, 2020*** ***A Report by Sally Flores, Youth Minister***

On Saturday, February 8th the Saint Rose of Lima Youth Group made a pilgrimage to New York City to visit the Catacombs at the Basilica of St. Patrick's Old Cathedral. The day began by taking the Rockaway Ferry into Manhattan. On the ferry the youth were able to see many of New York's historical sites including: Coney Island, the Verrazano-Narrows Bridge, the Statue of Liberty, the Brooklyn Bridge, and the South Street Seaport, where they ultimately docked.

Saint Patrick's Old Cathedral should not be confused with Saint Patrick's Cathedral on 5th Avenue in Midtown (America's Cathedral). Rather, St. Patrick's Old Cathedral is New York's original Cathedral, located on Prince Street and is now designated as a Basilica.

When the youth arrived at the Church they were greeted and welcomed by the day's tour guide. He began the tour by explaining the history of Saint Patrick's as a parish and the beginning of its structure. Like many other churches in New York, Saint Patrick's was built by Immigrants who wanted a place to worship the way they did back in their native land. For the Irish, Saint Patrick's Church became the center of community, service, and prayer; as it also symbolized their unity in an often hostile society.

The youth were then brought to the cemetery. Although many names on the tombstones were faded away, those buried were men and women during the Civil War Era - many who died because of the war. The youth were then brought to the Catacombs, located downstairs in the church, where the tour guide told the stories of those who were buried there. Many were powerful and influential families and individuals who not only helped develop the City of New York as we know it today, but also helped the Catholic Church in New York grow and prosper. Their faith, hope and love demonstrated their zeal for Christ and His Church.

During the tour the youth learned new things by listening, seeing and asking questions specifically pertaining to the history of the Catholic Church in New York and the faith itself. As much as it was a learning experience, it was also a spiritual one - a real pilgrimage. The youth were given the opportunity to reflect on the important role the Church has in their lives, and how they play a significant role in the Church today.

As great as the tour was, what was most significant about the day was the sense of fellowship and unity among the youth. Our Saint Rose youth come from different backgrounds, but they are all united by their one faith in Christ, accepting His call to come closer to Him and each other in friendship. During the day they were given the opportunity to share their faith experience, their aspirations and dreams. They came to realize that they are no different from the people who built the community of St. Patrick's Old Cathedral. They, too, when united by Christ in faith, hope and charity can build something beautiful - namely a Church of support, mercy, and compassion.

***The youth in our parish are not afraid to be part of the Church and take on roles that will help build up the Kingdom of God in Rockaway Beach.***

***The youth of Saint Rose are not just the future, they are the present.***

**Why not join our Parish Youth Group?  
Call 718-634-7394 and leave a message for Sally Flores.**



**The pilgrim group outside St. Patrick's Old Cathedral**