

## SERVANTS OF THE WEEK— VICTOR & ANNA RIVERA



Victor & Anna Rivera have a big combined family of 7 boys and 2 girls, and now are blessed with 27 grandchildren and 24 great-grandchildren. Victor was a skilled trades-painter, and retired after 34 years with General Motors. Anna retired as a Postmaster after 30 years with the US Postal Service. Despite work and family needs, they have made time to be active in their three different parishes. Anna said, “we love serving the Lord and the more we do, the closer we feel to our Lord. It is truly a labor of love.” They offer their labors in many different ways. Victor says he’s been an Usher his entire life, and has been

involved with the Knights of Columbus for many years. When they were members of Immaculate Conception parish of Ravenna, Victor was Grand Knight, and Anna was a member of the choir. Together, they served on Parish Council, the Marriage encounter team, and worked on projects to support the school. They also spent five years volunteering at a hot lunch program in Alliance Ohio where Victor was a cook, and Anna took care of the administrative work like keeping track of how many people they served. When they moved to St. Martha parish, they continued in similar ministries. Anna also volunteered for funeral meals, and became a Minister of Communion at Mass, and to take communion to a nursing home. When their lives brought them to OLV in 1999, they were hardly settled before they contacted our parish to offer their services. Victor was eager to continue ministry as an Usher and to join our local K of C. Anna was added to our EM schedule for Mass, served a time in the 8:00 choir, and continues in the Funeral Choir. Anna also served on the OLV Pastoral Council and represented our parish in the “Come and See” program for the past three years. Giving witness to the truth that faithful disciples can still learn more about their faith, Anna said, “In the ‘Come and See’ program, we have learned so much that it too has enriched our lives.” Together, the Riveras have been regular helpers at our Palm Braiding sessions. In the past few years, some health issues have caused some changes in their service. They both had difficulty walking so Anna retired from EM service, and Victor finally had to give up his weekly Usher ministry. However, last year, Anna responded to our great need for Ushers at our 5:00 Mass, and now she brings her welcoming smile to greet folks coming to Saturday Masses. Despite their deep commitments to all their parishes, Anna said, “OLV is the most loving parish we have ever belonged to. We have so many wonderful things going on all the time. Socials, (Sponsi) retreats, missions. And Father John is so understanding. When we renewed our wedding vows, he told us we didn't have to come up the stairs to the altar. He came down to us because he knows we have trouble with steps. Also I love all the things on the OLV website.” We can expect to see the Riveras active in something for as long as possible. Anna said, “At the end of the mass they say: ‘Go in peace to love and serve the Lord.’ --That is our mission. We get fulfillment and happiness from this experience.”