

## LITURGY MATTERS

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### Home Visits

No apostolic outreach scares Catholics more than home visitation. One reason for this arises from the experience that Catholics have of those groups that regularly do home visitation – Jehovah’s Witnesses, for example. Saturday after Saturday the handful of home visitors from this group will knock on doors, sometimes with a persistence that borders on discourtesy. Catholics, and the population in general, just do not like being visited this way.

The other reason comes from the ignorance of Catholics: so few of them have ever visited the homes of others on behalf of their parish that the very idea grotesquely enlarges itself in the vacuum of Catholic imagination into some terrible monster. “What will happen if I knock on doors?” Catholics think; they proceed to answer their question with the most frightful images their minds can produce.

Just like every other evangelization strategy, home visitation has its distinct advantages and disadvantages. The tragedy is that, because home visitation has become something of a corrupted image in today’s isolated society, parishes cannot easily grasp the particular advantages to home visitation. They get stumped on the disadvantages.

There are two main disadvantages in visiting homes: (1) it is very labor-intensive work, and (2) home visiting has become very “out of fashion” in modern life, particularly in the suburbs. There are ways, however, to lessen the intensity of the labor if parishes will take a long-range view of home visitation. Most Catholics who engage in home visitation find it to be a positive and affirming activity.

*. . . Let’s walk together as disciples in the footsteps of the Lord.*

