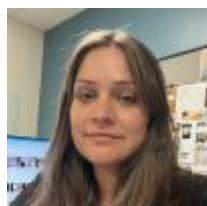




A banner in front of a statue of Our Lady of Fatima bears the words “Pray the Rosary, Walk in Faith, Protect Our Families,” during a procession in support of immigrants in San Jose, California, Sept.13, 2026. (Marissa Nichols)



by Marissa Nichols

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San Jose, Calif. — September 23, 2026

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On a warm September Sunday afternoon in historic downtown San Jose, California, nearly 1,000 Catholics — joined by local police who provided escort — processed behind a statue of Our Lady of Fatima and a banner that read, "Pray the Rosary, Walk in Faith, Protect our Families."

Along the 1.2-mile route from Holy Cross Parish to Our Lady of La Vang Parish, San Jose police officers blocked traffic and offered a presence of solidarity with the community.

Captain Ken Tran of the San Jose Police Department, who has been present during four previous processions this year, said: "It's a privilege to be here. We enjoy doing these things and whatever we can do to help. We're here for the community. We have nothing to do with immigration enforcement."

The Our Lady of Fatima parish-to-parish walk was spearheaded by the priests in the East San Jose region of the diocese. Fr. Joe Kim, pastor of St. John Vianney, said he and the other pastors were looking at ways to address the fear and anxiety from the immigration crises unfolding across the country. "Each of our parishes had separate devotions," he said, "and we thought that a single unified procession would help to speak the word of witness into the neighborhoods of the most impacted part of our county."

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The Sept. 13 procession was the latest in a series of diocesan Fatima-inspired processions held on or near the 13th of the month from May through October. The processions mirror the traditional dates associated with the apparitions of Mary at Fatima in 1917.

At every procession, a culturally diverse group of Catholics recites the rosary and sing hymns to the Blessed Mother in English, Spanish, Vietnamese, Tagalog and Tamil. At the conclusion of the September walk the Blessed Sacrament was exposed in the sanctuary and [Bishop Oscar Cantú](#) of San Jose spoke about the importance of forming young people to show public witness of their faith.

Additionally, several parishioners supported by a local nonprofit, PACT (People Acting in Community Together), gave their testimonies about their experiences of deportations as well as the solace and consolation they found in the church.



Holy Cross Parish musicians offer hymns to the Virgin Mary in Spanish during a Catholic procession in support of immigrants in San Jose, California, Sept.13, 2026. (Marissa Nichols)

Cecilia Barbosa of Our Lady of Guadalupe Parish said the procession is particularly meaningful at a time when many immigrant families are experiencing fear of separation and uncertainty in seeking legal status. "Times are a bit difficult right now for all immigrants; it is very hard," she said. "We must first be close to God, for God is everything to us. Draw near to him. He is the one who will guide us and take away our fear and dread."

For Rosalie Villegas, a Holy Cross volunteer, Mary's message at Fatima connects prayer with the pursuit of peace and justice. Villegas said, "Our Lady's message at Fatima was prayer and making reparations, as well as praying the rosary. So, yes, there is a link between Fatima and justice: She leads us to her son Jesus. Jesus is justice."

For Fr. Justin Le, pastor of Our Lady of La Vang, the procession is a reminder that Catholic faith is not meant to remain behind church doors. "Faith is not private," Le said. "We need to bring Jesus especially out to the streets for the community to see that Jesus is with them."



A police officer blocks traffic for a parish-to-parish procession in support of immigrants in San Jose, California, Sept.13, 2026. (Marissa Nichols)

The success of the Fatima processions have surpassed expectations of local pastors, according to Kim. "Over the past year, we have seen greater unity between our Catholic parishes, our neighborhoods, and the city. Each walk has been accompanied by a sizable presence of the San Jose Police Department."

In a [statement](#) last summer, San Jose Police Chief Paul Joseph assured the residents of the area that his officers will not participate in any immigration enforcement.

One more procession is planned for October.

This story appears in the **Immigration and the Church** feature series. [View the full series.](#)