

FROM FR. MIKE

September 24, 2024

This weekend was our annual Parish Social, a chance for us to come together as a Catholic community of faith. After the 4:00 p.m. Mass there was live music, games for the adults and bouncy houses for the kids, a car show, a variety of good food, desserts, and adult beverages as well. I hope you were able to meet some new friends or just had a chance to relax with family and friends. We are blessed to have our parish.

The parish social weekend is a good time to be reminded of the deeper questions of life. What is a parish for? A good working reminder of a parish's purpose is: *"To form a community of disciples of Christ."* At some point our motive for anything we do here, with the school, RE, ministries, social groups, or events, is to form Catholic disciples of Jesus and encourage one another in faith. This might seem too obvious or basic to some, but as parishes have closed due to lack of involvement, we can reasonably and necessarily remind each other of what life, and the parish is supposed to be about.

The purpose of the parish mergers as part of Renew My Church, as painful as it has been for so many, is to help bring about a real renewal in faith. The Lord desires this for us and even now, in the surveys that we have taken (DMI) people express a desire to have a deeper relationship with Jesus and to become more confident in their faith.

To help meet this need, St. Elizabeth of the Trinity Parish will be offering "The Rescue Project" which seeks to proclaim the Gospel in a compelling and attractive way over eight weeks in a small group format along with a meal. Perhaps we all at times see our faith and good works as a gift back to God, maybe we subtly feel like we're doing Jesus a favor. The greatest work we can do is to receive God, to receive from Jesus Christ the grace, love, and teaching He offers. Can we allow ourselves to be rescued by the Lord?

On the Thursday evenings that these sessions are held this fall, I will be in the church at 6:00 p.m. praying for all those attending by name, that Jesus may touch their hearts in a new way. I encourage anyone that is not directly participating or volunteering in the program to pray in church for a deeper outpouring of the Holy Spirit in the parish and for the needs of the participants. Intercessory prayer is powerful and reminds us that faith is a gift and none of us converts anyone, it is God's work that we all get to be a part of.

The page next to this column shows four questions that will be answered in creative and engaging ways by Fr. John Riccardo who created this ministry. He will also be speaking on September 25th at the Archdiocesan Day of Renewal. He presents Jesus' saving work in very engaging and dramatic ways. Watch the trailer and see for yourself. But most of all, ask the Lord to increase your faith and the faith of those you love.

I remember a colleague at a company I worked for before entering the seminary; he used to ask the question as a boy about life in general: "What does it all mean?" he would ponder. We should not be afraid of the big questions because our hearts desire real answers. God has not left us alone; we were made for times such as these. Come and see.

Your brother in Christ,

Fr. Mike

