

FROM FR. MIKE

October 27, 2024

This weekend the Lord healed a blind man asking Bartimaeus a question we all want to hear Jesus say to us: *“What do you want me to do for you?”* Jesus’ coming is, first of all, good news. He knows that we need Him and He wants to help us, to bring us the love and healing our hearts crave on this pilgrim journey. Salvation in Jesus really is good news which is what propels us on our mission to evangelize.

I was thinking about how we support, even financially, the things we care about including at the parish. When we need to raise money for a building project, we make a reasonable proposal and ask for support. When there is an important ministry like the food pantry, SVDP, One Prisoner One Parish, or supporting the Station School in Rwanda, we can count on all of your generosity for such a worthy cause. The same goes for liturgical upgrades or images like the Divine Mercy.

It made me reflect that other than the operating budget and second collections for the Archdiocese, we never really focus on raising money for the evangelizing mission itself, raising money to bring people closer to Christ. St. Paul was the greatest missionary in the history of the Church and had no shame about asking for money to bring Jesus to those who had never heard of Him before because he knew that the Lord came with love and power to those open to it; *“What do you want me to do for you?”*

To that end, we will be starting a quarterly second collection at all Sunday Masses called an “Evangelization Collection” with the purpose of directly funding the various programs, ministries, and materials that help us grow in our relationship with Jesus Christ. Here is a list of some of what your quarterly donations will fund, and some things we are still aspiring to do:

Programs: Some of the programs we are offering, because of their production quality and content require registration fees or requested annual donation but are well worth the cost. The Rescue Project run by Fr. Riccardo has born real fruit for us. Also, the men’s group That Man is You features good content meant for men with quality promotional materials and website, but it also is not without cost to run. We also have annual Lenten missions (Fr. Knotek will give our parish Lenten mission next year), staff retreats, *Totus Tuus* for the children, in person baptism preparation, and annual inspiring books we give out at Christmas.

Hospitality: One of the biggest reasons that people leave their parish is when they don’t feel part of a community. We have monthly hospitality after the 9:00 a.m. and 1:00 p.m. Masses that costs the parish money to offer. There is also some form of hospitality served at all Rescue Project sessions and TMIY which is very important for the experience of people getting to know one another and feeling welcome. Think how often Jesus spent time at meals with those He was reaching out to.

The things mentioned here are by no means exhaustive regarding what the parish currently does or is trying to do in terms of evangelization. But it does put us in the mindset of keeping the mission forefront in our mind, normalizing that talking about Jesus, even spending money directly toward the purpose of helping people grow as His disciples is what our primary purpose is at the parish.

When this quarterly parish second collection comes around, I hope you will be generous, trusting that it will be used to bring Christ more to those who need Him.

God bless,

Fr. Mike