

From the Desk of the Pastor

Dear Friends,

Last weekend, a letter from the Cardinal was read to you regarding the initiative "Renew My Church." In this letter, Cardinal Cupich talked about how all the parishes in the Archdiocese will belong to groupings. These groupings will afford them the opportunity to begin to look at how parishes might work together, support one another, and share personnel, programs and ministries. Our grouping has been identified as: St. Tarcissus, St. Cornelius, and St. Monica parishes.

In November, a joint meeting for parish council leaders among the three parishes was convened here at St. Tarcissus. That meeting was simply an introduction to the idea of this grouping, as well as an opportunity for all the council leaders to get to know one another and look at some of the things we have in common with each other, and to also examine some of the challenges we face as parishes today.

We all see a decrease in priest personnel, contributions, and volunteers. All of our parishes are aging and younger families and individuals are less visible in parish life, including Sunday worship. This is a phenomenon happening all across the Archdiocese, and I suspect, across the country. The increasing secularization of our society is a reality we live with. Yet we must find a way to counteract it.

The "Renew My Church" initiative is one way for us to begin to look at parish life differently and to make it stronger and more sustainable for the future. Parishes can no longer stand as isolated islands unto themselves. They will need to reach out to other parishes around them and find ways to strengthen their mission vitality. Sharing ideas, resources, and personnel is a good beginning.

One concrete way we are doing this presently is in sharing our Lenten Parish Mission. This year, we will combine with St. Cornelius Parish, who will host the Mission, entitled, "The Loving Mercy of God." The Mission will be lead by Dominican Father Brian Walker. Soon you will see information regarding the Mission in both of our bulletins. Come and join us for three nights of prayer and renewal around this topic. The Mission dates are: March 19-21. This is a great way to deepen our Lenten experience of prayer, fasting, and almsgiving, as well as a way to work together and enrich each other with gifts we have to offer.

One of the goals of "Renew My Church", is to see ourselves less as parish, and more as church. In doing this, who knows what we may find in return. Faith always requires us to venture into the unknown, trusting that God has a plan and it will lead us to a deeper appreciation of who we are as His people. On February 16th, the priests of the Archdiocese will meet with the Cardinal and his team to learn more about the process of "Renew My Church." Whatever information is gleaned from this gathering, will be shared with you. Together we will move forward in faith and in trust, guided by the Holy Spirit, to create a church for the future. Let us not be afraid of what we might discover, and may God bless us in this endeavor .

Fr. Mike

IMPORTANT NOTICE:

Rectory Hours the Week of February 6th-10th—Only

Monday, Wednesday & Friday 8 am to 4 pm

Tuesday and Thursday CLOSED

**Our phone system allows you to leave a message at anytime
and your call will be returned promptly.**

Thank you !