

Why do I come to THIS parish, St. Pius X?

This is an important question for each of us to answer. Why? Because by understanding the reason we come to St. Pius X, it will show us what we receive from our parish as well as what part we play in the parish's overall wellbeing.

Let's start with a few questions. How many parishes have you attended over your lifetime? _____
What do you remember about them? _____
When you finally decided to attend St. Pius X what was your primary motivation? _____

When I think about our parish, the first image that comes to mind are the parishioners. Yes, the church is beautiful. The liturgy speaks of God's love. Yet, it is the parishioners, most notably those active in the life of the church, that capture my attention and inspire me.

When you look around at the members of our parish do certain individuals stand out? If so, what is it about them that seems inspirational? _____
Do you suppose they were always this way? Maybe, but probably not.

A phrase that is sometimes used to reflect one's commitment to their faith is, "One and done". That describes someone who attends one hour of Mass each week and then does nothing within the parish until the following Sunday. That attitude might seem okay, but it can be very limiting. It denies them the added advantage one gets from fully participating in parish life. It's like being a family member but seldom participating in family activities other than those that are obligatory.

Let's look at a biblical figure and how his understanding of faith changed after an encounter with Jesus. There are many to choose from, but let's look at Peter, the fisherman. Before meeting Jesus he attended synagogue on a weekly basis and said prayers at home. However, after the miraculous catch of fish that occurred when Jesus was present, he saw himself for what he was (and all of us are) by rightfully confessing, "*Go away from me, Lord, for I am a sinful man!*" {Luke 5:8}

That said, it was still not easy for Peter to move from a passive relationship with God to being actively involved. Sometime after he said "Yes" to Jesus' call, he asked Jesus "*Look, we have left everything and followed you. What then will we have?*" {Matthew 19:27} Jesus said to him, "*Truly I tell you, at the renewal of all things, when the Son of Man is seated on the throne of his glory ... everyone who has left houses or brothers or sisters or father or mother or children or fields, for my name's sake, will receive a hundredfold, and will inherit eternal life.*" {Matthew 19:28-29} After that encounter, Peter understood more clearly that he was already experiencing some of those promises by having "spiritual brothers and sisters" who were also participating in Jesus' ministry. He had a "parish family" he could count on!

So, what is God calling you to do for yourself, your family, and "THIS parish"? The simplest way to find out is by doing what Jesus said and did, "*The Son of man came not to be served but to serve.*" {Matthew 20:28} By following Jesus in this way, you will get to know Him on a new level because you will experience His love firsthand for and through the parishioners at St. Pius X.

Reflective Questions:



1. What is it you find inspiring about the members in the parish who seem so engaged with their parish life?

2. If you were more actively involved in the parish, and those you love noticed it, what impact do you think it would have on your relationship with:

a. your spouse? _____

b. your adult children and grandchildren? _____

c. your siblings? _____

c. others in the parish? _____

3. If becoming more involved in your faith and parish life could achieve the results you listed in question 2, when will you start? _____

How will you start? _____