

DISCIPLESHIP at the 2019 Eastern Diocesan Acolyte Retreat



A humid, rainy and dreary early summer day did not curb our enthusiasm for Discipleship as thirty Altar Servers, clergy and adults from seven parishes across the Eastern Diocese gathered at Our Saviour's Parish in Woonsocket, Rhode Island for the 8th annual diocesan Acolyte Retreat on Tuesday June 25, 2019. The Retreat began with Mass for Discipleship celebrated by Bishop Paul Sobiechowski. The Holy Mass was concelebrated by Fr. Sr. Joe Soltysiak, Fr. Sr. Rob Nemkovich, Fr. Robert Koerber and Fr. Henryk Vos. Cleric Justin Daviault assisted Bishop and proclaimed the readings. Fr. Sr. Joe gave the sermon where he focused on how the Altar Servers can be Jesus to others by living as He lived and taught – by being disciples today. Mentioned was the Westfield parish preparing and serving dinner for 60 at the Westfield Food pantry just the evening before our retreat – discipleship in action.



After some donuts and bagels, the servers gathered for their first presentation on Discipleship. Fr. Sr. Rob spoke about the importance of who they follow in their lives and put forth Jesus as the best example. Our Lord is there for us, knocking at our doors but we need to let Him in and follow Him by living



as He taught – a life based on love. For others will know we are Jesus’ disciples by the way we love. Everyone recited the words to “*I have decided to follow Jesus*” and the presentation ended with a song/video from Chris Tomlin: “*I Will Follow*”. An instant classic was Fr. Paul from the video speaking about being a disciple as this puppet resembled a certain other Paul when he was a few years younger :)



Disciple



An activity on Discipleship: *Following Jesus* was led by Joanne Oliveira. The Servers came up with various scenarios and ways that they can follow Jesus. They were encouraged to **“Do Something”**, **“Right Now”** and to **“Be The One”**! In their responses the theme of helping and caring for others came up many times in ways that they can be disciples Right Now!





Serving for Eucharistic Processions was the next presentation given by Fr. Henryk. After some explanation and questions the youth conducted a Eucharistic Procession for the Solemnity of Corpus Christi and did very well.





Some wonderful local Woonsocket pizza was served for lunch. After quality time in renewed friendships over some pizza and snacks, the servers gathered for the final presentation on Serving for Para-Liturgical Services. Fr. Robert Koerber gave a hands-on approach as the servers went through the motions for serving at May

Devotions – the Litany to the Blessed Virgin Mary and Stations of the Cross.



The rain kept us from swimming at Lincoln Woods Park, but we found our way to Walnut Hill Bowl. After a great afternoon of bowling we returned to our homes and parishes strengthened in our discipleship and enhanced in our ministry of serving our Lord at His Altar and in His Holy Church. A special thanks to Fr. Henryk Wos and Our Saviour's Parish for again hosting the retreat this year. We look forward to seeing everyone at our Eastern Diocesan Youth Retreat – August 18-22, 2019, at Camp Howe in Goshen, Massachusetts. Registration and health forms are available from diocesan pastors and on the *“Eastern Diocese Youth”* Facebook page.



Remember: "If you love each other, everyone will know that you are my disciples" (*John 13:35*) for Jesus is "the way, the truth and the life, no one comes to the Father except through [Him]" (*See John 14:6*). Let us be Jesus' disciples today and follow Him always!

Fr. Sr. Rob Nemkovich Diocesan Youth Chaplain



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