

# Calling the Holy Spirit

About 35 men were present at the Parish of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Morris, on Saturday, December 2 for a day-long retreat with the Ecclesia Domestica group. Kicked off with prayer and praise and well-received breakfast treats, Ecclesia Domestica President Kevin Olson then welcomed the group. His message about second chances used the symbol of a truck he had as a teen ager, which came back to him decades later.



Following Kevin's testimony, keynote speaker Tim Cushing addressed the group about his conviction that the Church stands the test of reason.

Using imagery from Aristotle to Descartes to Hawking to the Angelic Doctor of the Church – St. Thomas Aquinas, Tim drove home the point that we cannot deny the Roman Catholic Church is reasonably sound. Our souls are the essence of our bodies, just as the mind is the essence of our brain. What is our final cause for being here?

Small group sessions followed, where men informally broke down the previous talk and its relationship to each of them.

When the whole group reconvened, we listened as Brett Hallberg of Our Lady of the Lake in Battle Lake provided an emotional tour of his path to passionate Catholicism! An Air Force veteran, he described the Lord God nudging him and his family toward life decisions in miraculous ways. Fully willing to admit he wears his faith on his sleeve, Brett urged us to watch and respond to the Holy Spirit's lead. "What message does He want to deliver through us?", Brett questioned. Get out of our comfort zone, and "Be a hero" he urged us.



Fr. Larry Richards was featured in a luncheon video introduced by Ecclesia man John Schulzetenberg. Following that, Fr. John Paul Knopik of the nearby St. Mary's and Ave Maria Parishes spoke of his recent week in deer camp. If deer hunting is joy in the natural sense, in the woods and around the lakes of northern Minnesota, then the Holy spirit is joy in the SUPER natural sense, he insisted. JOY, the acronym, means 'Jesus Over You', according to a fellow he knows. And the opposite is SAD: 'Satan At the Door'. Both are a decision and a choice according to Fr. JP. The Holy Spirit is the spiritual

scaffolding of the work-in-progress that is our life. What a stirring visual image of Father's point!

The day wrapped up with time in Eucharistic Adoration, personal and intercessory prayer, the Chaplet of Divine Mercy, all introduced in a talk by our host, Fr. Todd Schneider. He also heard confessions during this time. At the end of the day, we celebrated Mass with the Assumption Parish faithful. Mass – the pinnacle of human worship of our God. Just an excellent day!





*Ecclesia Domestica*

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