

A personal invitation from our Pastor

To all of the men and my fellow brothers in Christ:

For more than twenty years, St. Mary's has hosted Welcome weekends/retreats here at our parish. St. Augustine once said, "our hearts are restless O' Lord until they rest in you." Our parishes hearts are restless until they rest in You. You are the parish. Your family is the parish, and without you God we cannot stand strong. I wish to take this opportunity to personally invite you to join us February for this awesome inspiration weekend of "Welcome," renewal, and faith. I especially encourage the men who are new to our parish, to come and join us. What a great way to meet other parishioners and share a common bond we call our Catholic faith. One simple "Yes" can make a tremendous difference in our lives and the lives of those dear to us. I am convinced that Christ Renews His Parish, is one of the reasons for our parish's warmth, generosity, and closeness. With your presence Welcome will continue to be the Spirit driven difference in your life, your families, and in our parish.

Sincerely and humbly I remain your brother in Christ, Fr. Bryan.

This is an invitation for all men of our Parish 19 years and older. Previous Welcome participants are invited and encouraged to attend. We also welcome anyone from outside the parish.

Reflections from men who previously participated in the Welcome weekend.

"My marriage and the bond with my kids were strengthened. Christ has changed a heart of stone into a heart for love alone. Being a combat vet, I had a profound experience."

"I was totally resistant to going to this retreat. I'm not a touchy-feely guy, but this was one of the best things I've ever done for myself."

"Since I attended the weekend, I have found a renewed sense of peace, vitality, and feel less pressured by the burdens I face in my life."

"I was a new parishioner when I attended the weekend. The Christ Renews weekend was a great way to deepen my spirituality while meeting a great group of fellow parishioners."

"A complete spiritual turnaround..."

"For all these years, I said I would never make a Christ Renews weekend; that it wasn't for me. I am so glad that I changed my mind; it has been a great, uplifting experience which has brought me closer to God!"

"After I finally said 'yes' to the Christ Renews weekend after so many 'no's', I feel closer to the Catholic Church and to St. Mary's Parish."

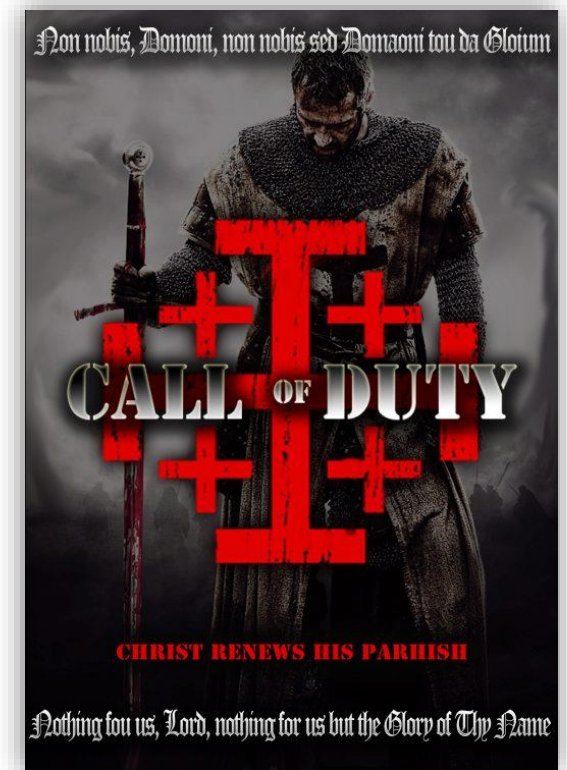
"I made all the excuses not to go. Don't think why not...think of the positives and why you should...faith, food, fellowship and fun. Did I mention FOOD?" (and it's FREE!)

A personal invitation to...

Welcome Christ Renews: Answering the Call of Duty Men's Retreat

February 25-26, 2023

**St. Mary's Church
Swormville, New York**



But you, man of God, avoid all this. Instead, pursue righteousness, devotion, faith, love, patience, and gentleness.

1 Timothy 6:11

Put on the armor of God so that you may be able to stand firm against the tactics of the devil. For our struggle is not with flesh and blood but with the principalities, with the powers, with the world rulers of this present darkness, with the evil spirits in the heavens. Therefore, put on the armor of God, that you may be able to resist on the evil day and, having done everything, to hold your ground.

Ephesians 6: 11-13

What is Welcome

It's an experience that helps you discover what's missing in your life and what to do about it.

This experience helps those who want to work this out, but have no idea how, or even where to start. This invitation is about you. Most people are not living up to their potential and you may not know what to do about it. Welcome puts a framework around the questions and struggles we all have every day, in every way, and helps you become a better-version of yourselves.

It is a spiritual renewal weekend for men, designed to help individual grow in their personal relationship with Jesus Christ and with other in their faith community. Just as all of our other commitments need renewal, so does our commitment to Christ.

You will meet other parishioners facing the same life challenges – family, career, and society. The sharing of dialogue in a very liturgical, scriptural and prayerful atmosphere will allow you to develop a closer and deeper relationship with Christ.

What else do I need to know?

- The men will meet in the Parish Center on Saturday, Feb 25th, 2023 at 8:00 AM. Activities will conclude around 5:00 PM on Sunday, Feb 26th.

- Casual, comfortable clothing is appropriate

- Meals will be provided by volunteers. There are also regular breaks for beverages and snacks. Please let us know if you have any special dietary needs.

- Accommodations for Saturday night are simple but adequate. Please bring a pillow, sleeping bag or bedding, towels and toiletries. Mattresses are provided, and showers are available.

- Sacraments are an integral part of the weekend. There will be an opportunity for confession and the weekend will conclude Sunday afternoon with a special Mass. Family and friends are welcome at the Mass.

- The weekend is FREE. Donations are graciously accepted and help keep this program self-sustained. There is no need to stay away for financial reason.

Who can I call if I have questions?

Bob Gedeon	716-479-0237
Andrew Simpson	716-264-9039
Tom Cumbo	716-861-0032
Rick Spears	716-479-7628
Don Wander	716-688-1512
Kyle Kieffer	716-359-1116
Bill Barone	716-205-3777
Tony Violanti	716-283-4355
Al Chrzanowski	716-913-4828
Tom Vilardo	716-714-5870
Bill Gajewski	716-783-1729

How can I participate?

Indicate your interest by completing the information below, and returning this form to the rectory. You can also register online at the link provided below.

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

Special Dietary Needs: ☐ No ☐ Yes, specifically –

Emergency Contact

Name: _____

Relationship: _____ Phone: _____

Email: _____

Please list family and friends who can keep you in their thoughts and prayers.

Name:	Ph:
Email:	
Name:	Ph:
Email:	
Name:	Ph:
Email:	
Name:	Ph:
Email:	

www.stmaryswormville.org under "Faith Formation"