



## FROM THE DESK OF FATHER JONATHAN

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OCTOBER 22, 2017

This week all the Pastors in the Archdiocese of New York met for several days of prayer, conferences, and fellowship. On other years, many of the talks dealt with administrative issues, long-term planning, parish mergers, school regionalization plans, etc. Those things are important and they were helpful.

But this year had a very different focus. We had guest speakers help us rethink what parish life should be and how to achieve this. There were two points that I found especially helpful and challenging that I would like to share with you.

1) To fulfill our mission as a parish we need to get away from the model of serving "religious consumers" and instead create a model of a parish of "disciples". A parish that is attending to "religious consumers" is focused on giving people what they want to "get" from God or the Church. But the Christian life is not about "getting" but rather about following Jesus, being his Disciple. The parish that forms disciples, on the other hand, is challenging everyone to live up to the great mission of loving God, loving others, and going out and making more disciples (Matthew 28). I think we have a lot of work to do in this area and we will continue working on it together. Stay tuned!

2) It is easy to fall into the trap of considering the parish as the group of people who already come to Church on Sunday. But if we are to follow Jesus' commission of going out and making disciples, we should remember that our parish consists of everyone who lives within our zip code or zip codes. In other words, we should be at least as concerned for those who are not yet in the pews.

Now that most of the physical plant restorations have been done, we can focus even more of our attention on what matters most.

**God Bless,  
Father Jonathan**

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