

CONFERENCE INFORMATION FOR THE 2019 DIOCESAN MEN'S DAY OF RENWAL

For the tenth consecutive year, the Diocese of Steubenville is sponsoring a **Men's Day of Renewal** on Saturday, **March 23 from 9 am to 4 pm** (optional Rosary and Chaplet of Divine Mercy at 8:30 am) at **St. Stephen's Church, 1036 Belford St., Caldwell** off of Exit 25 on I-77. *The Patron of the Conference is St. Joseph*, a model of a true man of God, whose intercession we count upon for its success.

The goal of the Men's Day of Renewal is to focus on the spiritual development of the men of our diocese to help them choose the path that God created for them. Spiritually strong men of faith and character translates into solid families, more dynamic parishes, and better communities. This is critical to the Church and particularly our diocese, now and in the future. It is also highly important for nurturing vocations.

To complement the Holy Hour, the Penance Service, and Mass presided by Bishop Monforton, the keynote speaker is **Mark Nehrbas**. As director of Christian Outreach at the Franciscan University of Steubenville for 13 years, he directed and developed the Summer Conferences to national prominence, now attracting 50,000 participants each year in Steubenville and at different branches. A dynamic speaker, he has given talks at conferences all over the country.

The theme of the Conference is "The Cross as a Source of Strength and Path to Ultimate Victory Over All Adversity". This is not abstract theological theory. Mark Nehrbas lived it. He will be speaking from his heart, from his personal experience.

The morning address: "Victory of the Cross in My Battle with Cancer" will be his personal testimony of what he went through on a journey that began in 2012: Anxiety, fear, and pain, from two separate bouts of an aggressive form of stomach cancer that included two major surgeries, countless days with painful chemo, and repeated doses of radiation. Through all this, his prayer life became more intense; his faith and trust in God deepened. Providentially and unexpectedly, a generous friend, a Knight of Malta, offered to sponsor him and his wife Carol for a pilgrimage to the great Shrine of Our Lady of Lourdes in France. Before leaving in May of last year, his doctor indicated that his cancer was back and that he would have to resume aggressive treatments after the pilgrimage. At the time, Mark was unaware that his tumor marker count shot up to over 300. Upon his return from Lourdes, a subsequent examination revealed a normal tumor count with no trace of cancer! His doctor was baffled! Mark knew it was a miracle!

The afternoon address: "Victory Over Suffering: Lessons Learned from the Cross," Mark explores the mystery of suffering, why God permits it, how he confronted and grew from it, and how it can make us saints. Each of us encounters suffering. Redemptive Suffering by the people of God can ultimately save the world.

More Information...and how you can help!

Sharing the sacrifice. Given the large geography of our diocese, travel time may be long, thus giving the conference a pilgrimage flavor. Lent, of course, is all about sacrifice and spiritual growth. Because St. Stephen Church in Caldwell is near the geographic center of the diocese, the Steering Committee is hopeful that the men from Minerva in the north to Chesapeake in the south are all willing to participate. Regardless of distance, a trip of great fellowship deepens the friendship. A bag lunch will be provided at the conference.

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A great day of enjoyable fellowship and spiritual invigoration. In each of the last eight years, we have returned from the Men's Day of Renewal reinvigorated, enthusiastic, and spiritually refreshed. Expect more of the same this year! It is awesome to hear the men lift up their voices in song and be moved by the beauty and power of faith in action. Through God's good grace, we will gain spiritually strong men to help build the kingdom of God, and battle the evils that plague our society; men who put Christ into their professions; men who become knowledgeable in their faith and are prepared for a joyful Easter by becoming closer to God. The Men's Day of Renewal has grown into a significant event in our diocese, thus fulfilling a great need.

Promotional Help Needed. While parish announcements, posters, and brochures, are indeed important and helpful, these cannot replace the one-on-one personal promotion from one's peers. The most effective form of advertisement is word-of-mouth, and the personal witness of men who have gone to a previous Conference. ***Thus one or two men are urgently needed in each parish to assure the success of this event.*** To ease the burden on our pastors, we are depending upon our men to offer their assistance as ***parish representatives*** to mobilize the men with some good ***one-on-one Men's Day PRO-MO-TIVATION.*** ***Word-of-mouth advertising is essential*** to maximize the promotion of the Men's Day of Renewal throughout each parish. We ask participants of past years to tell their friends about this awesome opportunity for spiritual renewal. If your parish doesn't have a Men's Day representative, please consider volunteering by informing your pastor and distributing registration forms to the men in your parish. You can also help with registration and van-pools. For more information on how to help, e-mail Don Coen (Chair of the Diocesan Men's Day of Renewal): donandmargcoen@yahoo.com

Equally important, our women can be most valuable in encouraging their husbands, sons (including teens), fathers, brothers, and boyfriends, to attend. This is an essential part of the new evangelization.

Father and son can make this day an unforgettable shared experience in which they become closer to each other. Pastors accompanying the men in their parish have an opportunity to know them better, thus solidifying parish relationships. ***The Men's Day of Renewal also needs priest to serve as Confessors.***

The local ***Knights of Columbus*** councils understand that spiritual formation of their men is part of their mission. Men's Day provides an excellent opportunity for this, as well as building new relationships by inviting men in their parishes.

Each prospective parish representative is asked to make his availability and contact information known to the Chair of the Steering Committee, Don Coen at (740)264-0155, (740)632-1565, or donandmargcoen@yahoo.com. Men may register individually, or the parish representative may collect the registration forms with payment and send them as a package to ***Roger Huck, c/o Men's Day of Renewal, P.O. Box 54; Beverly, OH 45715.*** This would save considerable time instead of registering at the door. Checks for the **Registration cost of \$25.00 per person** are to be made payable to the **Diocese of Steubenville** with "Men's Day of Renewal" written on the memo line of the check.

Transportation Needs. A carpool, vanpool, or bus saves on fuel costs and gives an opportunity for fellowship while traveling to and from the event—especially for those traveling greater distances. Please invite other men and assist with the organization of transportation for those attending in your parish.

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Donations Needed. It is very expensive to put on a conference of this magnitude and feature nationally known speakers. While the Steering Committee does its best to minimize the cost for each participant, we are seeking donations from businesses, parish organizations, the Knights of Columbus, and individuals. Please send donations to Roger Huck as shown above. Furthermore, we do not charge men who are unable to pay, so that no man is excluded from attending.

Ads in the Program Brochure. Details for placing an ad for a business or community organization, or Knights of Columbus Councils can be found in the Conference Blog, or call Roger Huck at 740-984-2234 or 740-336-9128.

More information is available from your pastor, from Don Coen above, or Paul Sebastian at (740) 245-9404 or paulsebastian@yahoo.com. The **Men's Conference Blog** at diosteubmen.blogspot.com has a wealth of promotional materials for use at the parish level. 1) Overview & Poster; 2) Ad Form; 3) Press Releases; 4) Possible Bulletin Blurbs; 5) Pulpit Announcements; 6) Promotional Ideas; 7) Functions of the Parish Rep; 8) Sign-Up Sheet; 9) Sample Bulletin Insert; and 10) a Possible Talk by One of the Men after Mass. There are also interesting articles on men's spirituality, past conference highlights, etc. After the Conference and throughout the year, articles will be added to help the men keep in good spiritual shape. Clergy, Religious, and knowledgeable layman are invited to submit articles.

Please submit your registration as soon as possible. Registration will be accepted at the door; however, doing so in advance makes our planning more efficient and also helps to minimize waiting at the conference entrance.

BENEFIT SUMMARY OF WHAT THE MEN'S CONFERENCE CAN DO FOR YOU:

- Get you into *good spiritual shape*.
- Have *a great day of enjoyable fellowship and spiritual invigoration* with fellow parishioners and participants at the conference, resulting in deeper friendships and parish cohesion.
- Develop ourselves as men of character and spiritual strength* as we obtain the graces to cope with problems and conquer problematic issues that trouble our society.
- Be an effective spiritual leader to your family* as a better husband and father.
- Prepare our hearts for the great feast of Easter* as we become closer to God.
- Become more knowledgeable about our Catholic faith* and grow in Christian maturity.
- Become a more effective soldier of Christ*, and help strengthen His kingdom on earth.

Visit <http://diosteubmen.blogspot.com> for additional resources to help promote the Men's Day of Renewal in your parish.

Paul Sebastian, Contributor
Men's Day of Renewal Steering Committee