

GOD FIRST

Radical Spirituality for a Struggling Society

Faith facing Society's 'isms'

Our year-long initiative of **GOD FIRST** is meant to affirm what we believe was the purpose of Jesus Christ — to bring all things into oneness with God our Creator. Yet we know in our society, as during the time of Jesus, distortions of God's plan are abundant. We see these distortions in the movements meant to bring about personal satisfaction and desires — *relativism, secularism, individualism, consumerism, and fundamentalism*. These ideologies minimize the message of Jesus Christ and disguise the promise of the Father. They distort and minimize the fullness of the message of salvation.

GOD FIRST challenges each individual to see how their own life is fashioned to fulfill the will of God rather than making the gospel relevant to their own lives at their choosing; to see how the gospel is meant to transfigure our own lives into the image of Christ, rather than make Christ conform to our worldly expectations; to recognize that our faith is not an individual act meant for individual gratification, but one that is meant for the betterment of all people; to realize that we cannot pick and choose what is presented in the scripture, but that the entire gospel is one unified message that cannot be segmented.



Accepting **GOD FIRST** will mean lives being transformed. It will require minds and hearts taking on the mind and the heart of Jesus. It will mean being “obedient to the word Jesus taught — and teaches today.” It will mean giving up preconceived notions of how life is to be, in favor of what it should be according to God's plan for us. To make **GOD FIRST** a part of our lives, it will mean renewing our spiritual formation and prayer development, which move us from false societal expectations and ideologies.

We'll be using Sunday and weekday homilies, scripture reflections by parishioners and staff alike, integration in our religious education, school, youth ministry, and RCIA programs, as well as every organization in the parish, monthly mailings, parish website, parish mission, adult library, and finally, speakers to address the spiritual formation and prayer development for a wide variety of groups (as mentioned on the next pages). Our parish mission in November will also be part of this whole **GOD FIRST** initiative. Watch the bulletin and the parish website for more understanding.