

Pastor's Corner

Evangelizing the Faith through Golf?

In my first assignment as a priest, there was an Annual Parish Golf Tournament. The Pastor was an avid golfer and started the Tournament as a way to raise funds for the parish school and build community, especially among men. The Golf Tournament was advertised for a couple of months in advance in the bulletin and from the pulpit at mass.

Some parishioners took exception to all the promotion. “Why don’t we advertise Eucharistic Adoration like we advertise golf?” “Why don’t we promote prayer groups like we are promoting this tournament?” It was clear they believed a golf tournament was only a social event and not an opportunity to experience faith. The pastor disagreed, “We need Eucharistic Adoration and prayer groups for the good of the faith, but we also need events like a golf tournament to reach everyone we are called to serve.” The pastor was right.

More than 100 people, mostly men, played in the golf tournament that year. I spent a good part of the day at the tournament. I recognized some of the men from church but I hadn’t seen many of them before. Everybody had a great time playing golf and enjoying the fellowship that golf offers. In the weeks following the tournament, I began to see some of the golfers at weekend mass with their families. Several eventually became active in our parish.

Based on that experience, I am convinced that God uses many means to spread faith in Jesus, including sports and games. Jesus evangelized at Temple and in synagogues, but also in people’s homes, on boats, during walks and at meals. Jesus wasn’t bound by people’s expectations or preferences. The Lord is present wherever two or three gather in his name, so why not on a golf course during a game of golf?

The St. Francis Xavier Men’s Club will host the Old Metairie Golf Classic on Friday, October 5, at Audubon Park Golf Club in New Orleans. We have been announcing this event for several weeks. (Hopefully this bulletin arrives before the tournament is played!) Please consider playing in the Tournament or helping to sponsor it. Proceeds will help support our school. Fr. Thien and I will be at the golf course for fellowship. Email OldMetairieGolfClassic@gmail.com for details or to register.

May the Lord grant good weather for our Golf Tournament and may we experience the Lord in the fraternity, competition and beauty of Audubon Park.

God bless,
Fr. Joe