

West Catholic Football Retreat 2011



Over the weekend of July 23, 2011, the West Catholic Football Teams participated in their 3rd Annual Football Retreat. These retreats are organized by the football dads and involve a community service project that includes both the student/athlete and someone who is a significant male role model in his life. The goal is to give back to the community, build team unity and bond with those males who impact their lives.

This year we had over 150 participants comprised of Varsity, JV, and Freshmen players, role models, coaches and even Falcon Football Alumni.

In previous years our projects led us to one specific location like St. Michael's in Fremont and last year St John's in Freesoil, Michigan.

This year with a group of over 150 Falcon Faithful we were able to branch out to several venues. From the "Football Field" into the "Mission Field," we completed service projects in Grant, Newaygo and two locations in the Grand Rapids area.

We started out Saturday morning with breakfast at the Golden Corral Restaurant on Alpine. This included meeting, greeting and eating to build up the mind and body with energy sources that would be used in the hard work ahead.

After our breakfast the assigned teams headed out in five different directions lead by the fathers at each site/location to help spearhead project completion.

The locations and projects were as follows:

Grant Community Church, Grant, MI, (Part of LoveINC. Ministries in Newaygo County)

- Project included the splitting, and stacking of firewood ... and lots of it. That supply of wood is then distributed by the organization to families in the surrounding community as their heating source for the entire winter.

St. Bartholomew Church, Newaygo, MI

- Project included painting of some buildings, brush removal and some additional miscellaneous projects.

Holy Trinity Parish, Comstock Park, MI

- Project involved building a playground for the students and parishioners.

West Catholic High School

- Project involved cutting trees and removing logs and brush. The interior courtyards were spruced up as well by removing overgrown brush and painting.

VanSingel Farms, Grant, MI

- Owner Cal VanSingel (A friend of West Catholic) was a gracious host and let us use his property as a central meeting and overnight camping spot. Cal was also instrumental with connecting us with these service opportunities in this area. A group of parents was assigned to this project to help set up the camp area with tents for both eating and overnight sleeping.

The various groups were kept nourished throughout the day by lunches made up of sub sandwiches, snacks and beverages packed and organized by our wonderful Football Moms.

Once all the projects were completed, everyone convened at the property and then headed down the road to Baptist Lake to cool off by swimming, playing catch and taking our “Saturday Night Bath.” Once refreshed and somewhat clean, we returned to the campground to attend a special outdoor mass with our own Father John Vallier. After mass, a steak dinner was served with complementary side dishes, fruits, vegetables and desserts.

At night everyone gathered around the fire pit. The “Ring of Fire” has provided the stage over the years for talk and reflection on the upcoming season. Coach Rohn started off with his thoughts and expectations for on and off the field. After Coach were speeches by the players, giving them an opportunity to share their own thoughts about tradition, dedication, respect and the need for personal accountability. A lot of pride was shared that night, and even more pride developed as a result of that moment in time.

The next morning the group got up early, ate breakfast and headed home.

We are thankful for having an opportunity to reach across different faith and different counties sharing our time, talent and treasure with those communities in need.

Tim Bancuk
Proud Parent & Participant