



## St Raphael Church

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September 18, 2017

To Whom It May Concern,

St. Raphael Church in Bay Village, Ohio, hosted Fr. Michael Denk and the Prodigal Father's *Pray 40 Days* Lenten Mission on March 5-7, 2017. It was a lot of work, but worth it! The mission was extremely well attended, and we continued to receive positive feedback from our parish for months afterwards.

We diligently followed the preparation guidelines provided by Fr. Michael and his team, including bulletin and pulpit announcements, website promotion with links to the *Pray 40 Days* app, distribution of the book to parishioners, and engagement of our day school and PSR children. Each night of the mission, our school Drama Club performed a skit, children came forward to lead in song (different grades were assigned to lead each night), our Music Director and adult volunteer musicians formed a praise band to accompany Fr. Michael, and volunteer parishioners gave personal witnesses concerning the prayer types featured that evening. Fr. Michael made a point to stay on time with the schedule, as these were school nights, and members of the Prodigal Father team managed their own merchandising tables.

Each night of the mission was standing room only, with over 1,000 people attending all three nights. The mission format included entertainment, but also prayer, instruction, music, personal anecdotes and personal witness. Parishioners found it to be spiritually uplifting – we received many, many positive comments. Feedback also included great praise for the book and accolades for Fr. Michael.

This is a mission that takes a lot of work to properly plan and execute. It really requires engagement of the parish staff, school and some key ministries to pull it off. But the results are engagement and participation of the wider faith community in a way we've seldom experienced before. Fr. Michael and the Prodigal Father team have a formula/template, and it's been our experience it works. I'd recommend the *Pray 40 Days* mission to any parish serious about engaging the faithful as a community in prayer.

Blessings,

*Dcn. Mark Cunningham*

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*We continue the work of the Lord.*