Is it time for the Church to rediscover its role in engaging the faithful on Catholic Social Teaching?

Sister Linda LaMagna, CCW, thinks so, and her enthusiasm was evident at the conclusion of a special Liturgy commissioning those involved in ARISE Together in Christ. The outdoor Mass, celebrated on August 18 at the Our Lady of the Alleghenies Shrine in Loretto, came just weeks before the launch of a new season of the diocesan renewal initiative.

“I’m really excited about season three because it focuses on walking in the footsteps of Christ to engage in the Catholic Social Teachings of the Church,” expressed Sister Linda, diocesan ARISE coordinator. “So I think everybody leaves here with a little bit of expectation with the power of the Holy Spirit coming alive in all of us, and I think the Bishop reiterated that in his homily this evening.”

Bishop Mark, indeed, explained that the time is right for this renewal opportunity.

“Our world, our Church, and our families, in our hearts and souls, need purification now more than ever,” he stated. “We need a new day and a new way. We need to be people who are not afraid to share our faith with others who are seeking the same purification and the same transformation that leads us to the truth.”

For those who feel distracted and disheartened about circumstances of our time, Bishop urged the faithful to revisit the second reading for that Sunday from Hebrews. He specifically quoted the following from that reading:

*Since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us rid ourselves of every burden and sin that clings to us and persevere in running the race that lies before us while keeping our eyes fixed on Jesus, the leader and perfecter of faith.*

“For all of you who have already been participating in the journey of faith called ARISE Together in Christ, that’s what Hebrews is talking about,” Bishop Mark added. “We know who our leader is. We know the one who is the perfecter of our faith. He is the Lord Jesus who endured the cross for our sins and comes to us with his Body and Blood to strengthen us at this altar.”

In preparation for season three of ARISE Together in Christ, a special diocesan convocation is planned for the morning of September 21 at Bishop Carroll Catholic High School in Ebensburg.

Doctor Donald Asci, a Professor of Theology at Franciscan University of Steubenville, will present “Following Jesus and Transforming the World: The Social Dimension of Christian Discipleship.”

Doctor Asci will focus on the way in which the social teachings of the Church present some fundamental truths of the Gospel that all Christians are called to incorporate into their daily lives.

“It’s basically the same values that Jesus taught us when He was here among us and still present with us,” noted Sister Linda in looking forward to the convocation and the upcoming emphasis on Catholic Social Teaching.

There is no charge to attend the convocation, but attendees are asked to register in advance. Reservations can be made by visiting the special [ARISE section](https://www.dioceseaj.org/arise/) of the diocesan website.