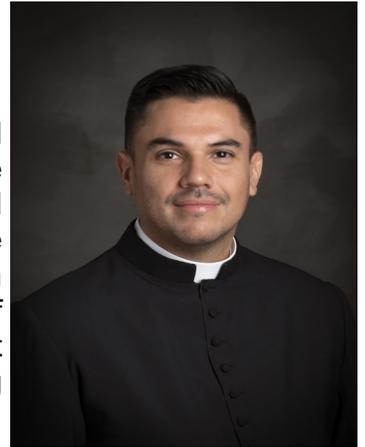


MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OCTOBER 2023 DIDACHE

It has been requested by the Pastoral Council and other members of our parish community that I write something for the parish bulletin. I'm not a writer. I don't even write my homilies. I do believe in the power of the Word. In that way I can identify with Socrates and even Jesus himself being masters of the word... they didn't leave anything in writing. But by the virtue of obedience, I'll try to write something once a month.



On the last three weekends we have been hearing in the gospel of Matthew that theme of 'vineyard'. It seems that in the time of Jesus growing grapes and making wine was really popular, as it is also for us here in California, especially here in Carmel Valley. When we drive out Carmel Valley Road we can see many beautiful vineyards by the roadside. It is interesting that in the parables Jesus does not focus his attention on someone's faults or even a punishment. He focuses more on 'bearing fruit' because when we 'bear fruit' it gives meaning to our lives. 'A fruitful life is a life full of meaning.'

We have started our Religious Education Program. It is always good to see the children, teens and adults looking to know Jesus more and to learn about the Church and what we believe. We have five new children in a first year Holy Communion class. Susan Franks has offered to teach this class; Jennifer Bodner is teaching the second year class with another five children that are going to make their First Holy Communion Sunday May 5th, 2025. This year we don't have a first year Confirmation class, but we have a second year Confirmation class with five youth who are going to make their Confirmation on Sun April 21st 2024 Bishop Danny already has confirmed that date for us. Tess Arthur is their teacher. Happily, we have 4 adults in our RCIA program with John Condon and Derwin Borling as their teachers. These students will receive the Sacraments of Initiation at our Easter Vigil Saturday March 30, 2024. With our religious education program, we see that we can produce 'fruit' that will last and offer everlasting life.

On the diocese level, I am looking forward for the priest retreat led by Rev. Albert Haase, OFM. I hear he is a good preacher. You can check his web site www.albertofm.org. I always enjoy spending time with the bishop and my brother priests. Thankfully this one is not a silent retreat as it is hard for us not to speak to one another for the whole week. The clergy of the diocese meets twice a year for these retreat and study days. Please pray for Bishop Danny, my brother priests and me that we all have a holy retreat.

Other news from the diocese is that every parish in the Diocese of Monterey, Our Lady of Mt. Carmel (OLMC) included, has an annual assessment to support Diocese operations. In our last fiscal year, the assessment was \$16,140. The Diocese has just changed how it assesses parishes and the OLMC assessment is now \$21,850, an increase of \$5,710 (a 35% increase) which is a significant amount for our small parish. Please consider how you can help support this new cost by increasing your weekly Sunday giving and please consider making it consistent with automatic online contributions. Instructions on how to sign up for our secure online payment system are attached. This weekend you will find a 'Donation Card' by the pews and the entrance of the church. Some parishioners have told me it can feel embarrassing when the collection basket is passed and they do not put anything in it because they contribute online. This will give those parishioners a card to place in the basket, and hopefully a good way to encourage more parishioners to use the online giving method.

It is my hope and my prayer that we can 'bear fruit' together as we continue the work here in our parish for our spiritual well-being, and for the sake of our brothers and sisters, especially the neediest in our community.

Fraternally in Christ,

Fr. Jhonnatan.