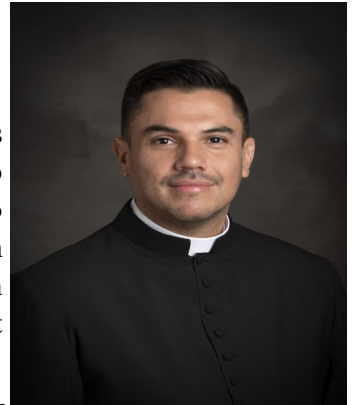


MONTHLY NEWSLETTER DECEMBER 2023 DIDACHE



For some reason the month of December goes quickly for me, as I considered it my busiest month during the year because I try to plan ahead in order not to over stress myself. I would like to begin my December monthly letter by letting you know that on November 17th I took my Oath of Naturalization and am now an American Citizen! I give thanks to God to be part of this great nation where I have lived for almost 15 years.

The month of December always begins with the celebration of the first Sunday of Advent close to the Feast Day of Saint Andrew the Apostle on November 30th. Advent is a big Church secret because for many, it is already Christmas. But how can we celebrate such a great mystery of the Incarnation without any preparation? It is because of that reason the Church puts aside four weeks to prepare to receive Jesus in the manger. December is also filled with other celebrations like the Immaculate Conception, Patronnes of the United State of America whom I ask so fervently for peace between Israel and Hamas. The venerable Bishop Fulton Sheen had a thesis that the only one who can unite Jews, Muslims and Christians is Mary: She is a Jewish Mother and venerated in Islam as Most Maryam. She is the Mother of God for most Christian people. It was also a joy to celebrate the Feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe this week with all the work that the Hispanic Community put in this celebration bringing flowers, decorating, cooking, and having good fellowship with each other. You can see some of the pictures and videos on our social media pages.

This weekend we celebrate Gaudete Sunday. This is a Sunday of Joy during the Advent Season; for that reason, the priest wears the Rose color vestments as a reminder that in preparation there is always joy. The Gospel this weekend tells us that *'John was across the Jordan, where He was baptizing'*. It is an interesting story why John was baptizing across the Jordan. I hope and pray we can meditate on that part of the Scriptures this weekend.

We will be celebrating Christmas and for many this means gathering with family and friends to celebrate the birth of Our savior Jesus Christ. I know many of you will be traveling and I hope that wherever you are you can celebrate the beautiful liturgies on Christmas Eve or Christmas day and have a wonderful Christmas Dinner. I will be visiting family for New Years in Colombia. New Years in Colombia it is like the American Thanksgiving where many people gather to celebrate and to give thanks for the blessing received in 2023 and consecrate to the Lord the new opportunities and blessing to come in 2024.

Next weekend I will meet with the project team, architect and contractor to revisit the ceiling project, something we will probably need a two or three year campaign in order to accomplish. This will include removing the existing church ceiling and completely updating the electrical, AC/Heat system, lighting and probably a new sound system. This is a necessary project as our current electrical system is dangerous and we desperately need to replace the lighting. I Hope and pray with the support and efforts of the whole community, we can make our church an even more beautiful place of prayer to help us to grow in our spirituality and relationships with our neighbor.

I am sincerely grateful to be your parish priest and I thank you for your continuing generosity, support, and friendship.

"Do not be afraid; for behold, I proclaim to you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. For today in the city of David a savior has been born for you who is Christ and Lord".

Rev. Fr. Jhonnatan F. Carmona;

Parish Priest.