



A bimonthly publication of Good Shepherd Catholic Church ~ steadfast in awakening our true being in God.

ME? A missionary disciple?

EMBRACING THE IDENTITY THAT MATTERS MOST

"It seems fine, in theory, but me? Really? Missionary discipleship sounds like uber faithful people traveling the world sharing the Gospel 24/7! I'm just me."

Self-talk like this likely plays in the minds of many Catholics wondering how the concept of missionary discipleship "fits" into busy, modern lives. With family, work and a host of other commitments, it can prove challenging.

But thinking of it as mere additions to a "to-do" list defeats the core idea.

Missionary discipleship is *everything* about who we ARE. Missionary discipleship is the Holy Spirit breathing Christ into our identity as Catholic Christians, and children of God.

Letting the Spirit touch our lives and the lives of others produces a pronounced joy that naturally forms and defines our true identity. And baptism makes us "card-carrying" missionary disciples. Imagine your baptismal certificate with a companion ID card for your wallet — right there with your driver's license, your Costco membership card

and myriad access cards. There it is. Your Missionary Disciple card... your access to heaven.

Of course, no one will ask to see a tangible card, but this ID ranks above the rest. It gently reminds bearers of the life that Christ asks the faithful to live: to *receive* the faith, *share* the faith and *safeguard* the faith for eternal salvation.

Missionary discipleship transforms us every day into who we say we are and permeates every facet of life! Missionary discipleship authenticates Christian identity and reveals what God has written on our hearts.

*I'm Ready!
This is who
I am.*



MISSIONARY DISCIPLE

	Child of God		
	Body of Christ		
	Kingdom of God		
	Restrictions: Free Will		
	Endorsements: Gifts of the Holy Spirit		
	GO MAKE DISCIPLES OF ALL NATIONS		
	Effective: LIFETIME		
	By virtue of Baptism		

*I am with you always,
until the end of the age.*

Commissioned by: **JESUS**

(Story continues on page 4)

**We are not part-time Christians.
We are Christian all the time!**

POPE FRANCIS

THE BODY OF CHRIST

The People of God



Whimsical yet powerful, the image of God calling your phone points to a vivid reality.

He is calling. All the time.

From the Latin word *vocare*, which means “to call,”

one’s vocation describes a primary occupation for which a person is well-suited. [Good Shepherd’s Vocation Ministry](#), retooling after the pandemic, aims to be a ministerial resource urging awareness and contemplation of God’s call in our lives.

Ministry members and co-chair Ninfa Campomanes recently attended a diocesan workshop led by the Director of Vocations Father Mémo Hernandez.

“It was very fruitful, very productive,” Ninfa explains enthusiastically recalling many of the suggestions and ideas for parish vocation programs.

Ninfa cites how the ministry focus will shine a light on priestly vocations and religious life referring to “a need for homegrown priests.” The statistics are daunting with roughly one priest for every 3,000 Catholics worldwide.

Locally, the Diocese of Sacramento upholds a commitment to vocations with a diocesan statute: *“The Christian faithful have an obligation to foster vocations to the priesthood and the religious life by living faithfully the call to holiness, by holding vocations to the priesthood and the religious life in esteem, and by encouraging young men and women to consider the possibility of a call from*

God to the ordained or consecrated states. Diocesan and parish programs are to assist in fostering vocations.”

In Good Shepherd Parish’s nearly 30-year history, two men have become priests – Father Brian Soliven and Father Alex Llanera, SJ. Four parishioners have been ordained to the permanent diaconate – Deacon Ed Smith, Deacon Bill Sousa, Deacon Rommel Declines, and Deacon Al Llenos.

Ninfa refers to author Rhonda Grue-newald and her book, *Hundredfold, A Guide to Parish Vocation Ministry*. “She writes about how vocation is a calling and not only to ordained ministry,” Ninfa clarifies detailing how Christian vocation is lived out in many ways. Men and women may choose consecrated religious life, married life, and some may choose a vocation of single living. All vocations require attention, affirmation and support to encourage a life in Christ.

Spiritual callings also manifest in various

GOD IS CALLING

Vocation Ministry works to help God’s people listen, hear, answer



Left to right : Espie Bacerra, Cita Lumbang, Len Beltran, Ninfa Campomanes, Rose Camerino and Carmen Cua.

commitments and charisms. Ninfa’s own experience offers an example. She shares in fraternal communion with the Discalced Carmelites as a professed member of the Secular Order of Discalced Carmelites, the third order of Catholic laypersons and secular clergy. In making her 2019 promise, she lives a vocation aligned with Carmelite spirituality.

Ninfa ponders the call to missionary discipleship. Baptism, our first vocation, calls Christians into the body of Christ uniting us as the people of God. It *begins* the lifelong journey of discipleship, urging our attentiveness to God’s abundant grace. Training the heart and mind to listen, discern and respond according to God’s will is the difference between letting a call go to voicemail and picking it up on the first ring. Better yet, sensing the call – *knowing what God desires for you* – represents the disciplined disciple who *listens* in prayer, *hears* in sacramental living and *responds* with a missionary spirit to live and share the Gospel.

Let's Gather

AND AWAKEN THE JOY!

MARCH MADNESS

Saturday, March

26

2022

March Madness

In the spirit of family fun, **March Madness** gave parishioners a chance to come out and play! Friendly cornhole competi-

tions attracted all ages as players advanced through the brackets vying

for the chance to reign as cornhole king! But not to be outdone,

some serious hoops took place on the black top, too.

With speed and agility, balls were flying through the air and through hoop

nets as players scored free throw points like no tomorrow.

The parish hall scene set the NCAA March Madness vibe with festive tables set cafe-style for snacks and big screen basketball viewing — a welcomed spot for spectators to grab a bite. Volunteers served popcorn, nachos, pizza and beverages with the signature Good Shepherd hospitality! “Give back” donations of soccer balls and gift cards were collected for Cristo Rey High School’s athletic department.

Sunday, April

10

2022

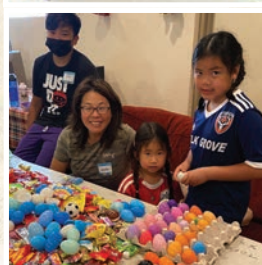
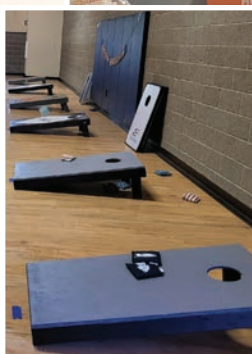
Easter Egg Hunt



little ones in pursuit of more than 7,000 bright and colorful eggs which carpeted the school field. More than 1,000 attended with well over 300 youth participating. Beyond the hunt for colorful eggs and the prized golden eggs, kids enjoyed face painting, a coloring contest, animal balloons and a fun photo backdrop. In all the memory making moments, the event collected donations for its selected “give back charity,” Ronald McDonald House Charities Northern California.

In the smiles and greetings of brothers and sisters in Christ, we gather with joy, in faith, hope and love, ready for fellowship, fun and hospitality! Mark your calendars with gratitude and PRAISE GOD AS WE GATHER.

All Let's Gather events are FREE. Watch for more details and updates in the bulletin as these dates approach!



COMING UP NEXT!

Gathering Again!

AT THE ALTAR OF OUR LORD
...THE TABLE OF THE FEAST
...THE BANQUET OF OUR HEARTS



Saturday, May

21

2022

Let's Gather
AT THE TABLE
Parish Family Dinner



“Let’s Gather” events started with a Pentecost Picnic almost one year ago. Now, we plan to culminate this “year of returning” to vibrant community with a special family dinner. Save the Date and Let’s Gather at the Table, together and always, to celebrate our faith and fellowship, hope and hospitality, love and gratitude. We will reminisce over the past 12 months of Let’s Gather events, grateful for the community that is alive and well at Good Shepherd Parish. This resilient faith family represents community at its best – authentic missionary disciples undefeated in love for Christ and each other! Sign up to attend on the parish website!



Good Shepherd Catholic Church's
10th
Anniversary!
**Annual
Easter Egg
Hunt**

*We are called to open ourselves more
and more to the action of the Holy Spirit, to offer our*

“Unreserved

“None of us feels like we’re perfect,” **Veronica Schreiver** humbly admits expressing some discomfort as she clarifies her stance on missionary discipleship.

“We are the living Church,” she says describing a vocation to serve as “God’s messengers on earth” doing our best to live the Catholic faith.

Veronica begins her day on an exercise bike and lets her morning ritual transport her to a place of prayer. She reads her Bible, too, gleaning inspiration for her workday. “God knows,” she quips thinking of her crossover home chapel and adds, “he’s o.k. with it.”

She talks of friends and life events that have influenced her faith, describing moments of accompaniment when “friends help us to do better.”

“We choose to be changed,” she affirms signaling that missionary discipleship is both a calling and a choice to embrace the identity.

Veronica also acknowledges “I’m always struggling to know if I’m doing what’s right,” but insists that listening for God’s feedback offers the answers.

“I try to hear God and I think we receive direct messages,” she says but notes the issue is “we just don’t listen.”

An avid runner, Veronica participates with the Life Runners ministry sharing the Gospel of life on the back of her T-shirt. She heard God calling when she assumed responsibilities for serving the homeless via the Winter Sanctuary ministry. She also joined the parish finance council seeing the overlap with her professional work in finance and investments.

“I’m afraid of being lukewarm,” she concedes sharing how easy it is to “make excuses” but “God left us with a big responsibility.”



*For every Christian,
for the whole Church,
this is not an optional
mission ...
but essential.*

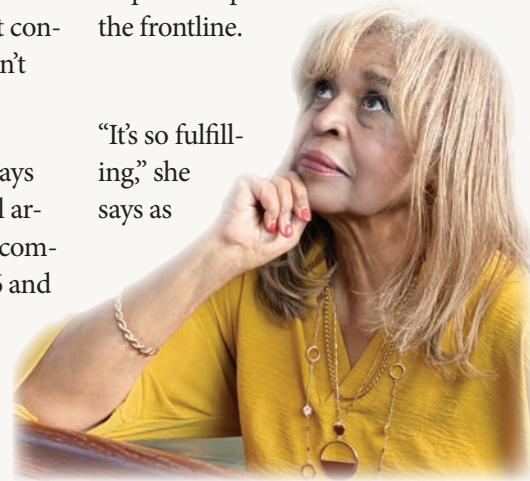
POPE FRANCIS

Pondering whether Catholics see missionary discipleship in themselves, **Judith Marshall** worries that “many don’t connect the dots, so they don’t put it into play.”

“I feel appointed,” she says referring to an impactful article that prompted her comment. It cited John 15:16 and encouraged readers to make the most of their “divine appointments.” Judith views much of her life as a succession of appointments. “I didn’t just start” being a missionary disciple, she explains crediting her mother as the one who “just set the example.”

or working at the food locker on Monday mornings serving help and hope on the frontline.

“It’s so fulfilling,” she says as



she encounters people who come and go, but they possess a mindset to help others. They call Judith later offering to help the ministry that helped when they needed it.

“They never fail to thank us,” she shares mentioning that often some come to parish functions, or social events.

Judith also belongs to the

READINESS

to be instruments of God's mercy...tenderness...love POPE FRANCIS

Hearts of Compassion ministry, serves as a lector and an extraordinary minister of holy Communion.

"Volunteering brings opportunities to meet people," Judith explains suggesting that missionary discipleship isn't about proselytizing per se but living a life of Christian example.

"having received the Good News of God's gift of salvation, which any believer would want to sell everything to own this 'pearl of great price'... and not to keep this 'under the basket.'"

Often surrounded by his daughters and family at Mass, he speaks of an urgency. "I realize I am not immortal," he

understanding and wisdom," he counsels to "discover salvation, realize your happiness and share it!"

Prayer represents the most common theme in the journey. **Mary Palmer** encourages, **"Pray, pray for God's guidance in everything."**

"In the music ministry, God uses me to help others to pray," she reflects, especially humbled and honored to sing at funerals and "bring some comfort to those who grieve."

ministry. In the midst of COVID-19, recognizing how friends were "hungry for connection," she formed a weekly rosary ministry on the Zoom platform, praying together with an ever-growing group of people who evangelize each other.

Mary describes missionary discipleship as "living a life of love for God and others" and she says

For **Francis Kang**, Christian example and missionary discipleship have a special place *and necessity* at home in the domestic church and in immediate environments.

"First, we have to have the need to share" the faith Francis affirms stating that need arises out of joy and conviction of

says and he sees an unfortunate "maintenance mode" in today's Church rather than the urgency of early Christians.

"We should step it up a little more," he incites sharing his personal testimony and asserting "there is a lot to cultivate."

"While each generation has stories and spiritual values it wants to pass along to their children, we cannot assume past faithfulness will continue or that future generations will be aware of the great legacy or priceless family heirloom of faith in God," Francis writes.

Francis queries, "How does one get interested? Get on your knees and pray for un-



"finding ways to be present to others" can be one of

the best ways to begin to see discipleship in yourself.

Recalling her 2019 Cursillo, she found it to be "a huge catalyst" in embracing the next dimension of discipleship. She has been singing at Mass since her teens, and taught faith formation classes in college. Cursillo marked a turning-point. Discipleship became even more of a reality playing out in her life.

She easily said yes when asked to share her joy with the Catholics Returning Home

She concedes, "you won't always be appreciated" in attempts to reach out, be present and love, but "don't let that get you down...learn to put hardship in God's hands and keep trying." Mary quotes Mother Teresa's wise advice for authentic missionary disciples: *We cannot all do great things. But we can do small things with great love.*



By their Fruits

YOU WILL KNOW THEM

Highlighting the good work and “fruits” of our parish ministries and parishioners.

For the Knights of Columbus members, living one’s faith translates to living a life of missionary discipleship. Grand Knight Mike Blakey attests easily to the vast capacity of the Knights who stand ready to serve – to *encounter* Christ, *accompany* others, invite people to *community* and *send* each other out in perpetual motion to love and serve.

“We have over 264 members,” Mike says indicating how he “calls on different people at different times based on different skill sets and the needs that come up.”

“I’m a dispatcher,” he adds noting he “dispatches” himself, too, sending Knights out as disciples “every day as we live our lives.”

Knights of Columbus Laguna Council LIVING OUT MISSIONARY DISCIPLESHIP

The Council’s history runs parallel to that of the parish. For nearly 30 years, the Knights have integrated themselves into Good Shepherd Parish life as individual men of faith and as an extended arm of the international organization – nearly two million members strong – devoted to its mission of “*empowering Catholic men to live their faith at home, in their parish, at work and in their community.*”

Knights often offer their help through formal, organized efforts but also at a moment’s notice, stepping in to fill a void, support a concern, or fix a problem. The scope of this is profound and the degree of service is almost impossible to quantify. Moreover, the Knight’s far-reaching impact is quiet, subtle and generous. It’s discipleship.

“They will know we are Christians by our love,” Mike reasons recalling the lyrics of the song which aptly describe the call to discipleship.

The Knights have several commitments and functions very familiar to the parish community including fellowship breakfasts, youth sports competitions, and fundraisers like fireworks sales, pie sales, and festive gatherings such as the St. Patrick’s Day dinner. Their annual efforts at Christmas warm hearts via the Adopt-a-Family program which brings toys, gifts and hope to families on the threshold of despair.

But perhaps lesser known are all the occasions when disciples are dispatched to help with problems beyond someone’s means or ability. A broken-down vehicle, an overgrown yard, a burnt-out bulb. Mike says Knights might find themselves on somewhat of a “reconnaissance mission” uncovering root issues that can overwhelm.

The Knights also provide scholarships to students and offer financial support to various ministries when unexpected or unplanned expenses develop.

The Knights reach out in support of the larger community,

too, responding to Elk Grove Home Assistance Response Team (H.A.R.T.) requests for able-bodied helpers to physically move unhoused families into homes. Mike calls on members with trucks or trailers and the work begins.

Some Knights regularly support the Works of Mercy ministry helping to distribute meals to area homeless. “We leave them saying ‘God bless you,’” Mike says underscoring the vital time with “brothers and sisters” in need of outreach and prayer.

Mike emphasizes how prayer fuels the Knights’ work. While *Charity, Unity and Fraternity* represent the central tenets of the Knights’ activity, it is prayer that “helps us evangelize,” Mike explains. Their monthly Rosary Crusade (the second Tuesday of every month in the church) helps deepen members’ faith and maintains their direction.

Member Knights live their daily lives with service top-of-mind. “This is the fruit,” Mike affirms upholding a mission to “serve God through serving others.”

“All we can do is set up circumstances but it is God who changes hearts.”



From left to right: Nick Suarez, Ed Serafica, Father Diogo Baptista, Rich Thompson and Grand Knight, Mike Blakey



MADE ANEW
GOD MAKES ALL THINGS NEW
Rev. 22:1

Remember your confirmation? When you formally renewed your baptismal promises? When you were anointed with chrism and the bishop said, “Be sealed with the Gift of the Holy Spirit”?

Your “amen” reply followed. It is so. Spoken with conviction, *amen* conveys acceptance of the indelible spiritual mark—**YES to belong to Christ.**

More than 102 confirmandi have prepared for two years for this special “amen-moment.” Enrolled in [Good Shepherd’s One Eight confirmation preparation program](#) they’ve learned to recognize their unique gifts and share them through Christian service and love. They will be confirmed on June 18, 2022 beginning their lifelong journeys of missionary discipleship.

Confirmation stirs us as we witness spiritual strength and maturity come alive. It renews the spirit of discipleship among all Catholics who see themselves anew, ready to witness Christ with zeal.

BE SEALED WITH THE GIFT OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

Confirmation imparts grace for a lifetime of service, renewal



For **Melinda Avendano**, a senior at Cosumnes Oaks High School her enthusiasm never ceased after confirmation. Once she received her sacrament she signed up to serve on the *One Eight* Core Team and continues to guide and mentor students.

“It made me more involved in church,” Melinda says reflecting on what being sealed with the gift of the Holy Spirit meant to her. She tells her students that they should strive to “understand everything that is going on” at Mass and how it should feel “like you’re hanging out with friends.”

Melinda acknowledges it’s a lifetime effort and “you don’t grasp it all in a day.” But her enthusiasm for the “gradual process” is evident. She sees the gift of knowledge in herself, thankful for the ability to voice and share her faith with others.



Hector Marin, a senior at Franklin High School, describes the seal of the Holy Spirit as “having love within” and being able to share love with others.

Hector remembers “feeling a lot happier” and recognizing all the good that comes from God. He had a new sense of confidence and a desire to better himself to “live my best and fullest life.”

Hector enjoys helping at parish events like breakfasts, dinners and the festival. “I like to give a hand,” he says indicating a joyfulness in meeting people and serving.

“I think I am following Christ in the way I try to inspire and uplift people,” Hector explains stressing how kind compliments and steady emotions make a huge difference in imparting Christ’s message to love one another.

Confirmandi recently spent a Saturday in service to the homeless. In coordination with the Works of Mercy ministry, they baked cookies and prepared and distributed brown bag lunches and water to men and women living in encampments, experiencing the hardship of poverty. In their mission to serve the homeless, students were asked whether they encountered Christ.



Above: Students and parents master assembly line cookie-baking and sandwich-making in the parish center before loading their love into bins for distribution to the homeless. At left, Fr. Diego explains the importance of the students’ outreach.





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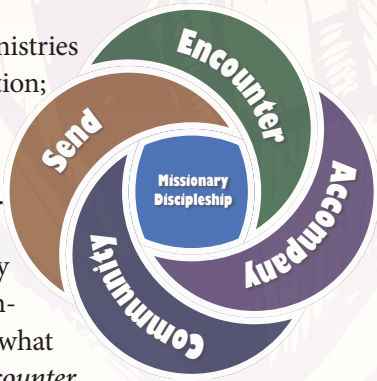
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Awaken TO MISSIONARY DISCIPLESHIP

To awaken to **missionary discipleship** means to recognize the perpetual activity of the Christian vocation... *to be alive in faith and keenly aware of one's identity as a child of God!*

The Paulist Evangelization Ministries talk about it in terms of invitation; furthering the invitation in one's own life and extending it to the yet "unreached" in faith.

The terminology of missionary discipleship offers broad brush-strokes. When contemplating what each word means to you – *Encounter, Accompany, Community, Send* – it becomes easier to see discipleship already in effect AND to explore new ways to reveal the essence of Catholic missionary discipleship in your life. The Paulist Fathers offer this checklist as a simple way to respond to the most worthy invitation ever received.



A Catholic Missionary Disciple's Checklist ☒

- ☐ Prayer (morning, throughout the day, evening)
- ☐ Reading of Scripture (daily, weekly)
- ☐ Involvement in worship
- ☐ Preparation for Mass (reflection, prayer)
- ☐ Extended time in prayer (meditation, lectio divina, adoration)
- ☐ Being attentive to family
- ☐ Involvement in my parish
- ☐ Celebration of the Sacrament of Reconciliation
- ☐ Small group sharing about faith
- ☐ Having prayer events at home
- ☐ Being a minister in the parish, serving as a volunteer beyond the parish
- ☐ Forming community in the parish
- ☐ Responding to the needs of neighbors and the neighborhood
- ☐ Assisting others with charitable giving
- ☐ Direct involvement with serving the sick, poor, needy
- ☐ Talking about faith with others
- ☐ Inviting people to consider becoming believers, to worship
- ☐ Inviting inactive Catholics to reconnect with the Church
- ☐ Involvement with diocesan projects

www.pemdc.org/programs/discipleship/catholic-discipleship-checklist