

Hoping the below will suffice. -- Theresa MM

On July 5-7, 2019, the Office of Diaconate Formation held a retreat for the 2020 and 2022 candidates of the Permanent Diaconate and their spouses. *Discipleship* was the theme of this 3-day long retreat which was held at Vallombrosa Center in Menlo Park, CA. The retreat offered time for prayer with one another, self-reflection among the beauty of the retreat grounds, and fellowship over delicious food. The weekend featured talks on Discipleship by Archbishop John Wester, former Bishop of the San Francisco Archdiocese and currently Archbishop of the Archdiocese of Santa Fe. His talks were thought-provoking, entertaining, and wonderfully delivered and relatable. During the stay, a panel discussion was held— featuring ordained deacons and their spouses. They openly answered any questions the candidates and spouses had. The candid panel enlightened us with practical advice and reassuring words. During one of his talks, Archbishop Wester said, “Prayer is nothing more than paying attention.” This retreat gave us all an opportunity to pay attention and to journey along that “distance between the mind and heart”.