



FROM THE DESK OF FATHER JONATHAN

SEPTEMBER 17, 2017

After the centennial celebration on September 2nd and Sunday masses on September 3rd, I was able to get away for a few days of rest and relaxation, something I had not been able to do earlier in the Summer because of our church construction projects. As much as I enjoyed the vacation, being away made me want to come back to Our Lady of Mt. Carmel even more! I missed seeing all of you and sharing my life with you.

Taking time away from our regular responsibilities and surroundings is a very healthy thing. It is a chance to charge our spiritual and physical batteries and to gain perspective on the challenges of ordinary life. I assure you I have new energy to do what God is asking of me.

I know that many of you are not able to take vacation away from our neighborhood. Many of us are on a restricted budget, working long hours with no paid leave, taking care of a sick relative, or are not physically well yourselves. Even in these cases, we have to find ways to take a break and there are many ways to do this. One family told me their employer doesn't allow them several days off in a row, so throughout the year they take day trips to different parts of NYC and beyond. Preparing food at home and using public transportation makes these day trips affordable. As simple as these day trips may be, the family told me this "vacation" makes a big difference. The mother joked that the kids don't know that some people go on vacation for more than one day.

This story reminded me of my own childhood. I know my parents raised seven children on a tight budget. But we never knew if we were poor or rich. We knew my dad worked very hard to provide us with what we needed, and that was enough! Our simple vacations were unforgettable, and looking back on them, I know my parents sacrificed greatly to make them happen.

I know retirees who also find ways to get out of our neighborhood every once in awhile and enjoy themselves. New York City is full of opportunities for affordable recreational and cultural activity, and many of them have senior rates.

Whether you are raising a family, single, or a retiree, it is easy to fall into the rut of our daily responsibilities and slowly burn ourselves out! Be creative and find ways to get the rest you need!

**God Bless,
Father Jonathan**

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