

# THE SOUTHERN CROSS

THE OFFICIAL NEWSPAPER OF THE DIOCESE OF SAN DIEGO

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DAVID MAUNG

**JOYFUL:** Everyone is invited to the traditional Simbang Gabi Mass on Dec. 14 at St. Michael Church in San Diego, which includes star-shaped lanterns illuminating the way to the birth of the Christ Child on Christmas.



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# THE SOUTHERN CROSS

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## DIOCESE OF SAN DIEGO

The Diocese of San Diego runs the length of California's border with Mexico and serves more than 1.3 million Catholics in San Diego and Imperial counties. It includes 96 parishes and 14 missions, 49 elementary and secondary schools, Catholic Charities and various social service and family support organizations throughout the region. It also includes five historic sites, the most well known of which is the Mission Basilica San Diego de Alcalá, the first mission established in California by St. Junipero Serra in 1769.

## MORE FOR YOU

This symbol indicates where readers may go online to obtain more information about the subject at hand, including additional photos, video and other content.



# Bishops Call for Tolerance

By Kevin Eckery



In an action meant to underscore the

serious danger posed by rising Islamophobia and anti-Semitism in California and around the world as a result of the war in Gaza, Cardinal Robert W. McElroy and two Christian bishops in the San Diego region issued a joint statement.

They urged people of all faiths in San Diego and Imperial counties to join together and acknowledge the “deep grief” being experienced by Muslims and Jews “in the escalating cycle of violence that is consuming the Holy Land.” And they reminded Christians that “Islamophobia and anti-Semitism are utterly incompatible with what it

means to be a Follower of Christ or what it means to be an American.”

Cardinal McElroy issued the statement on Nov. 8 along with San Diego Episcopal Bishop Susan Snook and Bishop David Nagler, of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of America.

“God weeps with us and all who suffer,” said the bishops.

The bishops acted because the effects of the war have not been limited to Gaza. The war has caused incidents of Islamophobic and anti-Semitic hate speech and violence to rise alarmingly around the world, including the United States.

A national report from the Anti-Defamation League cites a nearly 400-percent increase in anti-Semitic incidents since Hamas’ attack on Israel on Oct. 7. Similar reports reflect an almost doubling of Islamophobic incidents since the start of the war.

In Chicago, a 6-year-old Muslim boy was stabbed to death and his mother

was injured when they were attacked by their landlord in Chicago in what authorities called a hate crime.

In Southern California, an elderly Jewish man died at a protest rally after a clash with a counter-demonstrator in Ventura County.

The bishops closed their statement by calling “on all people of faith to stand with us and our Jewish and Muslim brothers and sisters to oppose hate, to console one another in their suffering, to protect and support the innocent, to listen to each other’s experiences, to pray for an end to violence in the Middle East, and to work for a just and lasting peace in the land that all three of our religious traditions cherish so deeply.”

The complete statement can be found below and online at [sdccatholic.org](http://sdccatholic.org), under “Communication and News.”



ADOBESTOCK

## ‘Twin Hatreds Have Been Awakened Again’

*Cardinal Robert W. McElroy, of the Catholic Diocese of San Diego; Rt. Rev. Susan Brown Snook, bishop of the Episcopal Diocese of San Diego; and Bishop David Nagler, of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of America, issued this statement on Nov. 8:*

As religious leaders in San Diego and Imperial counties, we have witnessed the beauty and the depth of the Jewish and Muslim communities and the faith which animates them. We profess in our own Christian faith the unity of the human family that has been created by God, equal in dignity. We are grateful for the many years of peaceful interfaith cooperation that religious leaders of all faiths have worked hard to foster in the San Diego area. Now, however, the conflict in the Holy Land threatens that deepening understanding between people of faith here at home. Islamophobia and anti-Semitism are utterly incompatible with what it means to be a follower of Christ or what it means to be an American.

We acknowledge and share the deep grief felt by Jewish and Muslim people at the escalating cycle of violence that is consuming the Holy Land. Indeed, we believe God weeps with us and all who suffer. The massacre of more than 1,300 Israelis by Hamas on Oct. 7 shocks our most fundamental sense of humanity and moral right. The escalating war being waged by Israel in Gaza has cost more than 10,000 lives, with no sign of ceasing in its destructiveness. We fear that a new generation of hatred is being born, which will cripple

any pathway for a just and lasting peace.

The twin hatreds of anti-Semitism and Islamophobia, so embedded in our history and so vicious in their virulence and poison, have now been awakened once again in our own land. A 6-year-old Muslim boy is murdered in Chicago because of his faith. An elderly Jewish man is killed at a protest in Thousand Oaks. Jewish students are harassed and threatened on university campuses, and every Jewish family knows firsthand a deepened fear of discrimination and violence that echoes past horrors. Increasingly, Muslims on campus and in society as a whole, are indiscriminately labeled as terrorists within American society. Even here in San Diego County, these hatreds are present and growing, with actions of hatred against Jewish and Muslim houses of worship and anti-Semitic and Islamophobic actions in schools. Children who witness such acts of hatred may grow up without a sense of the American and religious commitment to the human dignity and respect due to all people.

Here in the San Diego area, we call on all people of faith to stand with us and our Jewish and Muslim brothers and sisters to oppose hate, to console one another in their suffering, to protect and support the innocent, to listen to each other’s experiences, to pray for an end to violence in the Middle East, and to work for a just and lasting peace in the land that all three of our religious traditions cherish so deeply.



# Vatican Releases Report on Historic Synod

By Cindy Wooden



VATICAN CITY

— A report

summarizing

discussions at the assembly of the Synod of Bishops said the Church may need more welcoming pastoral approaches, especially to people who feel excluded, but also acknowledged fears of betraying traditional Church teachings and practices.

Among the topics addressed in the report were clerical sexual abuse, women's roles in the Church, outreach to the poor and the concept of "synodality" itself.

The assembly, with 364 voting members — 365 counting Pope Francis — met in working sessions six days a week Oct. 4 to 28 after a three-day retreat outside of Rome. Cardinal Robert W. McElroy, from the Diocese of San Diego, was one of them.

The assembly's discussions set the stage for a year-long period of reflection that will culminate in the second and final synod assembly in late 2024 on the same topic.

The 41-page synthesis report, voted on paragraph-by-paragraph Oct. 28, described its purpose as presenting "convergences, matters for consideration and proposals that emerged from the dialogue" on issues discussed under the headings of "synodality," "communion," "mission" and "participation."

Every item in the report was approved by at least two-thirds of the members present and voting, synod officials said. They published a complete list of the votes.

Within the synod topics, members looked at the role of women in the Church, including in decision-making, and at the possibility of ordaining women deacons. The report asked for more "theological and pastoral research on the access of women to the diaconate," including a review of the conclusions of commissions Pope Francis set up in 2016 and 2020.

The paragraph was approved 279-67, which was more than the needed two-thirds support but still garnered among the highest negative votes.

Among members of the assembly, the report said, some thought the idea of women deacons would be a break with tradition, while others insisted it would "restore the practice of the Early Church," including at the time of the New Testament, which mentions women deacons.

"Others still discern it as an appropriate and necessary response to the signs of the times, faithful to the Tradition, and one that would find an echo in the hearts of many who seek new energy and vitality in the Church," it said. But, the report added, some members thought that would "marry the Church to the spirit of the age."



**READY TO LISTEN:** Pope Francis prayed with participants in the assembly of the Synod of Bishops before making a rare speech to the gathering Oct. 25, 2023, in the Paul VI Audience Hall at the Vatican.

## Thousands Participate in Diocesan Synod Dialogues

Thousands of faithful at schools and parishes participated in synod dialogues across the Diocese of San Diego in October and early November. They shared their experiences with the Eucharist and ideas on how to build Eucharistic communities.

The schools and parishes submitted the information they collected at the dialogues to the diocese, which will spend the next two months analyzing it, assisted by two professors from the University of San Diego. Cardinal Robert W. McElroy plans to share the findings with the community in early 2024.

Pope Francis launched the global synod in the fall of 2021, calling on all faithful to participate. The goal is to encourage a Church culture of listening and participation, where all members of the community discern a path forward together.

The diocese has invited the faithful to participate in three synodal sessions. Parishes and schools held small-group sessions in the spring of 2022, the community took an online survey later that year, and this fall was invited to dialogues centered on the Eucharist.

### Information Online

Cardinal McElroy shares his experience of participating in the Synod of Bishops in Rome and Pope Francis' vision for a synodal Church.

[thesoutherncross.org/synodalchurch](https://thesoutherncross.org/synodalchurch)

**LATEST:** [sdcatholic.org/synod](https://sdcatholic.org/synod)

Assembly members also discussed pastoral approaches to welcoming and including in the life of parishes people who have felt excluded, including the poor, people with disabilities, LGBTQ+ Catholics and Catholics whose marriages are not recognized by the Church.

The synthesis report did not use the term "LGBTQ+" or even "homosexuality" and spoke only generally of issues related to "matters of identity and sexuality."

The synthesis said that "to develop authentic ecclesial discernment in these and other areas, it is necessary to approach these questions in the light of the Word of God and Church teaching, properly informed and reflected upon."

"In order to avoid repeating vacu-

ous formulas, we need to provide an opportunity for a dialogue involving the human and social sciences, as well as philosophical and theological reflection," it added.

The divergences in the assembly, it said, reflected opposing concerns: that "if we use doctrine harshly and with a judgmental attitude, we betray the Gospel; if we practice mercy 'on the cheap,' we do not convey God's love."

Still, it said, "in different ways, people who feel marginalized or excluded from the Church because of their marriage status, identity or sexuality, also ask to be heard and accompanied. There was a deep sense of love, mercy and compassion felt in the Assembly for those who are or feel hurt or neglected by the Church, who want a

place to call 'home' where they can feel safe, be heard and respected, without fear of feeling judged."

The report emphasized the "listening" that took place on the local, national and continental levels before the assembly and the "conversations in the Spirit" that took place during it, which involved each person speaking in his or her small group, silent reflection and then discussion.

In several places throughout the report, assembly members insisted that greater efforts must be made to listen to the survivors of clerical sexual abuse and those who have endured spiritual or psychological abuse.

The report also acknowledged fears, including that "the teaching of the Church will be changed, causing us to depart from the Apostolic faith of our forebears and, in doing so, betraying the expectations of those who hunger and thirst for God today."

In response, though, assembly members said, "We are confident that synodality is an expression of the dynamic and living Tradition."

"It is clear that some people are afraid that they will be forced to change; others fear that nothing at all will change or that there will be too little courage to move at the pace of the living Tradition," the report said.

Throughout the synod process, the report said, "many women expressed deep gratitude for the work of priests and bishops. They also spoke of a Church that wounds. Clericalism, a chauvinist mentality and inappropriate expressions of authority continue to scar the face of the Church and damage its communion."

"A profound spiritual conversion is needed as the foundation for any effective structural change," it said. "Sexual abuse and the abuse of power and authority continue to cry out for justice, healing and reconciliation."

Catholic News Service



## EMBRACE OF GOD'S LOVE

Message from  
Cardinal Robert W. McElroy

The beauty of God's gaze looked down upon the earth and graced us with the gift of Jesus, born in a manger, impoverished and homeless, but surrounded with love. It was the defining moment of human history, a sign that God's love for us is without any limitation whatever, for God was willing to enter fully into our human existence, to know the joys of our life and every form of human suffering, so that He might accompany us at every moment of our pilgrimage on this earth and unto eternity.

Jesus spoke with compassion to all those who were adrift and afraid. He unveiled the truest pathway to sustained happiness in this world in the Beatitudes. He showed his unwavering care for those who were in need of healing and consolation. He sought out all those who felt alienated and alone.

We stand in a moment in which wars rage all around us, when family life is under siege on many levels, when solidarity within our society is frayed and worn.

Yet still, and overwhelmingly, we Catholics are



called to be overwhelmingly people of hope. So many people misunderstand the meaning of Christian hope. It is not the belief that everything always comes out all right. No, that is mere optimism, not Christian hope.

Christian hope is the recognition that, in all of the challenges of our lives and our world, God finds a way to come to us and walk with us, to console us and lift us up, to truly help us become men and women of the Gospel whose joy is at the core of our souls, because we have been redeemed and already live in this world as citizens of heaven.

So, as we contemplate Jesus born in the manger this Christmas, as we see the beauty of these days reflected so powerfully in the eyes of children who most purely recognize the presence of God in our midst, let us remember profoundly that God chose us personally and irrevocably on this great feast of Christmas, and chooses us still, to embrace with divine love.



**STAR-MAKERS:** Parishioners created "parols" to be used for the bilingual Mass for the combined Simbang Gabi and Las Posadas celebration on Dec. 23 at Mission San Luis Rey Parish.



**TRADITION:** "Parols," star-shaped lanterns decorated with lights, are a part of the diocese's Simbang Gabi Mass, which will be held Dec. 14 at St. Michael Church in Paradise Hills.

# Tradition Lights Way to Birth of Christ

## The Southern Cross



Simbang Gabi is Filipino for "Night Masses"

and consists of a novena of Masses to honor the Blessed Mother as she prepares to give birth to the Christ Child.

In the Diocese of San Diego, these Masses are held in almost 20 parishes and are preceded by a diocesan vigil and commissioning Mass.

As always, all faithful are invited to this year's vigil, to be held at 6:30 p.m., Thursday, Dec. 14, at St. Michael Church in Paradise Hills. Cardinal Robert W. McElroy will celebrate the candlelit Mass with Auxiliary Bishops Ramón Bejarano, Michael Pham

and Felipe Pulido. The Mass will be preceded by a procession of colorful, star-shaped lanterns called "parols" and by a recitation of the rosary.

For Amor Figuración, a member of the local Filipino Catholic community, Simbang Gabi is an opportunity for "renewal" in the days just before Christmas.

"It's such a blessing because, basically, you're starting your holiday before the birth (of Jesus) at Christmas," he said, explaining that the commitment to attending Masses on nine consecutive nights is a way of "offering yourself for peace, love and hope."

Figuración, a parishioner of St. Mary Parish in National City, participated in Simbang Gabi in his native Philippines as a youth and, since moving to the United States about 30 years ago, has

continued to keep the tradition.

In 2019, he made the parol that represents the Filipino organization United Bicol of San Diego in the procession at the annual diocesan vigil for Simbang Gabi.

Measuring about 3 feet wide, it consists of a five-pointed star made of bamboo sticks with a covering composed of raffia and abacá fiber. There is a battery-operated strobe light inside the star, and Christmas lights adorn each of the five spikes, as well as the two "tails" that trail from it. The parol is adorned with the image of Our Lady of Peñafrancia and is held aloft with a wooden pole.

Figuración estimates that it took him about one week to construct the parol. In the past two years, he has added more lights to make it brighter.

"The parol ... signifies the symbol of the star that guided the Three Kings," he said.

Having carried that parol into the diocesan vigil from 2019 until last year, Figuración hopes to hand it off to a different family this year, so that the experience can be shared with others.

With the parol he constructed having served its purpose for five years, he would like to see another family construct a new parol for next year.

"By doing your own parol," he said, "you have that personal touch and commitment to the Lord."

See a schedule of the  
Simbang Gabi services  
at [sdcatholic.org/simbanggabi2023](http://sdcatholic.org/simbanggabi2023).





# Award Recognizes Dynamic Campus Ministry

By Denis Grasska

Jamie Cleaton, campus minister at the San Diego State University (SDSU) Newman Center, will receive the Fiat Award at the diocese's annual Young Adult Christmas Gala.

Some 240 young adults from across the San Diego Diocese will attend the sold-out event on Saturday, Dec. 9, at St. Gabriel Parish in Poway. It will include a catered dinner, drinks and dancing.

The Fiat Award is presented annually by the diocesan Office for Youth and Young Adult Ministry, which organizes the gala. The award recognizes a young adult who has served "diligently, prayerfully and with a servant's heart." Its name comes from the Virgin Mary's answer when asked to be the mother of Jesus (Luke 1:38); "Fiat" is Latin for "Let it be done."

"How is someone supposed to respond when they are given an award that is named after the response of the Blessed Mother, (when) they're given an award based off her perfect 'yes'?" Cleaton asked rhetorically, before sharing that he felt "humbled," "grateful" and "very blessed" to receive this recognition.

He expects that it will be "weird" to be standing on stage by himself, when the success of his ministry was made possible by many others, including his wife, Grace; their six children; Father Pedro Rivera, director of the SDSU Newman Center; the Office for Youth



**DAY IN THE LIFE:** Jamie Cleaton, right, and Father Pedro Rivera are seen with two of the more than 200 students who attended the SDSU Newman Center's fun-filled kick-off to the fall semester.

and Young Adult Ministry's staff; and the more than 30 SDSU students on the Newman Center's leadership team.

"My 'yes' doesn't stand alone. That's for sure," the 37-year-old said.

Cleaton grew up in the Ocean Beach area in what he described as "a very blessed Catholic household." He was homeschooled, and daily Mass was "a part of our curriculum."

As a fifth-grader, he attended a retreat that had a profound effect on him.

"I remember getting prayed over in this retreat, and I realized for the first time God didn't just exist, but He actually loved me and loved me personally," he said.

Cleaton "really started to fall in love with the Church" while attending a nondenominational high school,

where he had to research the answers when his Catholic beliefs were challenged by Protestant schoolmates.

Though the reality of the Eucharist kept him from being led away from the Church, he acknowledges the "very dynamic prayer and preaching" in Protestant churches.

"I really want to be a vessel to help bring a dynamic ministry like this to the (Catholic) Church, the home of the sacraments, the home of the fullness. And that's why I decided to go to college to study catechetics and theology and go into a life of ministry," said Cleaton, who graduated from Franciscan University of Steubenville in 2009.

After graduation, he served as a youth minister at St. Mark Parish in San Marcos and at Sacred Heart Parish in Ocean Beach.

For almost six years, Cleaton has guided campus ministry at SDSU. During that time, he has seen the university's Catholic community "explode."

He recalled how a one-day retreat held shortly after his arrival had attracted about 10 or 15 students, while a retreat this past spring drew about 140. Meanwhile, a "handful" of Bible studies has grown to more than 15, Sunday Mass attendance is so high that "we barely fit in our building," and 26 men from the Newman Center attended the diocese's recent Explorer Day to learn more about priestly life.

Maricruz Flores, director of the Office for Youth and Young Adult Min-

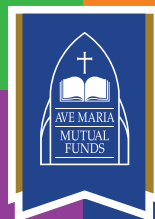
**Campus** Continued on Page 6

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# Student Wins National Award

By Denis Grasska



A Catholic school student from the Diocese of San

Diego is among the winners in the 2022-2023 Missionary Childhood Association (MCA) National Christmas Artwork Contest.

Gwen Renee Garcia Gutierrez, a freshman at the Academy of Our Lady of Peace, was an eighth-grader at Our Lady of Mt. Carmel School in San Ysidro when she created her submission titled "Goldfield Moments."



Gwen Renee Garcia Gutierrez



**HEAVENLY SCENE:** Local student Gwen Renee Garcia Gutierrez's artwork "Goldfield Moments" was among the winners in the Missionary Childhood Association National Christmas Artwork Contest.

mission lands through prayers, sacrifices and small monetary donations.

The MCA's artwork contest is open to children in kindergarten through eighth grade. Submissions from participating dioceses are sent to the New York-based national headquarters of the Pontifical Mission Societies in the United States.

Students from Our Lady of Mt. Carmel, Our Lady of Grace, St. Kieran, St. Mary Star of the Sea, St. Gregory the Great, Sacred Heart (Coronado) and Sacred Heart (Brawley) schools and one homeschooling program participated in the 2022-2023 contest.

"Their drawings reflect their artistic talent and their devotion to a gener-

ous God, who gave us His only Son to save us," said Sister Eva Rodriguez, a member of the Sister Servants of the Blessed Sacrament and diocesan director of MCA.

She added, "Almost every year, we have a student selected as a finalist in this contest, and that makes me very proud."

The 22 winning artworks will be displayed at the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception in Washington, D.C., for the Advent and Christmas seasons. The two grand-prize winners will see their artworks used for the national Pontifical Mission Societies' official Christmas card.

## Campus *Continued from Page 5*

istry, said, "He's really made a second home in the Newman Center for all of those who attend San Diego State."

But Cleaton isn't limiting himself to fostering Catholic community at SDSU.

Brilema Perez, associate director of the Office for Youth and Young Adult Ministry, said that Cleaton's ministry dovetails nicely with the approach her office has taken, which is to "build bridges between communities."

She said he is in the privileged position of being part of "plugging (college-age Catholics) into the San Diego young adult community once they graduate."

In June of last year, Cleaton founded a San Diego-based nonprofit named Paradigm Missions. He said its purpose involves creating "a dynamic college ministry," while also helping young Catholics to develop into "a good practicing parishioner" after graduation. He explained that the "off-ramp" from college ministry is "really an on-ramp into parish life."

The nonprofit reaches out to students in local community colleges.

"Those are our freshmen and sophomores," Cleaton said, explaining that many current community college students will transfer into SDSU as juniors.

Paradigm Missions has assisted the Catholic Club at Cal State San Marcos, he said. By next semester, there will be a Catholic Club at Mesa College and "hopefully" one at Palomar College.

"Just like Mary's Fiat was just the beginning, I also feel like this is just the beginning," he said.

He added, "The Lord's just begun in college ministry in San Diego and ... and I'm really excited for what's to come."

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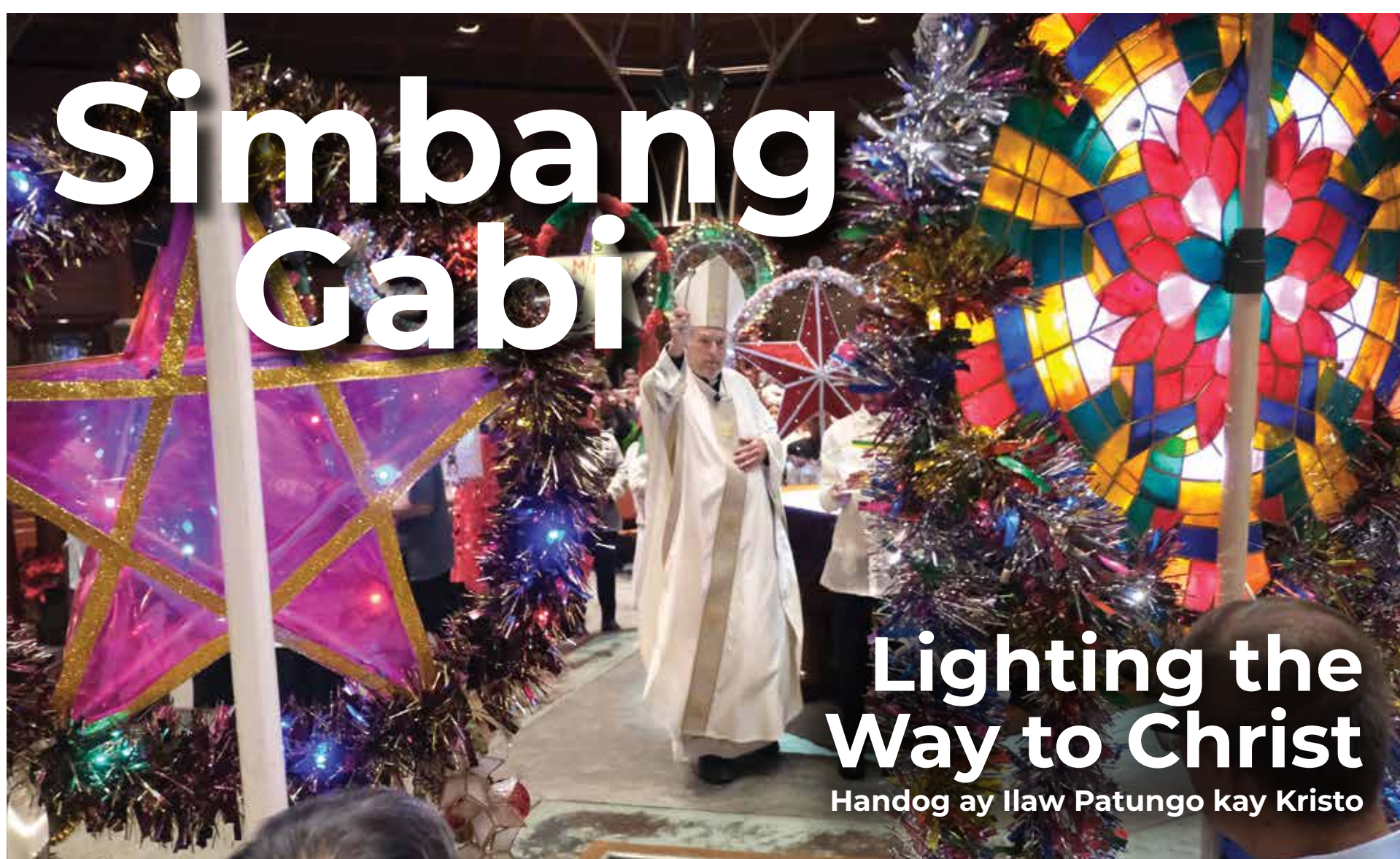
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**Dec. 14, 2023 • 6:30 p.m.**

**St. Michael Church  
2643 Homedale St., San Diego 92139**

**DIOCESAN VIGIL AND COMMISSIONING MASS**

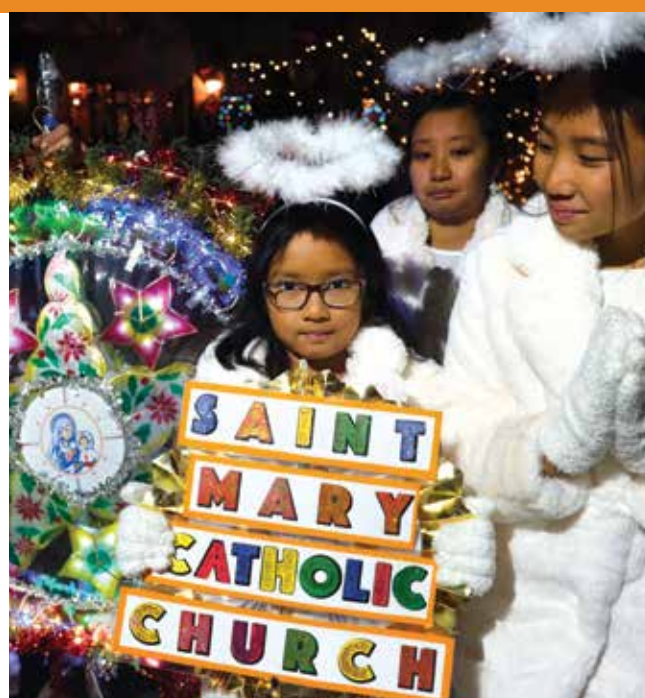
Cardinal Robert McElroy, main celebrant,  
with Auxiliary Bishops Bejarano, Pham and Pulido



**DIOCESE OF  
SAN DIEGO**

Everyone is invited to join the Filipino Catholic community for this beautiful celebration that lights the way to the birth of our Savior.

It's followed by Simbang Gabi services at parishes across the region.



**Schedule of Masses at [sdcatholic.org/simbanggabi2023](https://sdcatholic.org/simbanggabi2023)**



# 'Not Just Praying, but Working for Justice'

By Denis Grasska



A year ago, members of Our Lady of Guadalupe Parish raised their voices to oppose a project that would have diminished the already poor air quality in its Barrio Logan neighborhood. Two months later, the project was abandoned.

On the heels of that success, the parish has continued to welcome opportunities to put its faith into action through civic engagement. In doing so, it re-energized a tradition of social activism led years ago by its late pastor, Jesuit Father Richard Brown.

In late 2022, Mitsubishi Cement Corp. sought to build a warehouse at the 10th Avenue Marine Terminal, which would have dramatically increased diesel truck traffic in the area.

Around that same time, the parish was in the midst of a period of self-examination, after having recently welcomed a new leadership team.

"We, as a parish, were talking about how we could organize ourselves to put our faith into action ... and not just pray for justice, but really work for justice," the pastor, Jesuit Father Scott Santarosa, explained.

While the parish has had "a long history" with the San Diego Organizing Project (SDOP), an interfaith



**PRAYER VIGIL:** A parishioner of Our Lady of Guadalupe Parish participated in a vigil outside of the San Diego Port headquarters on Dec. 12, 2022.

organization focused on social justice, Father Santarosa said, "More recently, we have stepped up our game a little bit and been more visible in terms of putting our faith into action."

The parish's activism surrounding the proposed cement storage facility represented "a significant step in that direction," he said.

The Environmental Health Coalition had reached out to the parish, seeking allies in its campaign against the warehouse project.

Jesuit Father Brad Mills, a parochial

vicar of Our Lady of Guadalupe Parish, said that he had been surprised when presented with data showing that Barrio Logan had "some of the worst air quality in the country" and "some of the highest asthma rates."

Among longtime residents of the barrio, there is the feeling that the city sees the neighborhood as "a place where it's okay to pollute," he said, noting that lower-income areas with high percentages of racial minorities often seem to have disproportionately high levels of pollution.

"None of us are against cement; none of us are against industry," said Father Mills. "We all benefit from that, to one extent or another. The question is: What communities bear the brunt of that?"

After Sunday Masses on Nov. 27, 2022, more than 500 parishioners signed letters opposing the warehouse project then being considered by the Board of Port Commissioners. The signature-gathering effort was led by A Faith That Does Justice, a parish organization that encourages parishioners "to live out the Gospel and put their faith into action through acts of social justice."

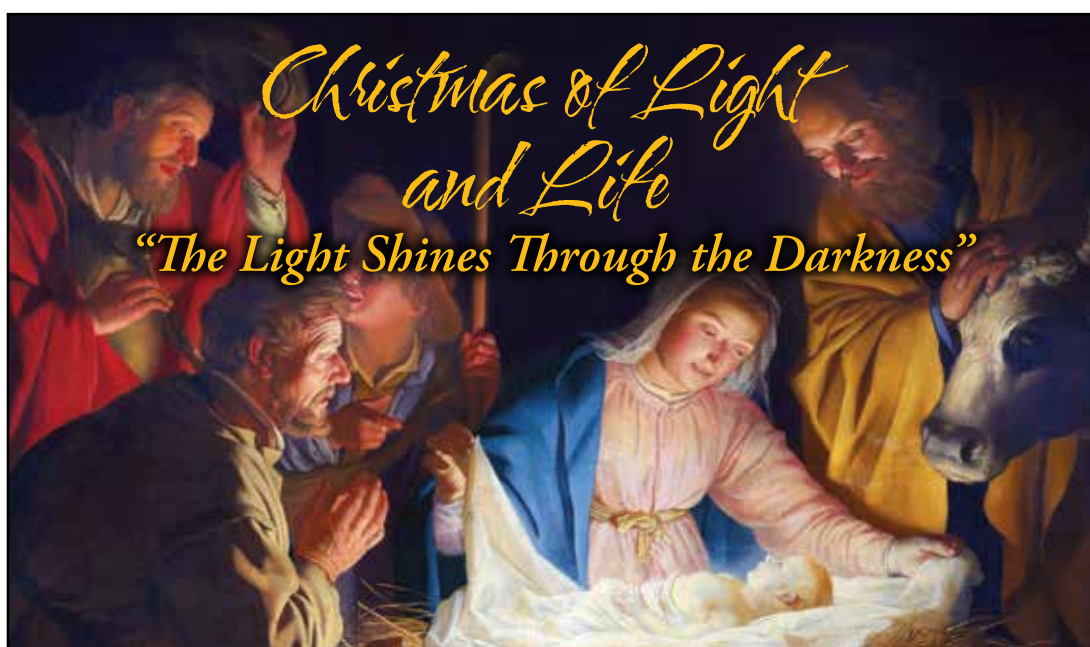
Father Santarosa said that about 100 parishioners gathered "on a cold Dec. 12," the Feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe, for a prayer vigil at the Port of San Diego. The evening event included songs, recitation of the rosary, and testimonies.

Both Fathers Santarosa and Mills underscored that the event was a prayer vigil, not a protest.

Father Santarosa said, "I think our unique role in that moment was bringing a faith community's voice and prayer to a concrete issue." (No pun intended.)

Father Mills noted that parishioners' opposition to the warehouse was "rooted in prayer" and that they "drew on their faith as a source of strength"

**Justice** Continued on Page 9



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**Father Anthony Saroki**

KEYNOTE SPEAKER

Pastor, Our Lady of Mt. Carmel, San Diego



**Father Chris Tozzi**

HOST of Light and Life

Pastor, St. Thérèse of Carmel



**Stephen Beuerle**

WEIHNACHTSMANN-BABBO NATALE KNIGHT

Co-Founder, Light and Life



**Pierre Charnasson**

Christmas of Light and Life Benefit

AUCTIONEER



**SK Gary Hayes**

Christmas of Light and Life MASTER OF CEREMONIES

President, Knights of Columbus San Diego Chapter 2023-24

Celebration of Holy Mass	4:30 PM	PRC Partner Updates	7:00 PM
Registration/Social Hour	5:30 PM	Keynote Presentation	
Dinner and Silent Auction	6:00 PM	and Appeal	7:15 PM
Live Auction	6:30 PM	Closing Prayer	8:00 PM

**Tickets: \$80 • Early Bird Table for 8: \$600 (by Dec. 2, 2023)**



Justice *Continued from Page 8*

in their call for “a more just world.”

The day after the prayer vigil, about 60 to 70 people attended the port commissioners’ meeting, where they presented the signed letters of opposition. Though the board had been scheduled to vote on the proposal during that session, the vote was postponed.

Father Santarosa said that, at the invitation of Rafael Castellanos, chairman of the Board of Port Commissioners, the parish hosted a community forum on Jan. 18. Mitsubishi Cement Corp., the Environmental Health Coalition and other key players were able to share their perspectives on the warehouse project and address community concerns.

It was announced in early February that Mitsubishi Cement Corp. had abandoned the plan to build a storage facility at the Port of San Diego.

Father Mills acknowledged that “a variety of factors” led to that decision.

But, he said, “I would imagine that the pressure which the parish put on it perhaps played some role. I trust it did.”

Marta Flores, a longtime member of the parish, said it was “an honor and a privilege” to be asked to serve as emcee for the Dec. 12 prayer vigil.

Flores, 72, said her faith has been “grounded in social justice” since her youth. Reflecting on the successful campaign against the warehouse, she said, “I am very grateful to God for that experience.”

“This was our time,” she said, “and our community rose to the occasion with great faith, and love, and joy.”



**SPEAKING UP:** Father Scott Santarosa, pastor of Our Lady of Guadalupe Parish, led a vigil outside of the San Diego Port headquarters to pray for port commissioners to consider the health of Barrio Logan residents in their decision to approve a storage facility. Two months later, the project was dropped.

Ashley Valentin Gonzalez, a recent college graduate, was among those who gave testimony during the prayer vigil.

“It’s an experience that is very beautiful and ... it really shows the power of what community is,” she said.

Since the issue of the cement warehouse was settled, Our Lady of Guadalupe Parish has found other ways to bring prayerful witness into the public policy arena.

On May 7, the parish held another prayer vigil, this time outside the Edward J. Schwartz Federal Building in downtown San Diego, which is home to the San Diego Immigration Court. The event, an expression of solidarity with asylum-seekers, coincided with the expiration of Title 42, the emer-

gency health authority that placed additional restrictions on immigration to slow the spread of COVID-19.

On Aug. 6, the parish had a Eucharistic procession to and from nearby Christ the King Parish, when California State Assemblyman David Alvarez spoke there about the Homelessness Prevention Act (SB 567).

Reflecting on his parish’s recent examples of civic engagement, Father Santarosa said that it’s “not enough to just pray inside of our beautiful church.”

“We, people of faith, really do have power and an obligation or a responsibility to use it. ... I hope we always will step up to the plate and do our part in making God’s world what He wants for us.”

For Father Mills, the parish’s recent experiences illustrate that, if faith communities are invited “to take a stand” about important issues of life and justice, many people will “respond quite beautifully.”

He said, “I think that there is a willingness and a desire in people to put their faith into action.”

Decades ago, Father Brown led another generation inspired by their faith to act. He organized parishioners to advocate for social justice for their community on issues such as public safety, recreational facilities and housing. They held neighborhood rallies and appeared before public agencies such as the San Diego City Council.

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## Dear Friends and Family of Catholic Charities:

As the warmth of the holiday season envelops our hearts, we wish to share with you stories that resonate with the deepest of emotions, stories filled with hope. Week after week, through our website, emails, and social media, we shall unveil new stories that will continue to inspire well into the new year. Hope, as we know, is the flame that fuels our yearning, the fervent desire for a brighter tomorrow, a truer reality. It is a sentiment we all hold dear, one that extends to those we serve through all our programs.

With every story you read, we ask you to become the pillars of hope in our shared mission to aid the less fortunate members of our community, those who desperately require our assistance in their most trying moments.

Catholic Charities is an embodiment of hope, a haven for the strangers in our midst. Through these stories, you will see how our participants place their trust in our services, how they find solace, and, most importantly, hope for their future. Will you, in your own life's journey, embody the essence of hope and intention?

Let us introduce you to Renae, a tireless go-getter known for her unwavering determination. A sudden injury during her time working at a real estate agency sent her life spiraling out of control, and at the age of 60, she found herself without a home. Catholic Charities' Rachel's Women's Center extended its hand, offering her the resources needed for a safe haven, recovery, and the first steps towards healing.

Then there is Mario, a victim of identity theft, where his sole source of income was cruelly stolen from him. Stripped of his SSI, he faced the daunting challenge of affording rent, groceries, and even basic essentials. He turned to the Day Center in Imperial County, where we rallied to help him reinstate his identity, regain his financial footing, and secure housing. Today, he's become a beacon of hope, sharing our mission and the resources available for those in need at our Day Center.

This holiday season, we embark on a journey through these remarkable stories, one by one, tales of hope and inspiration, where participants battled barriers that threatened their very existence. Each of them arrived at our doorstep with a flicker of hope, and we, in turn, employed every resource, and every ounce of our dedication to support, aid, and equip them with invaluable tools. We do this for anyone who reaches out to us, for it is our unwavering mission, the force that drives us daily.

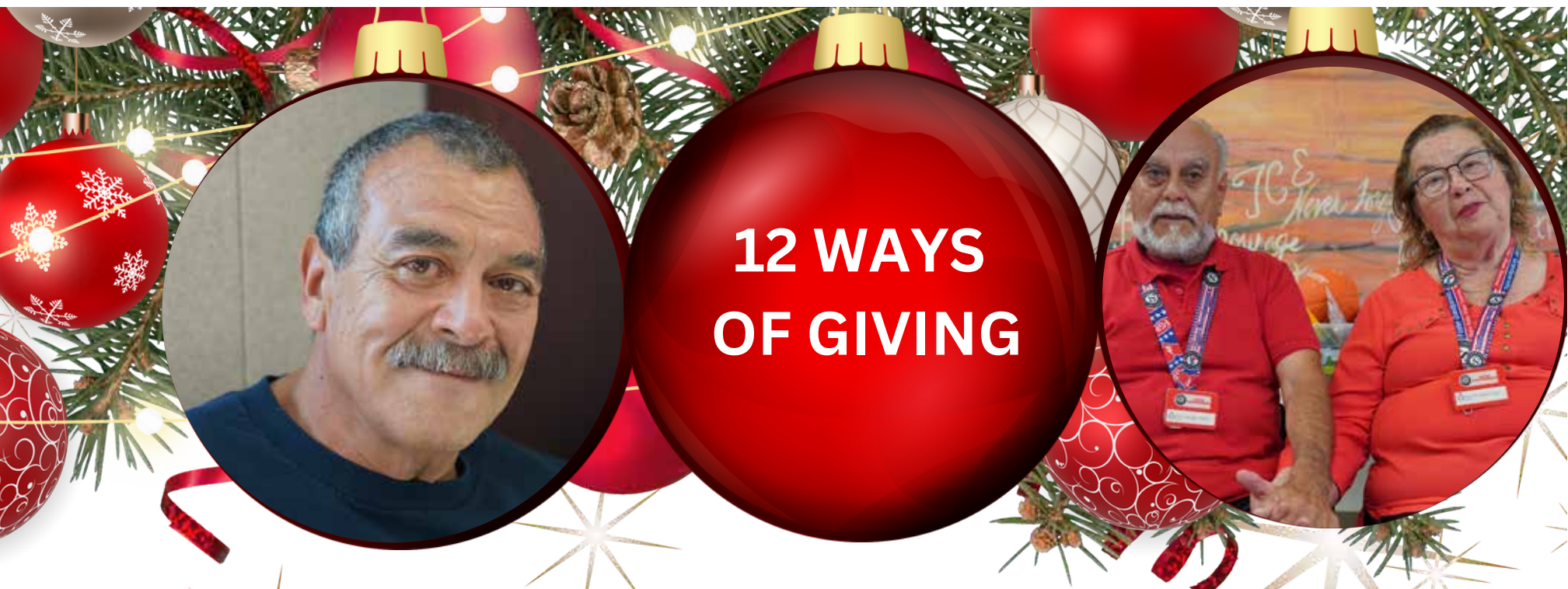
Life tests us all with its trials, tribulations, formidable barriers, and heart-wrenching decisions. Our participants, like you and me, navigate their own unique journeys, holding onto faith and hope, yearning for a glimmer of assistance.

This holiday season, we implore you to join us in nurturing the flame of hope across all our programs, for all the souls who turn to us at their most vulnerable hour. Your contributions hold the power to illuminate the path of hope for so many. All contributions made to Catholic Charities are critical in sustaining our services, and 100% of what is donated goes toward programs and services for the most vulnerable. We invite you to make a difference today, either by using the pre-paid enclosed envelope or visiting [www.ccdsd.org/donatenow](http://www.ccdsd.org/donatenow).

With profound gratitude and unwavering hope,

Appaswamy "Vino" Pajanor  
Chief Executive Officer





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By Denis Grasska



Father Pat Murphy is the senior associate pastor of St. Gabriel Parish in Poway. In that role, he is able to focus on what he loves best: spiritual direction.

As a confessor and spiritual director, he draws from firsthand experience of being mired in sin and healed through God's grace. Before a dramatic conversion, he spent more than 15 years away from the Church and in the throes of alcoholism.

**Question: How did you fall away from the Church?**

**Answer:** I always considered myself Catholic, but at 17, I got involved with drinking, partying and girls. In my mind, I couldn't engage in the faith anymore because I wasn't living a life that was conducive to being in God's presence.

From 22 to 32, I made a living as a bartender. Bartending put me through

**Senior Associate Pastor,  
St. Gabriel Parish**

**Father Pat Murphy**



college, but also got me into some trouble. I once spent 10 days in jail for drunk driving.

After four years in Laughlin, Nevada, where I was working in casinos, I moved across the river to Bullhead City, Arizona. I got fired and ended up living on the streets for about eight months. I either stole or begged for whatever I ate.

On my birthday in 1988, I reached out to my parents for the first time in years. I moved in with them, but I couldn't get a job; I was unemployable because I was drinking a gallon of vodka a day. I even stole from my parents.

On Jan. 13, 1990, my dad gave me an ultimatum: Get help, or be gone by the time he got home. That day, I prayed the most honest prayer of my

life: "God, help me." Six hours later, I was in detox.

**How did you find your way back to the Church?**

The other three guys in detox had grand mal seizures. I was terrified that was going to happen to me, too. Over and over, I prayed, "God, help me." All of a sudden, I had this intense experience of love — I knew it was God — and I fell peacefully asleep.

I had another profound experience two weeks later, when I went to confession at St. Mary Church in Escondido. I had been away from the Church for 16 years, and it was hard to walk through that door. I thought the priest was going to yell at me, but he said, "Welcome home! The Lord's been waiting for you."

After finishing my penance, I had an experience of Jesus holding me. It was as real as you are. For the next six months, I went to Mass every morning before my addiction-recovery meetings.

**How did you first recognize a call to the priesthood?**

Part of the recovery process is giving God permission to come into your life the way that He wants to come in your life. "Your will be done, without conditions."

When the idea of priesthood starting popping into my head, I ignored it for about two months. But one day, while praying in front of the Blessed Sacrament, I saw a piece of yellow paper that turned out to be a novena to the Sacred Heart of Jesus. I prayed it for nine days, asking God to tell me if He wanted me to be a priest. At the end of nine days, there were no apparitions and no voices, so I figured that was my no.

But, that evening, just outside the recovery home, I greeted one of my fellow residents. He said, "How's it going, Father Murphy?" I asked why he called me that. He replied, "Oh, you're always talking about God. You might as well just become a priest." All the

**Murphy** *Continued on Page 13*



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**Murphy** *Continued from Page 12*

hairs on my arms and neck went up.

**What happened next?**

The priesthood thing wouldn't go away. About six months later, I told my mom, "I know this is kind of weird, but I think maybe the Lord is calling me to be a priest." I thought she would burst out laughing, but she said, "Pat, I've always seen that."

Not long afterward, I met with the diocesan vocations director. I laid out my whole story and figured he was going to say, "Don't let the door hit you in the rear end. Thanks for stopping by, but you're not a good candidate." I was looking for a no, but he wouldn't give me that no. Instead, he encouraged me to continue my discernment.

In late summer of 1991, I was officially accepted into the diocese's priestly formation program. Since I was praying that the Lord's will would be done in my life, without conditions, I figured that I had to keep walking through these doors until the doors closed. Of the eight guys in my seminary class, I was the only one to be ordained.

**What's your message to those who are holding back from going to confession?**

Everything's forgivable. Trust in God's love; that's greater than any sin. Go to confession, and you can really have a new start. Although the central focus of our faith is the Eucharist, one experience of reconciliation in the right time, at the right place, can change your life dramatically.

# Plan Targets Pregnancy Centers

By Denis Grasska



San Diego County Supervisor Terra Lawson-Remer

has made it clear how she feels about crisis pregnancy centers.

In an agenda item introduced at the board's Nov. 7 meeting, she labeled these nonprofit pro-life organizations "notorious" and "fake," accusing them of "unethical practices" and "deceptive methods."

Around 15 crisis pregnancy centers encourage women in San Diego and Imperial counties to choose life for their unborn children and provide them with the resources to do so. They offer a variety of services, both during and after pregnancy. These include free ultrasounds and baby items, as well as prenatal care, parenting classes, adoption referrals, job-skills training, Natural Family Planning classes, referrals for a safe place to live, and support groups at no cost.

Board Vice Chair Lawson-Remer's proposal calls for the county to explore taking legal action against the centers, "including but not limited to shutting down such centers"; to launch a public education campaign to challenge their claims and promote the availability of resources that include abortion; and seek funding to raise awareness about "reproductive health services."

The board deadlocked at 2-2 on her proposal. Joining her as a "yes" vote was Chairwoman Nora Vargas, a former executive of Planned Parent-



**LIFE-AFFIRMING:** Pregnancy centers offer a variety of services for women, encouraging them to choose life for their unborn babies. Some hold events like baby showers to support the entire family.

hood. Supervisors Joel Anderson and Jim Desmond voted "no."

Until the deadlock is broken, the proposal will be brought up for a vote at each meeting of the Board of Supervisors, unless Lawson-Remer requests its removal from the agenda.

By Dec. 5, the date of the next meeting, newly elected Supervisor Monica Montgomery Steppe will be able to break the tie. She has expressed support for legal abortion.

Maria Valencia, who serves in the diocese as associate director of Culture of Life, said that these centers have been "persecuted" since the U.S. Supreme Court's ruling last year effectively overturned *Roe v. Wade*, which guaranteed a constitutional right to an abortion.

In California, voters approved an expansion of the right to obtain an abortion, which remains legal and widely available.

Pregnancy centers "just want to offer the other option that Planned Par-

enthood ... doesn't offer, and (that) is to support moms and encourage them to have their babies," she said.

Valencia said that the centers "think they can win" on this issue, but having to litigate it would be expensive.

"As a diocese, definitely, we support the pregnancy centers," she said, "because their mission of promoting human life and supporting families with valuable education is aligned with the diocese's mission."

**The Diocese asks Catholics to make their voices heard by attending the next board meeting at which the proposal will be discussed or by contacting their county supervisors via phone or email, and to pray that the pregnancy centers will be able to continue their work.**

**More information:**  
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# Pope to Attend Climate Summit

By Christina Bagaglio Slentz



From Nov. 30 through Dec. 12, representatives from almost every country on the planet will assemble in Dubai for COP28, and Pope Francis will be there to address the participants on Dec. 2. What exactly is a COP, and why is the pope attending?

The acronym stands for “Conference of the Parties,” a United Nations process of gathering to address issues of significant concern in need of international cooperation. COP28 is the 28th meeting of the 198 nation-states that are parties to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change, a collaboration aimed at stabilizing greenhouse gas emissions in the interest of human safety and protecting the Earth’s natural systems. The first COP was held in Germany in 1995, and the parties have met annually almost every year since then.

## Why Is the Pope Participating?

If you have become familiar with Pope Francis’ call to care for our common home, as reflected in his 2015 encyclical “Laudato Si” and his 2023 exhortation “Laudate Deum,” you won’t be surprised that the pontiff is attending COP28, as their goals largely align.



Laudate Deum

In “Laudato Si,” Pope Francis loudly laments the cry of the earth and the cry of the poor, born of excessively consumptive human behavior and a worldwide addiction to the use of fossil fuels — the focus of the COP. In particular, the pope draws attention to the fact that it is the poorest and most vulnerable who have been affected most immediately and most intensely by climate change, though they are the least responsible for the emissions that have given rise to it. Out of love for these brothers and sisters around the world, the pope reminds us of our responsibility to care for creation, one of the seven principles of Catholic Social Teaching defined by Pope Leo XIII’s encyclical “Rerum Novarum,” way back in 1891!

“Laudate Deum,” released this Oct. 4, sharply criticizes the lack of leadership demonstrated by those in the strongest position to take action. “To the powerful, I can only repeat this question,” the pope poses, “What would induce anyone, at this stage, to hold on to power, only to be remembered for their inability to take action when it was urgent and necessary to do so?”

Pope Francis includes an entire section in the exhortation entitled, “What to Expect from COP28 in Dubai.” He begins with cautious optimism, writing “This Conference can represent a change of direction, showing that everything done since 1992 was in fact serious and worth the effort, or else it will be a great disappointment and jeopardize whatever good has been achieved thus far.” He closes the section urging those taking part in the COP to consider “the common good and the future of their children more than the short-term interests of certain countries or businesses.”

## What Are the Key Issues?

By attending in person, Pope Francis will be able to reiterate his pleas directly to the country representatives who hold the power to vote. Specific items on the table include:

- **The Global Stocktake** — the assessment mechanism to measure countries’ emissions reductions as pledged during the 2015 COP in Paris, known as the Paris Climate Agreement, attempting to keep global warming at less than 1.5 degrees Celsius (2.7 degrees of change in Fahrenheit), a goal the pope has described as a moral imperative.
- **Mitigation** — emissions reductions, which Pope Francis argues must demonstrate substantial change and not simply the appearance of being concerned.
- **Climate Finance** — efforts in this realm include the phasing out of subsidies to the fossil fuel industry, achieving a just energy transition to renewables, and rectifying the “ecological debt” owed by wealthier countries responsible for long histories of significant carbon emissions production.

- **Loss and Damage** — recognizing the grossly uneven levels of losses and impacts felt especially in the Global South as a result of climate change.
- **Adaptation** — countries are encouraged to develop adaptation plans as impacts will be felt before the climate crisis can be fully reversed.

## Bottom Line

According to the World Health Organization, climate change is expected to cause approximately 250,000 additional deaths per year, due to undernutrition, malaria, diarrhea and heat stress in the next two to three decades. As



we are called to love our neighbors, we, as Catholics, must recognize the gravity of this catastrophe and press our country to take the lead in taking action. Equally important, we must take action ourselves in our own homes and parishes. If you are ready to do more, scan the QR to be part of the SDCatholic Creation Care Ministry or go to <https://bit.ly/JoinSDCathCreationCare>. We will keep you abreast of our events and opportunities to learn more.



## Eco-friendly Christmas Activities

Visit our page for activities you and your family can do to incorporate earth-friendly practices during your holiday season.

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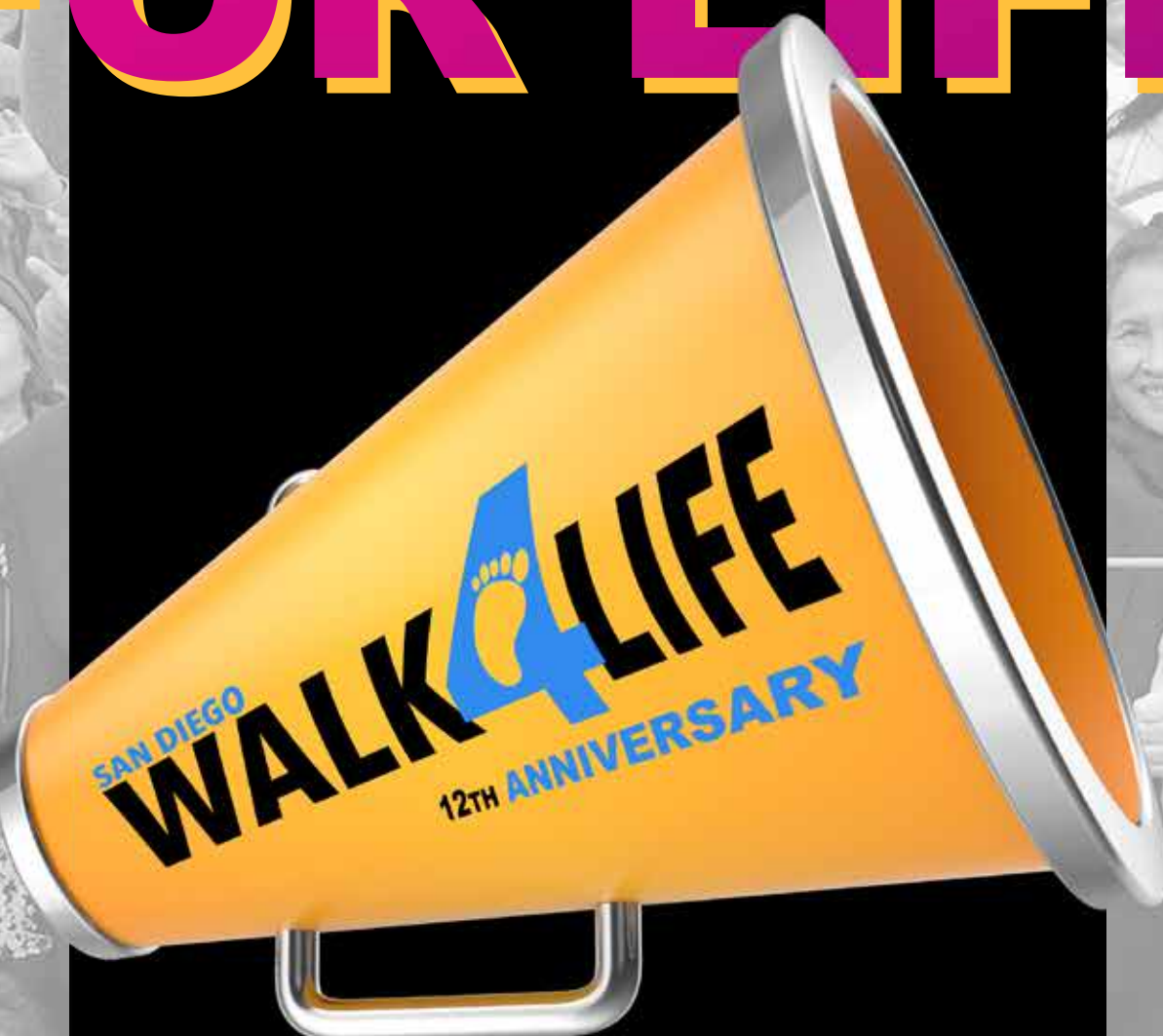
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News of bombings,  
conflicting  
interpretations

of what happened;  
commentaries that favor  
one group over another;  
growing suspicions, doubts,  
contradictions.

It all contributes to stoking anxiety,  
depression and violence. That is why  
we are beginning to be more aware of  
mental illness, of our own emotional  
instability.

Our humanity already has endured  
times of hate, destruction and war.  
Bloody struggles motivated by reli-  
gious beliefs, of my God against yours;  
fratricidal wars over politics, territory,  
and exploitation of natural resources.  
Faced with these realities, how should  
we react?

Our brain, which processes all of  
this information and stimuli, has var-  
ious systems to respond. These are  
highly sophisticated and complex  
neurochemical and physiological  
processes that help us to understand  
the immense potential we have to live

#### Columnist

**Ricardo  
Márquez**



more consciously as human beings.

If we compare the human brain  
with a symphony orchestra, with  
diverse instruments and sounds, all  
follow the same sheet music, all con-  
tribute, with their differences, to cre-  
ate the music that is life. The director  
of this cerebral symphony orchestra  
is each one of us. A good orchestra  
director knows how to harmonize  
and make the most of the orchestra's  
resources, pulling the best each one  
offers. That is what we're called to do  
to live in good physical, mental and  
spiritual health.

Three sections make up this ce-  
rebral symphony: intellectual, emo-  
tional and behavioral. All of them are  
interrelated. Within the intellectual  
area, we can pick from two functions:  
analyze and/or appreciate. Here we  
can choose to focus on the details,  
what's missing, what doesn't work,

criticisms ... or, look for what is pos-  
sible, appreciate the qualities of what  
exists, imagine or dream something  
different. Some functions are going to  
"contract" us, while others are going  
to "expand" us. The director decides  
what to use to create his own music.

The decisions in the intellectual  
section affect what occurs in the emo-  
tional one. Excessive analysis, and the  
focus on what is lacking, can produce  
the contraction of the emotional sys-  
tem and generate anxiety, sadness  
and depression. The appreciative use  
of intellectual capacity offers hope  
and inspiration to the emotional sys-  
tem, expanding it, opening the heart  
to acceptance and love. The orchestra  
director, that is each of us, decides  
what nourishes or depresses our emo-  
tional system.

The behavioral section has to do  
with our responses of "fight," "flee" or  
"freeze." The values we have learned  
in our families and in society are  
present here: customs, traditions,  
beliefs and rhythms. If we lived in an  
environment where the value was to  
avoid conflict, we would flee; if we had  
experience in facing and resolving

problems, we would fight. Our values  
and beliefs guide our actions and be-  
haviors; that's why having an under-  
standing of our personal, cultural and  
family history is so important in this  
section of our brain.

This is just a prelude of all the poten-  
tial of what we are and can develop to  
have a full life, abundant and healthy.  
The results are not just the fruit of  
personal effort. We need people to  
help us, guides, friends, communities,  
to support each other — especially, in  
these times.

We all carry the voice of the Director  
within us. We can nourish it with the  
message of the Good News that invites  
us to see beyond the limits of a dark  
reality, where death does not have the  
final word. The interior voice is our  
Teacher, who we hear in the quietness  
of prayer, who offers us His presence  
and unconditional love, a love that  
allows us to accept ourselves, to heal  
our wounds and to serve; it's the voice  
that whispers to us: "Rise and go, you  
are My beloved son."

*Ricardo Márquez can be reached at  
marquez\_muskus@yahoo.com.*



## Office for Evangelization and Catechetical Ministry

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**JANUARY 20, 2024**

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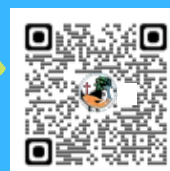
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A day of reflection for catechists

"Let us bear this in mind: God is hidden in our life, he is always there – he is concealed in the commonest and most ordinary situations in our life. He does not come in extraordinary events, but in everyday things; he manifests himself in everyday things. He is there, in our daily work, in a chance encounter, in the face of someone in need, even when we face days that seem grey and monotonous, it is right there that we find the Lord, who calls to us, speaks to us and inspires our actions."

-Pope Francis (Angelus on November 27, 2022)

*Scan to register!*



For more information contact Terry Campa (858) 490-8232



# News Briefs

## Ordination Mass to Transitional Diaconate on Dec. 2

Cardinal Robert W. McElroy will ordain Sean Embury to the transitional diaconate.

The ordination liturgy will be celebrated at 10 a.m., Saturday, Dec. 2, at The Immaculata Church, 5998 Alcalá Park, on the campus of the University of San Diego. The Mass will be live-streamed through [sdcatholic.org](http://sdcatholic.org).

Ordination to the transitional diaconate marks the last major step on the path to priesthood. During the Mass, the seminarian will promise to lead a life of prayer, celibacy, and obedience to his diocesan bishop.

## St. Michael's Staging 'Lion King'

POWAY — St. Michael School's Theater Department will present "The Lion King, Jr.," on Saturday, Dec. 9, and Sunday, Dec. 10.

The production is a version of Disney's stage musical adapted for younger performers. The musical itself is based on the blockbuster 1994 animated film.

Showtimes will be 2 and 7 p.m. on Saturday and 1 and 6 p.m. on Sunday, all in the parish's Holy Family Center, located at 15410 Pomerado Road, Poway 92064.

More than 75 students in kindergarten through eighth grade have been rehearsing for three months. Students are involved in every aspect of the production.

Purchase tickets at [showtix4u.com/event-details/78720](http://showtix4u.com/event-details/78720). For more

information, email [beth.entwistle@smspoway.org](mailto:beth.entwistle@smspoway.org).

## Make Christmas Merry for Foreign Sailors

Father Jim Boyd, chaplain for the Stella Maris Seafarer's Center, is asking for help providing Christmas gifts to the foreign sailors who will stop in San Diego during the holiday season.

He is requesting Christmas-wrapped shoeboxes of toiletries, including toothbrushes, toothpaste, dental floss, deodorant, combs, razors and shaving cream.

The shoeboxes can be dropped off between 1 and 4 p.m., Saturday, Dec. 16, at 1760 Water St., San Diego 92101, just inside the gate at the end of Cesar Chavez Parkway.

Father Boyd expects that at least 10 merchant ships, each with a crew of between 20 to 25, will arrive at the Port of San Diego during the Christmas season. The Christmas presents will be for all crew members, Catholic and non-Catholic alike. More information: Father Boyd at (858) 292-1822.

## Local Pilgrimage Set for Advent

The fifth annual Augustinian Advent Pilgrimage, a partnership between the Province of St. Augustine in California and Modern Catholic Pilgrim, will take place from 10 a.m. to 12:30 p.m., Saturday, Dec. 16.

Enter more fully into the Advent season by taking a family-friendly pilgrimage with the Augustinians of St. Patrick's Parish and St. Augustine

Monastery in North Park.

Participants will gather at St. Patrick's at 10 a.m. for the opening prayer service, then depart on a pilgrimage to the St. Augustine Monastery Chapel, where one of the friars will share a brief Advent reflection. Then, participants will walk back to St. Patrick's and end the day with lunch in the parish hall.

The pilgrimage is free and open to the public. The round-trip walking distance is less than 3 miles, and all ages are welcome. For more information and to sign up, visit [moderncatholicpilgrim.com](http://moderncatholicpilgrim.com).

## Catholics Can 'Encounter' Jesus in Rancho Peñasquitos

Encounter, a Spirit-filled evening of inspiring music, prayer, Eucharistic adoration, a healing service and reconciliation, is held on the second Friday of each month at Our Lady of Mt. Carmel Parish in Rancho Peñasquitos.

Sponsored by the parish's Hearts of Fire Ministry, the event runs from 7 to 8 p.m. The next date is Dec. 8.

For more information, contact the Hearts of Fire Ministry at [olmcheartsoffire@gmail.com](mailto:olmcheartsoffire@gmail.com).

## Men Invited to Join 'Rosary Crusade'

The Men's Rosary Crusade gathers at 9 a.m., every first Saturday of the month, at the corner of 6th & Laurel in Balboa Park. All men are welcome.

The rosary intentions are for reparation to the Immaculate Heart of Mary, for the conversion of America, for families and for the unborn.

For more information, contact David at [draguez@sbcglobal.net](mailto:draguez@sbcglobal.net) or (619) 920-8363.

## OBITUARIES

**FALLBROOK** — Father Jerome (Jerry) Nadine, who spent his retirement years in the Diocese of San Diego, died Sept. 30. He was 90.

Born in Scranton, Pa., he was ordained in 1958 for the Diocese of Brooklyn, N.Y. Father Nadine retired from active ministry and moved to Fallbrook in 2009. There, he helped out as needed at St. Peter the Apostle Parish and School in Fallbrook and St. Thomas More Parish in Oceanside, as well as celebrating Masses at Camp Pendleton and Mission San Antonio de Pala.

The funeral Mass was celebrated Oct. 12 at St. Peter the Apostle Church. He was interred at Riverside National Veterans Cemetery in Riverside, Calif.

**ADRIAN, Mich.** — Dominican Sister Julianne Wolny died Oct. 5 at the Dominican Life Center in Adrian, Mich. She was 90.

She was in her 72nd year of religious profession: 21 years as a Felician Sister from Livonia, Mich., and in her 51st year in the Adrian Dominican Congregation.

Born in Saginaw, Mich., she ministered primarily in her native Michigan. But she served for 10 years in California, including as an administrative assistant at Catholic Charities in San Diego (1990-1999) and as a Minister of Presence at Scripps Mercy Hospital in San Diego for five years before returning to Michigan.

A Funeral Mass was celebrated Oct. 10 in St. Catherine Chapel at the motherhouse in Adrian, Mich.

## Elderly religious need your help.

Like those pictured, nearly 25,000 senior sisters, brothers and religious order priests have devoted their lives to prayer and ministry—educating the young, tending the sick, aiding the needy and more. Yet years of serving for little or no pay have left a profound shortage in retirement savings. Your support of the Retirement Fund for Religious helps furnish care, medicine and other necessities. Please give generously.

## Please donate at your local parish December 9-10 or by mail at:

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[retiredreligious.org](http://retiredreligious.org)

Visit [retiredreligious.org/2023photos](http://retiredreligious.org/2023photos) to meet the religious pictured.  
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# Retirement Fund for Religious



# Holiday 'Embrace' for Needy Valley Families

## The Southern Cross



EL CENTRO — This December, Our Lady of the Valley Parish once again will host its "annual give-back day to the most in need."

Called "Embrace," the event will take place from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m., on Saturday, Dec. 9.

Embrace is organized by the parish's homeless ministry, in partnership with Catholic Charities. It will be held at two sites this year, with struggling families directed to the parish center at St. Mary's Church and homeless individuals to Catholic Charities' nearby day center.

Father Mark Edney, the parish's pastor, said he expects that about 1,000 people will turn out for this year's event, which will include a sit-



**GIVING BACK:** Our Lady of the Valley Parish hosts "Embrace," a holiday celebration for struggling families and the homeless, at two El Centro locations.

down meal at both locations.

The homeless also can receive free haircuts, provided by local barbers, and take showers and change their clothes at the day center. Each will

receive fast-food gift cards.

Father Edney said that there are often many gift cards left over, which are distributed during the weeks before Christmas.

Struggling families also will enjoy a sit-down meal and receive gifts, including gift cards, turkeys for Christmas dinner, and toys for the children at St. Mary's Parish Center.

"We give away everything that's given to us," Father Edney said.

Father Edney said that it is primarily through the donations of Our Lady of the Valley that the various gifts are made possible, but Catholics from other parishes and even non-Catholics also have contributed to the event.

"In the past, the people have been very generous (with their donations)," he said, explaining that this means that children sometimes can be given three or four toys, not just one.

"We don't save anything back," he said. "Whatever we have, we give."

**For information or to make a donation, call St. Mary Parish at (760) 352-4211.**



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INTO THY HANDS, O Lord, we commend the spirits of these beloved ones who are gone before us into the realm of thy eternal happiness and peace. *AMEN*

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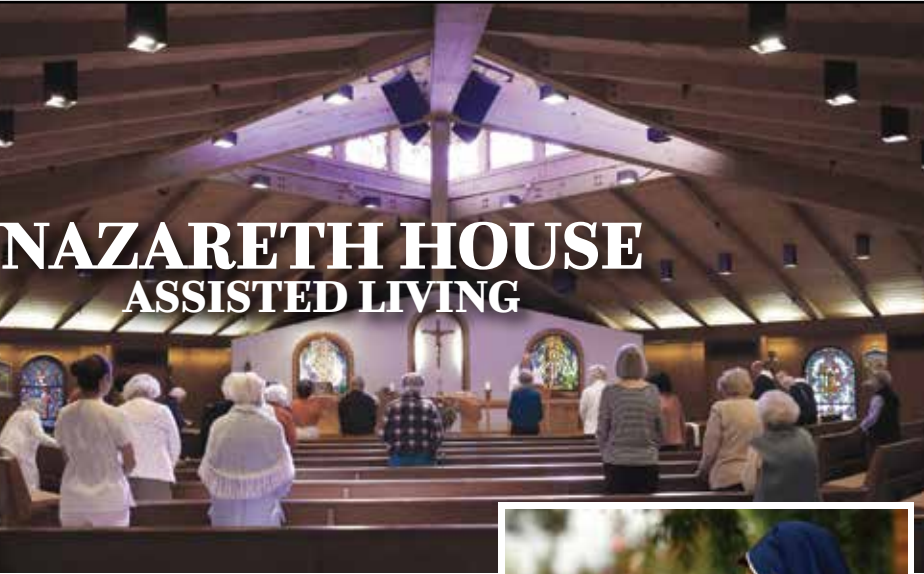
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Do I think about being a Brother, Sister or Priest?

Does the idea come to me often?

Does the idea scare me?

I SHOULD CONTACT

Most Rev. Felipe Pulido  
858.490.8389  
cmaglalang@sdccatholic.org

Sr. Kathy Warren  
858.490.8289  
kwarren@sdccatholic.org

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