

THE SOUTHERN CROSS

THE OFFICIAL NEWSPAPER OF THE DIOCESE OF SAN DIEGO

VOLUME 112 • NUMBER 04

THESOUTHERNCROSS.ORG

APRIL 2023



People's Pope

Special Section, Pages 9-12

PAUL HARING

10TH ANNIVERSARY: Pope Francis' initiatives call for the Church to closely engage with the faithful, especially those on the margins of society. Ministry leaders in the San Diego Diocese share how his pontificate is having a profound impact on the local Church. He's pictured during his general audience in St. Peter's Square on Oct. 5, 2022.



Get Happy

High school student explains "True Happiness" in retreat for middle-schoolers. **Page 3**



'Remain in Me'

Hundreds to attend San Diego Youth Day focused on importance of staying connected to Christ. **Page 6**



More Than a Day

Earth Day is April 22 — but its spirit is celebrated yearlong in the San Diego Diocese. **Page 14**



'The Triumph of Grace'

An Easter Message from Cardinal McElroy

Page 2

P.O. Box 81869
San Diego, CA 92138-1869

TELEPHONE: (858) 490-8266
E-MAIL: socross@sdccatholic.org
WEB: THESOUTHERNCROSS.ORG

THE SOUTHERN CROSS

PUBLISHER

Cardinal
Robert W. McElroy

EDITOR EMERITUS

Father Charles L. Fuld

EDITOR

Aida Bustos

ASSISTANT EDITOR

Denis Grasska

ADVERTISING/CIRCULATION

Donna Lightsey

CONTRIBUTORS

Roman Flores, Father Bernardo Lara,
Ricardo Márquez, Sharon Mousel,
Montserrat Ramírez

DESIGN

Pinomaki Design

Founded in 1912,
The Southern Cross
is the official newspaper of the
Catholic Diocese of San Diego.

The Southern Cross (ISSN 0745-0257) is published monthly by the Roman Catholic Diocese of San Diego, 3888 Paducah Drive, San Diego, CA 92117-5349.

Postmaster: Send address changes to The Southern Cross, P.O. Box 81869, San Diego, CA 92138-1869.

Telephone: (858) 490-8266.

Email: socross@sdccatholic.org

Web: thesoutherncross.org

Subscriptions:

Monthly print subscription: \$15 per year

Contact: (858) 490-8266;
dlightsey@sdccatholic.org



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 98 parishes, 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 colored triangle indicates that we have more content related to a particular story in our digital edition, thesoutherncross.org, including photos, videos, and at times an extended version.



The Triumph of Grace

Imagine if you were present at the resurrection of Jesus Christ. If you had watched as He emerged in glory from the tomb. If you saw Him encounter Mary Magdalene in the garden. If you had been with the apostles for that first moment when He appeared to them, turning their profound grief into incomparable joy.

The Gospels are our direct link with these magnificent events of faith and glory. Through the lens of the Gospels, we see that the Resurrection constituted the central turning point in human history. In the Resurrection, we have been redeemed. In the Resurrection, we understand that Our Lord Jesus Christ stands by us in every moment of our lives, supporting



LUCAS TURNBLOOM

us, embracing us, challenging us and consoling us.

It is in the Resurrection that we come to understand that we live on this earth with a mission and a purpose that leads beyond this life to eternal

Message from Cardinal Robert W. McElroy

glory with the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. And, most poignantly, it is in the Resurrection that we see that all those whom we have known and loved deeply on this earth are not gone from us forever, but live on with the Lord. We will embrace them once more in the Kingdom and treasure in them all of the qualities that we saw and knew and loved in them here in this world.

The ultimate reality of the Resurrection is that it teaches us that we are already citizens of Heaven, called to ennoble the world in which we live by striving to live out the values of the Gospel.

And, in that citizenship, we can truly rejoice!



ALINE CORPUS

Serving Souls

A total of 27 volunteers from the Diocese of San Diego spent March 18 at a migrants' shelter in Mexicali to support the more than 300 women, men and children staying there. The volunteers, among them Sister Madeline Fitzgerald, of the Poor Clare Sisters, collected items and funds to donate to the families. The participants included the Sister Servants of the Blessed Sacrament, Sisters of St. Joseph of Carondelet, Sisters of Mercy, Religious of the Sacred Heart, Sisters of Providence, and Franciscans. Read about Border Compassion, which organized the visit, in the May issue of The Southern Cross.

California Dioceses React to Tide of Lawsuits

The Southern Cross



The Diocese
of Santa Rosa
filed for Chapter

11 bankruptcy protection on March 13, following its announcement late last year that bankruptcy was likely as it struggled to provide compensation to victims of sexual abuse. More than 200 claims have been filed against that diocese.

The Oakland and Sacramento di-

oceses have both informed their parishioners that bankruptcy may be in their futures, as well.

In a letter to parishioners on March 16, Oakland Bishop Michael C. Barber, SJ, said his diocese was evaluating the best way to compensate survivors and ensure the continuation of its work serving the faithful.

Sacramento Bishop Jaime Soto made a similar announcement on March 1.

In February, Cardinal Robert W. McElroy announced that the Diocese of San Diego was considering Chapter 11 bankruptcy after receiving about 400 lawsuits concerning the sexual abuse of minors. Two-thirds of the

lawsuits stem from alleged abuse taking place between 1945 and 1975. No claim involves a priest of the diocese currently in ministry.

The cardinal stressed that a potential bankruptcy would involve only the diocese and not parishes, but that if the diocese does file for bankruptcy, a court would likely require parishes to contribute to the settlement. In that event, parishes, as a group, would have their own legal counsel to represent them, separate from the diocese.

More information is
available in
safeinourdiocese.org.



Middle-Schoolers Learn from 'True Happiness'

By Denis Grasska



Thirty-two Catholic youth spent four hours on a rainy Saturday morning inside St. Didacus Parish Hall, and that's where they discovered what happiness is all about.

"True Happiness" was the theme of a middle-school retreat, held Feb. 25, that brought together sixth- through eighth-graders from St. Didacus Parish and School, as well as Our Lady of the Sacred Heart Parish.

The retreat was led by Yacob Serawit, a junior at Mater Dei Catholic High School in Chula Vista, and based on one of the "seven essential modules" in the Magis Center's faith-and-science curriculum.

The Diocese of San Diego introduced the curriculum into its elementary schools and parish religious-education programs in fall of 2021, starting with "Evidence of God's Existence from Science" (Module 2). "True Happiness" (Module 6) followed in fall of 2022.

The curriculum was developed by Jesuit Father Robert Spitzer in response to troubling statistics showing that 42% of young people will lose their faith before age 25 and almost half of these will do so out of a mistaken belief that science and religion are incompatible.

The median age for religious disaffiliation is age 13.

The retreat at St. Didacus began with a reading from the first chapter of St. John's Gospel and concluded with a pizza lunch. In between, participants watched five short videos from the Magis Center's "True Happiness" module: an introduction to the four types of happiness and subsequent videos that focused on each one in turn.

According to the videos, the four types of happiness are: pleasure; ego-comparative, which comes from feeling or appearing superior to others; contributive, which involves having a positive impact on others; and transcendent, which is associated with a connection to God.

Pleasure is the lowest level of happiness because it is typically fleeting and neither affects others nor produces substantive change in the one who experiences it. Transcendent happiness, on the other hand, ranks highest because it affects many and can continue into eternity.

Four of the videos were followed by an organized activity, such as a Lego-building competition, and time for the participants to write in prayer journals.

Serawit planned and led the retreat as the service project he was required to complete as a recipient of his school's Dr. Estelle L. Kassebaum Scholarship.

An alumnus of St. Didacus School, he reached out to Elena Platas, direc-



ASSEMBLY REQUIRED: Middle-school students collaborate on a Lego-building competition during the "True Happiness" retreat Feb. 25 at St. Didacus Parish. The retreat was based on a faith-and-science curriculum that has been introduced into the diocese's schools and faith-formation programs.

tor of religious education at St. Didacus Parish, for help coming up with a suitable project. Platas told him of her idea for a middle-school retreat, explaining that she felt that it needed "a younger mind" to put it together.

Serawit met with Platas weekly, beginning in November, to prepare for the retreat.

Planning the retreat was instructive for Serawit, who said the lessons "opened my eyes to how I perceive happiness."

"The only way that you can become truly happy is through Christ," he said, "and I feel like that's really the big takeaway that we try to give to these kids."

Platas said that, in November, she was among the organizers and leaders of a "True Happiness" retreat for high school students in the Cathedral Deanery. About 150 youth from St. Di-

dacus, Our Lady of the Sacred Heart and Our Lady of Guadalupe (Barrio Logan) parishes attended that event, which was held at Our Lady of the Sacred Heart Parish.

She said the middle-school retreat had a different feel than that earlier one, and that is attributable to Serawit.

Explaining that older retreat leaders can make things overly complicated, Platas said, "I think (Serawit) can relate to the kids much better. ... We really need (young people to help us) because they can reach out to this community much better than we do."

Andrea Betancourt, a seventh-grader at Pershing Middle School in San Carlos and a St. Didacus parishioner, said the retreat enabled her "to look at happiness in a different way."

"This retreat was really nice," she said, "and this was a nice place for young people to understand happi-

ness a bit more and ... to dig a little deeper into (their) faith."

She also expressed appreciation for Serawit's commitment.

"I thought it was really nice that he's involving himself at this age," she said, "and teaching other kids to follow in his footsteps."

Marioly Galván, chancellor of the Diocese of San Diego and director of the Office for Evangelization and Catechetical Ministry, said it's cause for "great joy" that young people are coming together to reflect on the intersection of faith and science, with their "minds ... opened to the beauty that is our Catholic faith."

Events like the retreat are the fruits of a process that began more than four years ago, when the diocesan Office for Schools and the Office for Evangelization and Catechetical Ministry were tasked by Cardinal Robert W. McElroy with implementing the Magis Center's faith-and-science curriculum in all Catholic elementary schools and parish faith-formation programs in the diocese.

Galván said several parishes and schools have already hosted faith-and-science fairs, as well as retreats for both junior high and high school youth, to introduce the material.

This year, she said, the diocese will review the implementation of the two modules, "Evidence of God's Existence from Science" and "True Happiness," and give teachers and catechists an opportunity to share best practices.

Beginning in the next catechetical year, which starts on Catechetical Sunday (Sept. 17, 2023), faith-and-science workshops for teachers and catechists will be offered quarterly in English and Spanish, both in San Diego and Imperial counties.



YOUTH LEADER: Mater Dei Catholic High School student Yacob Serawit led the "True Happiness" retreat as a service project.

World Café: Grounds for Professional Growth

By Denis Grasska



For Catholic school students throughout the

Diocese of San Diego, March 10 was a day off, a Friday that served as the start of a three-day weekend.

But not for teachers and principals.

The schools were closed because about 500 Catholic elementary school educators were gathering at Good Shepherd Catholic School in Mira Mesa for a professional learning day organized by the diocesan Office for Schools. Another 150 preschool directors and teachers participated in a similar event via Zoom.

Diocesan schools are currently in the second year of a five-year professional development plan. Each academic year, there are two professional learning days, one in the fall and one in the spring, each followed by a series of online “mini-sessions” where participants work on a “product of practice” related to their learning.

The diocesan Teacher Liaison and Curriculum Leadership Team members play an essential role in planning and facilitating all sessions, as well as providing opportunities for sharing best practices and building collaborative learning networks.

Unlike previous professional learning days, this most recent one incorporated the “World Café” method of group discussion. For over 90 minutes, participants were separated by grade level or subject area into different classrooms on the Good Shepherd campus; there, they rotated among



SOMETHING NEW: A recent professional learning day for local Catholic educators included a “World Café,” where they shared best practices in a series of facilitated conversations.

tables for 20-minute facilitated conversations on specific topics, such as classroom management.

“Seeing the excitement on the teachers’ faces ... makes all the work behind the scenes worth it,” said Leticia Oseguera, diocesan superintendent of schools.

The event was “an opportunity to share, to listen, to generate some best practices, and also to network,” said Dr. Julie Cantillon, associate superintendent of schools.

She said that one participant described the World Café as “a gold mine of ideas.”

“Most of our schools are one class per grade,” said Cantillon, “so this is really the only opportunity that many

of them have to meet in person with a colleague who teaches the same grade level or same subject area that they also do.”

She said it’s been “exciting” to see that discussions that began at the World Café were still going on days later. She noted that, after the event, teachers were sharing strategies in their online groups and exchanging email addresses.

Carmen Poqui, who teaches fourth-grade Spanish at Mater Dei Catholic

Elementary School, expressed her appreciation for the World Café.

“We were able to cover different topics and we realized that we’re all in ... very similar situations,” she said.

Michelle Kerr, an eighth-grade homeroom teacher at Holy Trinity School in El Cajon, said, “We all got wonderful ideas from each other that we can take back to the classroom and help enhance student learning.”

Kerr said she came away with resources that will help her make social studies, a subject she teaches to sixth-through eighth-graders, more engaging for her students.

The Office for Schools plans to make the World Café a feature of the diocese’s professional learning days.

Matt Cordes, associate superintendent of schools, said that, when it comes to professional development, the Office for Schools focuses on quality rather than quantity.

“We’ve created a culture of continuous improvement where schools are seeking (professional learning), not to meet a number (of required hours), but to improve student learning, to grow in their profession and professional practices, to grow as a school community,” he said.

The real winners are students.

“Getting that time to connect with your peers,” he said, “is only going to make the instruction more impactful.”

Thank You for Voting Us ‘BEST’
for French Cuisine and Bakery, and FAVORITE in many others

THE FRENCH GOURMET

Catering • Restaurant • Bakery • Wine Boutique

960 Turquoise Street • Pacific Beach

**Specialty Coffee Drinks,
Pastries, Celebration Cakes,
Sandwiches, Soups, Salad,
and Prepared Entrées to go**

Wine Boutique
Serving Breakfast - Lunch - Dinner
Inside & Patio Dining
Restaurant is open daily for lunch
Dinner Wednesday thru Sunday

www.thefrenchgourmet.com

Hot Prime Rib on Saturdays

catering@thefrenchgourmet.com

DELIVERY SERVICE AVAILABLE

(858) 488-1725

New Bistro Menu
Patio & Inside Dining

AUSCP 12TH ANNUAL ASSEMBLY

Unity Through Synodality

Gather With Us in San Diego | June 12-15, 2023

FEATURING

CARDINAL
ROBERT MCELROY

Words Of Welcome

CARDINAL LUIS TAGLE

Vision For A Church Where
We All Walk Together

MASSIMO FAGGIOLI

The “Synodal Process”
In the USA and In the
Global Church: A
Geography Of Hope

CECILIA
GONZALEZ-ANDRIEU

Bridge People Or Neglected
and Peripheral Latinas/
Latinos Catholics In the U.S.

NANCY
SYLVESTER, IHM

Responding From a
Contemplative Heart ...
Living Synodality In a
Polarized World

LOCATION

UNIVERSITY OF SAN DIEGO

5998 Alcalá Park, San Diego 92110

The Assembly’s location on campus will be
provided after registration. Lodging will be in
single dormitory rooms in Maher Hall.

REGISTRATION

\$495 Registration includes room and board for
3 nights. \$325 for Commuter Registration
(includes meals, talks, and banquet).

Daily Registration: \$100 Monday, \$100 Tuesday,
\$125 Wednesday (includes banquet).

SCHOLARSHIPS AVAILABLE.

REGISTER ONLINE AT

auscp.org

All Are Welcome

auscp.org | 872-205-5862

Imperial Valley Conference 'United in Christ'

The Southern Cross



The diocese is hosting a major conference in the Imperial Valley on April 22, featuring more than 20 speakers, including a renowned national presenter.

The conference, which has as a theme "United in Christ, *Unidos en Cristo*," will be held from 8 a.m. to 3 p.m. at Vincent Memorial Catholic High School in Calexico.

The event will offer a youth track, two sessions with multiple workshops, and a liturgy to open the event. Each session will offer workshops in English and Spanish on various topics and areas of ministry, spirituality and parish life. The workshops will be conducted by veteran leaders, including several office directors from the diocese's Pastoral Center. Many vendors and ministry groups will be exhibiting, allowing conference-goers the opportunity to peruse resources.

The conference is a collaboration among all diocesan pastoral offices, Stewardship and the Schools Office. All of their respective communities are invited to attend.

"This conference returns after a long-awaited break from the COVID pandemic. With renewed enthusiasm, we are collaborating to bring the community of faithful together as we reflect on the Eucharist and how we are all united in Christ," said Marioly Galván, the diocese's chancellor and



YOUTH TRACK: The diocese's Imperial Valley Conference will offer programming for youth. Some attended the inaugural conference Nov. 17, 2018, at Vincent Memorial Catholic High School.

director of the pastoral offices.

The keynote speaker will be Brother Moisés Gutiérrez, OFM, PhD, a renowned presenter whose theme is "Called to Fan the Flame of Hope."

A special track will offer workshops geared to youth while their parents can attend the general sessions. All are welcome to attend, even those who are not active in ministry.

The diocese launched the inaugural Valley conference in November of 2018 and planned to offer it every two years. However, the pandemic

intervened. Planning for the second conference began last fall with the catechetical leaders from the Valley, including Sister Lupita Hernández, the principal at Vincent Memorial Catholic High School.

Father Ed Horning is a long-time pastor in the region. Currently, he serves as associate pastor of Our Lady of the Valley Parish in El Centro. He said the pandemic hit the area hard.

"We had a high number of infections and deaths. We experienced the shutdown and financial struggles in par-

ishes," he said. "Now, we are trying to bounce back as a Catholic community."

He said there is a great need in the Valley for growth in ministries such as stewardship, evangelization, youth, restorative justice, mental/emotional health and bereavement.

"Potentially, it could be very important for the faithful to gather, to be inspired, energized, renewed and empowered for mission," he said. "My hope is that the conference can serve as a catalyst for putting the Church on a trajectory of new and robust ministries."

Father Tony Morales is the pastor of St. Patrick Church in Calipatria and St. Thomas Indian Mission, which serves Winterhaven and Yuma, and the dean of the Valley pastors.

San Diego County and Imperial County are two separate areas, but their faithful are part of one diocese. That sense is not always recognized by Catholics on either side of the divide, said Father Morales.

He said the conference reinforces the idea for Valley Catholics that they are part of the diocese — and that the encounter can bear fruit for the faithful on both sides of the mountains.

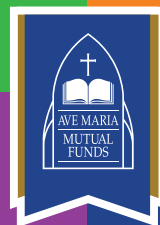
Registration for the Imperial Valley Conference is required. The cost is \$35, which includes lunch; \$25 per person for groups of four or more. Registration: sdccatholic.org/ivcc.



SERIOUSLY DIFFERENT

**INDUSTRY LEADER
IN MRI... MORALLY
RESPONSIBLE
INVESTING**

**CATHOLIC
ADVISORY BOARD
OF PROMINENT
CATHOLICS**



**MORAL
SCREENS WITH A
ZERO TOLERANCE
POLICY**

**ACTIVELY
MANAGED WITH
CONTRARIAN
THINKING**

1-866-AVE-MARIA

**AVE MARIA
MUTUAL FUNDS**

avemariafunds.com

Past performance does not guarantee future results.

Schwartz Investment Counsel, Inc., a registered investment adviser established in 1980, serves as investment adviser for Ave Maria Mutual Funds and invests only in securities that meet the Funds' investment and religious requirements. The returns may be lower or higher than if decisions were based solely on investment considerations. The method of security selection may or may not be successful and the Funds may underperform or outperform the stock market as a whole. All mutual funds are subject to market risk, including possible loss of principal. Request a prospectus, which includes investment objectives, risks, fees, charges and expenses and other information that you should read and consider carefully before investing. The prospectus can be obtained by calling 1-866-283-6274 or it can be viewed at www.avemariafunds.com. Distributed by Ultimus Fund Distributors, LLC.

200-131-011524 | 16320271-UFD-02/22/2023

Youth Invited to Celebrate Their Faith Together

By Denis Grasska

Between 750 and 900 Catholic teens are expected to attend San Diego Youth Day.

The annual event, sponsored by the diocesan Office for Youth and Young Adult Ministry, will be held from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., Saturday, April 15, at Mater Dei Catholic High School.

The youth rally will include a keynote presentation, as well as breakout sessions, praise-and-worship music, and a closing Mass celebrated by Auxiliary Bishop Ramón Bejarano.

This year's theme, "Remain in Me," comes from John 15:4-10, in which Jesus compares Himself to a vine and His disciples to branches that can only bear fruit if they remain on the vine.

San Diego Youth Day is open to all high school students. Participants register through their parish youth minister. The cost to attend is \$40 per person.

Maricruz Flores, director of the Office for Youth and Young Adult Ministry, described the event as "a day for all of the diocese to come together as a community and for young people" — surrounded by hundreds of practicing Catholic peers — "to feel that they're not alone."

Brilema Perez, associate director, said the event seeks to provide an opportunity for young people "to experi-



LIFTED VOICES: Praise-and-worship will be a feature of the upcoming San Diego Youth Day, April 15, like in past years. There will also be a keynote address, breakout sessions and a Mass.

ence what the Eucharistic community is ... in daily life, what that looks like."

"At the end of the day, it's community," she said. "It's building each other up, being inspired, and invited once again to become the saints that we're called to be."

Nationally known speaker Mari Pablo, a presenter for Ascension Press, will deliver the keynote.

Flores said Pablo's talk will "continue the conversation of mental health," a topic that rose to prominence in the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic

and lengthy periods of quarantine and social distancing.

Catholic singer-songwriter Chris Estrella, based in the Diocese of San Bernardino, will provide the worship music.

There will also be breakout sessions, including one led by San Diego State University basketball player Aguek Arop, a recently naturalized U.S. citizen from South Sudan, and another focusing on Blessed Carlo Acutis, a late 20th-century Italian teenager known for his Eucharistic devotion,

computer savvy and appreciation for videogames.

There will also be opportunities for confession and for silent prayer in the school chapel.

Monica Salazar, youth minister at St. John of the Cross Parish in Lemon Grove, and Evelyn Beale, coordinator of youth and young adult ministry at St. Luke Parish in El Cajon, are members of the event's planning committee. Both plan to attend with teens from their parishes.

"I've noticed, after the conference, (that) teens want to have a relationship with God and they are more open to seeing what God has for them," Salazar said.

Salazar hopes that teens will leave with the understanding "that they have a loving Father and that He has chosen them to do great things; that, when we remain in Him, He can transform our lives and bring true happiness."

Beale described San Diego Youth Day as "a unique opportunity for youth from our parishes to experience the universality and diversity of the Catholic Church."

For participants, she said, "I hope they feel how much the Catholic Church cares about them and that they are loved and accepted. Ultimately, I hope they leave this experience knowing that they are loved unconditionally by our Lord and their faith community."

Mary Elizabeth Accardi, LMFT
MARRIAGE, FAMILY & CHILD COUNSELOR
MFT LIC. #20751

2067 W. Vista Way, Suite 130
Vista, CA 92083

The Shops
1030 La Bonita Dr., Suite 130
Lake San Marcos, CA 92078
(760) 304-4522



LANR
FINANCE & REAL ESTATE

KATE ROMOSOD
REALTOR®
(858) 518-2344
Kate.Romosod@gmail.com
Cal BRE#01957292

Upon closing, \$500 will be donated on your behalf to the church you are registered at, and \$100 will be donated to "The Southern Cross," or any charitable organization of your choice.

Each Office is Independently Owned and Operated



MATTIA LAW
A PROFESSIONAL LAW CORPORATION

**ESTATE PLANNING
PERSONAL INJURY
BUSINESS
TRANSACTIONS**



Steve Mattia

(619) 795-6632 mattialaw.com

3835 Avocado Blvd, Ste 265 La Mesa CA 91941

Am I Called?


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
Fr. Eric Tamayo
619.291.7446
etamayo@sdccatholic.org
Sr. Kathy Warren
858.490.8289
kwarren@sdccatholic.org

SPONSORED BY:
San Diego Serra Club - North Coast
northcoast.serrasandiego.org



Homelessness is a healthcare crisis.



We can do better.

At Father Joe's Villages, we're helping America's Finest City live up to the title. Your ongoing support brings our Street Health team to more vulnerable San Diegans. Help our neighbors leave homelessness behind.

Sign up for monthly donations today.



Father
Joe's
Villages

neighbor.org | (619) HOMELESS (466-3537)

Eucharistic Revival Invites Young Faithful

By Denis Grasska

GARDEN GROVE, Calif. — The young adult ministry offices of four Southern California (arch)dioceses — Los Angeles, Orange, San Bernardino and San Diego — are collaborating on a major event to foster greater devotion to the Eucharist.

“Ever Ancient, Ever New: A SoCal Young Adult Eucharistic Revival” will be held the weekend of May 6 and 7 on the Christ Cathedral campus in Garden Grove.

The event is being held as a regional contribution to the National Eucharistic Revival, launched last June by the U.S. Catholic bishops and scheduled to conclude on Pentecost of 2025. The revival itself came in response to the results of a shocking 2019 Pew Research Center survey revealing that only one-third of U.S. Catholics believed that the bread and wine are transformed into the Body and Blood of Christ at Mass.

Pastoral Juvenil, San Diego’s Spanish-speaking young adult ministry, has been preparing for “Ever Ancient, Ever New” with a series of monthly Eucharistic holy hours that began in September. The final one will be held from 6:30 to 9 p.m., Thursday, April 13, at St. Mary Church in Escondido.

“The big goal is to educate ... our young adults, who maybe come to



CRYSTAL CLEAR: Christ Cathedral will be the site of a two-day SoCal Young Adult Eucharistic Revival, which aims to help young adults look upon the Eucharist with more understanding and love.

holy hours, but maybe do not understand; they go to Mass, (but) they don’t understand the Real Presence of Jesus at the altar,” said Maricruz Flores, director of the San Diego Diocese’s Office for Youth and Young Adult Ministry.

At the same time, she said, the event is “not a conference” or “another classroom experience,” but will be something much more engaging and inspiring.

For Brilema Perez, associate di-

rector of San Diego’s Office for Youth and Young Adult Ministry, it’s fitting that the Eucharistic Revival would include an event like this for the 18-39 demographic. She noted that it is among younger Catholics that one finds “the largest number of people leaving the Church.”

Perez said that young adult ministry directors from the four participating (arch)dioceses want the event to be “an experience that engages the mind, the heart, and the body.”

Doors will open at 10 a.m. on Saturday, May 6. The opening keynote will speak to the “mind,” offering an intellectual presentation on what the Eucharist is. This will be followed by two rounds of breakout sessions; of the four workshops available, one will be presented in Spanish.

A second keynote talk on Saturday evening will speak to the “heart” about the Eucharist. This will lead into a period of Eucharistic adoration.

The first day will conclude with a social.

The second day, which will run from 9:15 a.m. to noon, will include the closing keynote, which will reflect on how the Eucharist engages the “body” and how it leads us out into the world on a mission to share the Gospel.

Perez said that organizers have “carved out time” in the schedule for participants “to pray ... and process what they learned in the keynote or the (breakout) sessions.”

“If (local young adults are) willing to open their hearts to the Lord, He’s always knocking,” she said. “(‘Ever Ancient, Ever New’) is an opportunity to hear that call, to answer, and to let Him into our hearts and transform (us) in the way that only He can.”

The cost to attend will be \$50 per person. Find more information, including registration and accommodations, at socialrevival.org, on Instagram @everancient.evernew, or at (858) 490-8260.



HAVE FUN, FEED A CHILD



SIGN UP TODAY!

Pack Meals and/or Donate:
sdcatholic.org/millionmeals

WHO WE SERVE

Meals will be delivered to Casa de los Pobres in Tijuana, and to the Philippines and Africa.

GOALS

Need 4,000 volunteers
Pack 1.5 million meals | Raise \$375,000



MILLION MEAL EVENT

Organized by the deacons of the Diocese of San Diego

“For I was hungry and you gave me food...”
Matthew 25:35

Event provides healthy meals to families in extreme poverty.



**June 10-11, 2023
Cathedral Catholic
High School**

**Bring a Team
Bring Your Family
Ages Four and Up
Welcome**

INFORMATION:
deaconmike@saintbrigidparish.org
(858) 361-1240

Latin American Experience Shaping Papacy

By Justin McLellan



VATICAN CITY — When Pope Francis greeted the thousands of faithful gathered in a rain-soaked St. Peter's Square March 13, 2013, he quipped that his brother cardinals looked almost to “the ends of the earth” to find a new bishop of Rome.

The end of the world, in this case, was Buenos Aires, Argentina, where Pope Francis was born to Italian immigrants in 1936 and served as archbishop from 1998 until he became pope in 2013. He is the first pope born outside of Europe since the year 741 and the first from Latin America, where an estimated 40% of the world's Catholic population lives.

That distinction has molded Pope Francis' approach to governing the Church over the first 10 years of his pontificate, forging pastoral priorities and doctrinal decision-making rooted in his identity as a servant of the people in Buenos Aires' “villas miserias,” or shantytowns, first during a military dictatorship and then during a profound financial crisis.

“Usually, European popes start thinking about theology from philosophy,” Emilce Cuda, secretary of the Pontifical Commission for Latin America, said. But in Latin America, she said, looking at humanity's relationship to God begins with common people.

Cuda said that's because Latin America was “the first continent to take seriously the Second Vatican Council” and with it the idea that God's will can be discovered by listening to all baptized members of the Church.

The resulting openness to “communal discernment,” as Cuda described it, characterized the early priestly life of Pope Francis, who was ordained a priest just four years after the council ended, and extended all the way into one of the most recent events of his pontificate: the opening of the current Synod on Synodality.

The synod seeks to gather input from all baptized members of the Church to inform discussions among the world's bishops on building a listening Church. The bishops will meet in Rome in two sessions, the first in October and then again one year later.

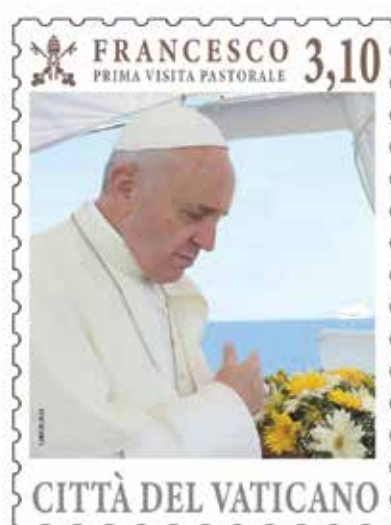
“It's not a different theology, it's not a different Church, it's not a Latin American pope now at the top of the Catholic Church; it's the continuation of one tradition that began in the '60s in this council,” Cuda said. “Pope Francis is going ahead with this challenge that started with the Second Vatican Council.”

Mar Muñoz-Visoso, executive director of the U.S. bishops' Secretariat of Cultural Diversity in the Church, said that Pope Francis' Latin American pastoral style was translated into Church teaching right from the start of his pontificate.

As an example, she cited his first



BLESSING: Pope Francis has lifted the elderly throughout his pontificate, highlighting the gifts they can share with younger generations. Here, he greeted a woman during a visit to Asunción, Paraguay, on July 12, 2015.



MAIL: The Vatican issued postage stamps marking the 10th anniversary of Pope Francis' election.

apostolic exhortation, “Evangelii Gaudium,” on proclaiming the Gospel in today's world, and likened it to the final document from the Latin American bishops' council meeting in Aparecida, Brazil, in 2007. Pope Francis led the committee that drafted the document, which insist-

ed evangelization in Latin America must involve close engagement with the faithful, especially those on the margins of society.

“One could say ‘Evangelii Gaudium’ takes the main tenets of Aparecida and re-proposes them for the Universal Church,” she said, including

the “rich tradition of collegiality and common discernment” in the Latin American Church.

That contribution to the Universal Church from what has historically been considered the margin of the theological world is what Dr. Hosffman Ospino, associate professor of Hispanic ministry and religious education at Boston College, identified as the greatest impact of Pope Francis' pontificate.

“We have traditionally looked at Latin America as mission territory, but we haven't looked to it for leadership. Francis changes all that,” he said. “He shows that Latin American Catholicism is vibrant with much energy that is both theological and pastoral.”

For Latin American immigrants, especially in Europe and the United States, Ospino said, the figure of Pope Francis “reaffirmed” their experience of the Church and put them back in contact with a vocabulary of “mission” and a fondness for popular devotion typical of the churches they grew up in.

Bishop Daniel Flores of Brownsville, Texas, said that having a pope from Latin America has “opened up to the Universal Church the perspective of Latin America.” As the leader of a diocese that borders Mexico, Bishop Flores said Pope Francis' pastoral style and care for migrants “very much resonates” with the reality of the Rio Grande Valley.

“Everyone brings their history with them when they serve in the priesthood, and certainly in the papacy,” he said, “and his pastoral sense of trying not to forget anybody and trying to always keep in mind who might not be taken care of is something that is very much born out of that Latin American experience.”

Catholic News Service

His Impact on the Diocese ...



Office for Ethnic and Intercultural Communities

Vicar General Father Michael Pham

From the beginning, it was obvious from his open approach, that this pope, a Jesuit named Francis, would be different. He challenged us to open our hearts and minds. He raised fundamental issues, inviting us to encounter one another and dialogue, and to pray for a better Church proclaiming the Good News.



I was particularly drawn to his vision of an inclusive Church and his drive for more listening and collaboration. Pope Francis purposefully sought to hear from voices often not heard. He appointed cardinals from smaller countries which previously were unrecognized, and found many avenues to listen to laypersons, specifically to women and young people.

The mission of the Office for Ethnic and Intercultural Communities reinforces Pope Francis' vision — "May the Church be the place of God's mercy and love, where everyone feels welcomed."

Guided by Cardinal (Robert W.) McElroy, we strive to witness the grace of cultural diversity, encouraging the cultural communities to preserve their faith traditions and share them with their parishes and the greater Catholic community. Their leaders have been invited to participate in the decision-making councils of the diocese.

The office promotes understanding, reminding us that we are "one family in Christ." In 2020-21, we created online forums to listen and dialogue about racism and its effects, and to identify steps, especially in our Church, to heal. The process of sharing continues in many parishes.

In 2018, the diocese held its first Pentecost Mass for All Peoples, bringing together about 1,500 people to pray and celebrate our faith. This year's event is preparing to receive almost 3,000 on May 27 at Miramar College.

Our office continues to be inspired by the Holy Spirit and by Pope Francis' words and actions: "To accept that we have been set free by Christ — His passion, His death, His resurrection — is to accept and bring fullness even to the different traditions of every people. True fullness."



Office for Life, Peace and Justice

Director Robert Ehnow, PhD

The Office for Life, Peace and Justice's mission is centered on Catholic Social Teaching's recognition of human dignity and the sanctity of life for all persons, from conception to natural death, welcoming the immigrant, tending to the incarcerated, and caring for the environment.

Pope Francis' papacy has prioritized ministering to those on the margins, including immigrants displaced by war and economic turmoil, the incarcerated, the homeless, and the working poor.

Pope Francis designated 2016 as the Extraordinary Jubilee of Mercy, a year of forgiveness and compassion. The year purposefully included an offer of understanding and reconciliation to the most vulnerable members of our global community.

During Pope Francis' first visit to North America in 2015 he met with more than 100 inmates at Curran-Fromhold Correctional Facility outside of Philadelphia. This visit highlighted his solidarity with prisoners and their families, providing an example of how to be compassionate to those marginalized community members.



Pope Francis' second encyclical, "Laudato Si" (Praise Be to You), calls all of us to action to turn away from consumerism and a "throw-away culture" to be responsible stewards of God's creation — our environment.

Pope Francis labeled abortion as murder and continues to uphold Catholic teaching on the intrinsic evil of abortion while simultaneously offering compassion to mothers who face difficult choices regarding families.

His papacy guides and motivates the diocesan ministries in our office, whose mission is aligned with the priorities that Pope Francis has set for the Universal Church, ones focused on being in solidarity and offering service to individuals and communities living on the margins.



Office for Evangelization and Catechetical Ministry

Chancellor and Director Marioly Galván

Pope Francis' papacy has brought a renewed vision for the ministry of the catechist and the vital role of evangelization within the life of the Church.

In "Evangelii Gaudium" (The Joy of the Gospel), his first apostolic exhortation, Pope Francis underscores the

kerygma as the foundation for sharing the Good News; simply stated, the love of Christ. His approach redirects our universal call to partake of the shared mission of placing the encounter with Christ as our ultimate goal before any program or catechetical event.



This framework has greatly shaped the level of intentionality and engagement; particularly, as we minister to students and families. The degree with which our pastoral ministers have adopted pastoral listening and accompaniment has dramatically increased our awareness of the needs in our parish communities.

For those serving in catechetical ministry, Pope Francis' call to be echoes of the living Word has challenged faith formators to delve deeper into the mystery. We are reminded, "all Christian formation consists of entering more deeply into the *kerygma*" (EV, 165). The goal for evangelization is to continue the journey sparked by catechetical formation, to make known the love of Christ, to witness the presence of Christ along the journey and not perceive Him as an archaic and distant occurrence.

Pope Francis' approach essentially is the "how" in ministry, complementing the philosophical and foundational teachings of St. John Paul II, namely the "what" we should believe, and those of Pope Benedict XVI, the "why" we should believe.

Most recently, Pope Francis has formally instituted the Ministry of the Catechist in his apostolic letter "Antiquum Ministerium," affirming the service of catechists and emphasizing the importance of their ongoing formation.



Office for Family Life and Spirituality

Director John Prust

Ricardo Márquez and I were lucky to start working for our office riding a wave of ministry momentum that started with Pope Francis' historic calling of the Synod of Bishops on the Family in 2014. The pope summarized



Servan



Pope Francis has had a profound impact on the Diocese of San Diego. He named its leader, Bishop Robert McElroy, and seven years later he was elevated to cardinal. The pope's impact is a listening Church, which engages and responds to the needs of its members, particularly the marginalized. The directors of the diocesan offices share how that impact has shaped their ministries.

the conclusions of this synod in his apostolic exhortation on family life, "Amoris Laetitia" (Joy of Love).

While there were no changes in doctrine that came out of the synod, it did open up important conversations about the way we, as a Church, minister to families and marriages. And it prompted our own bishop, now Cardinal, McElroy to call a local iteration of the synod focused on the joys and challenges in family life we face in San Diego and Imperial counties. Where has the Spirit been moving among us? How is the Holy Spirit challenging us to grow?

The synod yielded proposals and challenges for our diocese. A few themes stood out. One was the challenge to witness to both the beauty and the realism of the Catholic vision for marriage and family life. Another was the importance of mutually discerning and accompanying one another as we work to build a culture of families serving families.

t Spirit



a profound impact
Diego. In 2015, he
op Robert W. McElroy,
elevated him to a
initiatives aim to build
ich intentionally
s to the needs of its
y the marginalized.
ocese's pastoral
vision has shaped

Our office, which opened in August 2017, joyfully partners with parishes and ministries to bring to life those proposals. We offered a new marriage preparation program, called “Witness to Love,” that aims to accompany newly married couples far past their wedding day. We launched a marriage enrichment series to help couples resolve problems and strengthen their relationship. We began a ministry to serve separated and divorced Catholics. And we began “Healing Pathways,” a series of workshops that provide basic tools for families to respond to challenges in mental health, addiction, and parenting.

Office for Youth and Young Adults
Director Maricruz Flores

“A home, as we all know, demands that everyone work together. No one can be indifferent or stand apart, since each is a stone needed to build

the home.” This excerpt from “Christus Vivit” (Christ Is Alive!), Pope Francis’ apostolic exhortation, paints a portrait of what youth and young adult ministry should be. Each and every one of us — youth minister, youth, young adult, confirmation coordinator, DCM, DRE, catechists, volunteers — make up this home. Pope Francis invites us to be united, to form a home, because this ministry is not meant to be done alone.



“Christus Vivit” is a letter to all young people and those who work in youth and young adult ministry. He calls us to action, to genuinely and authentically accompany our young people, to form our young people as leaders and pray for them fervently.

Inspired by the pope, our diocese began a process in September of 2019 that asked young adults from every parish to “dream big” about how they would create a Church that engaged their generation and helped them to grow in their faith. The consultation, called a synod, was titled “Christ Lives! A Time of Dreams and Decisions.” The young adults presented 25 proposals to then Bishop McElroy, who committed to implementing them.

Our office is leading that implementation. Our office offers our complete support in forming leaders, offering workshops, and providing a welcoming environment for all in youth and young adult ministry. From our “Theology on Tap” nights to Camp Emmaus to formation workshops, our mission aligns with that of Pope Francis: to walk with our young people in their journey of faith.

Tribunal
Msgr. Steven Callahan

In December 2015 Pope Francis announced a number of changes in the process of seeking a marriage annulment. Four of these changes were most significant in making this process less cumbersome to complete.



Before December 2015, if a prior spouse lived in another diocese, our Tribunal had to seek consent from the Tribunal of that diocese before we could start the case. Since December 2015, we no longer need to obtain that consent.

The second change in procedure is when our Tribunal reaches an affirmative decision of nullity, the decision no longer goes to another Tribunal for automatic review, as was required before December 2015. Eliminating automatic review has cut about two months off the length of time for an annulment case to be completed.

Third, Pope Francis allowed certain “clear-cut” cases to be done with a briefer process on the condition that both parties consented. Examples are a marriage that came about primarily because of a pregnancy, a marriage where one or both parties were not open to children, a marriage where a party did not commit to marriage for life and reserved divorce as an option, and the case of a party who did not intend to be faithful to his/her spouse.

The fourth significant change was the request of Pope Francis to eliminate the fee for cases if the Tribunal could afford to do so. Cardinal McElroy was happy to abide by this request.

With these changes, I also took the opportunity to revise and simplify our annulment petition form to make it as easy as possible for someone to submit a case for consideration by the Tribunal.

Office for Liturgy and Spirituality
Director Noreen McInnes



When Jorge Mario Bergoglio was elected pope, in great humility, he likened himself to the portrait of the tax collector, Matthew, in the Caravaggio painting “The Calling of St. Matthew.” Matthew is portrayed, hunched over, grasping his coins, unaware that Jesus is pointing to him, beckoning him to come and follow Him. Pope Francis shared Matthew’s sense of undeserved mercy and reflected it in his motto, “miserando atque eligendo,” which roughly translates to “having mercy, He called him.”

Mercy, foundational in Pope Francis’ pontificate, led to him declaring 2015-2016 the Holy Year of Mercy. The Office for Liturgy supported the dedication of Holy Doors throughout the diocese as places of pilgrimage and promoted the sacrament of reconciliation for our diocese to fully embrace the Year of Mercy and all its benefits.

Pope Francis continued to advocate for mercy in his proclamation that the Church is a field hospital that must care for the sick, acknowledging that every one of us is sick. He emphasized that the Eucharist “is not a prize for the perfect but a powerful medicine

and nourishment for the weak.” This became the underpinning for diocesan training for liturgical ministers. Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion are taught that the minister at Mass is not to determine the disposition of the communicant.

We also encourage ministry to the marginalized through workshops for Pastoral Care of the Sick. As St. Augustine taught, we become what we receive and therefore we receive the Body of Christ, to become the Body of Christ, to serve the Mystical Body of Christ.

We are particularly grateful to Pope Francis for appointing Cardinal McElroy to the Diocese of San Diego. The cardinal shows mercy to everyone he encounters. I can attest to it because I am a recipient of that undeserved mercy.

Catholic Charities
Chief Executive Officer,
Appaswamy “Vino” Pajanor

During his public life in India, my father had the opportunity to interact with St. John Paul II and St. Teresa of Calcutta. So I was surprised by what he told me in what would become his last conversation with me before he died a week after Pope Francis was selected: “This pope is going to make our Church more vibrant with the Holy Spirit, and a place filled with faith-in-action.” This became very real to me after experiencing Pope Francis’ influence on Catholic Charities’ work in our diocese.

In “Laudato Si’,” the pope urged everyone to work collectively without geographical boundaries, and to enhance the lives of others with a focus on equity and social justice. This call to action is in sync with what Christ calls us to do in Matthew 25, which is the mission of Catholic Charities.



Pope Francis, in a video greeting, called Catholic Charities the “salt, leaven, and light that provides a beacon of hope to those in need.” This energized our work in the diocese. Just in the last couple of years during the pandemic, we created the Emergency Food Distribution Network working with our parishes to feed the hungry, we added homeless shelters for women and men, we acquired hundreds of low-income housing units for seniors so they can spend their golden years with confidence, and we responded to the migrant crisis by welcoming the stranger with love and care, and giving them hope.

Our team is constantly striving to do what the pope has asked us to do, “to be builders of the world, to work for a better world.”

We're on Pope's Journey of Love, Trust, Mercy



Ten years ago, Pope Francis walked out on the balcony of

St. Peter's Basilica and smiled gently. He quipped that his brother cardinals went to the ends of the earth to find Rome a bishop, given that he came from Buenos Aires.

His humor and humility immediately captivated many. He spoke and acted in a way that, looking back, gave a glimpse of the journey that was to come.

After introducing himself, Pope Francis went on to say, "And now, we take up this journey: Bishop and people ... A journey of fraternity, of love, of trust among us. Let us always pray for one another. Let us pray for the whole world, that there may be a great spirit of fraternity." He then said, "It is my hope for you that this journey of the Church, which we start today ... will be fruitful for the evangelization of this most beautiful city." A few moments later, he went on to ask those listening "to pray to the Lord that He will bless me: the prayer of the people asking the blessing for their bishop."

Pope Francis' words and actions on the balcony that day — his invitation to fraternity, prayer and fruitfulness — offer a pastoral, theological and social key to discern the journey we were about to begin. They help us appreciate the impact his ministry continues to have on our shared life in the

Professor of Theology,
University of San Diego

Victor Carmona



Church since then, including here in the San Diego-Imperial Valley region.

Francis' invitation to fraternity offers a foretaste of his focus on healing the wounds that mark the lives of many in the Church and beyond it. Early in his papacy (2013), the pope shared that he saw the Church as a field hospital after battle and that it needed the ability "to heal wounds and to warm the hearts of the faithful; it needs nearness, proximity." In that way, may we then bear witness to the Good News.

In his first apostolic exhortation, "The Joy of the Gospel" (2013), Francis thus invites all Christians to renew our encounter with Christ, whose tenderness never disappoints and "is always capable of restoring our joy."

The reality of our wounds calls us — especially those engaged in pastoral work — to be open to experiencing Christ's tenderness so we may relate with one another in like manner. In that fraternity, the joy of the Gospel nurtures a Church that goes forth and risks being "bruised, hurting and dirty because it has been out on the streets," rather than staying within its known confines, "clinging to its own security."

Francis' exhortation gave way to a



BLESSING: Pope Francis delivers his first blessing from St. Peter's Basilica on March 13, 2013.

Jubilee Year of Mercy (2016), which invited the Church to experience Jesus' tenderness as the Good Shepherd whose desire is for us to be merciful like the Father (Luke 6:36).

Francis trusts that a people who experience God's mercy may be able to move beyond condemnation and judgment to share God's mercy — along with the healing that it brings — with all. For Francis, that pastoral experience moves the Church to the theological task of prayerfully discerning, "What does it mean to be Christian today, 'in the here and now'?" It is a task that Francis called on the Church to take up through a worldwide, ongoing consultation known as a synod. Here in San Diego, the experience of listening to each other's joys, hopes and sorrows in the life of the Church moved us to grapple with the demand

of being a radically inclusive Church.

The Church's commitment to tend our wounds, and the prayerful theological task that must accompany such care, roots Francis' hope that we will be fruitful in giving witness to the Good News from the margins, peripheries, and borders of our world. His solicitude towards immigrants, refugees, the unhoused, members of the L.G.B.T. community, and our common home stems from such hope. A fraternal openness that in the context of the pandemic only grew more important still.

Ten years on, the Church's journey with Pope Francis continues to be marked by his ongoing invitation to fraternity, prayer and fruitfulness. May our response bear witness to "the fragrance of the Gospel."



**CALL US TO REQUEST
A FREE PROPOSAL**

1-888-996-1212

littleflower.org/specialgifts

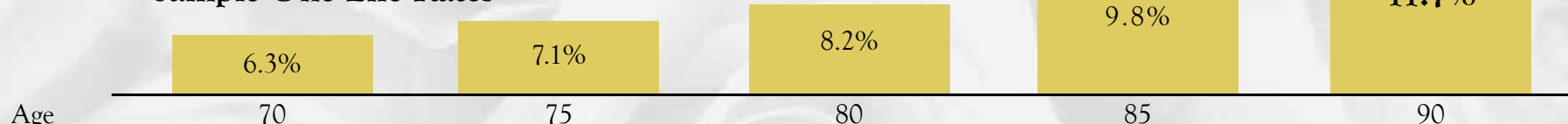
Secure Your Future with a Gift Annuity through the Society of the Little Flower.

- A \$10,000 charitable gift annuity provides an 80-year-old individual with annual payments of \$820
- Little Flower gift annuities provide fixed payments for life
- Payments are primarily tax-free through life expectancy

Your gift helps those in need through Carmelite ministries and the education of seminarians

**New
Rates**

Sample One Life Rates*



*Rates are subject to change • Minimum age 60 • For U.S. residents only
Please call our office to learn the rates for two-life gift annuities.



Society of the Little Flower • 1313 N. Frontage Rd. • Darien, IL • 60561

5K Helps Migrant Workers' Children in Mexico

The Southern Cross



Put on your walking shoes, and get ready for the Oaxaca Education Fund 5K.

The annual event, which raises funds to provide school supplies, scholarships and food stipends to young people in five Mexican villages, will be held on Saturday, April 22.

Check-in will be at 8:30 a.m. in Canyonside Park, located at 12350 Black Mountain Road in Rancho Peñasquitos. The walk will begin at 9 a.m., behind Ballfield No. 4, and will follow a route that will take participants through the Rancho Peñasquitos Preserve.

Adult participants are invited to make a tax-deductible donation of \$20; children walk for free.

Proceeds will be used to purchase school supplies for 1,500 preschool through high school students, provide partial scholarships to 23 college students, and give monthly food stipends to 48 orphaned and disabled children. The supplies will be distributed in Oaxaca in late July.

Last year's 5K raised about \$12,000.

The education fund is coordinated by Dr. Christauria Welland-Akong and Michael Akong, with the support of fellow parishioners Marti Martin and Cecilia "Cecy" Ayala and the assistance of other volunteers. Its history goes back to a ministry to migrant workers that began in 1985 at Our Lady of Mt. Carmel Parish.

Martin said that three women, Cathy Evans, Martha Wolfe and Sally



REWARDING: Cecilia "Cecy" Ayala distributes school supplies to villagers in Oaxaca, Mexico. The distribution is made possible by the annual Oaxaca Education Fund 5K, to be held April 22 this year.

How to Help

For more information or to donate, visit oaxacaeducationfund.org, call (858) 437-4001 or email drchristauriawelland@gmail.com.

Riley, had noticed campfires in the hills near their homes and went out to investigate. Discovering a migrant camp, they began bringing hot meals to the men living there.

At the men's request, the parish pastor was asked to celebrate Masses for them at the camp. Over the years, the Masses would be celebrated at different locations, and attendance fluctuated.

Starting in 2010, with much of the agricultural land in the area being converted into housing developments, most of the migrants left in search of work. So, the ministry began a new initiative to assist the families of the migrant workers they had befriended.

The Oaxaca Education Fund was established. It held its first 5K in 2010. The event has been held at its current location annually, beginning in 2015.

Martin said "there's a lot of camaraderie" at the 5K. Those who are out and about in the community will see participants and sometimes ask what they are doing, providing an opportunity to spread awareness.

The education fund relies entirely "on the grace of God and generous people" to carry out its mission, Ayala said.

"There's a lot of sacrifice and praying that we do get the funds to be able to do this," she said.

But the struggle is worth it when they see the faces of the villagers months later during the distribution of school supplies.



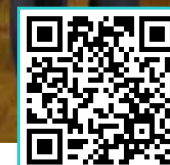
ST. JOHN'S SEMINARY
CAMARILLO, CALIFORNIA

ST. JOHN'S SEMINARY NOW OFFERS AN ONLINE M.A. IN PASTORAL MINISTRY PROGRAM FOR THE LAITY

This program will help lay ministers increase their knowledge of the Catholic intellectual tradition and improve their ministerial skills for the life of the Church. Students will be prepared to work in different areas of ministry and make professional and personal connections with others of the same mind and spirit.

For more information
Email: mapm@stjohnsem.edu
or visit www.stjohnsem.edu

A studio with professional video, audio, and lighting equipment has been built to produce visually stunning content by our world-class faculty. This studio allows our students to have an enjoyable technological experience.



Watch a brief video about the program



By Christina Bagaglio Slentz



This year, Earth Day officially celebrates its 53rd year!

Before the EPA, the Clean Air Act, and the Clean Water Act, the first Earth Day was celebrated in 1970, amidst an array of significant pollution problems. In an effort to raise awareness for the need to regulate behavior that posed a threat to the environment, 20 million Americans demonstrated across the country, and their voices were heard! In December of that year, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency was signed into existence by President Richard Nixon. For Catholics, however, caring for the planet has a much longer history, and, as the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops proclaims, “Care for the earth is not just an Earth Day slogan, it is a requirement of our faith.”

Not Just a Slogan ...

Although the theology of creation care is rooted in Scripture going all the way back to Genesis, a modern framework of this teaching began to emerge in 1891 with Pope Leo XIII’s “Rerum Novarum” (On the Condition of Labor). This encyclical, a benchmark for the beginning of Catholic Social Teaching (CST), responded to the political, economic and social issues of the Industrial Era, a time when environmental degradation began to take on a dangerous new level of impact. Over the course of more than a century, the CST principle of care for creation has continued to develop, with Pope Francis’ 2015 release of “Laudato Si” profoundly illuminating what it means to care for our common home in the 21st century.

7 Goals for 7 Days a Week

“Laudato Si” outlines seven areas for creation care action, and parishioners throughout our diocese have responded graciously. Here are a few examples:



CARE FOR CREATION: Cardinal Robert W. McElroy celebrated the winners of the Season of Creation Art Contest at St. Rita’s Church on Oct. 1, 2022. Father Scott Santarosa, SJ, blessed the trees to be planted in the neighborhood around Our Lady of Guadalupe Parish in Barrio Logan.



“Laudato Si” Action

Scan and Register



Response to the Cry of the Earth — Many parishes have begun gardens and have participated in tree-plantings, to include St. Thomas More’s pollinator garden, our religious sisters’ tree-planting at the diocesan Pastoral Center, and Our Lady of Guadalupe parishioners planting trees in their neighborhood.

Response to the Cry of the Poor — Creation Care Ministry has promoted giving up single-use plastics for

Lent in an effort to reduce the harmful effects of plastic pollution on the poor and vulnerable of our world.

Ecological Economics — At the Creation Care Clergy and Religious Workshop, Father Michael Murphy and Msgr. Mark Campbell shared their experiences as pastors implementing environmentally-friendly practices to include solarization and use of compostable products.

Adoption of Sustainable Lifestyle — St. Francis of Assisi Parish in Vista hosts an excellent community recycling program.

Ecological Education — St. Martin of Tours Academy was named a national green-ribbon school; Creation Care Ministry held a Season of Creation Art Contest for grades 4-12; and numerous creation care workshops have been held throughout the diocese.

Ecological Spirituality — St. Rita’s Parish hosted the diocesan Feast of St. Francis and Season of Creation Mass; Sacred Heart Parish in Coronado maintains a xeriscaped prayer garden; Whispering Winds Camp in Julian offers precious mountain retreat time.

Community Resilience and Empowerment — Our Lady of Guadalupe Parish and several creation care-minded members from other parishes stood in solidarity to oppose the housing of a cement warehouse in Barrio Logan that threatened to add to the historically poor air quality of the area. And they won their fight!

Ready to Participate?

Creation Care calls us to aim for these goals and engage on issues such as climate change; air and water quality; just access to/use of energy resources; environmental degradation due to plastics, toxins and other harmful substances; and the eco-marginalization of our most vulnerable sisters and brothers.

So, how can you, your family, and your parish get involved with this ministry? Register to participate in our SD-Catholic Creation Care annual cycle at <https://forms.gle/AnU5MDFQSQMC-U8u7> or scan the QR code on this page. By doing so, you will be added to our communication list, making sure that you receive notification of Creation Care events and opportunities. This connectivity will also allow you to share your progress and help us celebrate your successes as we all strive to make Earth Day every day!

sd catholic.org/
creation



Send pictures of your family or parish celebrating Earth Day to cslentz@sd catholic.org. We will post them on our Facebook and Instagram accounts.





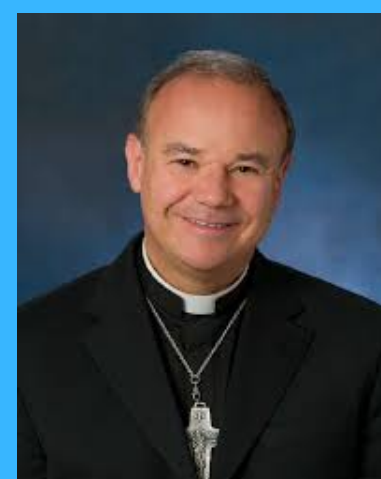
BLUE MASS

***Honoring all law enforcement
officers, firefighters and
first responders for their
service in our communities***

**SUNDAY
MAY 7, 2023
8:30 AM**

The Immaculata Parish (USD Campus)
5998 Alcala Park Way
San Diego, CA 92110

Hosted by the Office for Life, Peace,
and Justice



Bishop Ramon Bejarano

Bring your family, friends, and members of your community and join us to recognize and thank those employed in public safety and first responders.

Including: police officers, firefighters, correctional officers, 911 operators, and EMS personnel.

First Responders from all faiths are welcome.



**DIOCESE OF SAN DIEGO
LIFE, PEACE & JUSTICE**

Information:

<https://sdcatholic.org/>

(858) 490-8375

rehnow@sdcatholic.org

We Have to Make Decisions



It's inevitable. Life constantly puts us in situations where

we have to choose, from what time we want to get up to the most transcendental decisions, such as whom to marry, what job to take, what to get close to or to move away from.

All of us, from the time we can reason, have felt certain inclinations and tendencies, some that invite us to do good, to service, to fraternity, to love, and others that pull us instinctively toward aggression, envy, resentment and division.

It's the mystery of good and evil inside of us, between the universal yearning to be loved and respected and our human nature to compete and to survive. It's the struggle between our constructive and destructive capacities.

Our process for human and spiritual growth requires modeling, learning and practice in the area of "discernment," the action of choosing, of dis-

**Associate Director,
Family Life &
Spirituality**

Ricardo Márquez



tinguishing between what leads us to good or to evil.

Nowadays, discerning is a challenge, a necessity that can be overwhelming in the face of such volume of information, offers and messages we receive. Marketers know our tendencies and tastes; they attract us with images and values that promote well-being based on economic outcomes and material possessions: If you have a car, a watch, a house and can travel first-class, then you are valuable, important, admired. Our values — which guide our actions and behaviors — are defined by others who try to touch our hearts, to open our wallets and buy alluring products that promise the happiness we seek but end up being mirages that don't quench our yearning for fulfillment.

What makes up our capacity to discern in light of the Gospel? St. Ignatius

of Loyola (1491-1556), a master by experience in this art and grace, answers this question in the preparatory prayer of *The Spiritual Exercises*: "I will beg God, Our Lord, for grace that all my intentions, actions and operations may be directed purely to the praise and service of His Divine Majesty."

That's the key, the secret and the grace: That "all" actions and interior and external dimensions of our freedom be oriented and guided to service, intimacy and communion with the mystery of God the Creator, with His Redeemed Son and with the life-giving Spirit.

The intention that guides our decisions, the choosing between good and evil, between what brings us closer or pushes us away from the goal of why we were created, is cultivated from birth, in the family, through formation and life experiences.

If you don't live this experience from the earliest years, how is a seed going to grow that was never planted? If we could write in our houses and continually remember at meals to pray together that the goal of our lives

is "to love the Lord with all of your heart, with all of your mind and all of your strength ... and love your neighbor as you would yourself," we would be training our children to make good decisions when they grow up. They would have learned to recognize, sometimes by trial and error, what it is that draws us closer to what we are, the "image and likeness" of God, and what is it that leads us to experience the joy of recognizing the presence and revelation of that mystery in everything, in nature, in the faces of the people we serve and love.

Then, how do we know when we have made a good decision? By the resulting fruits. Feelings of consolation, joy and interior peace are signs of a good decision. If, on the contrary, there is devastation, anxiety and fear, those are signs of a bad one.

The art of discernment is not only the fruit of techniques or methods, but also the result of having profoundly experienced the love of God from which is graciously born the drive to choose whatever will lead us to a greater union with the Creator.

NAZARETH HOUSE ASSISTED LIVING



A Catholic, spirit-centered, assisted-living community with several levels of care. Located in Mission Valley, we offer seniors long-term residential and care options.

We provide supportive services and compassionate care in a Catholic, loving environment.

Tour Our Newly Renovated Community
Daily Mass
Hospice Care



Nazareth House



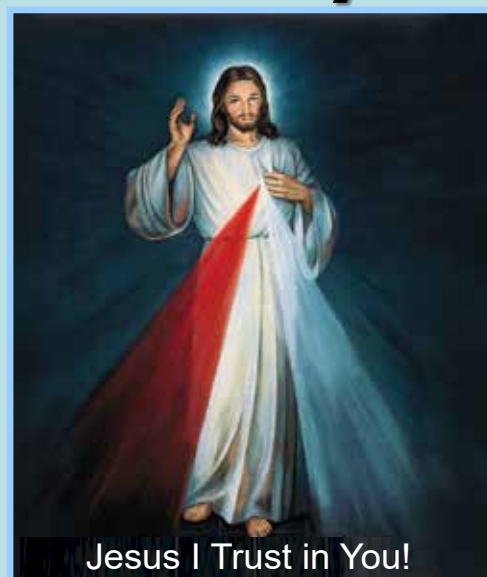
619.563.0480

www.nazarethhousesd.org

6333 Rancho Mission Road, San Diego, CA 92108
info@nazarethhousesd.org

LIC# 372000400

Celebrate Divine Mercy Sunday



- **Benediction**
- **Eucharistic Adoration**
- **Scripture**
- **Holy Hour / Chaplet of Mercy**

April 16, 2023
2:00 P.M. to 3:30 P.M.

ST. MARTIN OF TOURS

7710 El Cajon Blvd, La Mesa 91942

GUEST SPEAKER:
FR. ADNAN GHANI

Father Adnan Ghani is an Augustinian and Catholic Chaplain serving Kaiser Permanente Zion Medical Center and Alvarado Hospital Medical Center.





Obituary

Little Italy Community Mourns Tireless Priest

By Denis Grasska

Father Louis Solcia, an icon within San Diego's Italian Catholic community, died March 2.

Father Solcia, a member of the Clerics Regular of St. Paul, also known as the Barnabites, was 91.

Born in Milan, Italy, Father Solcia was ordained to the priesthood on Dec. 8, 1957, in Buffalo, N.Y., where he became a naturalized U.S. citizen in 1968.

Father Solcia arrived in the Diocese of San Diego in 1990. From then until his death, he served as associate pastor of Our Lady of the Rosary Parish, which is located in the Little Italy area and has been home to generations of Italian Catholics.

Barnabite Father Joseph Tabigue, the parish's pastor since 2011, said his late associate had a strong devotion to the Eucharist, the Blessed Mother and St. Pio of Pietrelcina.

Father Solcia led a "Eucharistic" life, said Father Tabigue, who painted the picture of a selfless man — "the very image of that body being broken and given away" — who found purpose in ministering to others.

Father Tabigue recalled the older priest's regular visits to patients at Rady Children's Hospital, his service as an unofficial chaplain for homeschooling families who worshiped at his parish, and his ministry to students including at John Paul the Great Catholic University in Escondido.

"He was always available, in spite of his age and years beyond retirement," said Father Tabigue, who described him as "truly a father."

For the benefit of his spiritual children — and even if it generated complaint letters to the pastor — Father Solcia didn't water down the Gospel and its demands. Father Tabigue said he was "never ... afraid to tell the truth," because he was "concerned about the soul of each person."

Laura Castañeda first encountered Father Solcia in 1995, after moving from Tucson, Ariz., settling in downtown San Diego, and attending Mass at nearby Our Lady

of the Rosary Parish.

She felt an immediate connection with "this old Italian priest" who celebrated the noon Mass on Sundays. It was unlike anything she had experienced before.

"He just had a way (of) making you feel like he was speaking directly to you," she said.

By the following year, Father Solcia had become her spiritual advisor.

She recalled her first session with him, when she accepted his invitation to make her confession, something that she had never done before without the anonymity of a screen.

"When I left, I felt so spiritually cleansed," she said. "This man never judged me."

Father Solcia would later officiate Castañeda's wedding in 2007 and baptize her son, Erick, and her first granddaughter, Dahianna.

Even after moving to Chula Vista, she stayed connected with Father Solcia. She would call and visit him. During his last days, as his health declined, she was among those praying at his bedside.

Castañeda fondly recalled two of the late priest's favorite sayings: "God bless you real good," his preferred way of ending phone calls and letters, and "Pray, hope, and don't worry," a popular quotation of Padre Pio's.

"He was not just a priest. He was so special," she said.

"He knew how to connect with people, regardless of your age, regardless of your gender, regardless of where you were from, regardless of whether or not you were Catholic," she said. "He just had a very warm way of connecting ... with people and just letting you know that, no matter how dark your days might be at the moment, there was always hope for tomorrow."

The funeral Mass for Father Solcia was celebrated March 9 at Our Lady of the Rosary Church. Interment was at the Barnabite Fathers Cemetery in Lewiston, N.Y.



Father Louis Solcia



Priest Assignments

The following has been announced by the Office of the Cardinal, effective July 1:

Father Jay Bananal will be pastor of San Rafael Parish.

Father Gerardo Gomez Zapien will be pastor of St. Anthony of Padua Parish, National City.

Father Andrew Kunambi will be pastor of St. Didacus Parish.

Father Emilio Magaña will be pastor of St. John of the Cross Parish, Lemon Grove. (Father José Luis Muro will end his assignment at St. John of the Cross Parish on June 30 to return to Rome to complete his Licentiate in Dogmatic Theology studies.)

Father Fernando Maldonado will be pastor of St. Charles Parish, Imperial Beach.

Father Michael O'Connor will be pastor of St. Pius X, Chula Vista.

Father William Zondler will be pastor of Sacred Heart Parish, Ocean Beach.

The **Paulist Fathers** have been entrusted with the service of St. Gregory the Great Parish and will be assigning two priests to minister there.

DONATE YOUR CAR



CarsForBabies.org

- FREE Vehicle Pickup
- All Vehicles - Running or Not
- 100% Tax Deductible

BENEFITTING

Light and Life



Knights of Columbus

Call: 858-333-8751

MOBILE
ULTRASOUND
CHANGING LIVES
SAVING LIVES



News Briefs

Parish Presenting Good Friday Tenebrae Service

LA MESA — St. Martin of Tours Parish will present “A Choral Tenebrae Meditation on the Passion by Lani Smith” at 7 p.m., Good Friday, April 7, in the nave of the church.

The service will combine powerful choral music, readings and dramatic lighting. Communion and veneration of the cross will follow.

For information, call (619) 465-5334.

Lecture Series Ongoing at St. Thérèse of Carmel

Catholic Answers, one of the nation's largest lay-run apostolates, and St. Thérèse of Carmel Parish in Carmel Valley are teaming up to present the “On Fire for the Faith” lecture series.

The monthly series features a lineup of leading Catholic apologists and lay evangelists. The Friday evening events begin with wine and cheese at 6:30 p.m., followed by a lecture at 7 p.m. A free-will offering will be accepted.

The next talk will be “Devil in the Castle: St. Teresa of Avila, Spiritual Warfare, and the Progress of the Soul” (April 21) with Dan Burke, president of the Avila Institute for Spiritual Formation.

For information, call (858) 481-3232 or email parishoffice@stocsd.org.

Widowed, Divorced Invited to Healing Weekend

OCEANSIDE — Beginning Experience, an almost 50-year-old international ministry that helps the widowed, divorced and separated move beyond grief, will hold its next



The diocese's Catholic communities come together annually for a celebration of faith and culture at the Pentecost Mass for All Peoples. Cardinal Robert W. McElroy will celebrate the Mass on May 27 at the San Diego Miramar College gymnasium, starting at 11 a.m. Afterward, the cultures will host a festival with food samples and entertainment. All are invited to experience the joy and beauty of the Universal Church.

weekend retreat April 28 to 30 at Prince of Peace Abbey in Oceanside.

The cost is \$300, which covers individual rooms, food and materials. Scholarships are available.

For information, email beginningexperiencesd@gmail.com or call (858) 748-2273 in English or (330) 607-8774 in Spanish.

Fashion Show to Be Held April 29

CARLSBAD — St. Elizabeth Seton Women's Auxiliary will host a spring fashion show.

The event will take place from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m., Saturday, April 29, in the par-

ish hall at St. Elizabeth Seton Church.

Tickets are \$45, which includes a lunch of grilled shrimp salad, strawberry shortcake, coffee, tea and iced tea; a vegetarian option is also available. There will be raffle baskets of \$200 to \$300 value; raffle tickets are \$10 each or three for \$20.

Tickets available at ses-womens-auxiliary.square.site. For information, call (760) 822-2338.

Retreat Offers After-Abortion Healing

Rachel's Hope will hold an after-abortion healing retreat for Catholic (and Catholic-friendly) women.

It will be held May 19 to May 21 at the diocesan Pastoral Center. Mass will be included.

The cost to attend is \$60. Partial scholarships are available. Housing is available if needed.

Visit RachelsHope.org. Register at (858) 581-3022 or rachels_hope@juno.com.

BILINGUAL PSYCHOTHERAPY

Based in the Catholic Faith

Sliding fee scale, and various insurances accepted.



Mary L. Hill
MA LMFT (Lic. # 83383)
760-687-9883

SPECIALIZING IN:

- Anxiety and Depression
- Parenting
- Bereavement and Loss
- Marriage & Family Relationships

marylehillmft@gmail.com
www.marylehillmft.com
1650 Linda Vista Dr. Ste. 210,
San Marcos, CA 92078

ATTENTION ADVERTISERS — We appreciate your business.

However, errors sometimes occur. Please read your ad the first day it runs. If you should find a mistake in your ad, please let us know right away, by calling (858) 490-8266. We'll be happy to make the necessary changes. Tearsheets are provided upon request.

LIMITS OF LIABILITY — The Southern Cross assumes no financial responsibility for errors or omissions of copy. It is the advertiser's responsibility to read ad proofs before publication and notify us of any errors. We reserve the right to adjust in full any error for which we are responsible by publishing a corrected insertion. Requests for adjustments must be made within 30 days of ad publication. All copy must be approved by the newspaper, which reserves the right to request changes or reject an ad. Publisher reserves the right to cancel any ad at any time. All advertising is subject to credit approval.

Catholic Christian Spiritual & Psychological Guidance

Marilyn M. Marshall Ph.D.

Call (858) 450-3358

mmcmarshall@gmail.com

La Jolla, CA
92037



(Lic. #MT20588)

IN LOVING
Memory



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



Goodbody
MORTUARY
Since 1920

(619) 582-1700
goodbodymortuary.com

5027 El Cajon Blvd.
San Diego's Leading
Catholic Funeral Directors
FD LIC #790

Every Detail Remembered | Dignity

Receive Free Information with No Obligation by Contacting Us.

Obituary

Msgr. William Cuddihy

A retired priest of the Diocese of San Diego, Msgr. William Cuddihy, died Jan. 14 after a long illness. He was 90.

He was born in Kilkenny, Ireland, where he studied for the priesthood and was ordained on June 3, 1956, at St. Mary's Cathedral.

After a few assignments as an assistant pastor, Msgr. Cuddihy was appointed pastor of St. Madeleine Sophie Parish in Trona, Calif., which was then part of the Diocese of San Diego, serving there from 1965 to 1968. He later served as pastor of Immaculate Heart of Mary, Ramona (1968-1970); St. Patrick's, Carlsbad (1970-1973); St. Louise de Marillac, Crest (1973-1977); Our Lady of Refuge, San Diego (1977-1981); and St. Catherine Laboure, San Diego (1981-1999).

He was the founding pastor of Our Lady of Refuge Parish.

Msgr. Cuddihy, who was made a monsignor in 1985, retired from active ministry on July 1, 1999.

In a message to the diocese's priests on Jan. 15, Cardinal Robert W. McElroy recalled Msgr. Cuddihy as "a splendid member of that band of Irish priests who came to San Diego to share their faith and lives with the people of our Church."

The funeral Mass was Jan. 25 at San Rafael Parish.



WINNERS: Good Shepherd Catholic School won the regional Catholic Academic Junior High Decathlon on March 4 at St. Augustine High School.

The Southern Cross

Good Shepherd Catholic School won first place overall in the regional Catholic Academic Junior High Decathlon, and went on to represent the Diocese of San Diego at the national level.

The regional competition, which included 10-member teams from 21 local Catholic schools, took place March 4 at St. Augustine High School.

"I think the overall performance of the (Good Shepherd) team speaks to the effort and dedication these students put in," said Matthew Palpal-Latoc, head coach for the past five years.

"We, as a school, start our preparation in late August and meet about once a week until the competition," he said, "but many of these students spend countless hours studying at home individually or on group calls."

The coach, who serves as director of athletics at Good Shepherd, said the team reacted to its victory with "smiles and obviously happy tears."

In addition to Good Shepherd, the other overall winning teams included: St. Michael's School (2nd), Stella Maris Academy (3rd), St. Didacus School (4th), St. Patrick

School, Carlsbad (5th), and Our Lady of Guadalupe Academy, Calexico (6th).

The teams competed in nine subject areas — Current Events, Fine Arts, Math, Literature, Science, English, Religion, Social Studies and Logic — as well as in a "Super Quiz."

"The dedication, hard work and perseverance displayed by our decathletes are truly commendable, and their achievements are a source of pride for Catholic education in the Diocese of San Diego and beyond," said Dr. Julie Cantillon, associate superintendent for the Diocese of San Diego's Catholic schools, who serves as chair of the National Catholic Academic Junior High Decathlon Executive Committee.

She said, "Good Shepherd Catholic School deserves special recognition for their outstanding performance, which serves as a testament to their skills, teamwork, and commitment to the mission of (the academic decathlon)."

In the national competition, held online March 25, Good Shepherd was set to face off against the champions of 13 other regional competitions and the top two teams from an independent league that includes teams from throughout the country. The results of the national competition were not known at press time.

Catholic Academic Junior High Decathlon: catholicajhd.org. Regional winners: smore.com/r2m3f.

Imperial Valley

CATHOLIC CONFERENCE

UNITED IN CHRIST

UNIDOS EN CRISTO

Vincent Memorial Catholic High School

APRIL 22 2023 8AM-3PM

KEYNOTE SPEAKER: BROTHER MOISÉS GUTIÉRREZ, OFM, PhD

ENGLISH AND SPANISH WORKSHOPS PRESENTED BY OUR DIOCESAN OFFICES:

Location: 525 Sheridan St, Calexico, CA 92231	OFFICE FOR EVANGELIZATION AND CATECHETICAL MINISTRY	OFFICE FOR LIFE, PEACE AND JUSTICE
Confessions available: 8:00-8:45 AM	OFFICE FOR LITURGY & SPIRITUALITY	OFFICE FOR YOUTH & YOUNG ADULT MINISTRY
Cost: \$35 (Lunch included) Costo: \$35 (Almuerzo incluido)	SAN DIEGO CATHOLIC SCHOOLS	OFFICE FOR FAMILY LIFE AND SPIRITUALITY
Group discount: \$25 (per person) for groups of 4 or more.		DIOCESAN INSTITUTE
Register by calling: 858.490.8232 or		
Online: www.sdcatholic.org/ivcc		





Yuhara at Rachel's Promise

Dear Friends and Family of Catholic Charities:

Easter is a new light after sacrifice and tribulation. The Resurrection of Jesus Christ reminds us that his final sacrifice was done to lift us from loneliness, weakness, and despair into strength, hope, and happiness. It is a time to rebuild ourselves after the challenges we have faced and finding the courage to seek help in the hope of a better tomorrow.

Right now, this message could not be more appropriate for our team that works at Rachel's Programs. This past year has been a time of growth for our services for unhoused women in San Diego. We have been the leading organization serving unhoused women in San Diego for 40 years through this program.

Rachel's Programs is comprised of Rachel's Women's Center, a trauma-informed, recovery-oriented, drop-in day center serving 70-80 women daily and often the entry point into Catholic Charities continuum of services; Rachel's Night Shelter, an interim 35-bed overnight women's shelter; and Rachel's Promise, a new low-barrier 40-bed 24/7 shelter designed to meet the needs of women facing multiple complex barriers to housing, focusing on sheltering women that are living with serious medical conditions or who are not accepted into confidential domestic violence locations.

Last March a special soul came to Rachel's Women's Center. Yuhara, a 46-year-old woman, was dropped off by a taxi after being released from a local hospital. She was standing outside Rachel's in her hospital gown asking for help. Our team jumped into action and welcomed her by first giving her clothing, then a safe place to rest, and a warm cup of tea to drink as she shared her story.

Yuhara came to the mainland by stowing away on a cruise ship when she was 14 years old. She left Hawaii to escape the abuse she was facing in hopes of a better life. Yuhara had some family in Long Beach, but after some time she made a life for herself. She would buy cheap trinkets and craft them herself. At the swap meet, she was able to sell her treasures and save up enough money to buy a van to live in.

Yuhara would spend time with her family, but her independence and self-perseverance kept her working and creating trinkets as she followed her dreams of one day being able to afford an apartment on her own. As she noticed she was losing a significant amount of weight, she decided to seek medical help. She spent many months in the hospital doing tests where she was diagnosed with cancer.

Without a permanent home, the local hospital dropped Yuhara off at Rachel's Women's Center to get support. She has been part of Rachel's family for a year now. Our team has supported her through chemo, doctor appointments and has been her only emotional support. Early this March, Yuhara's condition became too critical, and her medical team determined that Rachel's Promise would be her final destination. Yuhara is still fighting to be here and continues to receive unconditional support from our team and her family at Rachel's Promise.

As we reflect on our lives this Easter, we reflect on the joy in our lives, and the trials and tribulations we have overcome. It is a time to be thankful for all the blessings in our lives as well as the blessings of being in each other's lives. Yuhara has been a blessing to all those who have met or spent any time with her. You can read and watch her full story on our website as she shares her own experience with the only family she has at Rachel's Promise.

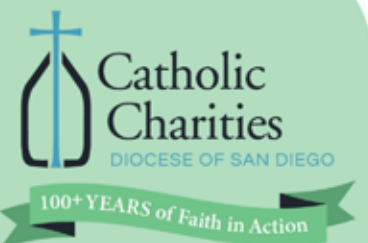
We are asking for your support this Easter. Without sharing your time, talent, and treasure Catholic Charities would not be able to sustain all the programs and services we provide. All donations made to Catholic Charities are critical in sustaining our services, and 100% of what is donated goes toward programs and services for the most vulnerable. Rachel's Women's Center has been operating in the same location for nearly 40 years. Catholic Charities has been providing help and creating hope for more than 103 years, but our commitment is much deeper, and our vision is much larger than simply sustaining. We need to do more. We want to do more. This Easter, will you put your faith into action to help us do more?

Donate today using the envelope included or by visiting ccdsd.org/giving.

Sincerely,

Appaswamy "Vino" Pajanor
Chief Executive Officer

March, 2023
Encampments line the
streets of downtown
San Diego



*Be the
"Good Samaritan"*

Support Catholic Charities
initiative of Neighbors
Helping Neighbors.

Give Online Today:
ccdsd.org/giving

Mail Donations To:
3888 Paducah Drive
San Diego, CA 92117

Call to Give:
619-323-2841

Text YOUANDME
to 44321