



# Renewing Our Church Together

DECEMBER 2019

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

In this joyful season of Advent, we prepare our hearts to receive God's most precious gift, the gift of his only Son, given to you and to me and to every person.

Our lives, our faith — truly all that we have and all that we are — is a gift that comes from our Father's loving hands. And he gives it all to us for free. Not because we could ever earn it or deserve it. But simply because he loves us.

Jesus taught us to worship our Father by giving thanks to him for all his gifts. This is the meaning of the word Eucharist.

I see this spirit everywhere in our *Called to Renew* campaign. People from all across the Archdiocese of Los Angeles are coming forward to thank God for his gifts by offering their own gifts.

I am humbled by your generosity to God and his Church. Your gifts are building Christ's Church on earth and helping to spread the joy of his Gospel and the truth of God's mercy and love. So, thank you.

In this holy season, I wish joy and peace for you and your families and loved ones.

I ask the Blessed Virgin Mary to keep you close in her maternal love. May she help us all to receive the precious gift of Jesus on Christmas, and may she help us to give thanks to God with all our hearts.

+ José H. Gomez U.

Most Reverend José H. Gomez  
Archbishop of Los Angeles



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### Year-end giving considerations

The end of the year is the perfect time to share God's many blessings with the Archdiocese through *Called to Renew*.

Many people choose to gift assets that have increased in value for the tax advantages. If you itemize tax deductions, you may receive an income tax deduction up to the full market value as well as avoid capital gains tax on the appreciation.

A year-end distribution from your IRA can also be tax-advantageous. If you are 70½ or older, the IRS requires required minimum distributions (RMDs) from tax-deferred retirement accounts. A qualified charitable distribution (QCD) can satisfy your RMD for the year, up to \$100,000, excluded from your taxable income.

Gifts must be postmarked by December 31 to be eligible for a tax deduction.

Credit card donations, stock transfers, and gifts of securities must be received by 11:59 p.m. PST on December 31.

The Archdiocese requests receipt of RMDs by December 16 to ensure timely processing.

For more information, contact Advancement Services at 213-637-7341 or [advancementservices@la-archdiocese.org](mailto:advancementservices@la-archdiocese.org).

Tax ID #95-1642382

*This information is not intended to be legal or tax advice. Please consult with your legal, tax, and financial advisors for specific advice on these matters.*

## VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT: DEACON TOMÁS AND SYLVIA GARCÍA Strengthening a special parish for our deaf Catholic community through *Called to Renew*

Deacon Tomás and Sylvia García know the importance of *Called to Renew* to the Holy Angels Church of the Deaf — and not only because they are the campaign co-chairs. Their involvement with the parish dates back nearly 25 years as volunteers, parishioners, and now staff members.

"The parish is dear to LA's deaf Catholic community," says Deacon Tomás, who has been deaf since childhood. "For many of us, it's our only home. For some of us, it is home away from home."

Parishes solely serving deaf communities are not common, says Sylvia, coordinator of programs. Holy Angels provides deaf Catholics with direct communication with parish leadership and staff, without sign language interpreters, and easy participation in the Catholic faith.

"The deaf community, like any other culture, has a need to worship in its own language," Deacon Tomás explains. "Having a parish of its own provides the benefit of being able to fully participate in parish life. Other parishes may have an interpreted Mass, but the participation, for the deaf community, stops and ends there. By having a parish where everyone is signing, all the time, members are full, active, and conscientious participants in the Body of Christ."

*Called to Renew* will allow the parish to replace two roofs that have leaked and damaged the interiors of their buildings. In addition, through Restorative Justice, the campaign will support deaf community members who are incarcerated. "Currently, there are no chaplains in our local jails that sign or who can provide deaf inmates with the support they need," Deacon Tomás says.

When the couple prayed over their own gift to the campaign, they realized how priceless the support and understanding they have received throughout the years from their parish and its pastors is. "Holy Angels Church of the Deaf brought me back home to my spirituality, to feeling Jesus and God within each one of the members," Sylvia says. "I was married here as well as confirmed my Catholic faith. The community has been here through three miscarriages as well as the pregnancy, birth, and raising of my two hearing children. We have celebrated their Baptisms, First Communions, indigenous rites of passage as well as our daughter's quinceañera. We are eternally grateful."

As campaign co-chairs, they sought to lead by example, Deacon Tomás says. "Folks think that this campaign is about 'them,' but really, this campaign is about 'us.' After all, we are 'one.'"



## Parish Spotlight

## St. Julie Billiard, Newbury Park

The timing of the *Called to Renew* campaign could not have been more perfect for St. Julie Billiard Parish.

"Since it's our 50th anniversary this year, we wanted to undertake a 50-year legacy project," says Father Paul Hruby, pastor.

The Newbury Park parish requested to participate during the campaign's Pilot Wave in 2018, in order to have the funds to build an exterior plaza. It raised \$1,912,640 — 186% of its assigned goal of \$1,030,000 and 106% of its enhanced goal of \$1,800,000.

Currently, St. Julie Billiard's campus consists only of the church, parish hall, and parking lots, offering limited options for parishioners to meet after Mass and for ministries and events. "The plaza will provide a large outdoor gathering area," Father Hruby says.

The designated gathering space will feature tables and chairs and a retractable awning, and the plaza will include a vestibule facing the parish hall and a new bell tower, too. The exterior of the church will be re-plastered as part of the project, and a play yard and bocce ball court added.

The parish will also use *Called to Renew* funds to install a new air conditioning and heating system for the church, replacing the more than 30-year-old air conditioning unit original to the church. The new, smaller unit will be relocated to the roof — clearing valuable space for the plaza. "We've had this big unit sitting right outside the church," Father Hruby says. "It wasn't inviting at all. The plaza will change that."

The parish will also move a large electrical box and trash enclosure to prepare the site for construction, which will begin in the new year and be completed mid-summer. Archbishop José Gomez broke ground on the plaza when he celebrated St. Julie Billiard's anniversary Mass in November.

Father Hruby notes that the parish began planning for the plaza after renovating the church seven years ago. At that time, they worked together to brighten the space with skylights and new chandeliers, murals, and a 300-year-old crucifix from Mexico.

"It's a very inviting and prayerful worship space, and now we're trying to extend that outside with the plaza," he says.

*"The whole look of the church inside and out has been slowly evolving over the last several years."*

**Father Paul Hruby**  
Pastor

<b>Parish Goal</b>		\$1,030,000
<b>Enhanced Goal</b>		\$1,800,000
<b>Total Raised</b>		\$1,912,640
<b>Percent of Goal</b>		186%
<b>Average Gift</b>		\$8,174





## Focus: Serving the Vulnerable

Every December, the Archdiocesan Office of Restorative Justice hosts a Christmas party for as many as 300 families with loved ones who are incarcerated, bringing joy to a community broken by crime and often left feeling isolated, ashamed, and alone.

"It's a way of reminding them that they are part of society," says Gonzalo de Vivero, director. "They feel part of something without having to share their pain or their struggles. They know they're not the only ones with the same issues."

On any given day, more than 22,000 men, women, and juveniles are incarcerated in the Archdiocese of Los Angeles. In a spirit of evangelization, the Restorative Justice Ministry reaches out to these individuals as well as their families and their victims — groups often not clearly demarcated from each other in many communities.

"Restorative Justice brings everyone back into God's embrace, whether they are on the giving or receiving end of a criminal action," Gonzalo says. "It returns the senses of hope, value, self-worth, and self-esteem for everyone who's involved."

### What this will do

*Called to Renew* will direct as much as \$15 million to expanding services and support to the incarcerated, their families, and their victims through additional personnel and training.

### Why this is important

As Catholics, we believe Jesus — who was brought to trial, crucified, buried, and brought to life again — offers hope and renewed purpose for every life.

## An Update on Our Campaign

Thank you for your generous support!

### Overall Campaign Goal

\$500 Million

Raised to Date: \$318,638,786

Percent of Goal: 64%

Number of Gifts: 21,743

### Lead Gift Goal

\$250 Million

Raised to Date: \$208,410,387

Percent of Goal: 83%

Number of Gifts: 52

### Parish Campaign Goal

\$250 Million

Raised to Date: \$110,228,399

Percent of Goal: 44%

Number of Gifts: 21,691



Want to learn more? Visit [CalledToRenew.org](https://www.CalledToRenew.org)