



Catholic Charities of Los Angeles, Inc.

The Sage

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Santa Barbara County Advisory Board Member is a Treasure

Beloved Associate Pastor of St. Barbara Parish at Old Mission Santa Barbara, Fr. Larry Gosselin, OFM, has served on the Catholic Charities’ advisory board in Santa Barbara County for many years.

Fr. Larry has ministered to the poor around the world in over 33 years of as a priest. He has also authored two books of religious poetry, *Hidden Sweetness* and *Unshadowed Light*. His book about his close friend, St. Teresa of Calcutta, titled *I Have Been Waiting For You*, shows us the personal relationship he had with Mother Teresa. He was asked by the Missionaries of Charity Sisters to impart the final blessing on Mother Teresa before she was laid to rest, and was also present at her canonization.

Fr. Larry has inspired many people to support Catholic Charities’ activities for the poor and homeless in Santa Barbara. The Santa Barbara Region of Catholic Charities is blessed to have him on its advisory board. ❀



The national documentary series *The Visionaries* profiles Catholic Charities of Los Angeles. The *Visionaries*, now in its 23rd season, is produced through a non-profit television company that creates documentaries about individuals and organizations working to make a positive difference throughout the world.

The documentary about Catholic Charities is titled “Where Charity and Love Prevail.” It was released to PBS stations nation-wide on March 30. This episode of the *Visionaries* features three of the agency’s programs – Archdiocesan Youth Employment, Esperanza Immigrant Rights Project, and Good Shepherd Center for Homeless Women and Children.

The host is acclaimed actor Sam Waterson. He begins by highlighting Catholic Charities’ Centennial this year: “For 100 years, Catholic Charities of Los Angeles has

worked to serve the vulnerable and poor... This year is not only a time of celebration and looking back on the last century. It is also a time for looking forward, to expand the agency’s services in anticipation of the next 100 years.”

Monsignor Cox, Executive Director of Catholic Charities, reflects in the video: “Catholic Charities always goes back to our mission. We are here to manifest the presence of Christ in the most vulnerable, not to forget the past, thank them for the seeds for us to harvest. May we, through the grace of God and the help of everybody who is a big part of Catholic Charities, plant the seeds today that future generations in the next 100 years will harvest.”

The video may be accessed and viewed at <https://catholiccharitiesla.org/>. ❀

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Message from the Executive Director, Rev. Monsignor Gregory A. Cox

Catholic Charities of Los Angeles officially started our Centennial year with a retreat lead by Archbishop José Gomez for the Board and staff of Catholic Charities. The focus was his pastoral letter, *For Greater Things You Were Born*, and how it applies to our work at Catholic Charities.

The retreat began with Archbishop Gomez celebrating Mass for the retreatants. His homily highlighted the importance of the dignity of life from conception to death. He invited the staff to see Christ in the clients whom we serve, so that we will treat them with the dignity and respect they deserve.

After the celebration of the Eucharist, we gathered in a large conference room to listen to the speakers and then to discuss their presentations. Everyone at the retreat was asked to read and reflect, beforehand, on Archbishop Gomez' pastoral letter, which he wrote specially for the people of God in Los Angeles.

Archbishop Gomez gave the main presentation. He shared his thoughts as to how his pastoral letter is relevant to Catholic Charities. He invited us to enhance our relationship with Christ through regular prayer and daily reflection of the Scriptures. These good habits will develop the strength and love we need to practice the corporal works of mercy in our service to the poor and vulnerable.

After Archbishop Gomez' counsel, the Board and staff discussed, in small groups, the ways in which we could implement the pastoral letter in the next hundred years. We agreed that we should increase not only our services, but also our compassion to those in need. Our daily prayer and reflections will remind us to have a joyful desire to work with God's grace in order to meet the needs of those we whom we will serve in the next hundred years. ❖



Archbishop José Gomez blesses the retreatants at the conclusion of the Mass. On the right are Monsignor Gregory Cox, Executive Director, and Michael O'Brien, Board of Trustees' member.

INVEST Program Provides Second Chances

Catholic Charities of Los Angeles' Archdiocesan Youth Employment Services program (AYE) recently initiated the INVEST Program to create employment opportunities for adult probationers in Los Angeles County. One special INVEST client, Nathaly Ramirez, who is currently on adult probation, is being provided with education, job training, and employment services by INVEST staff at the East Los Angeles/West San Gabriel Valley America's Job Center of California (ELA/WSGV AJCC).

Nathaly took advantage of all the programs offered and went into an on-site High School Diploma program at the AJCC with a partnering agency, New Opportunity Charter School. She also enrolled in a Certified Medical Assistant Training program that New Opportunity Charter School offers and is now attending school full-time, as well as the Medical Assistant Training Program after school.



Tatiana Soria, Career Development Specialist, Nathaly Ramirez, and Mariam Rojo, Business Service Representative, meet at the ELA/WSGV AJCC.

In addition, AYE staff provided Nathaly with an employment opportunity at the ELA/WSGV AJCC as a Resource Assistant through a County-funded Transitional Subsidized Employment (TSE) program. This allows her to gain "hands on" professional work experience and increase her chances of obtaining permanent employment. Nathaly is making huge progress toward her goal of sustainable employment leading to economic self-sufficiency. All she needed was a second chance.

Nathaly is very thankful for all the support and assistance she has received. She recently stated "I would not be able to do all of this without AYE's INVEST services, caring staff, and school mentors, all within the ELA/WSGV AJCC. Without them, I would probably be back to facing barriers and possibly be incarcerated." ❖

Making Strides in Moorpark: New shoes for good grades!

Moorpark Pantry Plus offers a number of programs for low-income families to support healthy, successful lives. The Back-to-School Shoe Program rewards students who stay in school and excel, maintaining good attendance and grades. Those who get straight A's receive a gift certificate for a new pair of top-level shoes from Kohl's!

Program Coordinator Patricia Calderon tells of one student who tried to talk her out of a pair of shoes even though he didn't have the grades. "I'm sorry" she told him. "If I give you shoes just because I feel sorry for you that's not going to help you." She explained that his grades were not good enough for him to qualify and told him that, if he improved, he could come back the next year to get new shoes.

The following year, he returned with improved grades, but wanted the top-tier shoes for a reward. Patricia had to tell him that his scores were not good enough for the top-tier prize. He went home



Araceli Paralia gets new shoes through the Back-to-School Shoe Program.

frustrated, but determined to win his prize! The next year, he proudly showed Patricia his straight-A report card.

Patricia is seeing the results of this program in the lives of students. More than twenty earned straight A's last year. "Thanks to our generous donors who make the program possible. They are helping Moorpark children learn that hard work will enable them to achieve their goals. That's a lesson they will benefit from their entire lives!" ❖

SAVE THE DATE!

23rd Annual

Catholic Charities



Golf Tournament

MONDAY, JUNE 17, 2019

ANNANDALE GOLF CLUB, PASADENA

FOR MORE INFORMATION,
CALL (213) 251-3495 OR VISIT
WWW.CATHOLICCHARITIESLA.ORG

San Gabriel Makes Imprints in the Fight against Poverty

The San Gabriel Region of Catholic Charities recently held its annual "Lenten Footprints: Making Tracks for Neighbors in Need" event, open to students of all Catholic high schools, middle schools and elementary schools in the San Gabriel Pastoral Region, on the track of Bishop Amat High School in La Puente.

San Gabriel Regional Bishop David O'Connell opened the event as students representing Bishop Amat, St. Madeleine, St. Joseph La Puente, and St. Denis youth ministry each led a decade of the rosary. Participants reflected on the sorrowful mysteries of the rosary, offering each decade for vulnerable populations impacted by various social issues in the community, as they walked the track.

Along the course, students also had the opportunity to learn facts about the effects of poverty in the region and the impact of their gifts in serving the community. While the event's primary focus was to build social awareness and promote justice for the marginalized, participants also were able to participate in various fun activities, such as Zumba and face painting. Attendees enjoyed a meal, courtesy of In and Out, which provided a food truck on site.

San Gabriel Region especially thanks Bishop Amat High School. ❖



Catholic Charities' San Gabriel Region staff assist students with obtaining volunteer hours for "Footprints." (Left to right: Nallely Gutierrez, San Juan Diego Community Center; Armine Lalaian, Continuous Quality Improvement; Priya Tharayil, San Gabriel Regional Director; and Mauricio Zavala, San Gabriel Region advisory board member)



Catholic
Charities
of Los Angeles, Inc.

1919 100 Years 2019

Celebrating our Centennial.

Centennial Gala Celebration

Saturday, October 5, 2019

6:00 p.m. Reception; 7:00 p.m. Dinner
Entertainment, Music and Dancing
Cocktail Attire

Cathedral of our Lady of the Angels

Center at Cathedral Plaza

For more information,

SArnold@CCharities.org

or (213) 251-3495

Good Shepherd Center & Homeboy Industries Collaborate to be “Life Changers”

Viviana Villa was born in Oregon, the oldest of 11 children, and lived in foster care with a total of 36 families. The longest Viviana stayed with a family was one month, because foster parents would typically contact DCFS workers and ask that Viviana to be removed from their care.

At age 13, Viviana ran away from foster care and her probation officer. For two years, she was homeless in Los Angeles, sleeping on different people’s couches. During this time, Viviana met Fr. Greg Boyle (aka “Fr. G”) of Homeboy Industries.

At 15, Viviana was arrested, sent back to Oregon and put in youth authority (YA). While incarcerated, Viviana wrote letters to Fr. G who would write back and assure her that, as soon as she was out, she would have a guaranteed job at Homeboy.

In August 2018, Viviana was released from YA and her parole ended. She returned to Los Angeles, met with Fr. G and began working in maintenance at Homeboy Industries. But, from last August to February of this year, she was, again, homeless in Los Angeles.

Viviana was referred to Catholic Charities’ Good Shepherd Center for Homeless Women and Children, where she has lived since mid-February. Viviana, who is pregnant, qualified for the Department of Mental Health’s Housing for Health program. She is currently waiting to receive her Section 8 voucher.

Viviana was recently promoted to Case Manager Assistant at Homeboy, where she helps with faxing, filing paperwork, and giving tours. She plans to continue working there toward a higher position, since she considers Homeboy her family. Viviana is excited to move out on her own and is motivated to provide the best life possible for her baby and herself. ❖



Homeboy Industries and Good Shepherd Center have been life changers for Viviana and her unborn baby.



**Catholic
Charities**

of Los Angeles, Inc.

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Address Service Requested



For 100 years, Catholic Charities has been providing emergency and supportive services for poor and vulnerable people in Los Angeles, Ventura and Santa Barbara Counties.



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