

# The Catholic Voice

MAY 2023 • VOLUME 61 • ISSUE 5

**The 10th anniversary  
of the Episcopal Ordination  
and Installation as Bishop  
of Oakland of the Most Rev.  
Michael C. Barber, SJ**

MAY 25, 2023





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## Editor's note

In the company of Friends. That's where I found myself on a Friday evening, between visits from the atmospheric rivers.

Every three years, SPRED – Special Religious Education Department – holds Confirmation. The last Confirmation took place during the pandemic, with the candidates and their sponsors sitting in chairs, with social distance between them. Families watched from their cars in the parking lot of St. Paschal Baylon Church in Oakland, listening to the Mass through the internet.

It was nonetheless a holy and memorable time. A photo of Bishop Barber anointing the forehead of a masked young woman graced the cover of *The Catholic Voice*.

In 2023, 16 candidates and their sponsors, families and catechists filled the pews. Three priests joined Bishop Barber at the altar. SPRED is a one-to-one ministry, with each Friend, as participants are known, having her or his own catechist.

To see the faces of the candidates as they approached the altar, and as I glanced back at the families who remained in the pews, I knew I was privileged to witness a holy moment.

Join the celebration on Pages 12-14 of this issue. Many thanks go to Michelle Martinez-Kilty, whose ministry as coordinator of SPRED is inspiring, for making this article possible.

Gratefully, Michele Jurich, Editor, *The Catholic Voice* ●

# The Catholic Voice

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## *CELEBRATE*

The 10th anniversary of the  
Episcopal Ordination  
and Installation of the  
Most Rev. Michael C. Barber, SJ  
as Bishop of Oakland

12:10 p.m. Mass | May 25, 2023  
The Cathedral of Christ the Light  
Oakland





# TEN YEARS OF Prayers Answered

AN INTERVIEW WITH BISHOP MICHAEL C. BARBER, SJ

**A**t 12:10 p.m. on May 25, the Mass commemorating the 10th Anniversary of the Episcopal Ordination and Installation as Bishop of Oakland for the Most Rev. Michael C. Barber, SJ will be celebrated at the Cathedral of Christ the Light.

In anticipation of the anniversary, Bishop Barber was asked about the progress on his three goals for the Diocese of Oakland – the Sunday experience, the corporal and spiritual works of mercy and forming missionaries disciples. He offered insight into his prayers that have been answered over these 10 years.

INTERVIEW BY MICHELE JURICH  
EDITOR, *THE CATHOLIC VOICE*

PHOTOS FROM *THE CATHOLIC VOICE* ARCHIVES

## The Sunday Experience

The first goal is the reverent celebration of the Mass. I see it really strongly at the Cathedral, because this is my home parish. The kind of liturgy we have but also the outreach we have for people. Father Brandon Macadaeg has the forming missionary disciples as a big part of this parish Sunday experience.

Since Covid, the congregation has grown steadily here and the support — all signs of God's work. It's all different kinds of people. You look at the video of Sunday Mass: different ethnicities and nationalities. That's where I see it real clearly, because I live here.

Second place I saw it recently: There's a group called The Bay Wide Young Adult Mass, from all the dioceses and counties around the bay. Every month or two they have a big Mass that they invite young adults to; it moves around. They've had three in our diocese. I've celebrated two of them: One at the Old Mission and just last Saturday, they chose the Newman Center/Holy Spirit in Berkeley.

They have a formula. They turn out the lights in the church. They bring in hundreds of candles and votive lights. They put them outside the church to lead you to the front door. And down the aisle, and all over the altar, the candles are lit. In Berkeley they only had a spotlight on the crucifix. It immediately creates a sense of prayer and intimacy with God. It's palpable.

It was a rainy, cold night. I said, "We're not going to get many people."





Ordaining priests outdoors in 2020



Above: Serving breakfast at People's Park in Berkeley



Left: Opening the Holy Door at the beginning of the Extraordinary Year of Mercy

And they filled it up. They had 150, 200 young adults. They bring their own schola choir. They do polyphony and chant. They do sacred music.

After Mass, I asked one of the young people, "Are you from Berkeley?"

"No, I'm from South San Jose."

"You drove all the way here for this?"

"I'd drive farther for a Mass like this."

This is what we're trying to do in our diocese. Create this kind of place where you experience Christ.

To me, this was the proof of the pudding. When I saw these young people who were thirsty and drove so far – San Mateo County, San Francisco, from our diocese and the North Bay.

I see it more and more in our parishes as priests pay more attention to the liturgy, celebrate it with more reverence and lead people into that reverence.

### The corporal and spiritual works of mercy

We got a kickoff on that in 2016, with the Year of Mercy. It's always a year of mercy in the Catholic Church. The Catholic Church exists for merciful purposes: I have spoken with Catholic Charities, St. Vincent de Paul, Catholic Worker. Recently I visited the Oakland Catholic Worker. At Berkeley Catholic Worker, there's J.C. Orton, whom I admire so much. It shows what one person can do. To keep that breakfast at People's Park going all by yourself for 25 years. It attracts a lot of volunteers, and it has drawn

people into the church, without even trying to. Not that it's proselytizing. It's not. People are attracted to a Church that does that.

Father Mac Lingo, who wasn't Catholic, who came down from his dorm and started helping out. He had no religion. That was his first step to meeting Catholics and getting interested in the Catholic Church.

At his own expense, he went through the Dominican School of Philosophy & Theology to get a master's in philosophy. That's where he discovered his vocation.

### Forming missionary disciples

The third goal is forming missionary disciples. We've had numerous workshops for our priests: Father James Mallon from Nova Scotia. I gave all the priests his book, *From Maintenance to Mission: Divine Renovation*. We had Pat Lencioni, who is from our diocese, speak to us about leadership in parishes and how to recognize and form a team of lay people. To try to inspire enthusiasm in our priests to grow our parishes and not grow complacent.

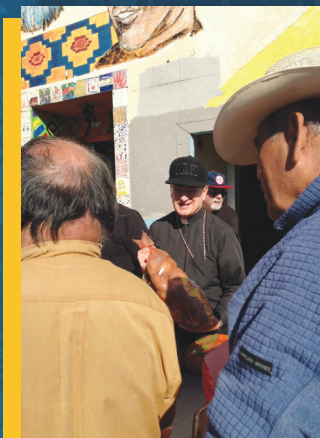
Father Mallon said to invite lay leadership, whoever it is you rely on.

I was so excited. Priests brought the people they rely on. At the end of it, I told Father Mallon: I want all our parishes to go from maintenance to mission.

He tells me: "Bishop, you'll be lucky to get 15 percent."

And he's right. The ones that are participating are showing fruit.





**Distributing food at Oakland Catholic Worker**



**Serving lunch at St. Vincent de Paul Dining Room, Oakland**

## What are the prayers God has answered for me?

The Franciscan Friars of the Renewal coming to our diocese. They encapsulate the corporal and spiritual works.

They wanted to come to our diocese. I kept offering this parish and that parish. I took them around. "It's too nice," they'd say.

Until we went down International Boulevard and they saw the barbed wire and fences at St. Bernard's. "Now we're talking. This is where we need to be."

St. Bernard convent was empty. They have been fixing it up with their own hands. The chapel is wonderful. They are making the garage into a kitchen, and they're going to have a mobile food van, rather than have all people have to go there to be fed.

They attract people who want to help them. All these carpenters show up and painters show up. "What can I do for you?" People want to help them, because they're reflecting Christ.

This is just as important: They serve the spiritually poor.

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**“ THE FRANCISCAN FRIARS OF THE RENEWAL . . . ENCAPSULATE THE CORPORAL AND SPIRITUAL WORKS . . . ONE OF THE BEST THINGS THEY DO FOR US: THEY GIVE YOUTH RETREATS.**

One of the best things they do for us: They give youth retreats. I said Mass recently in Antioch. Kids from youth groups. Friday, Saturday, Sunday, some from as far as San Leandro. On the last day, we had Mass. All the kids on basketball court. Their parents in bleachers. The Fathers talked about the gifts of the Eucharist. Posters of young saints around the room.

When I go around doing confirmations, some parishes ask the candidates to write a letter to the bishop, "Why I want to be confirmed." Almost every letter that comes in says "the best part of my preparation was the retreat we got to go on," which meant they had a time of intimacy with our Lord.

That brings me to the spiritual works of mercy.

## Youth Retreat Center

Restoring the Lafayette Youth Retreat Center. After the unfortunate death of the longtime caretaker, it needed a lot of work. We're putting on a new roof. Painting, new heating and air conditioning. New sewer line, windows. Make it an attractive place. We are starting to have day retreats. We'll have overnight retreats when it's all up to code. But that's another prayer answered. I owe it all to Monsignor John McLaughlin, who Cardinal O'Malley of Boston has shared with us. He has been raising the money singlehandedly. A lady came forward the other day and said, "I'd like to pay for the repairs."

It's going to be over a quarter-million dollars.

"The Holy Spirit sent me, Bishop, and I want to help you."





**Greeting Sisters after a Bay Wide Young Adult Mass**



**Christmas Mass at Santa Rita Jail, 2013**



**With Pope Francis, 2014**

Thank you, Lord, thank you, Lord.

The Franciscan Brothers built the chapel. It never had a chapel. This will all then come to influence our youth.

## Repairing the Cathedral

Everything is pretty much finished, safer, all behind the scenes. It had to be done. It was St. Joseph, who fixes things. I prayed to St. Joseph constantly. I'm grateful to him. And of course all the helpers we had, the attorneys, structural engineers and architects.

## A convent for the Carmelite nuns

When I got here, the Carmelite nuns were living in cabins on a ranch. In all kinds of weather, they had to go out and draw water from a pump. We were able to get them the closed monastery and bring it up to code. Through the generosity of benefactors, we were able to buy the convent and repair it.

Their faces reflect something of heaven. The love that's always there, the beauty, the innocence, the joy. It's a big pick-me-up when you go there. I know any good that's come to our diocese comes through prayer. They've constantly been praying for our diocese.

“ (THE CARMELITE NUNS’) FACES REFLECT SOMETHING OF HEAVEN. THE LOVE THAT’S ALWAYS THERE, THE BEAUTY, THE INNOCENCE, THE JOY. IT’S A BIG PICK-ME-UP WHEN YOU GO (TO THE CONVENT.)”

## Cristo Rey De La Salle East Bay High School

Another prayer answered was the Cristo Rey high school. That was a deep desire. When I first got here, I said, This diocese needs a Cristo Rey high school. This is the kind of diocese these schools are meant for. Somehow we'll do one. Again, our prayers were answered. People came to our help. It's like a miracle. It took so many people. Steve Wilcox was instrumental. He formed the leadership team; the recruiting teams; all these different teams. He brought it all together.

At the end, we had to show the Cristo Rey Foundation that we had \$5 million. We had \$4 million.

I went back again: Lord, we're this close. I know you want this school.

An anonymous donor gave the million dollars.

The Lord does hear and answer our prayers.

To see the first graduating class come through, and the school enrollment is steadily growing. Stephen Murphy, another gift of God, for the school. The kids couldn't do the jobs because the businesses were closed, so they had to raise more money and they still kept it all together.

## Jail

Those are some of my favorite Masses. I know they appreciate it the most. When we've gone there for confessions at Santa Rita and visited the pods, the guard would clap his hands. Men were all doing recreation. I'd say, "Hello, I'm Bishop Barber from the Catholic Church, here with some priests and volunteers. We believe Jesus gave us the power to forgive sins.





**Cristo Rey De La Salle East Bay High School, St. Elizabeth Campus  
Class of 2022**



**Getting COVID-19 vaccine, 2021 – and encouraging others to do the same**

“I’m going to be over here in the corner, strictly confidential. Any sins you want to have forgiven and washed away and never be held against you. These ladies will talk to you about the Bible and some of the other things Jesus says.”

People always come. You’d think they’d say, “Get the heck out.” People come.

Talk about grace!

## **DIOCESAN INITIATIVES**

### **Racial justice**

When I go around the diocese, we have people from many different countries and ethnicities. They often don’t understand the history of racial prejudice in the United States. It’s not out of any malice. Just from countries where that doesn’t exist. They come over here, and they don’t understand the pain and the history.

When I saw the Father Augustus Tolton play, I thought:

This is the perfect way – through the Gospel – to explain the history of racism and slavery in the United States.

Not from politics, which is divisive, but from the Gospel which is unitive.

If you see that play, you get it. When you see a Catholic family, escaping slavery and trying to make a living, and trying to practice their faith, being blocked by people in that Church, yet persevering in that same Church. They could still see Christ even through the veil; through the sacraments. Good priests and people were always there.

That was the context for the apology.

Part of the purpose of the Racial Justice Task Force is education, but from the Gospel perspective, not political. Political is divisive. The Gospel inspires love, compassion, healing, mercy, forgiveness and more resolve that we don’t have this again.

### **Diocesan Eucharistic Revival Congress**

This ties in with my first priority for the diocese, reverent celebration of the Eucharist and the Sunday experience.

It also includes fellowship, homily, instruction, service projects and ministry. You come out of Mass and say: How do I carry out the message I just heard?

We’re having this Congress and three-year Eucharistic Revival to help people realize the great gift we have in Jesus Christ in the Eucharist and in the Mass.

Especially since Covid, and we saw people weren’t rushing back to Mass. We had to re-emphasize our teaching on this and also provide the experience that when people go to Mass, they feel they are with Jesus.

When we have Eucharistic Adoration, they have time to let their soul breathe, they have friend to talk to and the Lord has time to speak to them. They quiet down and have time to hear Him.

One of the signs that this is working is when we had synod meetings in our diocese. I went to the youth and young adult sessions. Most had never been to a Holy Hour or Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament. We finished with Benediction.

**“  
YOU COME OUT  
OF MASS AND  
SAY: HOW DO  
I CARRY OUT  
THE MESSAGE I  
JUST HEARD?**





**At St. Patrick's Seminary, with the seminarians of the Diocese of Oakland. March 24, 2023**

I remember when I was walking with the young adults from the church to the hall, they said, "What was that? That was fabulous."

No matter what we talk about, we won. Now you know what we have to share. The Franciscan Friars of the Renewal bringing all the teens. We had a Holy Hour. It puts you in a place where you can talk about faith in a very positive and constructive way.

## **Mission Alignment Process**

The Mission Alignment Process has been a great success, given the amount of extensive lay consultation we had. We had 37 different meetings in parishes, deaneries and regions. People came and they shared. I wanted all the people in the diocese to know that we know. Look at places where the diocese is growing and places where it is shrinking. And that we'd be able to put our churches, priests and resources where most of the people are. And make sure no one gets left behind. No one will ever be left behind.

With all the good lay participation and also the priests, I think we will be announcing some of the directions and some of the things I've learned. We're already starting. I look at the merging of St. Paschal and St. Lawrence O'Toole. People were very hesitant to merge their parishes; holding onto their own identity and their own small group. When we had the MAP meeting, we invited them. They said: When we're coming together, it is so much better. Same in Alameda where they merged St. Albert and St. Philip Neri. St. Anthony and Mary Help of Christians. Same thing, Christ the King and St. Stephen. We have to evolve with the times.

## **On saying yes to Oakland**

When I was asked to be bishop, I had a lot of fear and trepidation to take on the job. Pastorally I looked forward to the preaching and liturgy. There were a lot of challenges here and the debt.

As I said in my homily when I was ordained, if we do the Lord's work, the help will be there. That has been proved true in my eyes. The Lord has sent us the people we need, the helpers, the leaders have come forward. Steve Wilcox, Rick Medeiros. Superintendents Kathleen Radecke and Andrew Currier. Cristo Rey De La Salle East Bay High School. Catholic Charities, SVdP, people came forward.

Praying for vocations. We don't have have a whole lot, but the guys we have I trust them completely. Men show up at my office wanting to become priests. I see the Holy Spirit touching hearts. This is not our doing. We have to be the models for the priesthood to which they are called.

One of the best things for me in the future: We have a good number of young priests, ordained 12 years or less. Great morale. They get along well with each other, the joy, the brotherhood. We had a retreat with silence all day and social and dinner where they speak. After dinner, we'd have optional roundtable. There was so much energy there and the openness.

That's why I have a great hope for our future. They guys we have you can trust. They are holy; they hearts are in the right place; a sense of devotion and piety.



# A look back

## AT MAY 25, 2013



**In a joyful celebration that incorporated the many gifts of the diverse communities that make up the Diocese of Oakland, the Most Rev. Michael C. Barber, SJ, was ordained and installed as the fifth bishop of Oakland on May 25, 2013, at the Cathedral of Christ the Light.**

At the end of the Mass, the new bishop had a few words for those gathered.

"People have asked me, 'what is your vision as bishop?' I would like to do for Oakland what Pope Francis is doing for the whole church."

He was interrupted by applause.

"My vision is this: The priests take care of the people. The bishop takes care of the priests. And we all take care of the poor, and the sick, and the suffering."

The new bishop thanked three people "here today who have played an important role

in my life." He thanked the Most Rev. John Rafael Quinn, archbishop emeritus of San Francisco, who ordained him to the priesthood in 1985.

"The priest who baptized me as a baby at Mission Dolores Church back in 19-hundred-and ... He's here today. Father John Cummins, the second bishop of Oakland.

"Thirdly, the Dominican sister who taught me in the eighth grade. You may not realize it but this sister has taught every person in the Diocese of Oakland because she taught me the faith, and I will hand it on to you. In honoring her, I honor all consecrated religious women, all teachers and all catechists in our diocese. Thank you, Sister Mary Jude."

He addressed the issue of what he is going to do about the diocesan debt, which stands at \$114.7 million.

"I don't know yet," he said, "but I do know this: If we are generous to responding to God and taking care of his people, God will take care of us.

"In 58 years of life, it never entered my mind that I would be bishop of Oakland, until three weeks ago," he said. In his initial nervousness, he said he recalled that Archbishop Pietro Sambi, the previous apostolic nuncio had told a priest who was nervous about being made a bishop: The Lord himself is going to be bishop of your diocese. You're only going to help him.

"That's what I'd like to do. I'm helping our Lord be the bishop of this diocese. I know I'm unworthy, but I do know one other thing: That for all eternity, in the mind of God, to be bishop of Oakland has been my vocation. With God's help, and your prayers, and the love of Mother Mary, I intend to fulfill it." ●

**“MY VISION IS THIS: THE PRIESTS TAKE CARE OF THE PEOPLE. THE BISHOP TAKES CARE OF THE PRIESTS. AND WE ALL TAKE CARE OF THE POOR, AND THE SICK, AND THE SUFFERING.”**

EXCERPTED FROM THE  
JUNE 10, 2013 ISSUE OF  
THE CATHOLIC VOICE

PHOTOS BY  
JOSE LUIS AGUIRRE







# The spirit of SPRED JOY OF CONFIRMATION

BY MICHELE JURICH | PHOTOS BY CHUCK DECKERT



Tyler Garrison chose St. Christopher for his Confirmation.

**S**IXTEEN MEMBERS OF THE SPRED COMMUNITY – AGES 18 TO 40 – RECEIVED THE SACRAMENT OF CONFIRMATION FROM BISHOP MICHAEL C. BARBER, SJ ON MARCH 10 AT ST. PASCHAL BAYLON CHURCH, DIVINE MERCY PARISH IN OAKLAND.

The special religious education department, coordinated by Michelle Martinez-Kilty, had much to celebrate that evening.

With sponsors, parents, family and friends filling the pews of the church, the Mass included familiar elements of a SPRED liturgy – a homily of a few well-chosen words, accompanied by gestures to emphasize them and a line of familiar catechists using gestures to accompany the Responsorial Psalm.

The candidates brought their spirit and joy to the

altar as they approached Bishop Barber, each with the name of the saint she or he had chosen.

Choosing a saint was a task Tyler Garrison, 27, took to not only to heart, but to research.

Tyler, who attends the SPRED Center at St. Ignatius of Antioch Parish in Antioch, had entered SPRED in 2019.

Tyler started attending SPRED, his mother, Juanita Garrison, said, “to be among the Friends who have similar ways of looking at Jesus.”

“He’d go to church, following along,” she said. “When it came time to receive the Body and Blood of Christ, he didn’t understand.”

But he did have a question: What does it feel like to receive the Body and Blood of Christ?

His mother offered this description: “If you were lost for a minute, that you’d be found.”

Tyler had also witnessed tragedy in his family: His beloved father had a heart attack and died, with Tyler and his mother present.

“I believe with all my heart that he understood what was happening,” Juanita said of her son.

At the hospital, as the family was saying goodbye, Tyler asked his mother, “Are the angels going to take my Daddy?”

Assured that they were, Tyler asked, “Is that a long journey? What does he need to travel?”

Tyler has comforted his mother over the past year. “He has a level of understanding like nothing I have ever seen,” she said. When her grief brings tears, Tyler says to her, “Don’t cry, Mama, because you said Jesus has him.”

Tyler received First Communion at St. Ignatius Parish this year, and also traveled to Monterey with his family.

At Mission Carmel, his mother invited him to look in the gift shop at the selection of prayer coins with images of saints. A attached card gave a short history of a saint.

Tyler took his time in the gift shop, reading the backs of the coins. “All by himself, he reached a decision,” she said.

He told the family, “I’m going to be Tyler St. Christopher,” he said, acknowledging that St. Christopher provides protection on journeys. “I’m going on a lot of journeys.”





“

## SPRED MISSION

**To integrate people with developmental disabilities into the faith and life of the Church.**

His mother believes he found the saint meaningful to him. “He remembered his Dad’s journey to heaven. His mind was made up.”

He confirmed his choice by doing additional research on his computer.

He received the gift of a St. Christopher’s medal for his confirmation.

As he sat with his family awaiting the beginning of Mass, Tyler spotted a familiar face: Father Jimmy Macalinao, who had served at his family’s parish, Holy Rosary in Antioch.

Do you think he could bless the medal, Tyler asked his mother.

Maybe after, she suggested. She approached Father Jimmy to ask him if he could do it later.

Father Jimmy’s response: Right now!

The look on Tyler’s face and short conversation with Father Jimmy were memorable.

“St. Christopher for him may have meaning we don’t know about,” Juanita said.

SPRED and the sacraments he has received this year have made their mark on Tyler.

“Whatever he was missing, he now has.” ●



*“My friends, Jesus says to you today: Come, Holy Spirit, spirit of love, give us your light. Come light our hearts. Make us strong. Give us God’s life.*

**– The homily of Bishop Michael C. Barber, SJ at the SPRED Confirmation Mass. A SPRED homily is repeated three times. At this Mass, it was given in English, then Spanish, then English. The homily’s words are accompanied by gestures familiar to the SPRED community.**



Catechists illustrate the Responsorial Psalm with gestures. Friends and families participate from the pews.



Mario Juarez, All Saints SPRED Center, Hayward

**“He likes SPRED. Whatever Mario likes to do, I will support him. He loves SPRED!”**

**“Mario le gusta SPRED! El encanta SPRED!”**

– The mother of Mario Juarez, who attends the All Saints SPRED Center in Hayward. He is a parishioner at St. John the Baptist Parish in San Lorenzo.



Andrea de los Angeles Herrera, SPRED Model Center, Oakland

**“It was a very important moment.”**

– Sandra Moreno, mother, who said that the Model Center is Andrea’s favorite. They used to live near the Model Center but moved five years ago. Sandra brought her to a SPRED center near their new home. “She walked out,” Sandra said. “She is non-verbal. But I understand what she’s trying to say.” Of her SPRED community, Sandra said, “She loves to be there. She loves the people she’s around.”



# The spirit of SPRED



The parents of Geraldo Barajas are happy their son is attending SPRED and will continue to bring him to SPRED as long as Geraldo wants to attend SPRED. He attends the SPRED Model Center in Oakland and is a parishioner at St. Joachim Parish in Hayward.

Anthony Magana attends the SPRED Model Center in Oakland and is a parishioner at St. Anthony Parish in Oakland.



Bernardo "Bernie" Sanchez is the son of Elsa and Jose Sanchez. Bernie attends the St. Clement SPRED Center in Hayward.

*"It meant so much to us as his parents and his family to watch Bernardo (Bernie) receive all his sacraments. Watching the Bishop put the oil on his forehead and then receiving Holy Communion was a beautiful moment. I felt that as parents, we had completed a journey, a page in Bernie's life. Being of Catholic faith and because of Bernie's special needs, it did not stop him. Thank you, SPRED, and all who have coordinated this wonderful program of friends."*

– Elsa Sanchez, mother of Bernardo Sanchez



Join the SPRED Community  
for Mass followed by our

## SPRED

### the Word

Dinner - Dance - Fundraiser

**Saturday, April 29, 2023**

**Liturgy:** 5:00pm

**Dinner:** 6:00pm

**After Dinner:** Dance, Raffle & Prizes

**Location:**

St. Perpetua Catholic Church  
2454 Hamlin Rd,  
Lafayette, CA 94549

**Dinner Menu:**

*Main Course:* Chicken Picatta

*Sides:* Mixed green salad, vegetables, mashed potatoes, rolls

*Dessert & Coffee will be served*

\*Vegetarian options available - upon request

**Cost:**

\$45 per person  
Kids \$15 per plate

If you cannot attend, please donate at  
<https://www.oakdiocese.org/support-spread>

Online registration deadline 4/21/23

Register online at <https://rb.gy/be8tf6>

or Call 510.273.4979 for tickets





## A VISIT TO SAN QUENTIN PRISON, MARCH 7, 2023:

**Front row:** Father Manuel Chiera, SJ, chaplain, San Quentin Prison; Bishop Jaime Soto, Diocese of Sacramento; Archbishop Salvatore J. Cordileone, Archdiocese of San Francisco; Bishop Michael C. Barber, SJ, Diocese of Oakland; and Debbie McDermott, director for Restorative Justice, California Catholic Conference

**Back row:** Julio Escobar, director of Restorative Justice Ministry, Archdiocese of San Francisco; Deacon John Storm, administrator of Catholic Restorative Justice Ministries, Diocese of Santa Rosa; Bishop Oscar Cantú, Diocese of San Jose; and Kathleen Domingo, executive director of the California Catholic Conference

California Catholic Conference photo

# Four California Bishops visit San Quentin

When four Northern California bishops visited San Quentin Prison on March 7, Bishop Michael C. Barber, SJ of Oakland may have been the one with the most experience there.

Bishop Barber started visiting the prison when his brother, Father Stephen Barber, SJ, served as chaplain at San Quentin.

“Most of all the men I have known there – I started there 20 years ago when my brother was chaplain – have all been paroled. Even the lifers have been paroled. Just a few were still there.”

Bishop Barber joined his brother bishops – Archbishop Salvatore Cordileone of San Francisco, Bishop Oscar Cantú of San Jose and Bishop Jaime Soto of Sacramento – in visiting inmates on death row and solitary confinement.

“The chaplain invited Catholic inmates to come to the chapel that afternoon if they wanted to meet the bishops,” he said. The California Catholic Conference estimated 40 inmates met with the bishops.

“We broke into small discussion groups,” Bishop Barber said. The inmates were asked: Anything you want to talk about or ask us? What can we do for you?

“A lot of them asked for more Catholic reading materials: Bibles, but also Catechism, also the Magnificat. They like reading about the saints, short prayers. They love those,” he said.

“Part of the outreach of the Order of Malta is to those who are incarcerated. I’m sure they will provide it. They love to do that.”

The chaplain asked the bishops to hear confessions, noting that inmates do not have many opportunities for the sacrament.

“We went into the sacristies and the confessionals and we heard confessions for an hour and a half,” Bishop Barber said. “People came. And people came. And people came. This is marvelous.”

During the bishops’ visit with the Catholic inmates, one gave testimony.

“He spoke for about 45 minutes, no notes, on how his early life was drugs, gangs and crimes as a teenager, in and out of county jail,” Bishop Barber recalled.

Eventually, he made his way to San Quentin, where, Bishop Barber said, “he came to know the Lord.”

“It was someone giving him a holy card of the Virgin Mary. He’s Latino; it’s Our Lady of Guadalupe; and it has a prayer on the back,” Bishop Barber said. “‘I might as well take it.’ He puts it up on the wall. Looking at her in his cell and reading

that prayer, something started in him. He met the priest, got instruction, got his sacraments, now he is evangelizing in the prison.”

He shared the challenges of evangelization, noting that he has a lots of discussions and arguments because a lot of people criticize the church.

Bishop Barber said he is sending some help, through the chaplain: An inmate in a Georgia prison, using the Catholic Catechism, rewrote it in language the incarcerated can understand.

“I want to get this book to him, noting ‘You can be the one giving the catechism there.’”

Bishop Barber has experience developing catechists behind bars.

“My brother was chaplain 20 years ago. I was head of the School of Pastoral Leadership for the Archdiocese of San Francisco,” he said. “We started a chapter of the School of Pastoral Leadership at San Quentin to train inmates to be catechists and do lay ministry there.

“It was very successful. They had to go to classes, know Scripture, theology, spirituality and prayer. They became the leaven

in the prison. We might need to get that going again.”

Representatives of the California Catholic Conference joined the bishops on their visit and reported additional comments:

“The visit to death row was especially heart-wrenching, but even there I saw a desire for a deeper spiritual life,” said Archbishop Cordileone. “One of the condemned is even a Benedictine oblate, who renews his vows annually with the prison chaplain! And all this despite the very oppressive conditions: a cell about 5’ x 15’, with a sink, a toilet, and a table that doubles as a bed. They are confined in that space most of the time. And yet, the ones we spoke with were happy to see us and very conversant.”

“Each conversation with the men in East Block was unique and personal,” said Bishop Soto. “Of course, this was because so were they. There was little reference to the awkward circumstances of speaking through bars. Worries about their family, questions about scripture, curiosities about the world outside, and interesting books filled our conversations.”

Before the visit, Bishop Cantú told the Catholic News Agency that the bishops were visiting the prison “simply to be a reminder of God’s presence and of compassion and a reminder that Jesus had interactions with two criminals on the cross: one who derided Jesus, the other who asked for compassion and forgiveness.” ●



# Parishes are gearing up for the Eucharistic Revival

WHAT'S BEEN GOING ON AROUND THE DIOCESE, AND WHAT YOUR PARISH CAN DO TO PARTICIPATE



BY MEGAN ARTEAGA

Megan Arteaga is coordinator of youth ministry and communications at Santa Maria parish in Orinda. She is a member of the steering committee of the Diocesan Eucharistic Revival Congress in September.

**A**s we approach the time for the Diocesan Eucharistic Revival Congress, it's been fun for me to look around the diocese and see what different parishes have been doing in answer to Bishop Barber's call to "revive and rekindle the fire of the Eucharist in our hearts." With this Revival, we've been given a chance to reflect upon the centrality of the Eucharist in our lives and to reaffirm our call to be a people nourished, fed and renewed by the Eucharist itself.

THE THEME FOR OUR DIOCESAN EUCCHARISTIC REVIVAL CONGRESS COMES FROM THE GOSPEL OF MATTHEW: "I AM WITH YOU ALWAYS." AS I LOOK AROUND OUR DIOCESE, IT'S TRUE! CHRIST IS HERE WITH US ALWAYS, AND PARISHES ARE SPOTLIGHTING THE SPECIAL WAY HE IS PRESENT IN THE EUCHARIST.

## TALKING THE TALK

A few months ago, the Church of Santa Maria in Orinda held two Days of Recollection focused on the Eucharist led by Father Christopher Fadok, OP. In addition to his role as Prior Provincial of the Dominicans at St. Albert's Priory, he also regularly helps out at the Church of Santa Maria's Sunday Masses – and was happy to share his knowledge and gift for teaching with our parishioners at these sessions as well.

The first talk Father Chris shared was for liturgical ministers. He gave many of them

an entirely new perspective on and appreciation for the Eucharist. "You hear bits and pieces [of teachings on the Eucharist] in homilies and [bulletin] articles, but I hadn't had anything like that since I was in CCD!" one of our parishioners said, chuckling. "He really has a way of making complicated things more approachable." This event helped our volunteers realize that their ministry during the Mass points to the Lord and helps all the rest of us in the congregation remain focused on Christ's holy presence.

The second talk was for the teens in the Confirmation program, and was followed by what was for many of them their first time at Eucharistic Adoration. "It was really peaceful," one of the teens shared. "I liked that there wasn't any pressure to do anything, but I could just sit there with Jesus." It was very simple – no music or Scripture or preaching, but it was a perfect place for the teens (and their families, who had also been invited) to rest in the Lord and reflect on and digest all they had heard in the talk.

## WALKING THE WALK

A little further south, planning is underway for a solemn Eucharist Procession along the streets of Dublin on June 10, as St. Raymond Parish celebrates the 62nd anniversary of its founding – which happens to coincide with the Feast of Corpus Christi the following day!

This will be the first time the impressive 10-foot monstrance, acquired two years ago through the collaborative efforts of members of the parish community led by the local Comité Hispano, will be brought out in procession as a public recognition of God's abundant grace and Real Presence. It's a sight to behold, and will be a great symbol of Christ's presence with us during the procession.

"As a member of the Legion of Mary, I love group prayers, and nothing compares to praying the Rosary in a procession," said Sylvia San Miguel, the point person for Eucharistic Adoration at St. Raymond. "The harmony of voices praying and singing in unison to honor our Lord takes our devotion to a higher spiritual level. First-timers



to experience a procession are generally in awe of just how moving it is, and want to participate again.”

Details will be forthcoming on the St. Raymond parish website, and everyone is welcome to come and participate.

## LIVING THE LIFE

Still more parishes participated in 24 Hours for the Lord in the weekend following Ash Wednesday, hosting 24 hours straight of prayer and penance with the Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament as we began the season of Lent. Volunteers scheduled themselves to sit with the Lord in prayer by the hour, and priests were available at certain times to hear Confessions. Surprisingly, many parishes found that the darkest hours of the night were

some of the ones that filled up with volunteers first – it seems there are many who seek quiet quality time with the Lord free from the distractions of the day’s hustle and bustle.

Even if your parish hasn’t done anything like Eucharist talks, a big procession or 24 Hours for the Lord, there are many ways you can get involved in the Diocesan Eucharistic Revival. The top three are to pray (for the Revival, for our congregations, for our religious and for our clergy), to register (yourself and your family and friends) and to support our Congress with advertisements, sponsorships and vendor participation.

But those aren’t the only ways. Feel free to get creative in your own parish. Do you have a small-but-persistent

young adult population? Ask the Franciscan Friars of the Renewal to do a Eucharist-focused Theology on Tap at a local pub. Does your parish have a school? See if you can get a few like-minded parents together to organize a student-led, kid-friendly Holy Hour with Jesus. Is your parish filled with “church grandmas” (as my friend calls them) who would be more than happy to provide food and babysitting in the Parish Hall for a Parents’ Night Out with Jesus in the church, where the parents can have discussions, share stories and bond in the presence of Christ while knowing their kids are safe and close? Or maybe you sometimes feel like you’re the only one left in your parish who cares – in

which case, going to sit with the Lord yourself in prayer for some renewal of your own soul and those of your fellow parishioners may be the best way to participate in the Revival for you.

And if all else fails, just come to our Eucharistic Revival Congress! ●



The Eucharistic Revival Congress will be held over two weekends in September of this year: a Spanish-language track on Sept. 8-9, and an English-language track on Sept. 15-16. Youth Nights for those aged 11-17 will be on the Fridays, with days for adults on the Saturdays. We’re looking forward to a time of prayer, talks, discussion, Mass, Adoration and a public procession of the Blessed Sacrament. Register at [www.oakdiocese.org/eucharisticrevival2023](http://www.oakdiocese.org/eucharisticrevival2023).



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**BY CARRIE MCCLISH**

Carrie McClish is a writer, photographer, artist and SNJM Associate. She is a parishioner at Sacred Heart Parish in Oakland.

**PHOTOS BY CHUCK DECKERT**

## THE HEALING POWER OF **World Day of the Sick**

“

**We just wanted to be here with  
our Blessed Mother.”**

*Bernadette Ezile, who traveled with a group  
from Holy Spirit Parish in Fairfield to the  
Cathedral of Christ the Light in Oakland.*

Ezile was drawn to the liturgy, held on the Feast of Our Lady of Lourdes, because of her deep connection to St. Bernadette Soubirous, also known as St. Bernadette of Lourdes. “She is my patron saint,” she said.

Additionally Ezile brought two special intentions to the Cathedral that were close

to her heart. One was for her native country of Nigeria, which had seen the abduction and murder of several priests in recent months; the second was a prayer of Thanksgiving for the recovery of her son who had been very sick. “There is so much to ask for.”

Hundreds of people brought their personal petitions of healing to the Oakland Cathedral, nearly filling it to capacity, for the annual observance of the World Day of the Sick. This day of prayer was started by Pope John Paul II in 1992 to encourage Catholics to remember and pray for those who are sick and suffering as well as for their caregivers.

Here in the Diocese of Oakland, the occasion brought together Catholic leaders from both sides of the Bay – San Francisco Archbishop Salvatore Cordileone joined Oakland Bishop Michael C. Barber, SJ, to concelebrate a special healing Mass.

The event also marked the debut of composer Frank LaRocca’s new Mass, “Messe des Malades: Honoring Our Lady of Lourdes.”

In addition to a variety of women and men religious, the gathering was attended by a number of fraternal societies, including the Order of Malta, the Order of the Holy Sepulchre, Knights of Columbus and the Knights of St. John. Members of the Order of Malta, which organized the liturgy, established the Malta Clinic at the diocesan chancery office building. The clinic has had more than 45,000 patient visits since its opening in 2008.







For Helga D'Arcy, who, like others, was anointed with the oils of healing, the experience left her feeling exuberant. She had traveled to the Cathedral aboard a chartered bus from St. Stephen Parish in San Francisco to pray for her son, who was living with cancer. "I felt something go through my body when I got the blessing," she said. "I asked God to bless my son, too," added the 86-year-old woman. "The Lord never gives us more than we can carry."

The liturgy likewise left Ina and Michael Maeda, members of St. Anthony Parish in Oakley, feeling blessed. "I thought it was wonderful," said Ina Maeda, of the gathering, which, she noted, brought together so many different groups of people. While both she and her husband have been challenged by health issues, this gathering lifted up their spirits.

"We can't go to France," said Michael Maeda, "but this was the next best thing." ●





# Sharing a heroic Asian saint:

## INDIAN-SRI LANKAN ST. JOSEPH (NAIK) VAZ

BY FILOMENA SARASWATI GIESE

*As the Asian diaspora grows in Europe and America, more and more Asian Catholics are part of the parishes and dioceses of Western countries. I would like to share the heroic and beautiful life story of a great Asian saint during Asian American Pacific Islander Heritage Month.*



St. Joseph (Naik) Vaz worked to revive the Catholic Church in two former Portuguese territories that came under Dutch control and where the Catholic faith was banned. He is the only Asian saint who bears the title of “Apostle.” He is also the only Asian saint who is recognized officially as a founder of a Church. Since his beatification in 1995 and his canonization in 2015, he is now recognized as a Universal Saint of the Church and as the greatest missionary that Asia has produced.

St. Joseph Vaz was born in Goa, India, and is descended from the Hindu family of “Naik,” which converted to Catholicism during the early 16th century Portuguese era in India. The 17th century was a period of armed conflict between the Portuguese and the Dutch to seize control of the spice trade along the west coast of India and in Sri Lanka and the Spice Islands of Moluccas.



St. Joseph Vaz was canonized in Colombo, Sri Lanka, by Pope Francis.

Wherever the Calvinist Dutch succeeded in ousting the Catholic Portuguese, they banned the Catholic religion and banned Catholic priests and missionaries from remaining or entering the former Portuguese territories.

The first areas where the Dutch destroyed Catholic missions and churches and banned Catholic priests were Kanara, an area to the south of Goa along the southwest coast of India, and the large island country of Sri Lanka. For his heroic work to revive the Catholic Church in these areas, especially in Sri Lanka, where Dutch persecution was harsh and unrelenting, St. Joseph Vaz earned the title of Apostle of Kanara and Sri Lanka.

St. Joseph (Naik) Vaz is relevant to the Asian diaspora and to the Church because he preached the Gospel without colonial patronage during the colonial period.

- He is the only missionary at that time who won the protection of an independent non-Christian ruler, the Buddhist King Vimaladharma Surya II of Kandy. This king protected him from the Dutch, who had banned all Catholic priests from entering the island under pain of death. The king allowed him to build a church in Kandy and to preach within his kingdom.
- He lived as an Asian renunciate known as a Sannyasi, walking barefoot on his missionary journeys throughout Sri Lanka and not accepting or even touching money.
- He used inculturation as a missionary method, using the languages and customs of the local people of Sri Lanka.
- He is a successful example of a priest who trained the laity to help run his church.
- As Pope Francis said at his canonization in 2015, Joseph Vaz had a great desire to minister to the sick and those in need. He and his nephew rescued and nursed the abandoned victims of the smallpox epidemic in 1696, at the risk of their own infection. He established the first hospital in Kandy. Later, when he was allowed to build a church, he attached a free clinic next to it. ●

Filomena Saraswati Giese directs the Joseph Naik Vaz Institute in Berkeley.



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#### PLANNING AN EVENT?

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## OFFICIAL SCHEDULE

### May 3

11 a.m. Catholic Telemedia Network Board of Directors Meeting, Menlo Park

### May 5

8:15 a.m. School Mass and May Crowning, St. David of Wales, Richmond

7 p.m. Celebration of the Sacrament of Confirmation, St. Clement Parish, Hayward

### May 6

11 a.m. Group Teen Confirmations, Cathedral of Christ the Light, Oakland  
Participating Parishes: Christ the King, St. Ignatius, St. Joseph Basilica

2 p.m. Group Teen Confirmations, Cathedral of Christ the Light, Oakland  
Participating Parishes: Our Lady of Good Counsel, St. Paul, St. John the Baptist (El Cerrito)

### May 7

11 a.m. Mass and celebration of the Sacrament of Confirmation, St. Teresa, Oakland

5 p.m. Mass and celebration of the Sacrament of Confirmation, St. Joseph, Pinole

### May 9

Priest Gathering

7 p.m. Mass and celebration of the Sacrament of Confirmation, St. Leander, San Leandro

### May 11

10 a.m. Priest Personnel Board Meeting  
1 p.m. Presbyteral Council Meeting

### May 12

St. Patrick's Seminary and University Board of Trustees Meeting, Menlo Park

### May 13

11 a.m. Group Teen Confirmation, Cathedral of Christ the Light, Oakland  
Participating Parishes: Most Holy Rosary, St. Edward, St. Monica

2 p.m. Group Teen Confirmation, Cathedral of Christ the Light, Oakland  
Participating Parishes: Our Lady of Grace, St. Paul Chong Korean Community, St. Agnes, St. John the Baptist (San Lorenzo), St. Benedict

### May 14

9:30 a.m. Mass and celebration of the Sacrament of Confirmation, St. Mary Magdalen, Berkeley

4 p.m. Mass and celebration of the Sacrament of Confirmation, St. Perpetua, Lafayette

### May 15-24

International Bishops Conference on Social Justice, Portugal

### May 25

10 a.m. College of Consultors

12:10 p.m. Solemn Mass on the 10th Anniversary of Episcopal Ordination and Installation as Bishop of Oakland, Cathedral of Christ the Light, Oakland

### May 26

10:30 a.m. Ordination to the Priesthood for the Dominican order, St. Dominic Church, San Francisco

3:30 p.m. Mass and First Profession of Vows for Missionaries of Charity Sisters, Archdiocese of San Francisco, Immaculate Conception Chapel, San Francisco

### May 27

11 a.m. Ordination to the Priesthood, Cathedral of Christ the Light, Oakland  
5 p.m. Mass and Celebration of the Sacrament of Confirmation, All Saints Parish, Hayward

### May 28

11 a.m. Mass and Celebration of the Sacrament of Confirmation, Cathedral of Christ the Light  
Participating Parishes: Cathedral of Christ the Light, Sacred Heart and St. Patrick

5p.m. Mass and Celebration of the Sacrament of Confirmation, St. Raymond, Dublin

### May 30

Chancery staff meeting

### May 31

3 p.m. Benedict XVI Board of Directors Meeting, Archdiocese of San Francisco

## STATEMENT

**On March 16, Bishop Michael C. Barber, SJ released the Diocese of Oakland's response to the harm caused by clergy sexual abuse. The letter and a list of Frequently Asked Questions are available in English and Spanish on the diocesan website, [oakdiocese.org](http://oakdiocese.org).**



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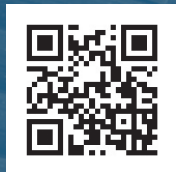


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[www.oakdiocese.org/bishops-ministries-appeal](http://www.oakdiocese.org/bishops-ministries-appeal)