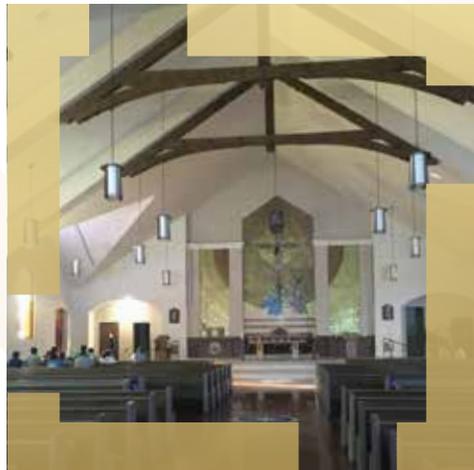


# St. John the Evangelist Parish

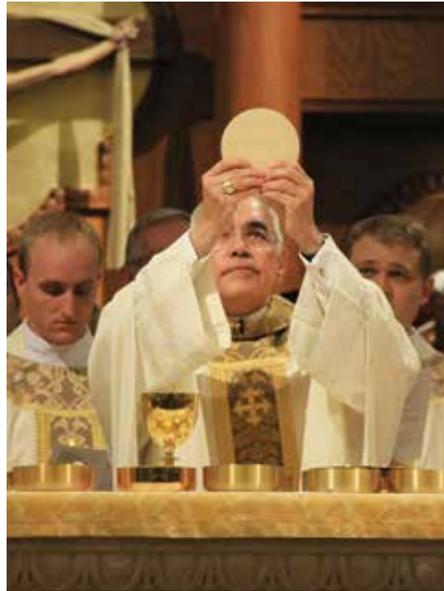
Marble Falls



“So we, though many, are one body in Christ.”

~ Rom 12:5

## A Message from Bishop Joe S. Vásquez



Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ:

We have much to be thankful for in the Diocese of Austin. Our gracious Lord has blessed us abundantly and, with the guidance of the Holy Spirit, we have grown together, evolving into the giving and caring community of faith we are today.

Through our Pastoral Plan, *Encounter that Leads to Transformation*, we have experienced Jesus Christ in a more intentional way, and developed a roadmap for a vibrant and secure future for this diocese. In this spirit, I am excited to launch a capital and endowment campaign so we may continue to encounter Christ in our liturgies and ministries, and to provide support to our clergy and each other.

The *Encountering Christ* campaign will fulfill the mission of our diocese as outlined in the Pastoral Plan. The campaign goal of \$85 million will support our clergy at all stages of their vocation, strengthen our parishes, large and small, and expand our services to our brothers and sisters in need. The campaign will also ensure we form a band of “missionary disciples,” in the spirit of Pope Francis’ Apostolic Exhortation, *Evangelii Gaudium (The Joy of the Gospel)*. We will direct funds to Catholic schools and parish faith formation programs, campus and young adult ministries, and leadership development for Hispanic and other emerging ethnic communities. Some of these funds will be used immediately to meet the needs of our faithful today, while other funds will be placed in endowments to be cultivated for the needs of tomorrow.

In the words of our Holy Father, “the joy of the Gospel fills the hearts and lives of all who encounter Jesus.” I know this to be true in my own life and in the faith-filled communities I visit. In this spirit, I hope you will join with me in supporting *Encountering Christ*.

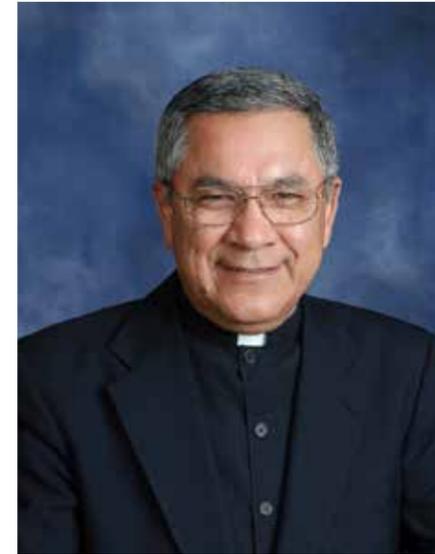
I am grateful for your prayers and support as chief shepherd of this great diocese. Please be assured of my prayers for you.

Sincerely in Christ,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Joe S. Vásquez".

Most Reverend Joe S. Vásquez  
Bishop of Austin

## A Message from Father Pedro



Dear Friends in Christ,

St. John the Evangelist Parish is participating in *Encountering Christ* a capital and endowment campaign benefiting important ministries across the Diocese of Austin. We join with more than 500,000 Catholics across 123 parishes to ensure that the church in Central Texas remains strong and vibrant for future generations.

St. John has thrived since 1961 because of the generosity of its parishioners. We have always worked together to meet needs that arise, such as when we constructed our new church. Guided by the Holy Spirit, we were able to build and fully pay for the church in less than five years. Since its dedication in 2015, we have seen significant growth in our membership and weekly collections, and have witnessed tremendous growth in our youth programs. Over the past 10 years, enrollment in religious education has risen from 40 to 400 students!

We are calling our campaign *Youth Encountering Christ*, because our greatest need at this time is educating and investing in our youth. Our existing classrooms are dated, severely undersized and not conducive to learning. It is now time for us to build an education center to nurture and support our youth in a healthy, engaging and safe environment.

Believing in the mission of the diocese and in our youth, generous donors have blessed us with lead gifts totaling \$2,000,000. Because of these gifts, we were able to pay off the remaining debt of \$280,000 associated with our new church, pledge \$720,000 toward a building fund for a religious education center and pledge \$1 million to support ministries across the diocese.

And there’s more good news! Because of these generous lead gifts, the diocese has agreed that 70 cents of each dollar donated by St. John’s parishioners will be retained at our parish to construct a new religious education center. This is truly good news in the name of Jesus Christ. Our campaign goal is \$1,300,000 to build an education center with a stretch goal of an additional \$200,000 to include an activity pavilion for our youth.

Sisters and brothers, we are privileged to have the opportunity to serve others as disciples of Christ. Please take a moment to review this brochure and note specifically pages 5 and 7, which relate directly to our parish. I urge you to prayerfully consider your donation to this campaign and to offer your prayers for its success. This campaign has my full support and, as your pastor, I hope you will embrace this opportunity for our parish.

Yours in Christ,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Rev. Pedro Garcia-Ramirez".

Father Pedro Garcia-Ramirez  
Pastor

# Encountering Christ

The Diocese of Austin is a thriving and growing community of more than 500,000 brothers and sisters in Christ. Our faith-filled presence has had a profound influence on Central Texas, and we continue to welcome more and more faithful to our parishes and missions each year.

Our diocese has seen many changes over the last 70 years. In the last dozen years alone, the number of Catholics in our area has grown by more than 25 percent. To address the challenges and opportunities these changes have created, the diocese spent a year praying about, reflecting upon and discussing a vision for our future. This year of discernment resulted in *Encounter that Leads to Transformation*, our Pastoral Plan inviting all members of our diocese to a deeper encounter with Jesus Christ, leading to renewal and transformation of ourselves, our homes, our ministries and our community.



Photo courtesy of Joshua Guenther

Strengthened by prayer, *Encountering Christ* allows us — in a spirit of stewardship and unity — to build a vibrant and secure future for the Diocese of Austin.

This campaign will raise a minimum of \$85 million to fulfill the vision of our Pastoral Plan and share in:

- Supporting Our Clergy
- Strengthening Parishes
- Emerging Disciples
- Embracing Discipleship



# Strengthening Parishes, including St. John the Evangelist

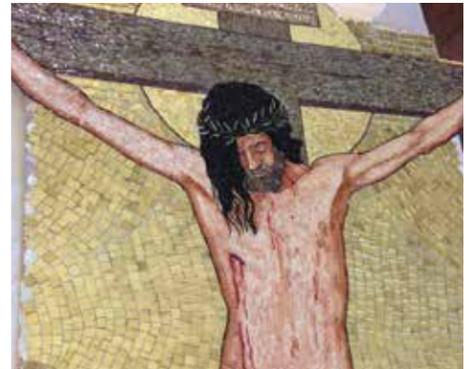
Our parishes and missions are the heart of our diocese. It is where Catholics celebrate the sacraments, learn about and grow in the faith, pass on and model their beliefs and come together to serve their community.



Each parish in the diocese is rooted in the church but has its own identity and charisma — and unique needs. *Encountering Christ* will have a significant impact on parishes, with \$22.5 million of the campaign's \$85 million goal remaining in parishes to address local needs.

Enrollment in our religious education programs has risen substantially over the past 10 years. More than 200 new Catholics have been confirmed, adult formation and Bible study programs are thriving, and attendance at youth retreats is at an all-time high. We strive to ensure that our future generations of disciples have the engaging learning opportunities they need to become leaders of our church.

*Encountering Christ* will allow us to meet St. John the Evangelist's most pressing need — the construction of a religious education center and activity pavilion. This project will provide a safe and welcoming learning environment for our youth and strengthen our parish community. We are blessed to have received lead gifts totaling \$2 million. Moving forward in the campaign, our parish will receive 70 percent of all the funds we raise, with 30 percent directed to the needs of the diocese.



# Building a vibrant and secure future for our diocese

# ... and for our parish community

## \$12 million to support our clergy

The men who dedicate their lives to serving us need our support at all stages of their journey. By supporting our clergy from seminary through retirement, we will encourage seminarians and priests to experience the fullness of their vocation, lifting them up as they help us consider and live out our own calling.



## \$35.5 million to strengthen parishes

Our diocese benefits from the diversity of our 123 parishes and missions, which are urban and rural, small and large, multilingual, with schools and without. Given the critical role of parishes, ensuring their strength and sustainability is of the utmost importance.



## \$20 million for emerging disciples

Our responsibility as Catholics is to ensure future generations of disciples are well-formed, prepared and excited to embrace and share their faith with our world. We continually seek to support the spiritual development of our children and young adults as well as engage them in educational and formational opportunities.



## \$14 million to embrace discipleship

Fostering encounters with Jesus Christ leads to a deeper engagement that will transform our ministry, resulting in true missionary discipleship. Witnessing our faith is an essential part of Catholic-Christian discipleship.



## \$280,000 for church construction debt

Thanks to our lead gift donors, we have already been able to pay off the \$280,000 in debt from the construction of our new church, meaning we are now debt-free. The expansion of our church has allowed for a significant growth in membership and youth programs and a greater sense of unity within our parish.



## \$1,300,000 for a religious education center

Our existing facilities are undersized and ill-designed to provide the best learning environment for our youth and other parishioners. A new religious education center will provide the emerging disciples of our parish a place to learn and experience closer encounters with Christ. This building will include five classrooms as well as an office for a youth ministry director. As a result of our lead gifts, \$720,000 has already been pledged toward this effort.



## \$200,000 for an activity pavilion

Once we fulfill our most pressing need of providing a religious education center for our children, we will work to build an activity pavilion. This outdoor space will be an outlet for our youth to have fun and engage in healthy activities on our parish campus. Situated outside the new education center, the pavilion will include basketball and volleyball courts.



# Stewardship as a Way of Life



Our material possessions are far less important than an intimate relationship with the Lord. In the early 1990s, the U.S. Catholic bishops collectively prayed and reflected on the hallmarks of Christian discipleship. With many solid biblical foundations, the bishops concluded that a disciple of Jesus is truly a thankful, responsible and generous caretaker of God's many blessings. In short, Jesus' disciples practice authentic stewardship.

While the New Testament does not provide a total portrait of the Christian steward all in one place, elements of this image abound throughout its pages. Based on several parables, and many apostolic instructions, Jesus' disciples understood they were to share their gifts with others. Guided by Scripture, we believe that the Christian steward is a person whose prayer leads to a constant awareness that God is the creator of all blessings in life spiritual and material.



Jesus presented the ultimate gift to God — the gift of his life — and we, too, are called to follow in Jesus' footsteps by receiving God's gifts gratefully, cultivating them responsibly, sharing them lovingly in justice with others and returning them with increase to the Lord.

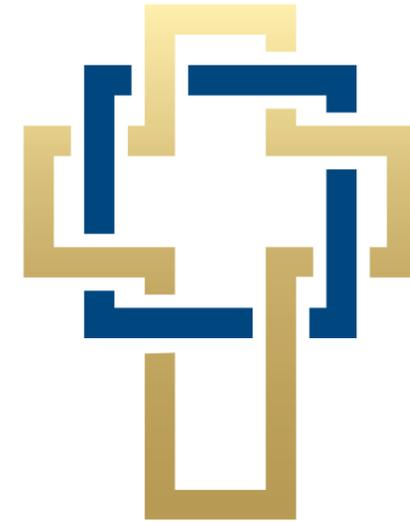
God has entrusted to Catholics the gifts of material creation, individual vocation and the church. Gratefully caring for these gifts leads to tangible examples of stewardship in our daily lives:

- **Stewardship of creation.** Respecting life, protecting the environment and developing our world through noble human labor.
- **Stewardship of vocation.** Faithfully carrying out our unique individual roles in God's plan.
- **Stewardship of the church.** Prayerfully sharing gifts of our time, talent and treasure to fulfill the mission of the parish, diocesan and universal church.



Stewardship as a way of life has astonishing implications for our relationships and daily lives. We can experience life-shaping changes of mind and heart as we commit ourselves to the Lord. Recognizing God as the origin of life, we are grateful for the gifts we have received and are eager to use them to show our love for God and one another.

The journey of discipleship is one of intense joy, fulfillment and peace. As Mary the mother of Jesus lived her ministry in a spirit of fidelity and service, we can find the same favor with God by living as authentic stewards of our world, our vocation and our church.



## AN INVITATION

Let us reflect on the many blessings the Lord has given us. Recognizing that all of our material goods are gifts from the Lord, we are asked in the Gospel to give back a portion of these gifts in thanksgiving for God's generosity and goodness to us.

Your gift is an opportunity to leave a legacy for the Catholic Church in Central Texas. Scripture tells us that Christian stewardship goes beyond giving of our surplus. It is a gift made from our substance.

It is in this spirit of Christian stewardship that we undertake this extraordinary campaign of *Encountering Christ*.



## CAMPAIGN PRAYER

Good and gracious God,  
source of wisdom and generosity,  
who, through your ever-present Holy Spirit,  
has bestowed upon our diocese in every generation  
the means to accomplish the mission of the church,  
we humbly ask for the grace to lovingly respond  
to your Spirit, leading us in the service of the Gospel  
through this *Encountering Christ* campaign.

May we experience a deep and profound encounter with Christ  
so that, transformed through faith, hope and love,  
we are moved to respond to the needs of the marginalized,  
raise up vibrant parishes, form fruitful ministries  
and call forth pastoral leaders.

Asking the intercession of the Immaculate Heart of Mary,  
may the work of this campaign be pleasing to you,  
as we await, in blessed hope, to glory in the fullness of your grace.

Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

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