

December 2019

Dear Friend of Chestnut,

As this year winds down and we look ahead to what's in store in 2020, we give thanks to God for all of the blessings we have received, most especially for the visit of the Prelate of Opus Dei, Msgr. Fernando Ocariz, to California in July.

During his visit, the Prelate told us that seeing us (the big crowd at the get-together) is a sign of hope! He was impressed to see how the Work has grown in California, and advised us to continue to place Christ at the summit of all our activities, which is the mission of Opus Dei. He encouraged us to bring the love of God and to give hope and joy to others in all our circumstances, even when we experience difficult days or become more aware of our defects. He reminded us of God's great love for us in bringing us close to the Work, and helped us to reflect on that so that we will be happy and joyful.

We at Chestnut/Excel are thankful for your generous help in the form of your financial support, time, talent and prayers for the growth of the Work through all the activities at and from Chestnut!!! As our dear collaborators in sowing the seed of Opus Dei in many hearts, we would like to ask you now for a special gift to help with the renovation of the oratory of Chestnut. The oratory, where Christ Himself resides in the tabernacle, is the heart and soul of Chestnut. Ever since Chestnut moved to Berkeley in 2012 it's had a provisional oratory. The altarpiece from the former center is installed over false walls to block windows, the pews do not provide sufficient seating, the wood floor and doors need repair, and the lighting needs to be improved. We've been working with Granda Liturgical Arts to renovate the oratory, with the condition that the new design would incorporate all the elegantly handcrafted altar furniture that was gifted to this oratory by Mr. Nassiri. We hope you will agree that the design we share with you here has done so in a beautiful way!



However, high quality materials and a hand-crafted custom design, along with all the repair and installation costs will be close to \$200,000. Once we sign the contract, we'll need to make a 30% deposit. We hope to begin this project soon to commemorate the 90th Anniversary of the start of St. Josemaria's work with women on February 14, 2020. Can we count on you to help us reach the total cost? We have included a pledge form and would be extremely grateful for your prayerful consideration of how you can help. As you know, this is an opportunity to give directly to the worship of God!

We know that you join us in giving thanks for the gift of the Work, and in praying that each of us would bring peace and joy to all those that we encounter in our complex and challenging world.

With best wishes to you and your family for a blessed Advent and a very Merry Christmas!

Joshlyn De Ala
Excel Education Foundation, Inc.
Chestnut Board President