

Divine Providence

How many of us believe in God's Divine Providence?

The Catechism of the Catholic Church says that, God uses our cooperation. In his goodness, He gives us our existence and by our free will the opportunity to cooperate in his plan. And God Carries out His Own Plan.

Divine Providence is relevant to the One Community Center and the story I have to share.

But before I get to the story, I'd like to address several points about the OCC.

First, it is part of our Pastoral 5 year plan, to provide more space for ministries to operate and grow. A plan which Bishop Larry has given his 100% support on, and something that we have delayed for over 20 years.

It is for our use and use for future generations. We will be able to host faith formation classes, seminars, retreats and it allow us to increase what we already do and provide. Bingo, ballroom dancing, zumba, movie nights. The list of activities goes on. Young adults will be able to use it for social gatherings, concerts, and use it as a base for their ministry. RE and the Preschool will be able to host events and classes in the OCC making scheduling more convenient to our families.

It will also be used to serve our community; as an outreach facility in which providers of services will come in Monday –Friday 9am – 5pm to serve the underserved. It will allow us, the parishioners an opportunity to Connect, Engage, Witness and Evangelize in our local community, not just deliver services.

Our campaign also allows us to attract funding from foundations that would otherwise not have given to the Catholic church. This model of outreach has not been seen anywhere in faith base communities and has found favor in the eyes of the Diocese. They have indicated that this is a model for the future and a model that enables us to grow Disciples of Christ.

This is a unique opportunity, especially fueled by the anonymous donation of \$1M gift / challenge. Divine Providence at work, keeping the door of faith open on this important project. A sign, that we are moving in the direction God wants us to go.

So here are a few questions about the OCC that have come up:

Is this another rail project; consistently over budget coupled with delays?

Project budget was reduced from \$6.5M to \$6M recently and we have contingency built into our estimates. The construction is estimated to last 1 year and is projected to start in October of this year.

Will we attract the homeless to our campus and our Mililani community?

Homelessness is already here in Mililani and on our campus. We recently called on Alea Bridge to come over to assist with two young individuals, one a man in his mid to late twenties, the other a girl a mere 16 years of age. A counselor came down immediately and began to pull the resources to address their need and get them to a shelter were their needs could be addressed. Deb Zedalis former chair of Social Ministry was out in the parking lot assisting, and said “God Bless you” to both of them. And in response, a teary but hopeful, “God Bless YOU” in return from the girl.

I will never use it, why should I contribute?

Over 50 years ago, this parish met in a school cafeteria discerning on the same question. What if they didn’t contribute, where would we be holding mass today? If we built the OCC 20 years ago, we all would be using it today. There are believers that help build this sanctuary that were not able to use it as well. But they did it anyway because they believed in the bigger purpose of growing Gods Kingdom and making disciples.

By Mike Browning

THE STORY – Divine Providence

“God Carries Out His Own Plan”

Victor was raised in the Catholic faith by his grandmother. He attended St Patrick School and received all of his sacraments in his youth. Victor lived a productive life, journeying from Hawaii to Southern California. After his Father passed, he returned home to Kaneohe where he lived simply, until 3 years ago. A tenant at the apartment complex where he lived wanted Victor to sell drugs. He refused, which caused a chain of events which led to Victor storing his belongings and began a search for a new home.

But illness struck him in the most inopportune time. After months of hospitalization and rehabilitation, Victor found himself without housing and after large medical bills not enough money to pay for his storage. His only belongings were found in his van. He was now homeless; in his late seventies and no family support.

He ended up spending time at the homeless pods on Sand Island, and contracted a bad blood infection. More hospitalization and frustration, Victor was looking for answers on how to “earn his inheritance”. After release, this time he moves to Central Oahu to stay with a relative. Times were rough, not always feeling welcomed. There were deep moments where he thought of ending his suffering once and for all, but Victor continued to search for answers.

He drove up to Wahiawa to find a Catholic Church and after not finding one, he was “led” by the spirit to our Church here in Mililani. Once found, Msgr John engaged him and worked with him along with other staff members in connecting him with the very service providers we have enlisted to work with us in the OCC. Fast forward to today and he is off the street living comfortably in his home here in Mililani and attends mass every Sunday. He loves our chapel where he thanks Jesus everyday for another day.

What’s most incredible about this story is as Victor journeyed his way back to his faith and a home, I had been working on this project for the same 3 years. The vision for the One Community Center had already been formed. The foundation of having Alea Bridge, IHS, Catholic Charities work with our

parish to connect those in need, to engage them with services all while we shower the love, support, and encouragement of Christ.

What “is” miraculous about this story, Victor is my biological father. God had connected us, here at St John Apostle and Evangelist Church after 59 years. Not by our design, but by God’s Divine providence. It is all His plan.

THE CHALLENGE

Lets step up to the CHALLENGE and pledge \$900K this weekend for the parish to complete our \$2.5M goal. In good faith the anonymous donor is delivering the first installment of \$250,000 this coming week. In good faith we need to meet this CHALLENGE for what God is calling us to do in our parish NOW and for future generations.

We are not asking for cash now, just a 3 year pledge.

Mahalo to those who have already made a 3 year pledge and to those many parishioners who have even increased their already generous pledge in order to help OUR parish meet this CHALLENGE.

Msgr John has laid out a path in which we can realistically achieve our goal. Fill out your pledge card and turn it in. If you are unable to make a pledge at that level, whatever you can pledge today will help us reach our parish goal. And of course if you are a believer in today’s Gospel, whatever you give today, will be given back to you and multiplied many fold.

PLEASE complete a 3 year pledge to this project outside on the lanai and drop your pledge off with one our team members. Lets all get involved to realize God’s Divine Providence for our community.

Please stand and extend your hand toward Jesus!

Heavenly Father, we thank you for all the gifts you bestow on each and everyone of us. We ask that you continue to work in our minds, our hands, and our hearts to show us the plan you have prepared. We thank you for the “free will” you have given and ask that you continue to show us the way to everlasting life through your Son Jesus.

Bless this community and all those who have worked so hard to bring your plan to fruition. Continue to lead us in expanding your Kingdom here on Earth. Father, bless our anonymous donor and all those that have graciously given to this important campaign. We thank them for their love and generosity shared with this community. May the gifts that they have given multiply many times over, not here on earth, but in your Kingdom of Heaven.

And Bless each and everyone of us that we too will find our path through your Divine Providence.

St Damien

St Marianne

We ask this through our Lord Jesus Christ,

Amen!