

## The Communicator February 3, 2026

Sunday, January 25 was a Wonderful Day at Saint Michael's. It seemed joy and love was overflowing on all parts of our campus from the moment the gates opened with Kids Club until well into the afternoon when our last participants left the Hospitality Hour and/or the library.



Kids Club  
was led  
on  
Sunday  
the 25th  
by  
Michael  
and

Seugnette Venter who stepped in to help Lenise Butler, incapacitated by her broken ankle. Photos don't do justice to the vibrancy of the art and the squeals of delight emanating from Magnolia Hall. Thank you for bringing this beautiful youth ministry to our doors Lenise.



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We had loads of guests that wonderful Sunday. The LaMancha Annual Icon Retreat was in full force with over a dozen iconographers once again present at SMAAA and the husband of our beloved teacher, Rev. Edward Harrison in the pulpit preaching to an attentive congregation. Literally, despite the large



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congregation present, you could have heard a pin drop while Edward spoke to us of a different path to repentance. We also had the return of Patty Hogan's annual cadre of visitors and faithful followers of SMAAA. Jeff Slade, Ruth Diem, Carolyn Holmes, Claire Whittaker are a gift to us each year. We just wish they'd never return North!

Perhaps, best of all, were the appreciative comments of many repeat visitors who had not been here for these past months, on the inspirational singing of the choir and for the warmth of the welcome extended by the congregation. If the Parish Annual Meeting 2025 was the nadir of the life of SMAAA, perhaps this Sunday was the Zenith. Pat yourselves on the back good souls of Saint Mike's. Love again wins.

Sunday, February 1, was the Parish Annual Meeting and there was lots on the agenda. Father Doug abbreviated the service for us to get an early start. Senior Warden Judith Frothingham gave her annual report and expressed her joy at having served as Senior Warden these past four years. A standing ovation followed. Junior Warden John Stelly, though not present, was also recognized and his work loudly applauded as was appreciation for other retiring vestry members, Mario Fernandez de Lara and Rene Parmegiani .

Treasurer Wendy Blake gave a sobering report on the state of her finances with a plea that we up pledges and find other ways of raising money for the Parish.

For a number of weeks Thomas Esakin, assisted by Carol Hopkins, has worked on edits of our Bylaws. These edits were made with the intention of having the church governance be more democratic and to also reflect the reality of the way our church functions or aspires to function. The most significant change was an alteration in the titles of Sr. Warden and Jr. Warden to Rector's Warden and People's Warden.

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What is the difference you ask? Isn't this just semantics? We hope the answer is a decisive No! Jr and Sr. Imply that Jr. is less than Sr. The intent was to make these two offices co-equal... One with spiritual responsibilities and the other with more temporal concerns. The Rector's Warden is appointed by the Rector, serves at the Rector's pleasure and is expected to provide spiritual counsel to the Rector and, with the Rector, to the Parish. the People's Warden is elected by the congregation and responsible for the more practical aspects of running a church but also as the People's voice to the Rector. Thank you Thomas for your hard work on this project. **The edited by-laws and definitions were unanimously approved.**

Father Doug announced his choice for Rector's Warden as Roxana Villa-Michel. Walter Lopez was nominated from the congregation as People's Warden and **unanimously approved.** Isabel Graves and Cecilia Sanchez were nominated to fill three-year terms as vestry members. **They were unanimously approved.**

At the inception of the Annual Meeting Eugene Hoekendorf gave an overview of all the improvements that have been made to the library. Wow! One thing he mentioned that we much appreciate is the opening of the library on Sundays. Thank you Eugene, Kathy, Jessica for your yeoman work on the library. It improves the life of all of us.

Gabriel Novaro's Memorial Service will be held February 21, 12:30. Gabriel was a gift to SMAAA for many, many years.... serving on the Vestry and as Junior Warden. His loss is very great to us and to his beloved wife, Lety, and family.

We sadly just discovered that long-time member of SMAAA, Roberto Zarate, passed away in December. Roberto will be

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### **Know Your Neighbor – February 11, 4:30 PM**

Join us for a special afternoon with violinist Jorge Aguirre, whose musical journey began in Lima, Peru, and led him to study at Juilliard and perform around the world. Jorge has shared the stage with legendary artists including Itzhak Perlman, Yo-Yo Ma, and Plácido Domingo. After a life-altering stroke, he made a remarkable return to music through perseverance and passion. His story is one of resilience, artistry, and the power of beginning again.

There will be a cash wine and beer bar. Non-alcoholic drinks and snacks will be gratis.

**Location:** Saint Michael and All Angels, 4 San Juan, Colonia Las Palmas, Room adjacent to the Library.

**Know Your Neighbor Lecture Series** is hosted by Saint Michael and All Angels and moderated by John L. Mitchell, a veteran journalist and former Los Angeles Times staff writer who was a member of two Pulitzer Prize-winning staffs—for the paper's coverage of the 1992 Los Angeles riots and the 1994 Northridge earthquake.

Jorge is a frequent and gifted contributor to the SMAAA Choral Program. We Hope to see you there!

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remembered by many as the partner of Claire Carrison.

The Diocesan Synod will be held Saturday, February 21. There will be an opening Eucharist at 10AM followed by the meeting. Father Doug Carter, Marisela Lathrop, Roxana Villa-Michel and Carol Hopkins will represent SMAAA at this important meeting. All congregants are welcome to attend.

In the next few editions, The Communicator will attempt to do a brief biography of your new vestry members and Wardens.



### **New Vestry Profiles-Isabel Graves**

Long-time SMAAA member, Isabel Perez Graves '26, is Coordinator of our Hospitality Program and a member of the choir. Isabel "loves Saint Michael's" and tries to always say "yes" to whatever the Lord requires her to do.

Isabel was formerly an employee of Mexicana Airlines in the Sales and Reservations Department and for many years was Captain of the Mexicana Airlines Running Team. The Mexicana Team competed all over the world. "When I was 5 years old I saw a beautiful plane flying overhead and asked my dad what it said on the side. He replied, 'Mexicana Airlines.' I said, 'That's where I want to work.' Mexicana was my life for many, many years."

"Twenty-two years ago I met William,

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fell in love, and was married 20 years ago in this very church. From that time, William, my family, and Saint Michael's have become my life." We are all the richer for Isabel's presence in our lives and in our Parish.

Last, but certainly not least, we share in the joy of Lorena and Gökhan on their nuptials celebrated last week at Saint Michael's. We are so happy for you both.

Thank you to photographers Pat Manners and Isabel Graves for the photographs found in this edition of The Communicator.



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