

Diocese of Orange and Advocacy Organizations Hold Homeless Persons' Memorial Service at Christ Cathedral

??

The second annual inter-religious event highlights the ever increasing homelessness problem in Orange County, Calif. and seeks to give some recognition and dignity to those who have died on our streets over the past year. **Garden Grove, Calif., (Dec. 7, 2017)** – The bi-annual homeless person's census continues to show dramatic increases in the number of people suffering on the streets of Orange County, Calif. without adequate shelter, reaching 4,792 homeless people in 2017. The 62 Catholic Churches, Catholic Charities of OC and many other missions of the Church work throughout the year caring for this marginalized population and witness first-hand the suffering, illness and death that occurs – often hidden from public view. Last year, more than 200 men, women and children died on the streets of Orange County, many nameless victims of societies neglect. On December 21st from 7 – 8:30 p.m. a special Homeless Persons' Inter-religious Memorial Service will be held in the Arboretum at the Christ Cathedral (13280 Chapman Ave., Garden Grove, Calif.) to offer some dignity to these forgotten souls. "As a community of faith we are called to promote the dignity of all God's people, particularly the poor and marginalized. It is our prayerful hope that through this memorial service we will offer some respect and dignity to those who have died on our streets, often in great physical and emotional pain. Also, we hope to increase our communities understanding regarding this escalating humanitarian crisis and call on all people of good will to respond," said Michael Donaldson, Director of Pastoral Care for the Diocese of Orange. This annual event will be held just blocks from one of the largest homeless encampments in Orange County – located along the Santa Ana River Trail. The Christ Cathedral campus, the administrative center of the Diocese of Orange, is positioned at the nexus of this crisis and seeks to generate energy and focus within the faith community to marshal additional resources to address this emergency. The many houses of worship throughout Orange County comprise the largest safety net caring for the most basic needs of this community – but a broader response is needed to address systemic inequities. "In honoring the inherent dignity of each of these human beings that have perished, we are called to shine a light on the issue of homelessness in our communities and encourage all to set aside any judgment or callousness and respond to the desperate calls from our streets," continued Donaldson.

??? ??

12? 11, 2017