



Archbishop José H. Gomez

*Letter Proclaiming the Jubilee Year Commemorating the 250th Anniversary
of the Founding of Mission San Gabriel Arcángel by St. Junípero Serra*

June 27, 2021

My Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

I pray that you and your families are well. It is great to see our society starting to open up after this long year of the pandemic. And it is beautiful to see more and more of you returning to church each week as state restrictions are being lifted.

This is a providential moment for all of us to renew and deepen our love for Jesus Christ and our dedication to living our Catholic faith. That is why I am excited to share this news with you.

I am writing today to announce that later this summer we will begin a Jubilee Year to mark the 250th anniversary of Mission San Gabriel Arcángel, which was founded by the great Franciscan missionary, St. Junípero Serra, in 1771.

In the Scriptures, a Jubilee marks a special time of the Lord's grace and mercy. And in the tradition of the Church, Jubilee Years or Holy Years are designated to commemorate important moments in the history of salvation.

The foundation of Mission San Gabriel is one such important moment. The mission is the first church in what is now the Archdiocese of Los Angeles. And as Pope Francis has noted, St. Junípero Serra was "one of the founding fathers of the United States." So, this Jubilee Year recognizes not only the Church's beginnings in Los Angeles, but also the Christian beginnings of America and the influence of Christian values in the formation of our national identity.

The Jubilee Year will begin on September 11, 2021, with an Opening Mass at the Cathedral of Our Lady of the Angels and will continue until September 10, 2022, when a Closing Mass will be held at Mission San Gabriel Arcángel.

I am grateful to the Holy Father Pope Francis and to the Apostolic Penitentiary of the Holy See for granting plenary indulgences for these liturgical events as well as for prayers at designated pilgrimage sites in the Archdiocese.

My brothers and sisters, this Jubilee Year, for me, is not about the past. It is about the present and the future. “Forward in Mission” is our Jubilee theme, and I am confident that during this holy year God will pour out many graces on our local Church and on our families.

I pray that we will open our hearts to his Spirit and that we will hear again our baptismal calling to be saints and missionary disciples — just like St. Junípero Serra and that first generation of missionaries and migrants who brought the love of God to California and America.

I pray that this year will awaken in all of us, a new awareness of our great dignity as children of God and our responsibility to spread the Gospel and build up God’s kingdom through our daily lives.

You will find more information on our Jubilee website, forwardinmission.com.

I wish you and your families a blessed summer. Please pray for me, and I will pray for you.

I entrust you all to the tender care of Our Lady of Guadalupe, our Mother. May she give us all a new love for her Son, Jesus Christ, and may she lead us to a new awakening of the faith in our times.

+ José H. Gomez

Most Reverend José H. Gomez
Archbishop of Los Angeles