

News

A brand-new Incarnation

Community center at local Catholic church opens three years after it was blessed.

Print Page

By Christopher Cadelago

Published: Last Updated Sunday, November 15, 2009 8:28 PM PST

DOWNTOWN — It's been more than three years since Church of the Incarnation parishioners saw their community center blessed.

On Sunday, a diverse group of churchgoers, students and community leaders showed up at the three-story campus complete with a preschool gym and office space to officially christen and open the center during a ceremony titled "A Harvest of Thanksgiving."

Father Paul Hruby stood in the courtyard and re-blessed the plot of land as elders of the church, Boy and Girl Scouts, and religious groups looked on.

"In stewardship we give back to God what God has offered to us," he said, before sprinkling the land with holy water.

The rededication put a swift end to a long wait, making the space available for various functions, including basketball and volleyball in the gym, weekly Boy and Girl Scout meetings and getting the word out about the small Catholic preschool nestled between a large playing field and outside play structure, said Marguerite Lincoln, director of marketing and special events for the Incarnation Community Center.

"We want it to be a place where we can have fellowship for all of the parish community," she said, sitting in one of the building's lounge areas.

She attributed delays in opening the center to a protracted construction schedule and other technical issues. But even that didn't stop the school's Boy Scout troop from using the project as a way to acquire coveted merit badges, troops said.

"The fix-up became an Eagle [Scout] project for two students here," said John Parker, a freshman at St. Francis High School who is five merit badges away from becoming an Eagle Scout. "It's a lot better than when it started."

Erin Sanchez, Incarnation's representative of the Crescenta Valley-Glendale Service Unit, said her Girl Scout troop is just two grades — second and fifth — away from turning out a full roster, and plan to use the newly opened space for World Thinking Day, where they exchange global information.

Holiday events are being planned, and a summer luau looms for organizers excited to finally have a place to gather.

This weekend children darted around a fall harvest spread, and visitors were welcomed by the sign: "May the bounty of the season fill your heart and home."

As part of the multipurpose event, St. Vincent de Paul Society spent the day gathering volunteers for its winter



Father Paul Hruby blesses the Incarnation Community Center at the Church of the Incarnation's "A Harvest of Thanksgiving" Grand Opening and Stewardship Fair on Sunday. (Scott Smeltzer/News-Press)

giving effort, including food drives, information on social services and help with utility bills.

"Some people don't know where to turn. They don't know how to get that help," said Ray Shinn, vice president of the organization's local chapter. "You'd be surprised that some don't know whether they qualify.

Dozens of groups participated in the stewardship fair, including Mission of Divine Mercy, Heart of Jesus, Legion of Mary, Knights of Malta and Couples for Christ.

Elaine Quada, an organizer for Kids for Christ, joined the rest of the parish's leadership in welcoming the new center, located about two blocks away from the Brand Boulevard church at 214 W. Fairview Ave.

"We love the space," she said.

Copyright © 2009 - Glendale News Press

[\[x\] Close Window](#)