

NEWS RELEASE

RESTORATION OF SACRED HEART CHURCH IN THE SEGUNDO BARRIO PRESS CONFERENCE THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 19 AT 11:00AM

El Paso, Texas, November 17, 2020: We are pleased to announce our project to restore Sacred Heart Church in the Segundo Barrio, along with the adjoining ex-Sacred Heart School building and the building housing the Jesuit residence and parish offices. We will hold a press conference this Thursday, November 19 at 11:00am at the Father Pinto Plaza, on the north side of Father Rahm Ave. between Oregon St. and Mesa St.

Sacred Heart Church, the most iconic building in the Segundo Barrio, was established in 1893 by Father Carlos M. Pinto, a Jesuit missionary from Italy, in order to attend to the spiritual and educational needs of the primarily Mexican immigrant community. Sacred Heart Church and Immaculate Conception Church are the oldest Catholic parishes within our city.

Thousands of El Pasoans were baptized or married in Sacred Heart Church and tens of thousands from both sides of the border have participated in mass there or joined community events. Thousands also attended Sacred Heart School. The Jesuit parish has deep roots and connections in the Mexican/Mexican-American community and with the El Paso community at-large, and close ties to the many families who reside in Segundo Barrio, so much so that it has long been known as *el corazón* of the neighborhood.

The buildings of the Sacred Heart Church complex are between 91 and 127 years old and in dire need of restoration and infrastructural upgrades but the limited financial resources of the barrio parish has made major improvements impossible.

Our all-volunteer group will apply for the necessary grants and tax credits, raise funds from the community, and oversee the restoration, from the solicitation of architectural bids through the completion of all work.

The [Executive Committee](#) is co-chaired by Father Rafael Garcia, S. J., the parish's pastor, and Dr. Max Grossman and includes Bishop Mark Seitz, Church leaders, elected representatives, and professionals specializing in architectural history, historic preservation, and related fields.

The [Advisory Council](#) consists of professionals and local leaders who are strong supporters of Sacred Heart Church and proponents of historic preservation.

Today we have launched our new website, www.restoresacredheartchurch.org, where you will find a complete list of our 23 volunteers as well as a "Donate" tab for contributing to our project.

The restoration of Sacred Heart Church will be the first project of its type in the Segundo Barrio National Historic District, which will be established in 2021 thanks to the El Paso County Commissioners Court, Texas Historical Commission, and National Park Service. It is our hope that many other historic preservation projects will follow and that Segundo Barrio will see an architectural Renaissance.

Because of a state-imposed mandate limiting outdoor gatherings to 10 people or fewer, the press conference will be attended by our Executive Committee and the press only.

Executive Committee, Restore Sacred Heart Church

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