The Chaplaincy Report
LA County General Medical Center
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Greetings to you all,
Thank you for your continued support and prayers for the chaplaincy ministry at LA GMC. This past month, July 2026, began with the arrival of Fr. Al, the new Head of Staff at St. Camillus. As is the case for many organizations during the summer, the chaplain team at LA GMC also experienced a quieter month than usual. The photo below was taken on Fr. Al's first day at St. Camillus with most of the staff chaplains. St. Camillus also hired two new per-diem Catholic chaplains this month to replace Nick, who recently retired.



Hoping for the Resumption of CPE in Fall 2026
An announcement was recently released that Urban Interfaith Chaplaincy, associated with St. Camillus, is preparing for the fall 2026 CPE unit and is currently recruiting students. The first day of the unit is scheduled for August 31st, provided that all requirements are met before the date.
We hope and pray that the CPE program will overcome its current financial and administrative challenges so that it can continue its legacy of training professional interfaith chaplains.

Visit by Hospital Delegations from Thailand – July 14
At the request of the San Gabriel Presbytery (SGP), I arranged a hospital tour for healthcare industry leaders and ministers from Thailand. Ten representatives from two hospitals - Overbrook Hospital and McCormick Hospital - visited LA General. They appreciated the opportunity to see the Historic General Hospital, which was constructed between 1927and1933 in the Art Deco style during the Great Depression. They also learned about *Sobrevivir* by Phung Huynh, a public apology expressed through art that is permanently installed in the patio of LA General.[1]



[1] In 2018, the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors issued a public apology to more than 200 mothers of Mexican descent who were forcefully sterilized at the Los Angeles County + USC Medical Center between 1968 - 1974. To publicly express this apology, the LA County Department of Arts and Culture commissioned Phung Huynh to create a permanent outdoor sculpture honoring the resilience of

Following the tour, administrative leaders from both LA General and St. Camillus, along with the chaplains, welcomed the delegation and engaged in meaningful conversations. It was a mutually rewarding experience for both the visitors and hosts.

The Consortium's Visit and Meeting with Fr. Al – July 21
The Consortium finally met with Fr. Al who began his new ministry at St. Camillus earlier this month. A few participants from the Consortium and LA General joined online, while those attending in person gathered in a circle in one of the St. Camillus offices. We introduced ourselves and briefly discussed the current transition in the interfaith chaplaincy ministry, including changes in its leadership. More conversations are planned, and further updates will be included in my future reports.

The Angel Interfaith Network (AIN) Meeting with Fr. Al – July 22
The AIN Leadership Board met with Fr. Al online as scheduled. The Board is currently developing strategic plans for the future of the ministry while reevaluating its capacity and addressing the challenges of this transitional season. Your continued support through prayers and donations of all kinds is deeply appreciated. Angel Interfaith Network: http://www.angelinterfaith.net

Pacific Presbytery Meeting & Presentation – July 28
In response to their invitation, I attended the Pacific Presbytery meeting at Knox Presbyterian Church in Los Angeles and shared an update on the chaplaincy ministry at LA General. I also brought outreach materials for the AIN ministry and had the opportunity to engage with many people during the gathering.

My experience at the Pacific Presbytery meeting was meaningful in several ways. I was pleasantly surprised to see Korean interpretation officially provided throughout the entire meeting. I was also invited to read one of the Scripture passages in Korean while the English text was projected on the screen. I especially appreciated those who shared their experiences from the recent General Assembly (GA). It was inspiring to hear David, a youth commissioner, reflect on his fresh and vivid experience at the GA as an emerging leader in the PC(USA).

At the conclusion of the meeting, TE Steve Yamaguchi, a Co-Transitional Presbyter alongside TE Wendy Tajima, offered the benediction in multiple languages – Greek, Korean, Japanese, and Spanish. He also shared a thoughtful reflection on the encampment of Japanese Americans during WWII, noting that, during the same period, Koreans were suffering under Japanese colonial rule. His heartfelt empathy for Japanese Americans who endured systemic injustice in the US expanded to acknowledge the suffering of Koreans across the Pacific in East Asia, recognizing the complex historical realities that shaped both communities. It was a long, hot summer day, but one filled with meaningful encounters and rich opportunities for reflection.

***Did I kill my daughter?* – A Mother's Cry at Her Child's Death**
Someone who has lost their parents is called an orphan. Someone who has lost a spouse is called a widow or widower. But there is no single word for someone who has lost a

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the survivors and to remember the histories of women whose narratives have been historically repressed. The name of the artwork is Sobrevivir, which translates to survive, to keep alive.

child. Such a loss defies language. This profound observation comes from the narration of an actor portraying a father who had lost a child in a film.

One morning, I was called to the Decedent Affairs Office, where a mother of a deceased patient was in urgent need of emotional and spiritual support. She had raised her daughter alone after her former spouse left the family when the child was still an infant.

Sadly, the daughter struggled with severe mental health challenges as she grew older and has been estranged from her mother for many years before her death in her mid-thirties. Throughout those years, the mother prayed day and night, asking God to help her find her daughter, who was presumed to be unhoused and struggling with substance addiction while exposed to illness, violence, and the dangers of life on the streets. In her brokenness, she eventually prayed that God would take her daughter home to heaven rather than allow her to continue suffering in such conditions. Tragically, and by coincidence, the daughter died at LA General on the very day she offered that prayer.

A Decedent Affairs officer, who had found my patient visit documentation for this patient, contacted me to support the grieving mother when she arrived at the office, overwhelmed by heartbreak.

In the morgue, I offered my quiet, compassionate presence as the mother saw her daughter's face for the first time since she had become a young adult - and for the last time. The young woman's beautiful yet expressionless eyes remained open. The mother wailed, leaning her face against the thick, cold glass window.

She then turned to me and asked, "Pastor, what should I do? Will God forgive me? Am I going to hell?"

She believed that her daughter had died because of the prayer she had offered - a prayer she had never imagined praying before. Although she felt relief knowing that her daughter was no longer suffering, she was consumed by the terrifying thought that she had somehow caused her daughter's death.

I listened. I acknowledged her fear, confusion, and despair. I affirmed that conflicting emotions often accompany profound grief. I gently reminded her that we, as human beings, do not possess the power to direct the Creator according to our wishes. God acts according to God's own wisdom, timing, and purposes – not ours. We are not in control. I invited her to consider another possibility: perhaps God's compassion had been preparing her heart, in a mysterious way, before her daughter's death. As we spoke, I noticed her breathing begin to slow and deepen. She appeared able to rest, if only for a moment. I remained beside her for a while longer, offering a quiet, life-affirming presence.

Sometimes we experience an unusual dream, intuition, imagination, or strong impression that later seems connected to a painful event. Such experiences can leave us unsettled, wondering whether they carry special meaning or require us to act. That uncertainty can be deeply distressing.

If you have ever experienced something like this, I encourage you to bring your concerns before God, who looks upon each of us with unfailing love and compassion. I pray that we may trust God to lead us into peace amid life's challenges. Rather than searching for explanations that may never come, may we allow ourselves to embody God's compassionate presence for those entrusted to our care.

In Christ,
Stephanie