

# HOLY INNOCENTS PARISH TURNS 90

**H**oly Innocents Parish was founded on the Feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe, December 12, 1923. Pius XI was pope and John J. Cantwell was bishop of the then Los Angeles-San Diego Diocese. The liturgical Feast of our patron saints/martyrs—the Holy Innocents—is December 28, which falls in the middle of the festive season of Christmas. It is during this time every year that we have the joy of celebrating the humble beginnings of our parish under the maternal gaze of Our Mother Mary and surrounded by that little cloud of witnesses—the baby boy martyrs of Bethlehem—whose prayers before the Throne of the Lamb have sustained us all these years.

OUR NINETIETH ANNIVERSARY celebrations brought us countless blessings. **His Eminence Cardinal William Levada** who in 1936 was baptized in our parish church was our honored guest. We were also joined by **Mother Judith, O.C.D.**, the Superior General of the Carmelite Sisters of the Most Sacred Heart and successor to Venerable Mother Maria Luisa Josefa of the Most Blessed Sacrament. “Mother Luisita,” as she is affectionately known, having escaped the persecution of the Catholic Church in Mexico, made Holy Innocents her temporary spiritual home.

ON THE EVE of the Solemnity of the Holy Innocents, Friday, December 27, 2013, more than 500 people gathered for a elegant dinner at The Grand Event Center in Long Beach. It was an evening for remembering with deep gratitude the many blessings of the last 90 years. Mother Judith spoke to us about the Carmelite Sisters long involvement with Holy Innocents Parish. Cardinal Levada shared his own reflections on the past and how he even served as an altar boy. Our pastor, Father G. Peter Irving III presented His Eminence with a digital copy of the page of the parish baptismal register upon which was entered William Joseph Levada’s baptismal information as well as other sacramental data. His Eminence was visibly moved by this gift and happily noted that Father O’Shea was the parish priest who baptized the future Cardinal.

THE NEXT DAY Cardinal Levada offered the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass on our patronal feast day and blessed the newly renovated baptistery, the very place where his own Christian life began. Prior to this, His Eminence celebrated the 9 o’clock Mass on Christmas Day.

