**Sports isn’t just about athleticism for Escolania Pacifica**

**St. Sebastian Sports Project Mass features 50 from Immaculate Conception, L.A.**

**MANHATTAN BEACH, Calif.** \_ About 50 students from [Immaculate Conception School](https://www.ics-la.org/) in the Pico-Union district of Los Angeles sang a Mass at American Martyrs Church in Manhattan Beach to celebrate underserved inner-city Catholic school sports teams. Schola Choirmaster Vince Bastidas conducted.

“We’ve never heard a Mass sung like this,” stated one surprised parishioner exiting after the April 2, 2022, Lenten vigil mixed Gregorian, classical, contemporary and Spanish-language liturgical music at 5 p.m. “It’s lovely. Those students are so talented.”

Escolania Pacifica founder, Fr. Ted Ley, SM, accompanied the kids on the piano.

*Lenten Love, Lenten Care* (Brahms) was sung as the Invitatory with the entrance hymn *For the Beauty of the Earth* (Pierpoint), appropriate to the seaside surroundings of [American Martyrs](https://www.americanmartyrs.org/). A Gregorian *Kyrie* and Responsorial were led by choirmaster and vocal music teacher Vicente Bastidas-Elizondo. Two eighth graders from Immaculate Conception served as cantrices for the vigil Mass.

Fr. Ted and Mr. Bastidas formed a choir at Immaculate Conception School this current school year.

A hymn written by Fr. Ted for First Communicants, *Come, O, Jesus, Come into my Heart,* was sung at the Offertory. The Eucharistic Prayer, the Holy, the Mystery of Faith and Great Amen were taken from the Creation Mass by Marty Haugen. Meanwhile, the Lamb of God was the Paraguayan *Cordero de Dios.*

Communion time featured *To this Table Lord We Come* by Marianist Brother Howard Hughes, and *Jesu Joy of All Desiring* by Johann Sebastian Bach. The closing hymn reprised *For the Beauty of the Earth* and added the beloved *Dona Nobis Pacem* canon sung in a round of high and low voices.

The Mass was attended not only by American Martyrs parishioners, but principals at underfunded schools participating in the [Saint Sebastian Sports Project](https://saintsebastianproject.org/), which has helped approximately 16,500 children in 60 schools in the Los Angeles Archdiocese, including the some-210 students at Immaculate Conception School. The organization supplies game gear, other athletic equipment, and coaching stipends. According to its Website, Saint Sebastian Sports Project has donated about $660,000 for the teams.

A short video played during Mass showed a snippet of goods given to Immaculate Conception students, all of whom are part of the school choir the Schola Cantorum’s Escolanía Pacífica.