



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Catholic Extension Society Honors David E. Harvey Jr. and Joe A. Cleary Jr. with Houston Spirit of Francis Award

HOUSTON, TEXAS — [Catholic Extension Society](#) honored David E. Harvey Jr. and Joseph A. Cleary Jr. of [Harvey Cleary](#), with its ninth annual [Houston Spirit of Francis Award](#), which recognizes an individual or group who has made a significant impact on the mission of the Catholic Church in America through service or philanthropy. As prominent fixtures in the Houston construction community, Harvey and Cleary were honored not only for their excellence in building physical structures, but for their years of dedication to building up their community and the Catholic Church.

Harvey and Cleary received the award at a benefit dinner on Feb. 20 in Houston, where other notables were in attendance, such as Archbishop Emeritus J. Michael Miller of Vancouver, Bishop Emeritus Curtis Guillory of Beaumont & 2019 Spirit of Francis Award recipient, Bishop Emeritus Ricardo Ramirez of Las Cruces (now a resident of Houston), Bishop David Toups of Beaumont, Auxiliary Bishop Italo Dell'Oro of Galveston-Houston, Sr. Jane Meyer, 2024 Spirit of Francis Award recipient, and Stan Marek, 2025 Spirit of Francis Award recipient.

Father Jack Wall, president of Catholic Extension Society, said, "We are here to honor two men, David and Joe, who exemplify the Spirit of Francis, commemorated in the three 'Francis figures' from whom this award derives its name."

Father Wall continued, "Both of you have served on the boards of nonprofits whose mission is to respond to the plight of the poor and to help alleviate their suffering. In doing so, you give powerful witness to the fact that it is God we serve when we care for the least of his people."

Upon receiving the honor, Harvey said, "Thank you, Catholic Extension, for this award. This recognition belongs not just to us, but to our family and colleagues who shaped who we are today and embody the values we cherish and hold high."

Cleary said, "We are both humbled to be recognized by Catholic Extension Society tonight. At its core, Catholic Extension's mission is rooted in love and taking care of one another, which directly correlates to our values of family, faith and work ethic."

Harvey and Cleary became friends when they met in Catholic grade school at St. Vincent de Paul Catholic School in Houston near Rice University. Years later, Harvey and Cleary would reunite as business partners, integrating Catholic values of service and compassion into both their personal and professional lives.

Harvey currently serves on six nonprofit boards, including Strake Jesuit College Preparatory, Cristo Rey Jesuit College Preparatory of Houston, St. John's School, University of St. Thomas, where he serves as an Emeritus Trustee, and Catholic Charities of the Archdiocese of Galveston-Houston, where he holds the title of Life Director.

Cleary previously served on the board of University of St. Thomas in Houston, a Catholic institution of higher education, reinforcing his commitment to faithbased education. He also participated in community service leadership through board membership with The Salvation Army of Greater Houston, supporting charitable and humanitarian initiatives.

Proceeds from the dinner will support Catholic Extension's missions in the state of Texas. Catholic Extension Society has had a special relationship with the Lone Star State since our founding in 1905, when our supporters helped to fund the ministries of the horseback-riding Oblate priests at La Lomita Chapel, a historic mission church on the banks of the Rio Grande in Texas. Since then, we have built and repaired over 2,000 church structures in all 15 dioceses in Texas — an investment totaling over \$200 million (in today's dollars).

Over the past 120 years, Catholic Extension Society has helped to strengthen all 15 dioceses in Texas by providing support more than 7,000 times. Currently, the organization supports over 2.8 million Catholics across eight Texas dioceses including Amarillo, Beaumont, Brownsville, El Paso, Laredo, Lubbock, San Angelo and Tyler.

For more information on Catholic Extension Society and the Houston Spirit of Francis, visit [here](#).

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About Catholic Extension: Founded in 1905, Catholic Extension Society works in solidarity with people to build up vibrant and transformative Catholic faith communities among the poor in the poorest regions of America. For more information visit www.catholicextension.org; follow us on Facebook at facebook.com/catholicextension or on X (Formerly Twitter) at [@CathExtension](https://twitter.com/CathExtension).

