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Presidential Speech at U.S. Bishops' Fall General Assembly

Archbishop Gomez

Admitting that people's faith in God "has been shaken" by the coronavirus pandemic and related economic turmoil, Los Angeles Archbishop José H. Gomez called on his fellow bishops to take the news of the Resurrection and the triumph of life over death directly to people to help them navigate the crises. "At the heart of their fears are fundamental questions about divine providence and the goodness of God," said Archbishop Gomez, president of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, Nov. 16 during an online address on the first day of the bishops' annual fall general assembly. "This is far more than a public health emergency," he said. "Everywhere, we

"In this hour in our country our neighbors need the church more than ever."

see spreading the fear of illness and death." The assembly was taking place entirely online for the first time because of the pandemic. The archbishop said the pandemic illustrates that the core message of the Gospel — Christ's love for every person, the power of the cross and the promise of the resurrection — "is fading from our neighbors' hearts." He said, "Brothers, in this time of death, we hold the Word of life. We come in the name of the God, whose love is stronger than death." The times, with their social unrest and uncertainty caused by the pandemic, "call for a heroic Christianity," he explained. "We need to continue to form and empower missionary disciples, as Pope Francis calls us to do." In opening his address, Archbishop Gomez paused a moment to remember the children and adults within the church who are victim-survivors of clergy sexual abuse. The archbishop's speech follows.

before I begin, I would like us to pause to remember all our brothers and sisters who are victim-survivors of clergy sexual abuse.

In light of the Holy See's report on Theodore McCarrick, we again want to express our deep sorrow and pray that they might find healing and hope. Let us also renew our commitment today to protecting children and vulnerable adults and to eliminating this scourge of abuse from the church.

As we know, this has been a long and challenging year for all of us in the church.

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