

THE GARDEN OF FORGIVENESS



Healing the Wounds of Clergy Sexual Abuse

A Proposal

A Project of SafeNet / Instruments of Peace



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Proposition

- SafeNet proposes the creation of a vast and expansive *Garden of Forgiveness (The Garden)* on the grounds of Old Mission Santa Barbara in Santa Barbara California.
- *The Garden*, which will also include a resource and education center (*The Center for the Study and Practice of Forgiveness*), will be the first of its kind in the nation created specifically to address issues of healing by acknowledging and exploring the power of forgiveness.

Purpose and Intent

The Garden of Forgiveness will be a place where people can gather inspiration and strength, and where understanding and compassion for others and ourselves can be learned, contemplated, and practiced.

- *The Garden* will help raise awareness about the power of forgiveness to assist in healing and alleviate suffering with regards to clergy sexual abuse.
- *The Garden*, through its proposed *Center for the Study and Practice of Forgiveness*, will provide resources for counseling, meditation, education, referral and mediation, and will host and sponsor conferences and seminars in partnership with *The Mission Renewal Center*.
- *The Garden* will be a place that honors our capacity to understand forgiveness and our willingness to forgive of our own accord.

Sponsors and Supporters

Under the umbrella of Instruments of Peace, a 501 (c) (3) California non-profit, *The Garden of Forgiveness* will be a project sponsored by SafeNet, the Survivors Alliance and Franciscan Exchange Network.

- Founded in 2003 by clergy abuse survivors of St. Anthony's Seminary in Santa Barbara, California, SafeNet's sole focus continues to be on the healing and reconciliation work within the Franciscan Province of St. Barbara and other wounded areas across the country.
- SafeNet is currently in discussion with the Mission Santa Barbara Community and the Franciscan Province of St. Barbara regarding co-sponsorship of *The Garden*.
- Supporters will include a diverse number of individuals and groups from both ends: survivors, family members, legal representatives, the clergy, Catholic parishes, dioceses, religious organizations, and alumni of St. Anthony's Seminary.
- *The Garden* will be a unifying endeavor that will cross boundaries.

Designated Space

Pending approval by the Franciscan Province of St. Barbara, *The Garden* will be located on the grounds of the Old Mission Santa Barbara and will encompass 1.3 acres.

- SafeNet is currently in dialogue with the Mission Santa Barbara Community and The Franciscan Province of St. Barbara to designate the area of the property to be used for *The Garden* as their contribution to this project.
- *The Garden* will encompass the Mission side of a shared driveway that extends from the entrance on Garden Street and divides the properties of St. Anthony's Seminary and Old Mission Santa Barbara.
- *The Garden* may include the use of an existing building on the property situated near the upper section of *The Garden*, a portion of which is currently being used as an office for SafeNet/Instruments of Peace. The building will be refurbished and incorporated into the overall design of *The Garden*.
- If the building is available for use it will also house *The Center for the Study and Practice of Forgiveness*.

Goals and Objectives

The Garden of Forgiveness will be many things to many people and serve as a model for parishes, dioceses, and communities to consider when exploring issues of reconciliation.

- *The Garden* will demonstrate a hopeful response to the clergy abuse crisis and become a place of prayer, peace, and empowerment.
- *The Garden* will support personal and communal healing and enable individuals to become quiet partners for others and silent guides for themselves.
- Through its resource and education center, *The Center for the Study and Practice of Forgiveness*, *The Garden* will offer meditation, psychotherapy, and mediation services, and provide workshops, seminars, conferences and forums in a safe and respectful environment.
- Through its archive, *The Garden* will allow returning students of St. Anthony's Seminary to participate in both individual and collective reclamation projects and invite the public to share in those discoveries.
- By being a vessel that holds both joy and sorrow, *The Garden* will help contribute to the emotional and spiritual well-being of all who enter it.

Description and Design

The Garden of Forgiveness will consist of communal and private spaces with paths that lead to areas for gatherings and quiet contemplation and a resource and education center/archive.

- Landscape architects, gardeners, artists, developers, craftsman, and others with particular talents will be consulted and hired to collaborate on *The Garden of Forgiveness* with respect and reverence for the environment.
- Existing trees, native plants, benches, fountains, pools, rocks, and other implements conducive to an atmosphere of peace and calm will be utilized.
- Water (in fountains, pools, walkways) will be used creatively to encourage interaction through the use of stones, icons and other symbolic offerings.
- An aesthetically constructed adobe/stone wall with the irregular placement of gaps, breaks, breeches and holes will ring the perimeter of *The Garden* symbolic of both safety and openness.
- A competition will be held for certain sections, fountains, pools, benches, sculptures, etc.
- Paths and pools will utilize the remnants of bricks and stones honoring survivors and supporters.
- The building that will house *The Center for the Study and Practice of Forgiveness* will be refurbished, maintained, and incorporated into the overall design, serving as an introduction to and from *The Garden*.

Cost of Project

The Garden of Forgiveness has a fundraising goal of \$4 million.

Appeal for Funds

- SafeNet is appealing to the hierarchy of the U.S. Catholic Church and the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops to support The Garden of Forgiveness with an endorsement and a financial commitment, and thus begin the long but necessary journey to establish trust with survivors on a national level.
- SafeNet is appealing to every Catholic parish and diocese in the United States to consider a donation to *The Garden of Forgiveness* and to participate in the promise to help heal the wounds of clergy sexual abuse.
- SafeNet is asking the Voice of the Faithful, the Knights of Columbus, and other Catholic groups and organizations to consider a donation to *The Garden of Forgiveness* and to promote positive transformation with prayerful acts and compassion.
- SafeNet is asking every survivor, including those who ever settled a claim with the Catholic Church, to consider a donation to *The Garden of Forgiveness* and to create personal opportunities for spiritual growth and healing.
- SafeNet is urging every legal firm and insurance company involved in the litigation process on both sides to consider a donation to *The Garden of Forgiveness* and to be clear when acting in the best interest of its clients.

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Appeal for Funds (cont.)

- SafeNet is urging every news agency that covered the sexual abuse scandal to consider a donation to *The Garden of Forgiveness* and to be mindful of language when reporting the pain and suffering of others.
- SafeNet is appealing to SNAP and other survivor advocacy groups on both the national and regional levels to consider a donation to *The Garden of Forgiveness* and to openly and respectfully discuss the option of forgiveness as a willing choice.
- SafeNet is inviting every former student of St. Anthony's Seminary, both those who were abused and those who weren't, to consider a donation to *The Garden of Forgiveness* and to return to Santa Barbara and help build it.

To donate to *The Garden of Forgiveness* please make checks payable to *SafeNet* and send your contribution to either one of our offices in the following cities:

SafeNet
PO Box 117
Santa Barbara, CA 93102

SafeNet
PO Box 236
Millbrae, CA 94030

You can also contribute online by visiting:
www.mysafenet.org

SafeNet / Instruments of Peace is a California non-profit corporation with 501(c)(3) tax exempt status. Contributions are tax deductible as provided by law.

Additional Information

- *The Garden of Forgiveness* is part of the *Global Gardens of Forgiveness Network*, founded in NYC by the Rev. Lyndon Harris, the Episcopal priest in charge of the relief ministries offered through Saint Paul's Chapel after September 11, 2001. His efforts to build a Garden of Forgiveness at Ground Zero are documented in the film, "The Power of Forgiveness," by filmmaker Martin Doblmeier (Journey Films).

www.gofnyc.org

- *The Fetzer Institute* develops research and educational programs that explore how love and forgiveness can effect transformation and healing for individuals and communities and are informed by both scientific rigor and spirituality. Their mission is to foster awareness of the power of love and forgiveness in the emerging global community.

www.fetzer.org

- *The Stanford University Forgiveness Projects* are an ongoing series of workshops and research projects that investigate the effectiveness of forgiveness on a variety of populations. Through its director, Dr. Fred Luskin, an Associate Professor at the Institute of Transpersonal Psychology, the projects have successfully explored forgiveness therapy with people who suffered from the violence in Northern Ireland, Sierra Leone and the attacks on the World Trade Center.

www.learningtoforgive.com

Management

The Garden of Forgiveness proposes a management plan with the Old Mission and the Franciscan Province of St. Barbara, to be discussed, negotiated, and mutually agreed upon for the use of the defined area for *The Garden*, and for a defined period of time. The land upon which *The Garden* rests will belong to, stay with and/or revert to the Franciscans at the end of any agreed term.

- *SafeNet / Instruments of Peace (IOP)* through its executive director and board of directors, and in cooperation with the Old Mission community, will oversee, design, build and maintain *The Garden*.
- In designing *The Garden*, IOP will consult with and rely on the services and expertise of local landscape architect, Katie O'Reilly Rogers, and consult with a number of other parties interested in collaboration, construction, and maintenance, including the present Old Mission gardeners, the Santa Barbara Community College Horticulture department, and volunteers from the community.
- Upon approval of *The Garden* by both the Old Mission community and the Franciscan Province of St. Barbara, IOP will raise the needed funds, approximately \$4 million, for the creation and maintenance of *The Garden*.
- IOP will set aside 25% of every dollar raised to create a maintenance fund for *The Garden*. A \$4 million fundraising goal, for example, would place \$1 million in this fund. Through proper investment planning, the fund would be self-sustaining over time. This percentage figure is flexible and will fluctuate depending on the actual need.

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Management (cont.)

- *SafeNet/IOP* will assume all costs for the operation, reconstruction, maintenance, and other related expenses for the building that may house *The Center for the Study and Practice of Forgiveness*, in exchange for the contractual use of the building. Terms to be negotiated and mutually agreed upon.
- A detailed and exact cost estimate breakdown for the construction and maintenance of *The Garden* will be calculated once the actual size and extent of *The Garden* are determined. Other considerations for *The Garden*, including publicity, insurance, liability, etc., will be further discussed and, upon mutual agreement, be shared by *SafeNet/IOP* and/or the Old Mission/Franciscan Province of St. Barbara.