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**For Immediate Release 9.10.18**

**Catholic Extension shines a spotlight on recovery efforts in Puerto Rico and honors Goya Foods President Robert Unanue and Executive Vice President Peter Unanue**

Metropolitan Club, New York | October 4, 6:30-9:30 p.m.

NEW YORK | On October 4, [Catholic Extension](#), a national organization that financially supports Catholic ministries among the poor and marginalized, will present **the 5th Annual Spirit of Francis Award** at a dinner to be held at the Metropolitan Club in New York City. Hosted by **Catholic Extension President Fr. Jack Wall**, the evening will spotlight Catholic Extension's continuing support of recovery efforts in Puerto Rico and honor **Robert Unanue and Peter Unanue**, president and executive vice president, respectively, of **Goya Foods** for their commitment to the island's restoration. The evening will also feature a special performance by 10-time Grammy-winning Latin jazz legend **Eddie Palmieri**. Honorary co-chair **Timothy Cardinal Dolan, Archbishop of New York** will deliver the invocation.

Proceeds from the event will benefit Catholic Extension's [Patrons of Puerto Rican Fund](#). Tickets and sponsorships are available at <http://catholicextension.org/francis-newyork>.

### **Catholic Extension in Puerto Rico**

Catholic Extension has been providing financial support to the Catholic dioceses in Puerto Rico for 110 years. The organization has stepped up efforts to raise funds following Hurricane Maria, which made landfall on September 20, 2017, and devastated infrastructure, residences and an estimated 1,200 Catholic Church buildings.

Since the hurricane, Catholic Extension has committed \$1.5 million to the Puerto Rican church's pastoral and charitable work, and continues to support ongoing financial needs through its Patrons of Puerto Rico Fund. Additionally, Catholic Extension, in partnership with Catholic Management Services, is providing consultation to Puerto Rican dioceses to help them access federal grants to reconstruct their damaged churches.

### **Recognition from Pope Francis**

During his May 2 General Audience in St. Peter's Square in Vatican City, Pope Francis thanked the donors of Catholic Extension for their support of the church in Puerto Rico in the aftermath of the island's devastation.

"In a special way," the pope told the thousands gathered for the audience, "I greet the members of the Catholic Extension Society of the United States with gratitude for their contribution to the work

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of rebuilding in Puerto Rico. In the joy of the risen Christ, I invoke upon you and your families the loving mercy of God our Father. May the Lord bless you all.”

### **Spirit of Francis Award**

The Spirit of Francis Award recognizes an individual or group for their commitment “to reach out to the margins of society” in the spirit of St. Francis of Assisi, Pope Francis and the founder of Catholic Extension, Father Francis Clement Kelley. For 110 years Catholic Extension has been building churches and the Catholic Church in the United States’ poorest places and transforming lives through the power of faith.

### **5th Annual New York Spirit of Francis Award Recipients**

#### **Robert I. “Bob” Unanue, President of Goya Foods**

Robert “Bob” Unanue became president of Goya in 2004 and has held several key positions both in the United States and abroad. He has played an instrumental role in establishing Goya as the largest Hispanic-owned food company in the United States as well as developing a foothold in Spain as a significant exporter of Goya’s award-winning olive oil to the United States. Under his leadership, Goya has generated more than \$1.4 billion in annual revenue, with 2,500 products and more than 4,000 employees in 26 production and warehouse facilities worldwide.

#### **Peter Unanue, Executive Vice President of Goya Foods**

Peter Unanue became executive vice president of Goya in 2006 and was most recently responsible for the expansion and relocation of Goya’s current headquarters in Jersey City, New Jersey, a 640,000-square-foot, state-of-the-art facility. He also headed the implementation of new technology and equipment for both its distribution and manufacturing facilities. Under his leadership, Goya installed an automated routing system for customer deliveries at all of Goya’s distribution centers nationwide, significantly increasing the efficiency and capabilities of the company’s distribution throughout the United States.

#### **About Catholic Extension**

Catholic Extension builds churches and the Catholic Church in the United States’ poorest places. Since its founding in 1905, Catholic Extension has distributed more than \$1.2 billion to dioceses and parishes that cannot support themselves. Catholic Extension provides funding and resources for church buildings, leaders and ministries to build up and strengthen Catholic faith communities and unleash the transformative power of faith. For more information, please visit [www.catholicextension.org](http://www.catholicextension.org).

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#### **Press Inquiries**

**Dayla Arabella Santurri**

781.479.6951

[Dayla@DaylaArabella.com](mailto:Dayla@DaylaArabella.com)

#### **Spirit of Francis**

**Award Dinner 10.4.18**

Metropolitan Club

1 E 60th St.

New York, NY 10022

[CatholicExtension.org](http://CatholicExtension.org)

[CatholicExtension@DaylaArabella.com](mailto:CatholicExtension@DaylaArabella.com)

#### **Catholic Extension**

150 S. Wacker Dr., Ste. 2000

Chicago, IL 60606

[www.CatholicExtension.org](http://www.CatholicExtension.org)

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