

**ACANTHUS REACHES LAND LEASE AGREEMENT WITH ST. BENEDICT CATHOLIC CHURCH TO
BUILD AND MANAGE INDEPENDENT SENIOR HOUSING COMMUNITY**

Acanthus Development to Build Senior Housing Communities on Catholic Campuses

PHOENIX (October 31, 2024) – **Acanthus Development** (Acanthus) is pleased to announce that it has reached an agreement on five ground leases to build and manage senior housing communities on parish campuses throughout the greater Phoenix metropolitan area. St. Benedict Catholic Church in Ahwatukee is slated to be the first of five planned locations for senior housing in the Roman Catholic Diocese of Phoenix, with construction anticipated to begin in April of 2025.

These senior living communities will incorporate independent and assisted living, as well as memory care, directly on parish grounds. The development program is particularly designed to further the goals, mission, and values of the local Catholic Church. Acanthus Senior Living communities will offer residents compassionate care and encourage a sense of belonging and connection with the community.

“This is a historic moment for us. I am excited to have a Senior Living Facility in our parish community that will give us the opportunity to evangelize all generations from early childhood in our St. John Bosco school to the seniors who will be living in the facility,” ***explained Father James Aboyi of St. Benedict’s Parish.***

“While the senior housing facilities will function independently of the parishes, they will benefit the churches. By offering housing and associated medical care for older members, the facilities enable residents to live next door to their parish,” ***said Bart Shea, CEO of Acanthus Development.***

The average size of each senior community is expected to be 150 rooms. Plans are also underway for senior living housing on the campuses of St. Clare of Assisi in Surprise, St. Raphael Catholic Church in Glendale, and St. Gabriel Catholic Church in Cave Creek.

Although located on Catholic parish grounds, each senior housing community will be available and open to people of all faiths. The need for senior housing is at an all-time high and will increase each year as the baby boomers enter the age group.

“I commend and am deeply grateful for people of goodwill coming together to roll up their sleeves and find creative ways to uphold the dignity of our brothers and sisters, and live out the Gospel mission to bring Jesus Christ to every heart and home – and now in a special way, those of all faiths who are in an assisted living situation can foster a sense of home so close to the heart of parish life,” ***said Bishop John Dolan***, the fifth bishop in the 54-year-history of the Diocese of Phoenix.

“The work of Acanthus Senior Living is a good compliment to the ongoing efforts of the Diocese of Phoenix and many other local entities – like Catholic Charities, St. Vincent de Paul, and FSL – that continue to serve on the front lines,” ***added Bishop Dolan.*** “The work of Acanthus will inspire others to think outside the box when it comes to evangelization and caring for one another, and that’s a really good thing.”

Establishing a Symbiotic Relationship with the Community

“Each senior living community will help individual parishes with their mission of providing state of the art housing for their senior members. They will also pay a land lease directly to the parish to support their

overall ministry, operations and other mission goals,” **shared Chris Bayley, COO of Acanthus Development.** “Having Acanthus Senior Living residents on-site does not have any expense allocated to the parishes.”

Mission Driven

Acanthus Development has worked over the last eight years to develop its program to ensure that each facility will support the fundamental mission of the Catholic Church. Having a senior living community on parish grounds will allow each parish to support senior services and senior living, as well as other core objectives like community outreach, education, and support for those in need.

“Our parish is thrilled to be one of the five initial parishes in the Diocese of Phoenix partnering with Acanthus Senior Living,” **offered Father Thaddeus McGuire of St. Clare Parish in Surprise, Arizona.** “In addition to there being tremendous enthusiasm amongst our senior parishioners about the prospect of living in the planned senior living center, there is also great enthusiasm amongst those still in the workplace who are excited about the opportunity to work in an environment where they would be free to live and share their Catholic faith while serving and journeying with those in residence.”

He added, “Our parish’s ability to minister to and to be blessed by those disciples in their golden years, will facilitate innumerable intersections of faith wherein we will be able to build each other up in the One Body of Christ as we journey together to the gift of eternal life.”

“One of the things I love most about this Senior Living project is the ministry the Church can do. As people age and draw closer to death, they naturally think about their relationship with God and others. This can be a life-changing moment for them - not only does this project help Catholics stay more connected to their faith and sacraments, but it also might help someone come to know or choose faith for the first time,” **said Father Chad King of St. Gabriel the Archangel.**

As **Father Camilo De Villa of St. Raphael Parish in Glendale, Arizona** succinctly put it: “Acanthus at St. Raphael – dignity of life assisted care living; come home to celebrate Mass at your parish home.”

A Vision for the Future

“The market reaction to this project has been overwhelmingly positive. In recent months, Acanthus Development partners have made contact with the Diocese of Galveston-Houston seeking to roll out this program in the greater Houston-Baytown-Sugar Land metropolitan area. Acanthus has also opened discussions to expand development of this senior living program beyond the U.S. borders to countries such as Canada, Chile, and Poland,” **added Shea.**

Visit us at www.AcanthusSeniorLiving.com.

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