

NORTH DALLAS

Parish Neighbors

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MEET THE SORIANO FAMILY: WHERE GOD'S PERFECT TIMING IS AT WORK

By Lani Relucio | Photos courtesy of the Soriano Family

If there is a family who swears by God's perfect timing, it would be the Sorianos. Living by the motto, "Jesus, I trust in You!" they have seen God's hands move at just the right time and right place in many circumstances, beginning with their chance meeting.

George was working in Romania when his grandmother in Panama passed away. He took the plane to visit his family and stopped over in Dallas for a few days. Cynthia, on the other hand, had just relocated from Guatemala to return to work with a previous employer in Dallas.

"He came by the office to see a mutual friend, and we were surprised to meet each other," Cynthia said. "Our friend arranged for all of us to go to lunch later in the week, and then she cancelled at the last minute, so George and I went to lunch." Call that serendipity or God's perfect timing for romance, it was not a surprise that they were married three years later in 2000.

"Married for 21 years, we have seen our share of challenges," George said. "But through it all there is always this understanding that God is always faithful to us, even when we can't see what we perceive as a favorable result. Looking back, we see that His path was much better for us."

They cited an event five years ago, when George had accepted a job that required him to be in Argentina for months at a time. Cynthia was left in Dallas with their four children, who were enrolled in a Catholic school near their home. "That location was important because daily logistics were tricky with George so far from home," Cynthia said.

On three separate occasions, three different friends approached Cynthia and told her she should consider a different school for one of the kids. Cynthia was happy to speak about it, but she wasn't convinced this was the path for their family. After the third person suggested this, she went ahead and applied for the



school and had her child go through the admissions process. Cynthia mentioned it to George. The odds were stacked against them. First, they would need to be invited based on the admission process. Their tuition would increase significantly. And finally, they would need to address the problem of commute since the new school was in another part of Dallas.

Entrusting the whole thing to God, they thanked Him for the opportunity and requested His guidance to wherever He wanted them to be. The admissions letter arrived a few weeks later with an invitation to join the incoming class. The financial resources for the increased tuition came through, and lastly, George was offered a job that brought him back to Dallas, just a few miles from the new school, resolving the commuting issue.

"Too many factors came together to deny the benevolence and presence of God in that situation," they said. "It is in moments like these that we recognize that no odds are stacked against our God, and when we trust in Him, He will lead us where He wants us."



Where did they learn this kind of faith?

Both George and Cynthia were raised in Catholic homes. They attended Catholic elementary schools and Catholic universities that were critical to helping their families instill in them a love for God, an appreciation for the Sacraments, respect for others, and deep gratitude for the sacrifices that come along with Catholic education.

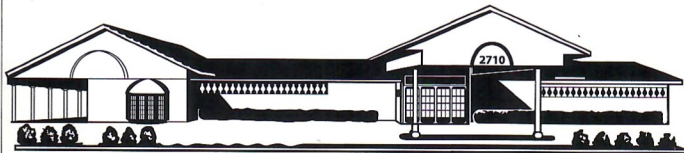
George has a BBA in Accounting from the University of Texas at Austin and a Juris Doctorate from the St. Louis University School of Law. He is an attorney who started out as a career Army officer through the Army ROTC Scholarship Program, serving our country for 25 years. He is also a graduate of the US Army Command and General Staff College at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas. Cynthia holds a BA in Spanish from the University of Dallas and an MBA from the University of Texas at Dallas. She currently works in Development for the Diocese of Dallas where she oversees the Bishop's Annual Appeal.

The Sorianos have been members of St. Monica Parish since 2000. "We enjoy the true sense of community and the many activities where we can practice our faith with other believers. Essentially, we found a parish where we could continue to grow in our faith through the parish leadership, educational programs, and a community of believers who could challenge and support us as well in our faith journey," Cynthia said.

George is the founder and chairman of the Saint Benedict Youth and Scouting Association, the former chief executive of the St. Monica Scouting programs, a charter member of Knights of Columbus Council 5656, and a 4th Degree member of the Notre Dame Assembly.

George and their children, Roman (15), Sebastian (13), Francesca (11), and Valentina (9) are ushers for the Sunday morning Mass. Roman volunteers with Rays of Light and Feed My Starving Children, and Cynthia volunteers with Austin Street Center in Dallas.

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George and the boys are also members of the St. Monica Boy Scouts Troop 712, where Roman is a member of Order of the Arrow. He was also a 3-year student of muay thai kickboxing and is a member of the Quiz Bowl team at his school. Sebastian is active in Boy Scouts where he holds the rank of Tenderfoot and he is an avid basketball player. He also participates

in Leadership Club of Dallas. Francesca is in her third year of Irish Dance instruction and she participates in local competitions. She also likes gymnastics and Harry Potter books. Valentina is a budding dancer, and is interested in taking care of animals.

All the Sorianos love to read! "We read history, fiction, non-fiction, and books on and about the faith. We love watching movies. George especially likes watching Scandinavian murder mysteries on Netflix," Cynthia enthused. Their extended family includes two guinea pigs, Harriet and Ginger.

George and Cynthia agreed, early on in their marriage, to always support the Church financially and be faithful in their stewardship. Their belief is that faithful stewardship will be rewarded in multiples and this has been the case. Their testimony is that they have never wanted for anything and that God has

been faithful to their commitments in support of the Church.

"It's important to always be thankful, even for the challenges. It's also a blessing to be able to recognize some moments when God has intervened. It makes you realize that He is always present in our lives, but these moments serve as a reminder of His omnipresence if we allow Him into our lives," they shared.

Cynthia's faith would be reflected by her favorite scriptural verses from 2 Timothy 1:6-7 "For this reason I remind you to rekindle the gift of God that is within you through the laying on of my hands, for God did not give us a spirit of timidity but a spirit of power and love and self-control," and from 2 Corinthians 12:9 "but he said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for my power us made perfect in weakness."

In times of need, she turns to St. Agnes, her Confirmation saint, as well as St. Therese of Liseux and St. Therese's parents, Sts. Louis and Zélie Martin.

George, on the other hand, finds strength in the scriptural passage from John 14:6, "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father but by me." George believes in the authority and sovereignty of the Roman Catholic Church. George is heard to sometimes say, "Jesus said it and that settles it!"

"We have had our share of challenges, from health issues to job losses, moving, kids, and life in general," they shared. "Through it all, we focus on Christ and the confidence that He will not only accompany us but also upholds us, which has helped us to continue even when things looked bleak. It's interesting because we always mention that God's timing is not our timing, and His timing is perfect. Looking back on certain experiences, if things would have happened when we wanted them to happen, the situation would not have borne the same fruits. God is good!"

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