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Los Angeles Rams quarterback Matthew Stafford sets to pass the ball in the first half of the ga

Los Angeles Rams quarterback Matthew Stafford sets to pass the ball in the first half of the game against the San Francisco 49ers at SoFi Stadium in Inglewood, Calif., Jan. 9, 2022. (CNS photo/Jayne Kamin-Oncea, USA TODAY Sports via Reuters)



by Catholic News Service

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LOS ANGELES — Archbishop José H. Gomez of Los Angeles and Archbishop Dennis M. Schnurr of Cincinnati are rooting for their home team in Super Bowl LVI, but they also have placed a friendly wager on the outcome of the Feb. 13 showdown between the Rams and the Bengals.

The prelates announced the wager in a joint video posted online Feb. 9.

For his part, Archbishop Gomez offered baked treats from the City of Angels beloved Porto's Bakery. On his end, Archbishop Schnurr offered a case of Cincinnati's own Graeter's ice cream.

"I look forward to celebrating the Rams' victory with the delicious Graeter's ice cream that Archbishop Schnurr will be sending my way," commented Archbishop Gomez.

"One of the best parts of the Bengals' triumph will be digging into the famous Porto's pasteles and cookies provided by my friend Archbishop Gomez," responded Archbishop Schnurr.

The prelates also are encouraging Catholics to get involved in this friendly exchange by donating to each archdiocese's Catholic Education Foundation, or CEF, in the spirit of the big game by going to www.bishopsbiggame.com.

"Or follow #BishopsBigGame on social media to see how you can be a part of the excitement and donate to support Catholic school students in the name of your favorite team," said a news release about the episcopal wager.

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"The CEF of the 'winning' archdiocese will receive 60% of the total fund and the CEF of the other archdiocese will receive 40% of the total fund," it said. "All proceeds collected will go directly to the respective CEFs, which provide needs-based tuition assistance for students attending Catholic schools."

To get things started, each archbishop has made of a donation of $1,000 to the joint fund set up to receive all donations.

"I am so proud of the Catholic schools of the Archdiocese of Cincinnati and the work of the Catholic Education Foundation. Through the generosity of the faithful, the CEF is providing millions of dollars of financial assistance each school year," Archbishop Schnurr said.

"We may disagree on the winning team, but on Catholic education, our bet is on our Catholic schools in both archdioceses all the way," added Archbishop Gomez.

"I'm proud of the great work of our students, teachers, staff, families and parish communities that make our Catholic Schools great," he said, "and for the generous support of the faithful through CEF so that our students have the opportunity to learn and grow to become the leaders of tomorrow."