



## – Press Release –

August 23, 2022, Chicago, Illinois–  
For immediate release

### GIA Welcomes Julio De León

GIA Publications, Inc. is excited to announce the addition of Julio De León to its editorial staff. Julio is a bilingual educator, composer, choir director, and performer with a longstanding dedication to music ministry and an impressive resumé of professional accomplishments. Skilled on numerous instruments, his specialty is percussion performance. For the past eight years, he has taught music in parochial schools in the Archdiocese of Los Angeles. He currently serves at St. Mark School, where he instills in his students a love for music as a form of ministry.

In May of this year, Julio graduated with a Master of Arts degree in Pastoral Theology from Loyola Marymount University. His thesis, titled “Music and the Liturgy: Bridging the Gap between Latino/a Theology, Aesthetics, and Music,” explored the role of liturgical music through the lens of cultural analysis, beauty, and its transcendental nature. Most recently, Julio served as the interim director for the Spanish choir at the Cathedral of Our Lady of the Angels in Los Angeles. He has ministered in numerous parishes in the Los Angeles area and has performed at such major events as the Los Angeles Religious Education Congress and for the NPM National Convention, where he also served as a clinician in the areas of spirituality, diversity and mentorship. Julio is married to Lesly Palacios Castillo, with whom he has partnered in ministry to their home community of Holy Spirit Church in Los Angeles for over twelve years; together they co-direct the Cristo Vive music ministry, originally founded by Lesly’s parents in Guatemala in the 1980s.

Julio was born in El Salvador and emigrated to the United States as a teenager. Earlier this year, he had the special honor of being commissioned by his native country to compose the official hymn for Fray Cosme Spessotto, an Italian friar martyred in El Salvador in 1980 during the height of the nation’s civil war and beatified along with three other Salvadoran martyrs on January 22, 2022. Julio’s composition was featured at the beatification Mass during the presentation of relics.

At GIA, Julio will work primarily with Editor of Spanish and Bilingual Resources Peter Kolar to develop high quality resources for Spanish-speaking communities and those who serve in them, as well as further engaging with this growing and vital segment of the U.S. Catholic Church through outreach and formational efforts. Kate Williams, GIA Vice-President for Sacred Music Publishing, said, “We are so thrilled to welcome Julio to the GIA family. He brings a vast set of gifts that will greatly benefit both our team and all those we serve. We look forward to wonderful things to come from our Spanish and bilingual department.”

Founded in 1941, GIA Publications, Inc. is a family-owned company with more than 10,000 choral and instrumental editions in print, as well as hymnals, recordings, and a wide variety of music education resources. Our website is [www.giamusic.com](http://www.giamusic.com).



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