

Bishop Oscar Cantú Remarks  
Cardinal Bernardin Reception 2023  
Baltimore Marriott Waterfront, Essex ABC

Thank you all for being here this evening as we honor the pride of San Jose, Ivonn Rivera.

The Diocese of San Jose is known in the secular world as Silicon Valley: a place of technology and innovation; a place that has transformed the valley formerly known as the Valley of Saint Clare - Santa Clara County. And the Catholic world continues to acknowledge it as the Valley of Saint Clare.

And yet in the Catholic world, we continue to say this is not only a place of technology, but it is indeed a place of innovation – innovation of human relations. That is something that Ivonn – an immigrant, a mother, a wife, a community member, a Catholic, a person of faith – has brought to our community.

We are grateful to her pastor, Father Rick Rodoni, who nominated her for this award, her community of Saint Lucy's for lifting her up, and to Ivonn, who has developed into a leader. She has developed from a place of faith, a place of family, a place of concern for her fellow community members. She has blossomed into a fierce defender of human dignity. We're proud of her,

and we hold her up as an example of what can be in Silicon Valley and what can be in all our communities. Human innovation. Human relationships.

My father was from Mexico, and he loved hot chilis. He cultivated them in his garden in the backyard, and he was particularly enamored with the *chili pequin*. It's a tiny little chili, but it's one of the hottest ones. I can testify to that. In Spanish, we say *chiquito pero picoso*. Of Ivonn, we would say *chiquita pero picosa* – “she may be small, but she packs a big punch.” A big punch of justice, of faith, of family life, and of human dignity.

*Con un orgullo de el orgullo de San Jose* – “The pride of San Jose,” we present Ivonn Rivera.