

Hobby Lobby Donates Land to California Megachurch

Hobby Lobby is no longer known for its retail of arts and crafts alone. The \$3 billion a year company now has its name connected to Saddleback Church led by Pastor Rick Warren. Oklahoma-based Hobby Lobby has donated a 170-acre ranch in San Juan Capistrano, Calif., to the megachurch.

“Rick Warren, his staff and the church’s congregation have contributed to the Lord’s work on this property and we couldn’t be more excited to donate this property to them,” said David Green, Hobby Lobby founder and CEO.

The Rancho Capistrano, located 12 miles from Saddleback’s main campus, has a history of generous giving. It was initially a gift in 1981 to Crystal Cathedral Ministries from Donna Crean and her late husband, John, founders of Fleetwood Enterprises. Crystal Cathedral Ministries was able to fulfill the couple’s dream by making the property a place of spiritual restoration and hope.

Hobby Lobby purchased the property in 2010 from the financially burdened Crystal Cathedral Ministries. An announcement was made on May 11, 2010, that the crafting retailer would lease the Rancho Capistrano property to Warren’s Saddleback Church so that the ranch’s initial ministry vision would be carried on.

Since the lease agreement, the ranch has become the church’s ninth physical campus and the acres have been divided into a regional church, a pastoral training center and an overnight retreat center.

“We are grateful to Dr. Robert Schuller and the Crystal Cathedral Ministries for their stewardship of this unique ministry facility and to Hobby Lobby for allowing us to

continue the longstanding legacy of Donna and John Crean and their family to change lives by providing hope and spiritual renewal," said Warren.

Warren plans to make the announcement of the donation of the Rancho Capistrano from Hobby Lobby to his 22,000 members on Saturday.

Although the donation comes as a gift to further the kingdom of God, many are disturbed that such a donation would not go to a more needy congregation. A commenter on *The Orange County Register News* website says, "Can't they find a poor congregation that needs this? Warren and his easygoing gospel certainly are rich enough already."

But Hobby Lobby has already taken care of that too. The corporation partners with eight organizations to share the good news of Jesus Christ. Among the eight are One Hope and Wycliffe, two organizations dedicated to helping the "needy"—those unable to get their hands on Scripture.

Hobby Lobby donated to One Hope a 185,000-square foot facility. The former hospital has since been turned into the headquarters for One Hope and has become the home to many other ministries and churches within Broward County, Fla.

Rob Hoskins, president of One Hope, says Hobby Lobby's facility donation has not only provided the ministry with an infrastructure, but has allowed them to exponentially grow, reaching millions of children a year with God's Word.

"I don't think a lot of people understand that it's not just the initial building that's the cost but some of the greater costs is the ongoing upkeep of the building and the management of the building," Hoskins told Charisma News. "And if you don't have resources there's no way a smaller ministry or a ministry that's struggling financially could ever keep up with the other costs that are associated with a building like this."

Hoskins believes the crafting retailer has a philosophical view towards philanthropy in line many ways with Jesus'.

"For one thing I don't think people understand the incredible generosity of the Greens. They're exhibiting unprecedented generosity because they give out of their earnings—not just a percentage of their profit, which is what most people do—so I think they're really unprecedented in that regard."