

HOW OUR FAMILY

**BOUGHT 2 ACRES
WITH A HOME
FOR \$53,000**

We had credit card debt, no thriving business, and serious doubts on the drive over.

This is exactly what we did — and the blueprint so your family can do it too.

Erick & Aaron Amezcua
Catholic Villagers

A Note Before You Read

This is not a book written by someone who had it all figured out. We didn't have a trust fund. We didn't have thriving businesses. We had credit card debt, a truck packed with everything we owned, two young men with big dreams, and parents willing to take a leap of faith together.

What we had was a conviction — that the way most families are living right now is not the way it's supposed to be. Separated. Renting. Dependent on systems we don't control. Working to pay bills for a life we don't really want.

This is the story of how our family of four left California, prayed for land, and found it the very next day — for \$53,000, no bank, no mortgage, no permission from anyone. And it is the map so your family can do it too.

— *Erick Amezcua*

Why We Left California

The diagnosis of a life that wasn't working — and why you already know this feeling

If you're reading this, you already feel something is wrong. Maybe you're in California. Maybe you're somewhere else entirely. But you feel the squeeze — the cost of everything rising, the culture drifting in directions you don't want your children raised in, the sense that no matter how hard you work, you're not getting ahead.

That's exactly where we were. Our father had applied to over a thousand job opportunities before he finally got one — in Missouri. As a Californian, Missouri was almost a mythological word. Something out there in the middle of the country I had no real picture of.

I'll be honest: I didn't want to go. I had just finished at UCLA. My brother Aaron had spent my senior year rooming with me in my studio apartment in Los Angeles. There was real temptation to stay — to be a city guy, to build something in the energy of LA.

But something deeper was pulling. It wasn't just the cost of living, though that was real. It wasn't just the job market, though that was real too. It was something harder to name. The people around us were comfortable — not bad people, but people going through the motions. Same conversations. Same small ambitions. Nobody building toward anything that would outlast them.

And underneath all of it, our faith was beginning to stir. Jordan Peterson's biblical series had cracked something open in both Aaron and me. We were starting to ask bigger questions. What are we actually for? What does a life well-lived look like? What did our ancestors know that we've forgotten?

“Looking back, moving with my family was the best decision I ever made. Our faith deepened. Our unity strengthened. Aaron and I were confirmed in the Catholic Church. Everything good that has happened since traces back to that one move.”

Our parents went first, in June 2022. Aaron and I followed in July 2023. We rented out the California property, packed everything we could fit in the truck, left the rest behind, and drove east.

The Decision

Somewhere on a highway in the middle of America, everything changed

It was just Aaron and me in the truck. Every possession we owned was packed into that cab — we had given away what didn't fit, thrown away the rest. There was no room for a single thing more.

We had listened to every podcast we had saved. We'd gone through all the music. At some point, somewhere in the middle of nowhere on a long flat highway, there was just silence.

Aaron looked at me and said: "Erick, we need to buy a house in Missouri."

I said: "Yes. We need to do that."

That was it. No research. No spreadsheet. No financial plan. Just two brothers, somewhere on the American highway, making a decision in a moment of clarity.

We were both excited, both a little uncertain about what was ahead. But we had that entrepreneurial conviction — that things would work out if we moved with purpose. We were happy to be going to see our parents. Our faith in God was rekindling. We were heading somewhere.

“The decision is the first thing. Everything else is logistics. Most families never get the land because they never actually decide to get it.”

I want you to understand something before you read any further: the \$53,000, the seller, the property, the terms — all of that came after the decision. The moment Aaron said those words and I agreed is when it actually happened. What followed was just the story of how God delivered on what we'd committed to.

The Prayer

A candle on the dinner table, four hands held, and a request to the Father

About a month after arriving in Missouri, we were living in a townhome and paying \$2,000 a month in rent. Aaron and I were both building toward being entrepreneurs — creating content, learning, trying to make things work. We weren't making much. The financial squeeze was real.

One evening, the four of us sat down to dinner together. Mom, Dad, Aaron, and me. My father had been growing in his faith and taking more spiritual leadership of our family. He prompted it.

We lit a blessed candle from our Catholic Church. We held hands around the table. And one by one, each of us said something out loud to the Father.

We asked for land. We asked for a home that was truly ours. We said we were ready. Each person at that table, in their own words, placed the request before God.

Picture the scene: an evening in a townhome apartment, not much light, the four faces of our family lit by a single candle, hands held in a circle, pleading together with real urgency. We weren't performing faith. We were feeling the squeeze and we brought it to God.

“We prayed on a Tuesday night. On Wednesday morning, the answer was already in the room.”

I tell you this not to make the story sound mystical, but because it is what happened — and because I believe the sequence matters. We asked. We received. That order is not incidental.

How We Found the Property

The county office, the old woman, and three consecutive days that changed everything

The very next morning, Aaron and I had to go to the county office to pay some property taxes. While we were there, we got to talking with one of the assessors about the area — asking about land, what was available, what the county looked like.

There was an older woman standing nearby with her daughter. She overheard us.

She said: “You’re trying to get in? I’m trying to get out.”

We turned around. She owned a property — land with a house already on it. She was ready to sell. She didn’t want to deal with banks or real estate agents. She wanted a simple, honest transaction with people she could trust. She was warm and kind, a sweet older woman, and she seemed almost relieved that we had found each other.

She said: “You guys should come see my house tomorrow.”

We went the next day. And the day after that, we had a signed agreement.

Prayer on Tuesday night. County office Wednesday morning. Saw the house Thursday. Signed the deal Friday.

“The meeting was a miracle. The price was a miracle. I don’t know how else to say it — and I have no interest in saying it any other way.”

Why Off-Market Is the Strategy

We did not find this property on Zillow. We found it by showing up, talking to people, and being visibly in motion. That is the strategy.

Off-market sellers — older owners, people ready to simplify, families dealing with estates — often sell below market because they want the simplicity more than the highest price. They want to deal

with a real human being, not a bank process. When you show up in person and ask, you access a market that most buyers never find.

Seeing the Property

Spiritual warfare on the drive, and a nod that said everything

All four of us drove out to see it. And on that drive, something happened that I now recognize clearly as spiritual warfare.

A wave of fear and confusion hit me — almost physical in its intensity. I was the one in the family who tracked our finances, and I started running the numbers in my head. I turned to my family and said: “Guys, I don’t know if we can actually afford this. Can we really do this right now? Should we just turn around?”

We started to waffle. There was a real moment where we almost texted her to cancel.

My father stepped in. This is one of the things I most admire about him — he is willing to go for it even when he doesn’t know exactly how it’s going to work. He said: “Guys. We just have to go for it.”

So we kept driving.

“Don’t let the doubt drive. The doubt is not wisdom. It is the last resistance before the breakthrough.”

When we pulled up, the area was honestly a little rough. It was a forgotten part of the county — rural, a little lawless-feeling, not glamorous. The kind of place that doesn’t make it onto any best-of lists.

But the moment we parked and got out of the car, something shifted. The four of us stood there looking at the two acres, at the house on the land, at the structures already built. We looked at each other.

We nodded. Nobody needed to say a word.

We could see what it could become. Two acres was a real amount of land. The house was there. The potential was obvious. In the rough surroundings, we had found a gem.

The Deal

\$20,000 down, 12 payments, no bank — how we structured it

We walked through the house that day with her. I won't sugarcoat it: the house was in bad shape. Dogs had lived there for years. The smell was difficult. The door was falling apart. We had to step outside more than once.

But we saw past it. We asked her: "How much do you want for the property?"

She said: "I've got to have at least \$50,000."

Coming from California, where houses start at \$300,000 with no land, the four of us went wide-eyed. We didn't show it. But every one of us felt it: we were sitting on something extraordinary.

The property had a large steel outdoor garage recently installed — a structure that alone would have cost \$30,000 or more to build. And she was asking \$50,000 for all of it.

We went home. That night we talked it through. The next day we went back and offered her \$53,000 — above her asking price. Her son had been skeptical we would even meet the \$50,000. When we offered more, they accepted immediately.

We also offered to cover the property taxes, which was only a couple hundred dollars. A small gesture that meant something to them.

The Structure of the Deal

There was no bank involved. I drafted the contracts myself: a quitclaim deed and a promissory note. Seller financing, fully documented, legally sound.

\$20,000

Down payment at signing

+ 12 monthly payments of \$2,333.33

= \$53,000 total. Paid off in one year. No bank. No interest. No approval process.

We signed at a bank in front of a notary. Clean, simple, done.

Where the Money Came From

We didn't have \$20,000 sitting around. Aaron and I put in whatever savings we had. My mom contributed most of her paycheck. My dad put in his paycheck and took a \$10,000 loan against his 401k. That is a father betting on his family's future with everything he has.

We also had credit card debt at the time. We moved anyway. If we had waited for perfect financial conditions, we would still be waiting.

“The multi-generational family is not just a spiritual good. It is a financial strategy. Four people pooling moderate incomes can do what no single household can.”

Note for the reader: The quitclaim deed template and promissory note template we used are available inside our Catholic Villagers community. You don't need to start from scratch.

The First Year

Plywood floors, a camper trailer, and what it actually takes

We gave her 30 days to move out. During those 30 days, we also negotiated our way out of the townhome lease early. We expected to lose our deposit and pay a penalty. Instead, the landlord simply said: just pay this month and you're free. Months later, she called us back to pick up our deposit check. No penalty at all.

Another small miracle. We stopped being surprised by them.

On move-out day, we showed up to find they were barely packing. They hadn't expected us to actually come on the day we said. So that day became something unexpected: our family helping them move out. My mom, my dad, Aaron, and me — wearing dust masks against the smell, hauling their belongings out, getting them on their way with dignity.

When they were gone, the real work began. We rented a large dumpster. We tore out all the carpet. We deep cleaned everything. We painted and sealed every surface. We put down new plywood floors. Friends came and helped.

For about a month, we split our time: some nights in the camper trailer on the property working, some nights back at the townhome while we finished clearing it out. My dad took two full weeks off work just to work on the house. Each of us found our role. My mom was cooking, keeping everyone fed and together. My dad was building. Aaron and I were hauling, cleaning, figuring out what came next.

***“Outwardly it looked rough. Inwardly it was deeply meaningful.
We knew we were making steps toward the life we wanted. We had
land under our feet that nobody could take from us.”***

The day the smell was gone and the floors were clean and the walls were sealed, we moved in. Not because it was finished. Because it was livable. We ate on a folding table. We slept in our beds on clean floors. And it was, genuinely, one of the best feelings any of us had ever had.

Where We Are Now

Come down a financial orbital level — and watch what happens

We paid the land off in twelve months. The moment that happened, everything got easier. The financial squeeze that had defined our first year lifted. We could breathe.

This is the lesson I most want you to hear: come down a financial orbital level. You are used to operating at a high level of consumption. The rent, the subscriptions, the separate utility bills, the paycheck-to-paycheck treadmill. You don't realize how much of your life is going to maintain a standard of living that isn't actually making you happy.

Come down a level. Get land that is well within your means. I promise it will make you happier — because you'll be off the rat race, and the abundance that comes from the land will replace what you thought you were giving up.

What Our Life Looks Like Now

We started with two acres. Through additional purchases of six adjacent lots, we now own over four acres — all for under \$100,000 total. All paid off.

- 50+ chickens — producing 60 to 75 eggs every single day
- Four goats providing fresh dairy
- A goat barn built by hand
- A garden producing food for the family
- Beehives
- Two tiny homes under construction — one for Erick and his bride Rachel, one for Aaron
- Ponds and swales being dug for water management
- Orchards and permaculture food forests being planted

We go to Mass together every Sunday now. Aaron and I were confirmed in the Catholic Church. Our family is more unified than it has ever been. We eat food we grew. We have something to pass

to our children.

“Walking into my chicken coop and pulling out 16 eggs — eggs that are better than anything money can buy — that is what \$53,000 actually purchased. Not a transaction. A way of life.”

How You Can Do This

The principles — applied to your situation

Your situation is different from ours. You may not have a brother named Aaron. Your parents may not be involved. You may not be moving to Missouri. That is fine. The principles transfer.

1. Make the decision.

If you are reading this, you already have the inkling. The AI economy, inflation, the cultural squeeze, the feeling that something has to change — you are not crazy. This is the path forward. I want this to be the final straw. Decide right now that you will, in fact, do this. The logistics will follow the decision. They always do.

2. Pray.

Do not skip this step. Seek first the kingdom. Ask and receive — this is not a metaphor, it is an instruction. Get your family around a table. Light a candle. Hold hands. Ask the Father for land out loud. You are asking for something noble. What father among you would give your child a stone when he asked for bread? Ask. Then show up.

3. Get your family on board.

Everyone needs to be moving in the same direction. If you have family members who aren't on board yet, bring them into the conversation gently. Show them the numbers. Tell them the story. The multi-generational family is your unfair advantage — financially, spiritually, in every way.

4. Find land with a home already on it.

Do not buy raw land unless you have the capital to build. Get a house with land on it. It does not need to be beautiful. It does not need to be finished. It needs to be livable. You can always add. You cannot add years back to your life while waiting for the perfect property.

5. Go off market.

Drive rural areas. Look for for-sale signs. Send handwritten letters to property owners you find on the GIS map. Go to county offices and ask questions. Talk to neighbors. Tell people clearly what you are looking for. The deals that change your life are not listed on Zillow. They are found by people who are visibly in motion.

6. Use seller financing when possible.

No credit check. No bank approval. Terms negotiated human to human. Always ask first. More sellers will say yes than you think — especially older owners who want simplicity more than the highest price.

7. Pool income with family.

This is the oldest wealth-building strategy in human history. We abandoned it for the myth of isolated independence and it has made us poor in every sense. Two or three incomes buying together can do what no single household can. Live together. Work together. This is not a compromise. It is leverage.

8. Don't wait until debt is gone.

We had credit card debt when we signed. We moved anyway. The land payment you eliminate is often larger than the debt payment you carry. Own land with some debt before you rent with none.

9. Come down a financial orbital level.

Stop trying to maintain a standard of living that is costing you your freedom. Get on land that is well within your means. The abundance that comes from the land — food, community, purpose, no housing payment — will far exceed what you gave up.

Where We're Going

The compound, the village, and the invitation

The two acres was the seed. It was never meant to be the destination.

Right now we are building two tiny homes on our property — one for me and my bride Rachel, one for Aaron. The main house is where my parents live. What is taking shape is a real family compound: three households, one piece of land, one shared table, one faith.

We are planting orchards. We are digging ponds and swales. We are building toward a permaculture food forest that will feed our family and our neighbors. The egg operation alone will produce 60 to 75 eggs a day. We will have more abundance than we can consume, and we will give the rest away.

But the compound is not the end. What we want to build — what we believe God is calling us toward — is villages. Communities of Catholic families on shared land. 50 acres. 100 acres. Properties large enough to hold many families, with a chapel at the center, children running between houses, work shared, food shared, faith shared.

This is how our ancestors lived. It is how we are meant to live. The industrial revolution scattered us into isolated boxes and called it progress. It was not progress. It was impoverishment — financial, spiritual, emotional, relational. The multi-generational family compound is not a quaint idea. It is the architecture of a flourishing life.

“The families who move first will have the most to offer the ones who come after.”

If you are not Catholic, I want to say something directly: your ancestors almost certainly were. At some point, a generation decided they were too wise to hold the worldview their fathers and mothers had carried. I ask you simply to be a scientist about your own inheritance. Were they ignorant — or were they onto something? The moment you begin to reclaim that relationship with the Creator, things will change. Seek the kingdom first. Everything else will follow.

You Don't Have to Figure This Out Alone.

If you want help applying these principles to your specific situation — finding land, structuring the deal, making the finances work, starting a productive homestead — that is exactly what we do inside our community.

Catholic Villagers

Direct access to Erick and Aaron. Weekly live calls. All the templates you need — including the quitclaim deed and promissory note we used. A community of real families doing this together.

You don't need to be Catholic to join — though it is the foundation of our worldview and we won't pretend otherwise. What you need is the conviction that this life is possible and the willingness to move toward it.

Join us at catholicvillagers.com

The families who move first have the most to offer the ones who come after.