

**Special
Edition
Bulletin**

**DEC
25
2023**

Christmas Edition



**Saint Andrew
Catholic Church**



A Letter From The Pastor

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

As we approach the end of the year, we gather together as a parish family of faith to contemplate and to remember the Nativity of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ: *The Word made flesh (John 1:14)*. The awesome moment that changed history forever when the almighty God descended from heaven to share in our humanity so that we mortal people can share in His divinity. *Jesus, the Son of God, came to the world to reveal the mysteries of heaven to the childlike (Luke 10: 21)*.

This sacred time invites us to reflect on the many ways Jesus has touched our lives. We thank Him for family and friends as well as the material and spiritual blessings we constantly receive. In a personal way, I am grateful and humble to be your pastor and to be able to share with you the Word of God and His sacraments. The gift of priesthood is the biggest treasure of my life, one that undeservedly, I have received from Him who is love and mercy.

As you read this special edition of our Parish bulletin, I hope you will reflect on some of the very important moments that we have lived together as a community . I hope you will be encouraged to continue sharing with us the gift of yourself, just as you are. Perhaps you will also be encouraged to be more engaged in one or more ministries that Saint Andrew has to offer. I invite you to remember those brothers and sisters in our Parish who lost a family member this year: say a prayer for them and treasure the people God has put in your life.

Merry Christmas and Happy New year!

Father Juan Anzora

Our Clergy from left to right:
Deacon José Campos
Deacon David Patterson
Deacon Ed Rubio
Fr. Juan Anzora, Pastor
Deacon Roger Fraser, retired
(not pictured)





During Thanksgiving

65 turkeys provided
76 food baskets given
245 people served

Many thanks to the Knights of Columbus,
St. Vincent de Paul and St. Martin
de Porres Ministries for their combined efforts.

The Knights of Columbus have served
St. Andrew Parish & beyond since 1995.

During Christmas

120+ turkeys provided
110+ food baskets given
300+ people served

Bringing Hope This Christmas

The Giving Trees are a long-standing St. Andrew holiday outreach program , under the umbrella of the St. Martin de Porres Ministry, which provides gifts for those in need.

There are many families in our community who struggle to afford gifts at Christmas. Many of them are our own parishioners. This year, we also assisted 13 families served by the Pregnancy Aid Clinic.

Through the generous support of our parishioners, and in partnership with our brothers and sisters from St. Peter Chanel Catholic Church, we provided toys, household items, and much needed gift cards to approximately 90 families with over 220 children.

Thank you for your support!



Feeding The Homeless

The St. Martin de Porres Ministry has been serving the homeless for over 25 years. From November to March, we serve once a month at The Bashor Men's Shelters (formerly Central Night Shelter) at the Shrine of the Immaculate Conception and Central Presbyterian in Atlanta.

"November's visit went very well. Due to your generous donations, we fed approximately 70 men and provided them with a sack lunch in the morning. We had some food left over which was used on a night that no one had provided a meal. This month, we served more than 100 men." - Sandy Lashley

To support St. Martin de Porres Ministry
email us at sanlorlas@gmail.com





The Society of St. Vincent de Paul serves those in need, and in doing so, our members strive to move closer to Christ. Vincentian volunteers deliver hope and help to families and individuals in need.

In September 2023, Rick Paris retired as the President of the St. Vincent de Paul Ministry (SVdP) at St. Andrew after serving in this capacity for 6 years. In an interview done earlier this month, he explained, "the SVdP ministry here at St. Andrew is a very active, vibrant and dedicated group of people. Our ministry is virtually a 365-24/7 operation. We have an assistance line where people in need leave messages, members who monitor and respond to those calls; people who assign and open cases; caseworkers who work the cases; and a Treasurer who manages the donations and disbursements. We also run a food pantry. In fact, during the depths of the pandemic when most ministries were shutting down or cutting back, the activity of our ministry actually increased. As with any ministry, we can always use more people. And there are many roles in the ministry in which people can serve".

Rick continued "The thing about the SVdP Ministry that I find compelling is the direct personal involvement with people who are in need. On the one hand it can be difficult, working with people who may be in desperate circumstances. And one important aspect of our ministry is the home visit, so going into someone's home under those circumstances is even more challenging. But on the other hand, that's also what makes it so special. We can't solve everybody's problems, but we can be there with them in their time of need and treat them with respect and dignity and with compassion and love. And, of course, there are times when we can help alleviate a specific need and help get them back on the road to living a sustainable life. And that is very gratifying as well."

Thanks to the support of our parishioners, in 2023, more than \$96,000 was contributed

to St. Vincent de Paul, enabling the ministry to give nearly \$100,000 in financial assistance and distribute more than 5,000 pounds of food in our community.

Currently, Rick serves as the vice-president of our SVdP District (group of parish ministries). We are thankful to Rick for his leadership and the many years of service to our community.

The new president of the SVdP Ministry at St. Andrew is Christa Frye. Christa has also served this ministry for many years, including running the Food Pantry during the pandemic, which was a challenging time for many families and volunteers alike. We are also thankful to Christa for taking up the baton.

This Ministry is always looking for support from volunteers and donors to continue the mission of Christ to serve those in need. If you would like to help in the community through SVdP, please contact Christa Frye at christafrye1@yahoo.com or 470-848-6265.



"There is an evangelical aspect to what we do. We try to see Christ in those we serve, and we invite those we are visiting to pray with us."
- Rick Paris



Christa and her family have been parishioners of St. Andrew for 20+ years.



Numbers from 2023

Through the work of the Holy Spirit here at St. Andrew, we have been blessed with parishioners who are kind and very generous, without whose donations, we would not be able to do the work of our Ministry.

To make a gift to St. Vincent de Paul, scan the code or mail a check to the parish payable to St. Vincent de Paul.



2023 Major Projects

Thanks to the ongoing support of many families, this year, we were able to complete four major projects totaling \$235,293.

- **Parking Lot Repairs** (repairs and enhancements)

March	Asphalt Repairs	\$13,750
May	Crack Sealing	\$7,800
June	Seal Coat and Striping	\$14,175

- **New Mulch in Preschool Playground**

June Installed 30 yard of Certified Kid Safe Mulch \$1,704

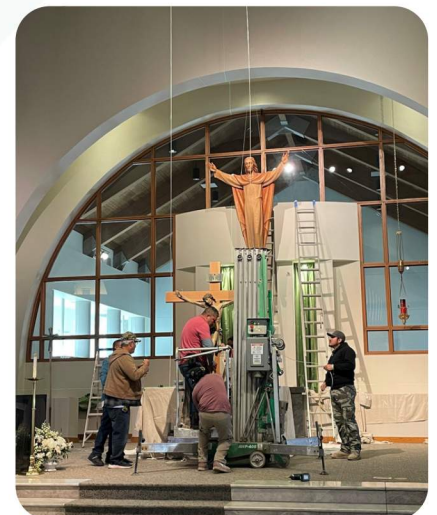
- **Roof Replacement**

September Replaced all asphalt shingles including the Church, Building B and a portion of the Education Building plus overlay existing modified flat roof area around the Church totaling \$188,564 for both projects.

- **Sanctuary Modifications**

November:

- Relocation of the Tabernacle
(all of the granite work was donated by Bruno Romero with RS Solid Surfaces Inc)
 - Installation of Crucifix above the Altar
 - Relocation of the Risen Christ to the Family Center
- Totaling \$9,300





A Message from our Coordinator of Adult Faith Formation & Discipleship

It is wonderful to be back at St Andrew with a community that I dearly love and I am very excited at the opportunity to serve the family of God. Looking forward to 2024, there are so many exciting things being offered for adults:

- Various Bible studies and classes to help us grow closer to Christ,
- Social events to help us grow closer to each other,
- A pilgrimage to ponder a miracle, classes to help us understand the relationship between faith and science,
- A new ministry for young adults,
- A new ministry for young families,
- Activities to grow the senior ministry, and so much more.

Remember, through our Baptism we are family! Our parish is a place of sanctuary where we come to learn how to love God and how to love each other, so that we can be a light to the world. 2024 is going to be a lot of fun.

My best wishes for everyone to have a peaceful and joyful Christmas season.

Yours in Christ,

AJ Cervantes



*Begin the New Year by signing up
in our Adult Faith Formation and
Discipleship programs.*



*Scan to read about
our spring programs*

Email AJ at
acervantes@standrewcatholic.org

Youth Faith Formation



Our St. Andrew Faith Formation Program wants to prepare children for the sacraments, but we want to do much more than that. Parents are the primary catechists for their children and the most important factor in keeping their children Catholic. Here at St. Andrew, we want to do as much as we can to partner with parents and give children Catholic fellowship with their peers.

The average age when "Former Catholics" make the decision to leave the faith is now just age 13. We want to have faith formation for our children grades 1-12 equip them as best as possible. Building a strong foundation when children are young helps us build upon it and provide more experiences and variety as they get older. We want to provide our teens with opportunities for weekly gatherings, mountain top experiences (retreats, camps, etc.), and adults to accompany them in their faith. If teens have these three things, there is an 80% better chance they remain Catholic.



We thank to the parishioners of St. Andrew for supporting our fundraising efforts to make these experiences possible. We could still use more adult volunteers to walk with our children and teens in the faith. If you are interested in making this your New Year's resolution, please reach out!

2023 Year in Review

- 41 teens and 3 adults received the Sacrament of Confirmation.
- 20 middle schoolers on our annual retreat that was focused on darkness and light
- 32 teens on our spring retreat that was focused on persistence through suffering
- 62 children received First Communion in the spring
- 11 teens went to Life Teen Summer Camp for the first time. During the day we had typical summer camp activities (high and low ropes, canoes, swimming, crafts, messy games, etc.), but we also had a lot of activities that built us up in our faith as well. We began each day with 30 minutes of prayer. After our "summer camp activities", we had daily Mass. Each night we also had a session that included a talk focused on the theme "Real Presence", small groups, and prayer (Eucharistic adoration on 2 different occasions). Priests were available throughout the week for confessions and to talk. Our group grew a lot individually and as a community.
- 325 children registered in faith formation 23-24 school year
- 36 teens on our confirmation retreat that was focused on the Holy Spirit
- 10 children received First Communion in the fall

"Life Teen has allowed me to discuss my faith with other teens and share life experiences"
– St. Andrew Senior



2024 Looking Forward

- Middle School Retreat on January 26-28. This retreat will be focused on Jesus, the Good Shepherd and is open to all middle school students.
- Confirmation Mass on February 11 at 1 PM
- High School Spring Retreat on March 17-19. This retreat is open to ALL high school students and will focus on how we can be "real presence" to those around us, ourselves, and God.
- First Communion Mass on May 5.
- Vacation Bible School on June 3-7. It will take place 9 AM-12 PM and is open to ages 3-11. More information coming soon!
- High School Summer Camp on July 8-13. We will be taking a group of 15 to Camp Hidden Lake again for Summer Camp!

"Being a part of Life Teen helped me grow as a person and also grow in my relationship with God. I started to be more active in the Church during Life Teen and I made great friends. I met people who inspired me to live life with faith (shout out to Brandon M, Jonathan A, and Daniel L)"

– St. Andrew Junior

Please email Loral Leach (lleach@standrewcatholic.org) or any of our other coordinators if you would like more information.



Stay Connected

standrewcatholic.org



Scan the code to make a special Christmas offering.



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