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ANNUNCIATION

CATHOLIC SCHOOL



Father Chad King blesses ACS students on the first day in their new school building.

ANNUAL REPORT

2020-2021

PASTOR'S AND PRINCIPAL'S DESKS



Dear Family and Friends of Annunciation,

I don't have to tell you how eventful the 2020-2021 school year was. I'm not sure who did more learning, the students or us faculty and parents! Who knew that new words would be added to our everyday vocabulary- like social distancing, false positives, quarantining. And the word "test" would not refer to student exams. Our school can be proud of the fact that we got through a very challenging year during a global pandemic by the grace of God and the strength of our community! I think we all learned that there is so much we can get through when we're all in it together, and not living isolated lives, only concerned with ourselves.

Another thing we learned is to take things one day at a time, to strive to see God in the present moments, and trust that we can handle whatever hurdles might come next, with Him! And with each new day, we did! Thankfully, we successfully navigated to keep our school open for in-person instruction for much of the school year, and without any major outbreaks, very few schools were able to say that.

We would not have had the success we did without our community working together for the good of the children in our parish school. Our students did an amazing job adjusting to so many new protocols and always did so with a great attitude and can-do spirit. Our parents were so flexible this past year being proactive and responsive when concerns arose about the potential for COVID-19 spread in their household or in their children's classroom.

Finally, Dr. Pristash, our faculty and staff deserve so much praise and gratitude for all they did to serve the students despite so many obstacles and challenges, they were the key to our success. The amount of time our faculty spent constantly adjusting the teaching and learning in their classrooms was simply amazing as they navigated students who were distance and in-person learners. Our faculty and staff went above and beyond to make the 2020-2021 year a positive one for our students, and I couldn't be more grateful and proud of this outstanding group of professionals. The entire St Gabriel-Annunciation community- students, parents, and faculty, despite the challenges, we rose to them and are stronger for them. Focused on God first, we continue to thrive.

I am grateful for the opportunity to oversee the spiritual needs of the students at Annunciation. As the year progressed, I was able to gather for weekly mass, offer confessions, and visit classrooms. It is so life-giving to interact with the students and see their faith and their love of Jesus grow. Seeing their desire to truly understand the deep richness and meaning of our faith is a great testament to the value of a strong Catholic school. To me it is particularly telling that we have a strong Catholic school when several parents enter RCIA to become full members of the Catholic Church, simply because of how much growth in faith they see in their children. We still have many ways we can grow, but I am so looking forward to being a part of, helping any way I can, the continued growth God will do in and through this community.

Through Him, With Him, In Him,

Fr. Chad King, Pastor-St. Gabriel the Archangel

"I love you, O my God, and my only desire is to love you until the last breath of my life. I love you, O my infinitely lovable God...If my tongue cannot say in every moment that I love you, I want my heart to repeat it to you as often as I draw breath"

- St. John Vianney, CCC 2658



Another year has come and gone, and here we are – 12 years old! Despite the many challenges going on in the world around us, last year was an exciting year for Annunciation. We were blessed to have in-person school all year with no setbacks. In December we made the long-awaited move to the permanent building, and we have been living the dream ever since! The teachers and students are enjoying the large rooms, upgraded technology, and beautiful STREAM space. We are so happy to have all students together in one space surrounded by a security fence. Our excitement continues to mount as we watch the beautiful new church soar toward heaven. We look forward to the dedication of the church later this fall.

ACS started its 13th year with many blessings. We are at capacity enrollment of 236 and 41 students on the waitlist for grades 1-8. We added a second full-time resource teacher to assist students who need academic support in math. We now have three registered nurses who share the job of providing full-time coverage in the nurse's office. For the first time in the school's history we are able to hold athletic practices and home games on our own campus. We have so much to be thankful for and so many to be thankful to — including all of you, our generous donors. We are grateful for the many angels among us whose faith, service, financial support, and prayers have helped us become the school God wants us to be.

Blessings to you all!

Dr. Sharon H. Pristash, Principal-Annunciation Catholic School

"I can do all things through Him who strengthens me"

WHO WE ARE

OUR MISSION



Within our strong Catholic community, we develop children to their fullest God-given potential – spiritually, intellectually, morally, socially, and physically.

ANNUNCIATION CATHOLIC SCHOOLWIDE LEARNING EXPECTATIONS

STRONG COMMUNICATORS WHO:

- Use oral and written language clearly, creatively and effectively
- Listen respectfully and interact cooperatively
- Develop effective personal organization, research, study, and technology skills
- Utilize a variety of tools for gathering, processing, and sharing information

THOUGHTFUL CITIZENS WHO:

- Take responsibility for what they do and say
- Contribute to the community's well-being
- See each person as important in the community
- Show positive leadership and good sportsmanship

ACTIVE CHRISTIANS WHO:

- Demonstrate a foundation of the teachings and traditions of the Catholic Church
- Participate in the liturgy
- Serve others
- Respect life and all of God's creation
- Develop ones own unique God given talents

RESOURCEFUL LEARNERS WHO:

- Exhibit curiosity, enthusiasm, and self-motivation for lifelong learning
- Employ and demonstrate critical thinking skills
- Work cooperatively with others to design solutions to real-world problems
- Plan, organize, and strive to accomplish realistic goals



CATHOLIC IDENTITY

Bishop Olmsted dedicates new school building

**By TONY GUTIÉRREZ
DEVELOPMENT
CONSULTANT**

Bishop Thomas J. Olmsted of the Diocese of Phoenix dedicated the new building of Annunciation Catholic on March 25, 2021, the Solemnity of the Annunciation, which is also the school namesake. The school is a ministry of St. Gabriel the Archangel Roman Catholic Parish and is located on its campus.

“Today we celebrate the event that changed all of human history,” said Bishop Olmsted, noting that the Annunciation marks when St. Gabriel the Archangel appeared to Mary to tell her she would bear the Son of God. In this moment, he said, Jesus dwelt among us. “God draws near to each human person, because ours is a God of love. No matter what happens in life, we can succeed because God loves us and is with us and is for us.”

Reflecting on St. Gabriel’s exhortation, “Do not be afraid,” the bishop noted that just as it was important for Mary to hear those words, it was also important for those families and administrators who started ACS to embark on such an endeavor 12 years ago.

“Mary put all her trust in God,” said Bishop Olmsted. “God became human” with Mary’s “Yes,” he added. “The Lord Jesus began to live in Mary’s womb in her body. Once that happened, everything began to change. We were not alone. God was living with us.”

Pastor Fr. Chad King and parochial vicar Fr. David Kulandaisamy joined the bishop in the dedication, along with



Fr. Michael Pierz and nephew Jonathon Pierz



Bishop Thomas J. Olmsted blesses the fourth grade classroom during the ACS dedication March 25, 2021.

“If you go to a school called the Annunciation, God’s calling you, reminding you of this great truth that He knows you by name, He wants you to get attuned to His voice, and He will continue to give you words so that you can fulfill a very important mission and impact the world.”

— BISHOP THOMAS J. OLMSTED

diocesan vicar general, the Very Rev. Fred Adamson, and Fr. Michael Pierz, a priest of the Diocese of Springfield, Massachusetts, and whose nephews Stanley and Jonathon Pierz were in the kindergarten and second grade classes at the school, respectively, during the 2020-21 year.

“Seeing the new school building and our new church being completed right behind it is such a blessing and a new beginning,” said Fr. King, who was in the midst of his first year as pastor of St. Gabriel. “The parish and school have been waiting for and needed new larger beautiful spaces for many years to grow and learn

in.”

Assisting were the parish’s Dcn. Robert Torigian and Dcn. Larry Grey from the diocese’s Permanent Diaconate Office.

“If you go to a school called the Annunciation, God’s calling you, reminding you of this great truth that He knows you by name, He wants you to get attuned to His voice, and He will continue to give you words so that you can fulfill a very important mission and impact the world,” continued the bishop in his homily. “That’s why a Catholic school is so important, and why parents — the first teachers of their children — are so important.”

Previously, the ACS facil-

ities were spread throughout the campus: the kindergarten through third grade classes shared a building with school administrators; fourth- and fifth-graders attended classes in portable buildings; and the middle school shared a building with the parish hall. The new building allows all students to share a single building and includes a new playground, outside eating area and basketball court.

“The new school building gives us more space to learn and grow together with our friends. And opens our minds to work together in the new space,” said Brenna Sharp, who was in sixth grade during the 2020-21 year, adding that a Catholic education will help her “learn about God and be more faithful and do His will and help others.”

ACS officially opened Aug. 12, 2009, while Fr. Dennis O’Rourke served as pastor. Fr. O’Rourke retired in 2018, and Fr. John Slobig succeeded him, serving as interim parochial administrator until Fr. King’s

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CATHOLIC IDENTITY

Monthly awards recognize fruits of the Spirit in students



Kellen Henry, a fourth-grader from the 2020-2021 school year, holds a rosary during one of the class prayers during the year.

In his letter to the Galatians, St. Paul lists the nine fruits of the Holy Spirit: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control (Gal 5:22-23).

These fruits emanate or proceed from the Holy Spirit, the third Person of the Most Holy Trinity, and reveal what He is like.

Each month, teachers at ACS highlight a different fruit of the spirit and recognize that fruit in their students with the monthly “Fruit of the Spirit” awards.

These awards are given to a select group of students at the monthly community prayer service.



Fr. Kurt Perrera, chaplain of Notre Dame Catholic Preparatory High School in North Scottsdale, takes questions about vocations to the priesthood during Catholic Schools Week.

Community comes together in annual celebration of Catholic schools

Joining Catholic schools from across the Diocese of Phoenix and throughout the nation, ACS celebrated National Catholic Schools Week (CSW) Jan. 31-Feb. 6, 2021.

CSW is an annual celebration of Catholic education in the United States. Most schools typically observe the week with Masses, assemblies and other activities for students, families, parishioners and community members to celebrate, and ACS is no different.

The week began with students wearing their uniforms to the 10:30 a.m. Sunday Mass with their families. This was immediately followed by an open house and a basketball free throw contest sponsored by Knights of Columbus St. Gabriel the Archangel Council 13286.

During the school week, students

learned about vocations to the priesthood and religious life from Fr. Kurt Perrera, chaplain of Notre Dame Catholic Preparatory High School, and Sr. Mary Eileen Jewell, PVMI, who serves as coordinator of evangelization for Our Lady of Joy Parish in Carefree.

Students also collected art and school supplies for St. Michael Indian School in St. Michaels, Arizona – one of the schools established by St. Katharine Drexel during her efforts in the Southwest.

ACS held a Saint’s Alive sock day and “Red, White and Blue” Day. The eighth-graders challenged the teachers and staff in a volleyball game, starting a new tradition that was attended by the entire student body.

► CONTINUED FROM PREVIOUS PAGE

arrival in 2020. The school’s mission is to provide students with a Catholic education to form them spiritually, intellectually, morally, socially and physically.

“What I love most about the new school building is where it is placed on the campus,” said Fr. King. “We are able to see the large beautiful new church from the school, so that Christ and the church will be overlooking the school, and every student and

teacher will be constantly reminded this is a Catholic school. I am excited that our Catholic identity will only be able to be enhanced and deepened through it.”

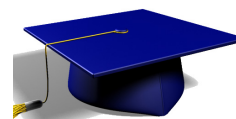
The school building is part of a larger expansion project for St. Gabriel. The bishop previously visited the campus for a groundbreaking on Nov. 17, 2019. In addition to the new school building, a new worship space was built and dedicated Nov. 3, 2021. The final phase will be the construction of a new parish administrative office

with meeting rooms for various ministries, with the school administration eventually moving into the former church building which is being converted into a parish hall.

The Annunciation is all about saying “Yes” to God, said ACS principal Dr. Sharon Pristash. “This school has made it to this milestone because many have said yes to God along the way,” she said. “Our new school building is not a destination but only another step in the journey of becoming the school God wants us to be.”

EIGHTH GRADE CLASS OF 2021

Congratulations to the Class of 2021



May 2021 saw our sixth graduating class leave us for the exciting world of high school. These 27 students are an amazing class of high achievers in every area. They all applied to multiple schools and have been promoted and now attend four Catholic high schools in the Diocese of Phoenix. See below for a summary of the acceptance results for the class of 2021. The graduates are encouraged to apply and were accepted at multiple high school which is shown on the chart below.

High School	Accepted	Honors
Brophy College Prep	9	3 Honors/ 3 Highest Honors
Notre Dame Prep	20	10 Honors 7 offered \$10,000 scholarship (Only 24 scholarships offered to the entire incoming freshman class)
St. Mary's High School	6	6 Honors
Xavier College Prep	7	4 Honors

Student Ambassador Program

The Student Ambassadors are selected to be the official student representatives for ACS during their 8th grade year.

The Student Ambassadors greet and converse with prospective students, families, and donors during school sponsored educational and social events.

This group of students showcase the quality and diversity of the student body, promote pride and communicate the remarkability of the school itself.

Ambassadors attend developmental workshops led by the Development Director and Student Ambassador Mentor, Keli

McCann, to develop the skills needed to represent ACS at special events including the St. Nicholas Celebrations at St. Gabriel, serving as ushers at the ACS All School Masses at St. Gabriel, distributing Catholic Education Arizona brochures at several parishes within the Diocese of Phoenix and serving as greeters at the annual Evening Under the Stars Gala.

By the end of their eighth grade year, the students experience growth in their confidence, presentation and public speaking skills to prepare them to be a strong Catholic leader.



Development Director and Student Ambassadors Mentor Keli McCann (far left) joins the Student Ambassadors at the annual Evening Under the Stars fundraising event.

EIGHTH GRADE CLASS OF 2021

In the Image of God

In partnership with Arizona Tuition Connection and private donors, ACS established the *Imago Dei* (In the Image of God) Scholarship to go toward high school tuition for three recipients meeting scholarship criteria.

The mission of the *Imago Dei* Scholarship is to acknowledge students who demonstrate exemplary Christ-centered behavior through service to parish, school and community. Recipients display a love and understanding of their Catholic faith and articulate a commitment — not only to perform acts of service, but — to live a service-focused and virtuous life.

Winners include River Vogelsang and Mia Eshelman, who are both attending Notre Dame Catholic Preparatory High School in Scottsdale and Christian Bax, who is attending Brophy College Preparatory High School in Phoenix.

At the beginning of every school year, ACS Development Director, Keli McCann introduces sixth-graders to stewardship.

“Stewardship seems like a big word to grasp at the young age of 11, but the students really want

Imago Dei Scholarship

The tuition cost for high school is three times an elementary tuition. To encourage our alumni to continue their Catholic education, we would like the *Imago Dei* Scholarship to be available to all future eighth grade classes. If you would like to make a difference in a student's life by becoming a designated donor, please contact Development Director Keli McCann, at kmccann@acspdx.org.

to begin sharing their time and talent to help others in the community, parish and school,” said McCann, who also chairs the Scholarship Committee.

The Scholarship Committee interviews the applicants, providing them an opportunity to strengthen their presentation, speaking and writing skills. The *Imago Dei* Scholarships provides awards between \$2,000-\$4,000 to students who:

- Are practicing Catholics registered within the Diocese of Phoenix
- Exemplify the Theological Virtues of Faith, Hope and Charity

- Plan to attend a Catholic high school within the Diocese of Phoenix in the next year
- Attend ACS at the time of application
- Have volunteered more than 100 service hours to the parish, school and community between Aug. 15 of their sixth grade year and Sept. 15 of their eighth grade year.
- Write a personal essay related to their service.



RIVER VOGELSANG



MIA EHELMAN



CHRISTIAN BAX



Eighth-graders (from left to right) Jackson Stack, Christian Bax and Rachel Hauer placed first, third and second, respectively for the Knights of Columbus' annual Catholic Citizenship Essay Contest.

Knights recognize Catholic citizenship

Knights of Columbus St. Gabriel the Archangel Council 13286 awarded monetary gifts – for \$100, \$75 and \$50 to three eighth-graders Jackson Stack, Christian Bax and Rachel Hauer, who placed first, third and second, respectively.

The awards were based on the Catholic Citizenship Essay Contest, a program of the

Knights' “Faith in Action” initiatives that encourages today's youth to be more connected to their community and their faith.

The awards were presented during the ACS Mass honoring veterans Friday, Nov. 13, 2020, the week of Veterans' Day, at which pastor Fr. Chad King also offered them a special blessing.

ALUMNI NEWS



Andy Kimerling played for NDP and received an athletic scholarship from Saint Anselm College located in Manchester, New Hampshire.



Liam McSherry played for NDP and received an athletic scholarship from Yavapai Community College in Prescott.

Unique to the ACS Alumni Class of 2017, is that four of these Alumni started playing soccer as toddlers. By the age of 10, the boys all played on the same soccer team for a couple of seasons at Desert Elite. With years of games under their belts, their long hours of practice and high achievement have paid off.



Drew Savage and Dayton McCann played for Brophy College Preparatory and hold the 6A Arizona State Championship Trophy for Brophy. This is Brophy's third consecutive state championship win.

2017 Alumni

Berkely Allison
Seth Bowers
Lauryn Carter
Caylyn Chipman
Qiliana Garcia
Nick Genta
Rhiannon Gnerer
Luke Hammond
James Khoury
Noah Lederer
Sydney Millane
Mark Rossbach
Faith Rosky
Ryan Fabry
Drew Savage
Dayton McCann
Grace Van Den Berg

High School

Battle Ground Academy, TN
St. Mary's Catholic High School
Xavier College Preparatory
Xavier College Preparatory
Xavier College Preparatory
Brophy College Prep
Notre Dame Preparatory
Brophy College Preparatory
Brophy College Preparatory
Notre Dame Preparatory
Xavier College Preparatory
Brophy College Preparatory
San Joaquin Memorial
Brophy College Preparatory
Brophy College Preparatory
Brophy College Preparatory
Rockwall Heath High School

College

University of Miami
Grand Canyon University
St. Louis University
University of Arizona
Franciscan University of Steubenville
Gonzaga University
Barrett, The Honors College at ASU
Barrett, The Honors College at ASU
University of Arizona
University of Denver
Southern Virginia University then BYU
Barrett, Arizona State University, Polytechnic
University of San Francisco Honors College
Creighton University
Virginia Tech
Arizona State University
Colorado State University (Fort Collins, Co)

ALUMNI NEWS

AHG helps alumna become ‘women of integrity’

Qiliana Garcia (ACS Class of '17, Xavier College Preparatory Class of '21), completed her Stars & Stripes Award — the highest award offered by the American Heritage Girls — through Troop AZ0015, which is based out of St. Gabriel the Archangel Catholic Church.

American Heritage Girls (AHG) is a faith-based scouting organization for girls 5-18 years of age dedicated to building women of integrity through service to God, family, community and country. AHG girls participate in badge programs, service projects, leadership opportunities and outdoor experiences, all with an emphasis on Christian values and family involvement.

Girls like Qiliana remain involved through high school and serve as a mentor for the elementary-age members.

Girls pursuing the Stars & Stripes Award must plan, lead and implement a service project to benefit the community. Girls pursuing this award exercise servant leadership, project management, communication skills, time management and organization.

Through the process of earning the Stars & Stripes Award, candidates gain a first-



Alumna Qiliana Garcia stands next to Station IV: ‘Jesus meets his Mother,’ which is a part of a service project she organized for her Stars & Stripes Award, the highest honor for AHG.

hand understanding of the servant’s heart required to lead with integrity and humility, preparing girls for responsibility as they transition to adulthood. To be considered

for the Stars & Stripes Award, a young woman must have completed her Dolley Madison Level Award and be more than six months away from her 18th birthday.

For her project, Qiliana built a permanent outdoor Stations of the Cross walkway located on the southwest corner of the St. Gabriel the Archangel Parish campus. She began fundraising in January 2021 to purchase the stations and rock. With the love and support of St. Gabriel parishioners, all the stations were adopted during the first weekend.

Members from Troop AZ0015 and other AHG troops from Tucson, Mesa and Chandler volunteered to help complete the project, ACS families and St. Gabriel parishioners. The project was completed on Aug. 5, 2021, with 800 hours from 40 volunteers.

On Sept. 9, 2021, Qiliana was notified that her project was accepted and approved. She is the 7th recipient from Arizona, the 2nd from Troop AZ0015 and the 856th in AHG Inc.

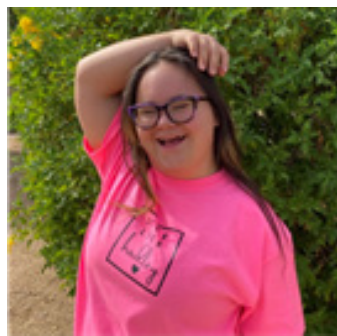
Alumna fulfills dream with entrepreneurial spirit

Live Like Hadley is a concept to represent alumna Hadley Hawkins’ (ACS Class of '16, Cactus Shadows High School Class of '20) dream of running her own business and creating a clothing line that truly represents her, her personality, her passions and her ideas.

Hadley launched the custom T-shirt company with the help of her business partner Allison Daley immediately after graduating high school and makes each shirt custom to order.

Hadley says the best advice to give from Live Like Hadley is: “Don’t be afraid to sparkle a little brighter.”

Living like Hadley means living your life with a lot of love,



Alumna Hadley Hawkins (above) sports a T-shirt from her company, Live Like Hadley (left).

laughter and maybe even an ice-cold Diet Coke, she said, adding that she hopes to inspire others to live each day to the “absolute fullest!”

“Fashion has been a dream for quite a while. I wish one day we get an award for running a



company or business and do what we deserve,” she said.

Currently, Live Like Hadley sells T-shirts for \$15, long sleeve shirts for \$25 and sweatshirts for \$30, but she and Allison hope to add more items to their cat-

alogue.

“Thank you for supporting our vision and helping support my dream,” said Hadley.

To learn more or to place an order, follow Live Like Hadley on Instagram at @livelikehadley.

SERVICE

Vibrant Vinnies makes a positive impact on community

**BY ANGEL VOGELSANG
VIBRANT VINNIES LIAISON**

The ACS Vibrant Vinnies Conference stayed very busy during the pandemic and into 2021, with more than 100 hours of serving the community.

The Vibrant Vinnies began as the vision of Ling C. Patty, then-president of the St. Gabriel the Archangel Society of St. Vincent de Paul Conference to start the first elementary Young Vincentian conference in the society's Western Region in February 2014. With guidance from Shirley Smalley, past District 11 president, it became a fully aggregated conference three years later.

The Vibrant Vinnies often help at the food pantry at St. Joan of Arc Parish in North Phoenix, the SVdP Hope Chest Thrift Store, the warehouse at Watkins and Foothills Food Bank. Highlights of the year include two clothing drives, two food drives and a successful shoe drive.

Serving four years with the Vinnies is the "best thing I have ever done," said River Vogelsang, who as an eighth-grader during the 2020-21 year served as conference president. He hopes to start a conference at his high school.

In May, the Vinnies raised funds and purchased items such as sunscreen, socks, lip balm, granola bars, water, rosaries and religious cards to be assembled into bless-



Members of the ACS Vibrant Vinnies sorted clothes at the SVdP warehouse.

ing bags. They then distributed 150 blessing bags in the Sunnyslope Neighborhood and outside of Ozanam Manor. In Sunnyslope, the Vinnies also helped sort shoes, clean the floors and filed documents in the office.

"I love serving others because it puts a smile on my face and the faces of people I serve," said Natalia Ehmann, a seventh-grader during the 2020-21 year who took Vogelsang's place as president after he graduated.

During the summer of 2021, they played Bingo with the residents at Ozanam Manor. The Vinnies enjoyed sitting next to the residents playing the games and socializing. They made patriotic cards to give to residents, thanking many of the Veterans for their service. The conference also brought in donations of towels and bed sheets.

"Can we come back and do this every week?" asked enthusiastically Sabini Mo-



Vibrant Vinnies collect non-perishable foods for the Foothills Food Bank.

row, a member who was in sixth grade during the 2020-21 year.

The motto for the Vibrant Vinnies is "we are the hands and feet of Jesus."

"I learned to not judge the homeless but to look for the face in Jesus in everyone I encounter," said Vogelsang, whose younger sister Meadow is following in his footsteps. "I feel so good after the Vinnies projects."

St. Vincent de Paul, pray for us! Bl. Frédéric Ozanam, pray for us!

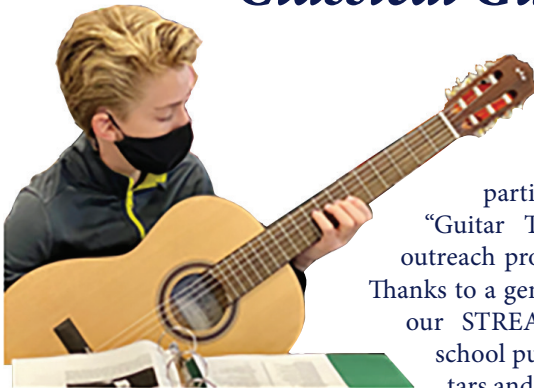


Members of the ACS Vibrant Vinnies helped sort non-perishable foods at the Society of St. Vincent de Paul's food pantry.



NEWS

Classical Guitar comes to Eighth Grade



River Vogelsang practices guitar in the new eighth grade classical guitar class from Spring 2021.

ACS is one of five schools in the diocese participating in the “Guitar To You” music outreach program this year. Thanks to a generous gift from our STREAM donor, the school purchased 30 guitars and cases, allowing the entire eighth grade class to receive instruction in classical guitar

every week.

The purpose of “Guitar To You” is to enhance the musical development of students and to develop them in the art of liturgical and contemporary guitar music. Under the direction of former University of Arizona and University of Illinois guitar and music professor, Philip Hemmo, the program builds skills in note reading, classical and popular technique, chord strumming, ensemble and accompaniment.

“Guitar To You” is available to all Catholic elementary schools



Mia Eshelman practices guitar in the new eighth grade classical guitar class from Spring 2021. Behind her, instructor Philip Hemmo assists Charles Ciarametaro.

in the Diocese of Phoenix, offered through Notre Dame Catholic Preparatory High School. The program includes a complete classroom guitar curriculum and frequent phone and email support.

Outdoor pavilion built at final request of late donor

BY TONY GUTIÉRREZ
DEVELOPMENT CONSULTANT

In a climate where temperatures can exceed 100 degrees even in non-summer months, an outdoor fan system becomes a necessity for ACS students to be able to eat their lunches and have other activities outside. The fans and multi-purpose Ralph Verby Pavilion were made possible through a generous bequest of \$131,000 to ACS after the pavilion’s namesake passed away April 2020.

Ralph had grown up in Duluth, Minnesota where he attended St. James Catholic School in the 1940s. When he learned that the principal of his alma mater, Dr. Sharon Pristash, was moving to Arizona to open up a new Catholic school, he started helping where needed.

“He was a good Catholic boy,” said Ralph’s widow, Muriel Verby, recalling visiting ACS as a portable trailer when it opened in 2009. “We saw just that one area, and he’s seen it develop. Of course,



Muriel Verby joins family friend Victor LaRosa and her son visiting from Australia Greg Darby in the pavilion named after her late husband.

the kids went up to the next year and the next year and the next year, so, he saw the progress.”

Ralph met Muriel while visiting Australia in 1990, where she was born and working as a tour guide. When he returned to Sun City West, she sent him some photos of the trip in a St. Valentine’s Day card.

“Big mistake — that’s what started it

all,” she said. “It wasn’t a mistake at all.”

The widowed Ralph hadn’t received a Valentine in years. They kept in touch, and when she took a tour of the U.S., they met up in San Francisco, and he drove her back to Arizona. They were married in 1992.

“He made a difference to me, to my kids, to my family,” recalled Greg Darby, Muriel’s son while visiting the school.

Even though Muriel isn’t Catholic, she always appreciated Ralph’s faith and his desire to support Catholic education. He had attended Our Lady of Lourdes, and then Prince of Peace Parishes, both in Sun City West.

As the new campus was being built, the outdoor cooling system, seemed like a perfect way to honor her husband. As she toured the school, Muriel was taken aback by the plaque bearing her husband’s name.

“He just loved the school, loved the way it was being run, the way it was being developed,” she said.

THANK YOU

Annual gala exceeds expectations



Paige and Ryan Hill



Doug and Christy Brown



Mike and Theresa Scagnoli

Advance planning is necessary to organize an event such as ACS' annual Evening Under the Stars fundraiser gala — typically beginning as early as one month after the previous year's celebration. However, uncertainty brought on by the global COVID-19 pandemic proved challenging for the planning process.

It wasn't until the beginning of spring 2021 that the Diocese of Phoenix Office of Catholic Schools gave approval for public events to be held, giving the planning team only seven weeks to organize the gala.

Development Director Keli McCann, with the help of parent volunteers, chose a new theme for the Evening Under the Stars Gala based on the Diner en Blanc multi-city event in which diners throughout the world gather in a surprise iconic urban location dressed in white.

Cave Creek's Stagecoach Village served as the surprise public location for Evening Under the Stars. Organizers focused on guests coming together and experiencing their city in a new way as they support Catholic education.

The Diner en Blanc theme created more than a simple picnic in a public place — it created a community experience founded on friendship and elegance. For one night, guests enhanced the local public space by participating in the evening's silent auction, dinner and dancing.

Serving as event co-chairs were parent volunteers Christy Brown and Paige Hill, who dedicated countless hours and used their talents to organize such a successful gala. Danielle Paluscio served as the emcee for the second year in a row. Other volunteers included committee leaders Teresa Vitolo, Nina Putrus, Draga Rozaci, Dad's Club President Mike Scagnoli and Lisa DiPasquale, along with all the Room Angels all who worked behind the scenes on the auction to make it a successful and fun event for all.



Dev. Director Keli McCann, Principal Dr. Sharon Pristash and Pastor Fr. Chad King



Guests enjoy an evening of dancing.

Virtual Fun Run draws student body together

The Annual Fun Run is the largest fundraising event held at ACS, and adaptations necessitated by the COVID-19 pandemic did not buck that trend.

In years past, the students attended in-person daily pep rallies emphasizing five character traits and Bible verses. However, October of 2020 saw a completely different approach. Boosterthon provided the tools for schools to run a virtual fundraiser.

The students watched a daily pep rally video with their classmates and stayed in the classroom to ensure proper social distancing. Eighth grade students helped create the virtual theme by becoming "on-site" newscasters for ACS. It was a big sur-

prise for the student body when they saw the eighth-graders featured in the daily pep rally videos.

At the end of the week, the students enjoyed dancing in their individual classrooms for the Rocktober Dance-A-Thon to maintain the social distancing protocols in place at the time.

In addition, the annual friendly competition between the pastor — Father Chad "The King of Rock 'n' Roll" King — and the principal — Dr. Sharon "The Princess of Polka" Pristash — allowed St. Gabriel the Archangel parishioners a way to support Catholic education. In the end, Father Chad won the competition with the most



Eighth-grader Rachel Hauer served as a newscaster during the 2020 Fun Run.

donations from St. Gabriel parishioners.

Fun Run Chair Chelsea Cordell and her family, the Brittain family, among other volunteers, helped make this a fun and successful event.

THANK YOU

Thank you to last year's volunteers and Community Partner!

2020-2021

SCHOOL ADVISORY COUNCIL

Homer Savard, Chair
Marcia Balestrino, Vice Chair
Melanie Hooper, Secretary
Elisa Cannizzo
Chelsea Cordell
Don Raiff
John Rainney

Ex Officio
Father Chad King, Pastor
Dr. Sharon Pristash, Principal
Keli McCann, Development Director

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Bee Piazza, President
Carrie Tilley, Secretary
Lisa Gallbreath, Volunteer Coor
Amber Piraneo, Fundraising Coor
Brenda Miko, Event Liaison
Lisa DiPasquale, K-5 Room Angel Coor
Katie Oveson, 6-8 Room Angel Coor

Room Angels

Heather Dyer
Christina Shen
Teresa Scagnoli
Marissa Pacheco
Christina Cave
Amber Piraneo
Alexis Macauley
Megan Lynberg
Heather Dyer
Lisa Powers
Katie Oveson
Lara Lewis
Muffy Wallace
Colleen Bahling
Angela Corso

Chelsea Cordell, Advisory Liaison
Keli McCann, Development Director

CATHOLIC IDENTITY COMMITTEE

Sarah Cupo, Chair
Angela Riley, Vice Chair

Dad's Club

Mike Scagnoli, President

The 2020-2021 school year provided much uncertainty for us to gather for our two annual events. The Angel Sponsor was an opportunity to support our mission. As the year progressed we were able to hold the two major events after all. The following businesses made the commitment as an Angel Sponsor early in the year.

Thank you for your continued support.

Angel Sponsors 2020-2021

AZ Premier Real Estate Group eXp
Desert Diamond Mechanical
Freeport-McMoran Foundation
Hernandez Ironworks
His Lighting
Raintree Pet Resort
RZR Ryling
Sonoran Hospital Medicine
T.R. Hill Executive Coaching & Consulting
Horizon Foundation of NJ
Monkey Boys Landcaping

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Mr. and Mrs. Roy Linkowski
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Mrs. Dorothea Smith
Mr. Spinelli and Mrs. Crawford
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Rocktober Dance A Thon

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Rolando and Norma Velazquez
Salvatore and Kandace Ricotta
William and Vanessa Ribadeneira
Leesa Ullerich
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Sherry Letchford

Community Partners

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Frank and Barb Rechtermen
George Ross
John and Amaya Coccodrilli
Michael and Teresa Vitolo
Mike Walsh

St. Gabriel Tuition Fund

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Mr. and Mrs. Larry Martin
Mrs. and Mr. Donald Smith
In Memory of Donald Craig
Ms. Elsa Solorzano
David Cunningham
In memory of Chuck Krcmaric
Mr. and Mrs. Paul Krizman

Annual Appeal

CTE Enterprises Bricks4 Kidz
Arthur and Michelle Anderson
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Patricia Barbarita
Ronald and Lisa Baumann
Joseph and Anna Marie Benich
Robert Cannon
Steve and Helene Charles
John and Amaya Coccodrill
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Keith and Patty Dzija
Bonnie Fioramonti
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Richard and Mary Hunkeler
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Henry and Kathy Jahns
Eddie and Sandy Khoury
Ken Kowalec
In Memory of Chuck Kremaric
Paul and Mary Jo Krizman
Fr. David Kulandaisamy
Ed and Valerie Lederer
Maria Linggi
Mark Melancon
Jim and Jeanine Moyle
David and Joanne Niemi
Raymond and O'Dell
Jim and Carol O'Neill
Fr. Dennis O'Rourke

Imago Dei Scholarship

Arizona Tuition Connection
Charles Emery
Marcia Balestrino
The Horizon Foundation for NJ
Paxton and Dawn Jevnick

Annual Appeal

Carol Patzin
Herbert and Elda Pierpan
Harry Rainbolt
Virgina Railson
Luigi and Michelle Reale
Douglas Rennie
George Ross
Susan Ruotanen
Thomas and Emilie Sabol
George Smith
Robin Sobzak
Abe and Amy Titze
Thomas and Debruvka Tollison
Frederick and Gina Virga
Michael and Teresa Vitolo
Stephan Vojt
Mike Walsh
Michael and Pamela Wold Fund
Eric Williams
Benjamin Zita

White Ribbon Club \$1,000+

Thomas and Mary Ducharme
John and Pat Muelenberg
Roger and Maddy Stack
Ronald Grove
Patricia McDowell
In memory of Lois Patzin
William Patzin

Green Ribbon Club \$1,500 +

Richard and Mary Cunningham
Michael Kelly
Carol Patzin

Blue Ribbon Club \$2,500+

Fr. David Kulandaisamy
Mr. Mark Melancon
Raymond O'Dell
John and Jennifer Rainney
Homer and Julie Savard

Principal Club \$5,000+

William and Amy Kremer
Sandra McCullough
Sharon E. Slattery

Evening Under the Stars

Gold \$1,000

Arizona Leadership Foundation
Pinks Moving and Storage
North Valley Eye Care
Dunn Powers
Warner Law

Silver \$500

Christy Brown/Launch Real Estate
Monkey Boys Landscaping
Biltmore Commons Dental
Maian Pediatrics
His Lighting
Mark Jolesch Enterprises, LTD
Arizona Foot and Wound Specialist

ACS Angel Family \$1,000

Velasquez Family
Jevnick Family

Friends of Annunciation \$500

Marcia Balestrino and Charles Emery
Yparraguirre Family
Cannizzo Family
Jolesch Family
Peitzmeier Family

Special Event- \$200

T.R. Hill Executive Coaching and Consulting
Burgess Family
Starkweather Roofing, Inc.
Pinks Moving and Storage, LLC
Zuno Landscaping

Designated Donations

Kiwanis of Carefree
Ray and Miki Hendrey
Thomas and Carol Gillespie
Ralph and Muriel Verby
Henry (Hank) Bries
Southwestern Mechanical
Raiff Family Foundation
Douglas and Christy Brown
Mike and Danielle Paluscio
Stephen and Christina Hank
Class of 2021

St. Gabriel Angel Donors

Mr. Thomas and Carol Gillespie

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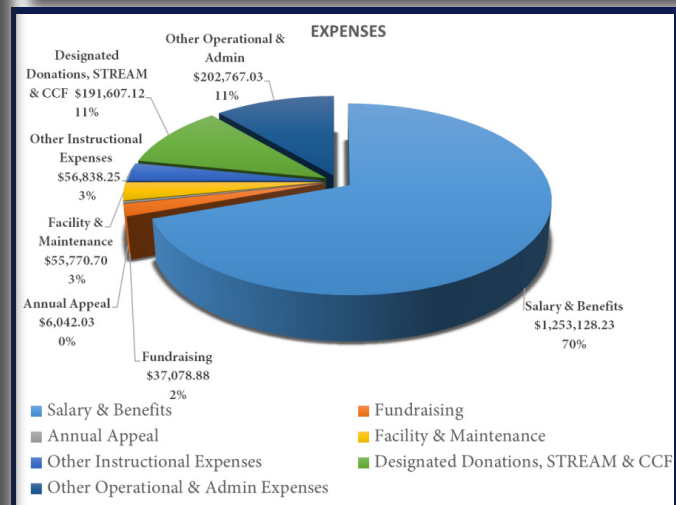
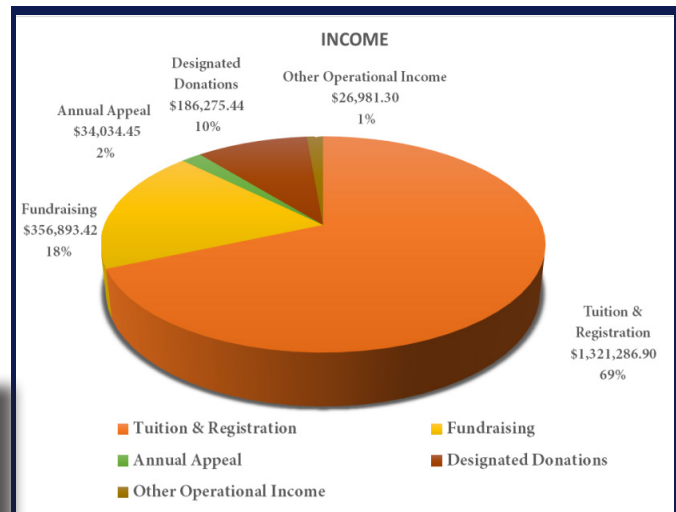
Mr. Ralph and Muriel Verby

The Raiff Family Foundation

FINANCIAL SUMMARY

Annunciation is proud to report the 12th year ended with zero debt, thanks to the generosity of our parents, parishioners and donors. The operating budget is funded by three sources- tuition, fundraising and donations (annual appeal, grants, and personal gifts). Designated funds from the previous fiscal year were used to offset expenses that occurred during the 2020-2021 school year due to the year ending with an evacuation of the campus due to Covid. Although we are blessed to have the support of St. Gabriel Parish through renting the shared facilities, the school operates without benefit of a parish subsidy.

INCOME		
Tuition & Registration	\$ 1,321,286.90	69%
Fundraising	\$ 356,893.42	18%
Annual Appeal	\$ 34,034.45	2%
Designated Donations	\$ 186,275.44	10%
Other Operational Income	\$ 26,981.30	1%
TOTAL	\$ 1,925,471.51	100%
EXPENSES		
Salary & Benefits	\$ 1,253,128.23	11%
Fundraising	\$ 37,078.88	11%
Annual Appeal	\$ 6,042.03	3%
Facility & Maintenance	\$ 55,770.70	3%
Other Instructional Expenses	\$ 56,838.25	0%
Designated Donations, STREAM & CCF	\$ 191,607.12	2%
Other Operational & Admin Expenses	\$ 202,767.03	70%
TOTAL	\$ 1,803,232.24	100%



Kiwanis
CAREFREE

Kiwanis of Carefree Awards Three Grants to ACS!

The Kiwanis Club of Carefree has been very generous to Annunciation Catholic School for the past 5 years, with grants totaling \$85,000 to support technology, special needs, and athletics. Kiwanis recently approved three more grant requests totaling \$25,487. The grants are for four interactive flat panels to replace the oldest models in middle school, bleachers for our outdoor sport court, and additional Wonderbot robots for use with younger grades to prepare them for



coding in middle school. We cannot thank Kiwanis enough for all their support of our school. We could not have the level of technology we do without their generous support. Please support Kiwanis of Carefree by donating to and shopping at their thrift store, the Kiwanis Marketplace. It is located in Cave Creek across from Dairy Queen. The profits from the

Marketplace provide the revenue to fund grants to schools. The Kiwanis Marketplace is also in need of volunteers. It's a great place for our middle school students to provide service hours to our community. God bless Kiwanis of Carefree!

How to Give

Annual Appeal

Annual Appeal funds help support Annunciation cover the day-to-day operation of the school, which includes utilities, rent, and maintenance.

Cash Gifts

Your financial gift to Annunciation Catholic School provides operational support for the school's mission, including academic programs, athletics, fine arts and technology.

Matching Gifts

Many corporations offer as a benefit to their employees a Matching Gift Program. Please ask your Human Resources Department for a matching gift to support Catholic education.

Gifts-In-Kind

The parents and parishioners of Annunciation continue in their generous donations of their time and talent. Please consider donating your experience or services to help Annunciation Catholic School. Some gifts that have already been received include printing, food and beverage donations, office and classroom supplies and equipment for the school.

Tuition Assistance

The St. Gabriel Catholic Parish has created a fund to help families at Annunciation who experience an unforeseen financial need during the year. Designated donations to Annunciation Tuition Assistance program through the parish St. Gabriel Tuition Assistance Fund can be given directly to the parish or school office.

The Imago Dei Scholarship is a scholarship created to provide students in grade eight an opportunity to receive a tuition scholarship toward high school tuition. The recipients of this award are determined based on their service to community, parish, and school.

Appreciated Securities

Gifts of securities, mutual funds and stocks are an excellent way to support Catholic education in your estate planning.

Planned Giving

Leave a legacy that reflects your ideals and values by supporting Catholic education in your estate planning.

Endowments

An endowment fund is known as "forever money." It is a special account that is established in order to generate revenue. One of the distinguishing characteristics of an endowment fund is that the principal amount contained in the account is not disbursed for any reason. This principal amount is invested in a manner that creates a steady return. Usually, only a portion of the interest or earnings from the endowment (typically 5%) are spent on an annual basis in order to assure that the original funds will grow over time. This year has seen a significant increase in financial need within the local community, especially during these extraordinary times. In an effort to respond to these needs, while partnering with the generosity of one of the Catholic Community Foundation donors, the Foundation has designated \$1 million dollars to be applied toward matched contributions from individuals. New gifts will be matched at 50% for new contributions made to any parish, school, or non-profit endowment that the Foundation manages. Join us in creating, supporting, and maintaining a fruitful community.

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**CONTACT OUR
DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR
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ANNUNCIATION
CATHOLIC SCHOOL
32648 N. CAVE CREEK ROAD
CAVE CREEK, ARIZONA 85331

