

THE *Spirit* OF ST. FRANCIS

St. Francis of Assisi Catholic Church | San Antonio, Texas



Fall 2015



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Cover Photo: Mary Claire Becan, pictured with her son Andrew, will begin a single parent ministry.
Photo Credit: Stephanie Bumgarner Photography.

The *Spirit* of St. Francis

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Comments? Questions? Creative ideas? Awesome!
Talk to Charles. Email him at cramirez@sfasat.org



We Are ONE FAMILY

By Rev. Larry Christian, Pastor

Being a family is a beautiful and wonderful thing. It can also be hard and distressing. The full array of human nature is on display in family life. The happy and good things, as well as the difficult and sad, are lived out in family life. Family is where we learn to relate to other people, to love and to be loved, to forgive and to be forgiven.

There can be no doubt that today family life is under a great deal of stress. The number of families referred to as “traditional families” has actually become a minority in our time. Many families are headed by a single parent. More and more families are blended families with parents and children together from prior relationships. There are same-sex couples with children. Yet, in the mixture of all this complexity, the mystery of human love and care can be found. The seeds of faith are often present, though they may be in need of nurture and care.

Just as we rejoice in family life, we also work to support and aid it. In the month of October, Catholic bishops from around the world will be gathering in Rome, along with Pope Francis and a small contingent of various experts, to look at the question of how our Church and our faith can aid family life in its many manifestations in today’s world. Family life is the ground upon which the foundations of evangelization are laid. The Gospel needs to be shared with real people in their real situations, right now.

Through faith, we are invited to become part of an even larger family—God’s family! As people of faith, we are joined together not simply by the bonds of blood and genetics, but by something even more profound: the waters of baptism and the conferral of the Holy Spirit. St. Paul expresses it when he says that we have become God’s children by adoption! What does that mean? It means that God has chosen us, selected us, and wants us to be His own.

I think, ultimately, what any of us would look for in marriage, family life, and deeper friendships is that feeling, that experience of being wanted or desired, of being cherished, welcome, and at home. When we feel less than desired or wanted, or even worse, when we feel rejected, it can be a terrible experience. Jesus tells us that He will not lose what the Father has given Him. And what has the Father given Him? Us! These bonds, in the Holy Spirit, are deeper than any other kind of connection.

As your pastor, I ask you to pray for families—all families—in whatever shape, size, or condition they may be. Pray for the healing of broken families. Pray for the unity and peace of families. Pray for love among family members. Pray for forgiveness in family life where it may be needed. Pray that the gift of the Holy Spirit will bond us together tightly as brothers and sisters in the Lord. ■

Photo from left: Jan Knappe, Fr. Larry, Delia Bullock, and Rick Hotard share a laugh at our 2014 Festival.
Photo by Eileen Kleffner.

OUR PARISH FamilyTRADITION

Celebrating the 35th Anniversary Festival

By Sr. Rose Kruppa, CDP

What happens each year on the Feast of our patron, St. Francis of Assisi? It's Fall Festival time! This year's festival will take place on Sunday, October 4 from 10 am–7 pm. We invite all parishioners, friends and neighbors to come celebrate. Don't miss the traditional "Blessing of the Animals" at 3 pm.

As the largest family gathering of the year, one of the best features of the Festival is that people see each other just for fun and renewal of friendships. Each year it gets larger and there are more opportunities for family fun.

The most popular booths will be back. Don't miss the Wine Walk or the Cake Walk! Both are such fun and so competitive! The Margarita booth sold out last year. And don't you know that St. Francis smiles at the outstanding plants that appear in the Plant Booth? Children will enjoy the bounce inflatables, the petting zoo, the rock wall, and having their picture taken with one of the Minions.

The Men's Club will serve their famous barbecue chicken plates as sit-down dinners as well as plates "to-go." Other food items are chalupas, turkey legs, corn-on-the-cob, hot dogs, popcorn and grilled sausage. Desserts abound, many colorfully wrapped and obviously made with great love for baking and creativity.

Got rhythm? You'll discover your own with amazing instructors at the



"Drumming Around" experience. If you want entertainment, the centrally located stage will host entertainers of all kinds, including the famous band, Cactus Country from 3:30 pm–6:30 pm.

The raffle is by far the most successful—and easiest way—to boost our profits. The prizes appeal to everyone, so don't be shy about asking your friends and neighbors, co-workers and family to purchase one for \$5. Wouldn't you love to win the \$3,500 first prize? And Visa and HEB gift cards are any person's delight! Please pick up your tickets to sell or buy at Mass on Sunday or from the church office. You might even go to another parish to sell those raffle tickets.

The Silent Auction committee has outstanding prizes. There are always some real treasures to be had among the donations. Don't forget the Book Booth where many have found bargains galore. Or you may enjoy choosing your accesso-

ries and taking your picture in the photo booth! That is one of my favorites!

Festival activities kick-off with a dance in Henke Hall on Fri. Oct. 2 with music by Gallo. Buy your \$15 tickets after Mass or in the parish office today.

What's the most important thing about the festival? We work together, we grow in our participation in parish life, and we raise much needed funds for life-changing programs in our parish! Please do volunteer to work in one of the

"We work together, we grow in our participation in parish life, and we raise much needed funds..."

many booths for at least an hour. You can choose where you'd like to work.

If you can't work in a booth, please be a member of the Hospitality Committee—welcoming and greeting all who come!

Let's get organized, donate items, sell those raffle tickets, volunteer to work and save the date to have a really good time with our SFA community!

To volunteer, please contact Marilu Lopez at marilulpz@yahoo.com or Irma Flores at if9445@aol.com. ■



Photos Above Clockwise: Volunteers take a break and pose together; a boy prepares to jump on the inflatable bounce; four children pose for the camera; a girl enjoys a pony ride. Below From Left: A woman sips a margarita; a father and daughter buy booth tickets with their pet dog; Sr. Rose poses in the photo booth; a girl enjoys a hot dog; a dog relaxes in the courtyard before the Blessing of the Animals. Photos by Eileen Kleffner and Irma Flores.

Park & PARTY!

An Alternative Halloween

By Charles T. Ramirez

"Every child I saw loved Trunk-or-Treat last year," said Diana Adams. "Everyone was enjoying themselves and it really got the spirit of Halloween going for the kids."

As a member of the Moms Ministry at St. Francis of Assisi, Diana wanted to offer young families and their children an opportunity to celebrate the tradition of Halloween in a safe, fun environment. Last year, she organized an event adopted by other Christian churches called "Trunk-or-Treat," where trick-or-treating is done from car trunks parked in the church parking lot.

"The main purpose of Trunk-or-Treat is to get families together in a safe environment," said Diana. "Last year, parents said that this event was their trick-or-treat night for Halloween. They were not going to do the neighborhood thing because this was more fun for them."

Moms Ministry President, English Miller, says that Trunk-or-Treat builds community for families who want to celebrate the Halloween experience with their children.

"It offers a great alternative to trick-or-treating in neighborhoods," said En-

glish. "St. Francis offers a safe and welcoming place for families."

Families add to the spirit of the event by practicing a little creativity with their children through decorations and music.

"Children help parents decorate their cars and bring candy to pass out like they would do at home," said Diana. "Some families play music in their cars for the kids to enjoy. It's just a very festive event and the parents had a really great time."

"Children help parents decorate their cars and bring candy to pass out like they would do at home."

English agrees that the decorations make the event special for the children.

"The cars were very creative and many had themes," said English. "One car had a Super Mario Brothers theme with a game set up for kids to kick a soccer ball at mushroom replicas from the video game. It was a great creative opportunity for the kids to get involved and decorate the trunk in different ways."

With the popular success Trunk-or-Treat had last year, Diana hopes to keep this event an annual parish tradition.

"This October will be our second year hosting this event and we hope to have it every year," said Diana. "Trunk-or-Treat is for all families in our community to enjoy." ■



Meet the Aluise Family: Jeremy, Barbara, and their children Eros (9 months) and Felicity (5 years). Jeremy is a full time employee at a building materials company, working hard to provide for his young family. The Aluises wanted to start their family early and Jeremy looks forward to giving them the home they deserve.

"I did not have the home I would have liked growing up so I want to provide this for them," said Jeremy. "With Habitat's help, I can take advantage of this opportunity and give this to my family. We are very excited to begin the journey!"

Since 1999, St. Francis of Assisi has teamed with Habitat for Humanity of San Antonio, Inc. (HFHSA) to build an affordable home every fall here in San Antonio. This year, our build began on Friday, September 11 and continues every Friday and Saturday through mid October with a landscaping day in November. We continue to sign up volunteers to build, paint, bring lunch, provide water, and support our crew with their presence on site. Visit www.sfasat.org/habitat for more information or contact Rich Osgood at osgood@sbcglobal.net. ■

Details

Friday | 10.30.15 | Main Parking Lot | Park at 6:00 pm | Treating at 6:30 pm

Contact Diana Adams for more information at 210. 343. 9832.

For creative trunk decoration ideas, visit TrunkorTreat.homestead.com



Our New Single Parent Ministry

By Mary Claire Becan

Hello! My name is Mary Claire Becan and I am thrilled to be responding to God's call for a Single Parents' Ministry here at St. Francis of Assisi.

For my entire life, I've been certain of one thing – I knew I wanted to be a mother. When I got married in February 2011, I was happy and in love and eager to start a family. I was pregnant just one month later. Unfortunately, things are not always as they seem. As a pregnant newlywed, I found myself in a relationship and marriage that was never going to work. For my sake and the sake of my son, I had no choice but to file for divorce. I was embarrassed. I was hurt. I was alone. Not only that, but I had a very small person to worry about on my own.

I am very fortunate that I had supportive parents and some wonderful

friends through that time. I owned my own business, and my clients were generous with their concern. I would come home from work and find a package of diapers on my door step. My mother's piano students would bring their hand-me-down clothes for Andrew. I have never known such an outpouring of love.

Still, something was missing. Almost everyone I knew was happily married with several children. They could certainly empathize with my struggle, but couldn't fully understand what it meant to be a single parent. At the end of the day, that pain was mine alone.

Of course, in this time, I turned to my faith. Pain has a way of reminding us that we need God. I began reading scripture daily and making a point to thank God for the goodness that he brought us in a dark time. The idea of a Single Parent Ministry came to me on Mothers' Day. It was a particularly hard day for me. I was attending Mass at a different parish and they were handing gifts out to all the mothers. Though the gift was nice, it couldn't replace the husband I wish I had or the sense of loss I felt each day. I knew I couldn't be the only single mother in the congregation that day. I knew there had to be other parents who, like me, were desperate for a feeling of community and a sense of belonging at Mass.

I wanted to form a group for single

mothers and single fathers with a few specific goals in mind:

- For single parents to know that they have a place in our Church and in our parish.
- For single parents to pray and reflect on scripture together and find community through a common experience.
- For single parents to participate more fully in our parish, through social and service events.

As this group forms, members will further discover the needs of the single parent community at St. Francis of Assisi. My desire is for single parents to support and strengthen each other through regular meetings and events. Obviously, our time can be stretched thin but we will learn what kind of schedule is best as we go along. Above all, I want my fellow single parents to know that they are always welcome to join us, in whatever capacity they are able.

If you...

- Are a single parent, with a child aged infancy to adult
- Are looking for community, support, and friendship in your parenting journey
- Are interested in a regular time of prayer and reflection
- Are interested in attending social events, with and without your children

...then this group is for you!

My prayer and my plan is to let God lead us in this journey together. I hope you'll consider joining us. ■



Photo Credit Clockwise from Top: by Kaitlin Kalina; by Terrie Becan; by Stephanie Bumgarner Photography.



Formed in FAITH

From Preschool
to Adulthood

Children's Faith Formation

- Preschool faith formation: First Friday of each month (September- May) 9:30 am–11:30 am. We hope to offer more opportunities for preschool soon, but need more catechists!
- Children's Liturgy of the Word is for children 3 and older. During the 11:15 am Mass children are dismissed to listen to the readings and break open the Word. We are seeking leaders so that we can expand to the 8:30 am liturgy as well.
- Elementary faith formation (K-5th grade) is offered at 4 different times: Sunday 10 am–11 am, Sunday 3:45 pm–4:45 pm, Tuesday 4:30 pm–5:30 pm and Tuesday from 6:00 pm–7:00 pm. Consider becoming a catechist— grow in your faith while teaching children.
- Sacrament Preparation (Reconciliation & 1st Communion): Children second grade and older may begin preparing for these Sacraments during their second year of faith formation.
- Catechumenate for Children (CFC) is the faith formation and Sacrament preparation process for children over 7 years old who are seeking Baptism. CFC follows the RCIA model of catechesis and focuses on forming a relationship with Christ and recognizing his presence in daily life.
- Vacation Bible School kicks off the summer with a week of catechesis and faith sharing. Children 4-years-old through Middle School attend. High School and up may volunteer.



Middle School Faith Formation

- Middle School: Sunday 10 am–11 am. This class utilizes a video-based curriculum and small group sharing for most lessons.
- Middle School Small Faith Sharing Group Sunday, 3:45 pm–4:45 pm
- Edge: Tuesday, 7 pm–8:30 pm. Edge helps middle schoolers unleash who they were created to be, in Christ. In Edge, middle schoolers learn about the Catholic Faith through hands on activities, large group teachings, small group discussion, and prayer.
- Fall Middle School/Edge Lock-In
- Spring Middle School/Edge Retreat
- Middle School Vacation Bible School in June
- Summer Mission Trip to Eagle Pass, Texas

High School Faith Formation

- Summit: Lectionary Based Discipleship Group will meet Sundays from 3:45 pm–4:45 pm beginning on October 11. This SCC style group will reflect on the Sunday readings, share faith experiences and then join the community for the 5 pm Mass.
- Life Teen: Sunday after the 5 pm Mass from 6:15 pm–8:45 pm. As a Eucharist-centered movement within the Roman Catholic Church, Life Teen leads teenagers and their families into a deeper relationship with Jesus Christ and His Church. With the Blessed Virgin Mary as our intercessor and guide, Life Teen seeks to unleash the fullness of the Sacramental power present within the young Church.
- Life Teen flows from the Mass through a Gather, Proclaim, Break, and Send throughout each session.
- Freshmen Day Retreat
- Unleashed: Upper Classmen Missionary Discipleship Group beginning in November
- Fall and Spring Teen ACTS Retreats
- Confirmation Preparation: for Juniors and Seniors on Wednesday, 7 pm–9 pm beginning on October 7
- Teen Mission Trip: Incoming Seniors in June
- Life Teen Leadership Conference: Incoming Juniors and Seniors in June
- Steubenville/Life Teen Camp Covecrest or Hidden Lake in July
- Life Teen Inspiration Tour in August



Our AMAZING CATECHISTS

The Backbone of Faith Formation

Adult Faith Formation

Includes many opportunities including the following:

- ACTS Retreats
- The Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults – RCIA
- Baptism Preparation
- Bible Study
- Centering Prayer
- Endow Women's Study
- Grief Support Seminar
- Life Beyond Divorce
- A new Single Parent Ministry (See page 5)
- Men's Spirituality
- Theology Café
- Women in the Spirit
- Small Church Communities (SCC)
- Advent and Lenten Missions
- Sunday Adult Faith Formation: we begin the Mystery of God series by Bishop-Elect Robert Barron in September
- Marriage Sponsor Couples Program
- Six Dates for Catholic Couples
- Beyond Cana Marriage Retreats

Photo Above: Our graduating seniors pose together to celebrate completing the Life Teen program. Photo by Monica Harness.

Photos Right: Nearly all of our Elementary Faith Formation Catechists who are teaching our youngest parishioners this year.



America Gies
1st Grade



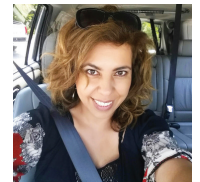
Ava Landa
5th Grade



Beverly Kasprowicz
1st Grade



Karla Clarady
5th Grade



Connie Rodriguez
4th Grade



Deborah Reinagel
1st Grade



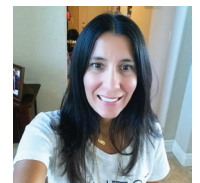
Delia Gaona
5th Grade



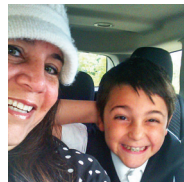
Diane Miranda
3rd Grade



Diane Niemiec
4th Grade



Estelle Ybarra
5th Grade



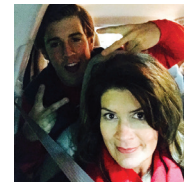
Jules Arkangel
4th Grade



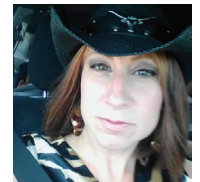
Kelly Xavier
Workroom Assistant



Kim Pruitt
4th Grade



Kyle & Michelle
Cantu | 3rd Grade



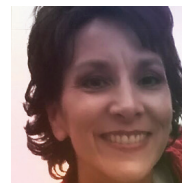
Mandi-bre Watson
2nd Grade



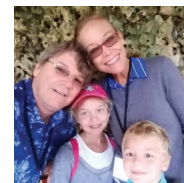
Mimi Chavarria
3rd Grade



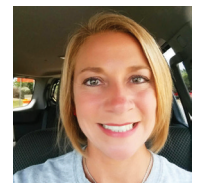
Miriam Flores
Coordinator



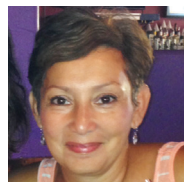
Rhona Blake
2nd Grade



Rita Schuenemann
1st Grade



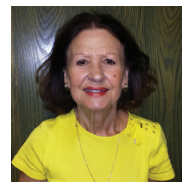
Sharon Arguello
3rd Grade



Darlene Hernandez
Kindergarten



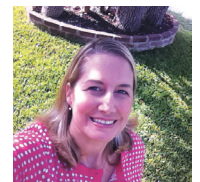
DeAnne Coltrane
2nd Grade



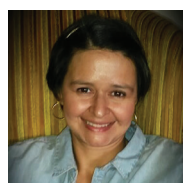
Jacqueline Stone
1st Grade



Joanie Meaney
Middle School



Anne-Kathleen
Borushko | 1st Grade



Mayra Goodwin
Kindergarten



Michelle & Melissa
Cantu | 3rd Grade



Matt, Grace, Betsy, & Hope
Westerman | Kindergarten

Sporting DISCIPLESHIP

CYO Builds Friendships And Families



By Charles T. Ramirez

“Yes, we want to build an athlete, but that’s lower on the list,” said CYO Board President, Roman Castillo. “What we want to build is a better kid to relate with others, to teach them to be in a team atmosphere, to be a better Christian.”

As a parent and coach, Roman sees first-hand the growth and maturity that CYO has instilled in his own children.

“My kids love the camaraderie from playing together with their friends,” said Roman. “They learn the sport and learn team-building skills. You don’t often see kids working together for a mutual goal.”

Parent, coach, and former CYO Board President, Bill Thorpe, agrees that the organization serves as a ministry to form children in a holistic, lasting way.

“The biggest growth factor for the kids is their self-confidence,” said Bill. “We are a competitive league but we also recognize that we are a ministry first. It’s important for the kids to have learned the sport but, more importantly, for them

to walk off having made new friends, having a better feeling about themselves, hopefully being in a little better shape, and just giving them a general boost in confidence.”

Family Friendships

In addition to children forming friendships, Roman says that parents inevitably do too.

“Parents talk on the sidelines during practice about how their kids are doing in school, what their schools do differently, what teachers they have, what vacations they have planned,” said Roman.

“Moms and dads may go out after a game for a meal. It’s great community building.”

Bill says he has made great friends in

his five years as a CYO coach.

“For me personally, I’ve formed a lot of great friendships with parents through CYO,” said Bill, “and many friendships transcend the CYO season and organization. I’m still very good friends with some who aren’t even involved with CYO anymore.”

Bill also affirms that CYO can function as a channel for families to deeper involvement in the wider parish community.

“Through CYO we are able to build relationships with the kids as well as the parents and use that as an opportunity to provide them with information on other events and things going on at the parish,”

said Bill. “Those seeds could grow into a full-fledged, newly involved family.”

CYO Disciples

Last winter, CYO basketball participants grew by 20%, adding two full teams to the organization. With this quick growth, Roman says volunteers are always needed and appreciated.

“We are always looking for volunteers year-round,” said Roman, “because without our volunteers, the kids wouldn’t have a program.”

Roman says the opportunities to volunteer are vast.

“We have volunteers who coach, work concession stands, and help us get the field ready for practice and games,” said Roman. “Just last month, we had about eight moms and dads out on the field moving around goal posts and bleachers. We really couldn’t do it without them.” ■

Above: Boys practice flag football as families socialize in the stands. Photo by Charles T. Ramirez. Below: Coaches Fernando Almendariz (left) and Bill Thorpe (right) celebrate with the baseball team after a post-practice huddle. Photo provided by CYO Athletics.

CYO Seasons

Fall	Volleyball, Flag Football, Soccer
Winter	Basketball, Track
Spring	Baseball, Softball

For more information, contact Roman Castillo at 210. 363. 7607 or visit StFrancisCYO.com





Called To CARE

My Discipleship as a Foster Parent

By Cherilyn Mezzetti

My husband and I moved to St. Francis of Assisi in 1992 after finding a larger house nearby to accommodate our growing family. The church was cozy and friendly so my husband and I, along with our three little girls, fit right in.

My desire to look into foster care came after hearing a speaker talk about it at Mass in 2005. My husband and I went to an agency for foster and adoption and completed all the courses except for the final interview. During the interview, however, we were told that we didn't pass because of my husband's medical problems. As I was still working full-time, I wouldn't be able to take both my husband and foster kids to all their doctor appointments.

In God's Time

The desire to do foster care still chased me. Though I felt such a need and a calling, I knew it just wasn't the right time. After my husband died in 2007 and I retired in 2011, I soon started the foster care process again. I was certified in September 2012 and by October I had two rambunctious twin 8-year-old boys, both angry because of their circumstances.

I got to know them for 9 months, learning their likes and dislikes, fears and goals. Each night, we read one or two books and then prayed together. One of the boys always said his own special

prayer for his family, asking God to let his mom come back. We had lots of hard times but also many rewarding times.

They came to church with me every Sunday and sat in the front so they could see. One Sunday, one of my boys was asked to be an altar server at Mass. He begged for the opportunity to serve and said he knew what to do because

"He said that he wanted to be a priest when he grew up, just like Father Larry."

he'd been watching closely. With that, the head server told me that he would guide my boy through it and he did great! I was as proud as any mother could be. After more times serving, he said that he wanted to be a priest when he grew up, just like Fr. Larry. Soon after that, some of his relatives came forward and adopted him and his brother. I think of them often, but I know God gave them to me for that special, short time.

Des'Ree and Cristine

Two months later, 16-year-old Des'Ree came into my life. Like all relationships, it was a bit rocky at first but we worked through it. Four months after that, 16-year-old Cristine joined us. Again, my life was enriched with things to do for them: doctors' appointments, caseworker visits, and school. Though I

"Though I could have lived alone to do my own thing, I've discovered how much we need others."

wasn't their race, color, or religion, we learned to live together as a family. My Small Church Community openly embraced them. Church has always been important to me and it hasn't been a problem with my foster children.

During their first year with me, both girls went to Children's Liturgy of the Word. Last year, we joined the 5:00 pm Sunday Mass and they attended Life Teen after. Cristine signed up for another year of Life Teen because she really learned a lot and made lots of friends.

Des'Ree has been with me for two years and she just graduated from Clark High School. She's getting ready for college this semester and will be leaving my home when the spring semester begins in January. She will be on her own but says she'll always be back to visit me. Cristine has been with me for a year and a half and will continue at Clark High School as a junior.

Des'Ree went on the Teen ACTS Retreat this year and announced that she wants to become Catholic. Cristine wants to finish her sacraments and learn the faith because she was only baptized as a baby without the opportunity to practice her religion. A few weeks ago, both girls joined the RCIA program to continue their journey.

I know that more children will come and go in the future and I try to remain open to each possibility. Each child comes with their own life story. What

they need is someone to be there for them. Though I could have lived alone to do my own thing, I've discovered

how much we need others. I recommend this ministry to anyone seeking to add fulfillment to their lives or to their family.

Cristine heard a song lyric on the radio the other day that gave her meaning to why she's in foster care. The song said, "I'm exactly where I'm supposed to be now!" I'm blessed every day by their presence and I know that I'm exactly where I'm supposed to be now, too. ■

Crafting COMMUNITY TOGETHER

At the Holiday Bazaar

By Charles T. Ramirez

“Community cannot be replaced by anything,” said parishioner Janie Cantu, “and the Holiday Bazaar connects the community. Your passion for life doesn’t serve much of a purpose unless you share it with others and we share our lives with each other through parish events like the bazaar.”

As a shopper and vendor, Janie loves the social, friendly atmosphere.

Other parishioner vendors, like Carol Inkman, agree that socializing is a fun part of the event.

“You meet a number of people and get to see the great talent that exists in the parish,” said Carol. “You think that there is no way it could be better than the previous year, and then each year it turns out better.”

Unlike Other Bazaars

Bazaar organizer Anna Wealty says that the event, sponsored by the Women’s Council, offers a wide range of vendors and items that were reviewed and approved to insure proportionality.

“It’s a great shopping venue with a huge variety,” said Anna. “We have many handcrafted, carefully chosen items. We don’t accept just any vendor who applies for a booth because we keep everything in proportion. Otherwise, for example, we would have too many jewelry vendors.”

Parishioner and vendor Lorraine Beddingfield says that shoppers can find artwork and crafts of every kind at the bazaar.

“Everything from knitting and crocheting to wood carvings to jewelry making, to food dishes, terra cotta candle holders, handmade lamps, and art-

work of all kinds,” said Lorraine. “Many times vendors will repurpose everyday items and make it into something that’s very attractive and useful to others.”

Parishioner and vendor Christa Trippy says that the bazaar helps people get into the holiday spirit.

“The bazaar is the kick-off of the holiday season,” said Christa, “where you can purchase things for Thanksgiving and Christmas. It is a big part of the community because so many parishioners set up at the bazaar and I love to see shoppers and vendors who I see regularly at Mass.”

“The bazaar is the kick-off to the holiday season where you can purchase things for Thanksgiving and Christmas.”

Having attended several other bazaars around the city, Christa says that ours stands out with its selection, variety, and booth accessibility.

“I really like the St. Francis bazaar over others I’ve been to because the booths are spread out and it’s very accessible,” said Christa. “And it’s after the Masses on Sunday, making it very convenient for people who can’t come on Saturday.”

Just Come and Mingle

To those who have never been to the bazaar, Janie suggests visiting simply to look around and talk to the vendors.

“Wander through all the different booths on the grounds,” said Janie, “if something catches your eye, stop for a minute and talk to the vendor. People love to talk about their art.”

Christa agrees that vendors love sharing their story. “Just come and see and mingle,” said Christa. “Ven-

dors love talking about where their product came from, how they made it, and people can become friends. There’s a little bit of everything and every year they have new people. It’s a great bazaar.”

“And the prices are good!” adds Janie. “You may find something that is handmade at a gift show or a hotel lobby somewhere, and it could be half the price here at the Holiday Bazaar. It’s just fun!” ■

Photos clockwise: Maria Giessler, Barbara Burger, Sr. Rose, and a vendor; Lorraine Beddingfield (left) and Mary Heubscher; Rita Schuneneman (left) and Karen Geri; two shoppers at a booth; Diane Smilgin (left), Anna Wealty, and Mary Catherine Fuchs. Photos by Eileen Kleffner.

Holiday Bazaar

Sat. Nov. 7 10:00 am–5:00 pm
Sun. Nov. 8 9:30 am–2:30 pm

For more information, contact Anna Wealty at 210. 393. 5483. Interested in the Women’s Council? Visit www.sfasat.org/WomensCouncil

Sharing GRATITUDE

The St. Vincent de Paul Thanksgiving Food Drive

By Charles T. Ramirez

"Thanksgiving is often a time when things get tough for the people we serve at St. Vincent de Paul," said Juan Cruz. "It's when they need more support and more help with food."

As a dual member of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul and the Knights of Columbus, Juan knows the importance of the Thanksgiving Food Drive.

Society of St. Vincent de Paul president, Jean Aratingi, says that the food drive provides the pantry canned food for a quarter of the year.

"For the Society of St. Vincent de Paul, the drive means we don't have to buy food through February," said Jean. "Last year, it was so successful that it helped us last through March without having to buy more food."

The Society's primary income relies on the generosity of parishioners during the black bag second collections at Masses on the first weekend of each month. Allocating each dollar collected, the Society is able to help more people after a successful Thanksgiving Food Drive.

"The food drive makes a really big difference for us in terms of how much money we have available to help people with their rent or utilities," said Jean.

Because many children are out of school during the holidays, Juan says it's

especially a critical time for those seeking assistance from St. Vincent de Paul.

"Many of our clients often have to take care of grandchildren who are out of school and need food," said Juan. "The food drive enables us to help them secure food."

Disciples Working Together

While the Society of St. Vincent de Paul sponsors the Thanksgiving Food Drive each year, the Knights of Columbus, Life Teen, and the Boy Scouts teamed up last year to help them with this labor-intensive outreach project.

"Once you get all those cases of cans, they are really heavy to move around so a big group of men makes it a lot easier to handle," said Juan. "The Knights are always looking to see how we can help different ministries in the parish and St. Vincent de Paul is perfect for that."

Grand Knight C.J. Fremin loves the collaboration with St. Vincent de Paul and knows that the Knights are providing a service to the community at large.

"Last year, we had a drive-thru drop off area in the parking lot where Knights helped parishioners drop off their canned donations and move them into the St. Vincent de Paul storage area for sorting."

The teens in Life Teen and the Boy Scouts helped organize, sort, and pack the canned food donations. Jean says that the collaboration has proven very successful.

"It's always been a tradition to collect food for those in need around Thanksgiving," said Jean. "All families can participate in the food drive and teach their children the meaning of Thanksgiving: to be grateful for what we have and to share it with people who need it most." ■

Photo: Donated bags of groceries for the Thanksgiving Food Drive fill the church before the blessing during the Thanksgiving Mass. Photo by Eileen Kleffner.

What is St. Vincent de Paul?

The Society's Mission

Inspired by Gospel values, the Society of St. Vincent de Paul, a Catholic lay organization, leads women and men to join together to grow spiritually by offering person-to-person service to those who are needy and suffering in the tradition of its founder, Blessed Frédéric Ozanam, and patron, St. Vincent de Paul.

Become a Member

Do you feel called to become a Vincentian volunteer? Contact the parish office at 210. 492. 4600. Learn more at www.SVDPusa.org



St. Francis of Assisi Catholic Church

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Mass Celebrations

Sat 5:00 pm

Sun 8:30 am | 11:15 am | 5:00 pm

Mon, Tue, & Thur | 8:30 am

Wed | 6:00 pm

Fri | 6:30 am

Reconciliation

Saturday | 3:30 pm - 5:00 pm

Liturgy of the Word & Communion Service

Monday - Thursday | 6:30 am

Save the Date

October

- 2 | Festival Kick-Off Dance
- 4 | Parish Festival
- 7 | Teen Confirmation Info. Mtg.
- 17 | Life Beyond Divorce Begins
- 30 | Trunk-or-Treat

November

- 1 | All Saints' Day
- 2 | All Souls' Day Mass
- 7 | Holiday Bazaar
- 8 | Holiday Bazaar
- 15 | RCIA Rite of Welcome
- 26 | Thanksgiving Day Mass

December

- 4 | Taize Prayer Service
- 10 | Teen ACTS Retreat begins
- 12 | Christmas in Assisi Dance
- 13 | Our Lady of Guadalupe Mass
- 18 | Christmas Concert



Photo: Parishioner Joe Hemmi works on the frame of our
2015 Habitat for Humanity house. Volunteer today.
Photo by Charles T. Ramirez.