


2025 ST. AMBROSE PARISH STEWARDSHIP REPORT



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LETTER FROM THE PASTOR

Dear Parishioners and Friends of St. Ambrose Parish Family,

This fourth annual Stewardship Report reminds us of the necessity of every person who calls St. Ambrose Parish their home. Without the generous sharing of so many, St. Ambrose Church & School and St. Michael Church (Beltrees) would be unable to provide the many services and opportunities included in this report.

The goal of stewardship is to respond to God's command to our first parents, Adam and Eve. We are to care for creation. God blesses us with gifts to be able to do so. We give thanks to God for our blessings by sharing them with others. We build up God's Kingdom of love, justice and peace when we share ourselves with others.

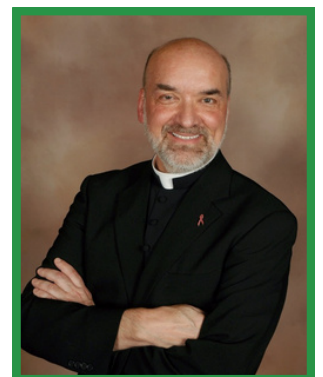
The Parish Pastoral Council, Finance Council, School Advisory Council, and the St. Ambrose Parents Association are instrumental in discerning the needs of our parish family and then find creative ways to meet those needs.

We strive to assist parishioners who are struggling spiritually, emotionally, physically or financially. We minister to one another at the Eucharist and beyond.

On behalf of our parish family, I thank you for your generous service and support to St. Ambrose Parish and look forward to another year of shared blessings.

May God bless you!

Steven Janoski
Pastor



"We build up God's Kingdom of love, justice and peace when we share ourselves with others."

FR. STEVE

THE FOUR PILLARS: HOSPITALITY

Bereavement Committee & Funeral Lunches

Our Bereavement Committee consists of four teams with about 35 on each team. The teams prepare and serve lunches. The committee organizes funeral luncheons for families and friends who are buried from St. Ambrose (or St. Michael). This is a much-appreciated ministry for our parishioners at a time of need.

The Bereavement Committee assisted with the annual All Souls' Memorial Mass held this year at the 10:30 Mass on November 2nd.

Women's Group

The St. Ambrose Women's Group is continually on the move. Our gatherings are growing and growing with many interesting events. Our guest speakers are some of the most interesting and inspiring as we learn what is offered in our community. We were inspired and invited to visit one of our local retirement homes, Asbury Village where several of our church members reside. Our game day consisted of one of our members husband cooking a delicious Italian dinner for us. All God's Children Shall Have Shoes has been a part of many of our parishioners go-to organizations. Sleep in Heavenly Peace volunteer organization is another one that many have participated in. One of our own younger member shared her cancer survivor journey with us.

Our bus trips continued their popularity as we traveled for a week to the state of Michigan with a special side trip to Mackinac Island. We cruised down the Mississippi River on the Celebration Bell with 80 of our parishioners. We attended the Carole King tribute "Beautiful" concert in Kirkwood, MO. Our annual Picnic in the Park with Fr. Steve consisted of over 70 ladies with games and prizes.

We support our parish and local organizations with the proceeds of our Spring Salad Luncheon and our Pecan Sales.

Welcoming Committee

The St. Ambrose Welcome Committee offers newly registered families a meal and fellowship several times a year. The families receive a special invitation to have lunch with other parish members and learn how to get involved in the parish community. Members of established organizations are on hand to explain their ministry at St. Ambrose and to offer membership to the new parishioners. Our goal is to make sure every parishioner feels welcome and a part of our larger community here at St. Ambrose.



THE FOUR PILLARS: PRAYER

Ministries

Altar Servers

We are blessed to have 51 Altar Servers.
This picture is an example of our servers at a 10:30 Mass.



Eucharistic Ministers

We have 114 mandated/commissioned Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion. The Eucharist is the source and summit of our faith, St. Ambrose Eucharistic Ministers put this faith into action by assisting in the distribution of Communion at Mass, at assisted living facilities, and in parishioner's homes.

Lectors (Readers)

The Ministry of Lector (Reader) is essential in the proper celebration of the Mass and other liturgies. Those who are called to serve as Lectors (Readers) are trained and provided materials to assist them with meaningful proclamation of the Word. This ministry is rooted in personal prayer and reflection on the Word of God so that it is truly PROCLAIMED from the heart and not simply READ. If you are interested in participating in this ministry, contact Steve Stack.

We currently have 30 people trained in this ministry.

Music Ministers & Choir

There is an ancient proverb attributed to St. Augustine: "Those who sing pray twice". At St. Ambrose, music is incorporated into Masses and liturgical celebrations, through the sharing of instrumentalists (piano, organ, guitar, occasional strings, winds, and horns) along with cantors and choir members. All told, we have about 25 people who provide this essential ministry. We also have a children's choir that performs for special occasions.

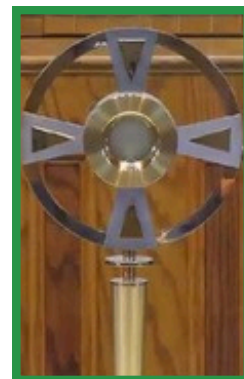


Monthly Adoration

Holy Hour – Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament of the Eucharist is held on the third Thursday of every month.

Prayer Chain

St. Ambrose has a small group of prayer warriors who pray for those requesting prayers. If you would like to join the prayer chain, contact the Parish Office.



St. Michael Church, Beltrees

St. Michael Church in Beltrees (Jersey County), constructed in 1877, with its first Mass being said on March 9, 1878, is a quaint little church, it is nestled on a hillside among farmland and pastures in southern Jersey Co. St. Michael is an integral part of St. Ambrose Parish. St. Michael's has and still today provides the community with the opportunity of attending Mass on occasion throughout the year, including Christmas, Easter and Feast of St. Michael. Each year a Memorial Day Mass is held in the cemetery honoring our deceased veterans. It is through the generosity and dedication of members of St. Michael Church, past and present, that the church and cemetery thrives and continues to be a place for many to come together and give thanks to God and lay their loved ones to rest.

This year, one Baptism and two funerals took place at St. Michael Church. During the season of Lent, Stations of the Cross and Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament were offered weekly. We would especially like to thank Tom Bechtold and all those who help him.

For nearly 150 years the members of St. Michael's, many of whom are now parishioners of the St. Ambrose Parish family, continue their dedication to the parish they refer to as "the little church on the hill."



THE FOUR PILLARS: FAITH FORMATION

Bible Study

Participants in Bible Study obtain a richer understanding of the readings and apply them to their lives. Bible Study is offered on Saturday mornings for men and women of the parish. The men meet at 8:00 a.m. and the women at 9:30 a.m. The Bible Study leaders are Greg Mattingly and Deacon Tom.

Cursillo

God's blessings never end! 2025 has been a well-attended year for Quincy Cursillo. All of the weekends have been filled with inspiring men and women on the teams. The attendance of



candidates has also grown as we

reach out and ask for their time to attend a Cursillo weekend. It truly is "a short course in Christianity". God is good all the time! With a lot of prayer, 2026 will be the same. The schedule for 2026 upcoming Cursillo weekends:

- Jan 22-25 Men's
- Feb 19-22 Women's
- March 19-22 Men's
- April 16-19 Women's
- June 25-28 Men's
- July 16-19 Women's
- Sept 17-20 Men's
- Nov 12-16 Women's

We encourage everyone to try and attend a Cursillo weekend. With God's grace, 2026 will be filled with many candidates attending Cursillo weekends.

Ongoing Faith Formation

Continuing use of multimedia presentations for Adult Faith Formation from St. Benedict Press. As our offering for the Year of Hope, we presented the Series: Real Suffering: Finding Hope and Healing in the Trials of Life. We were supported in our efforts by a grant from our Diocesan Foundation for Adult Faith Formation with grant from the Harvest of Hope Campaign. The series touched a cord as

...continued

we had new participants, and the discussions were helpful to all. In the Fall we screened Season Two of: The Chosen. It was edifying to have so many had previously watched the Series on the Television.

We have given Advent and Lent pamphlets and calendars to the entire Parish with specially chosen ones for children and adults. A Christmas and Easter book is given as a gift for each Celebration. We continue to make available the publication: My Daily Bread.

We also visit 26 Federal Detainees who are in solitary confinement with Breaking Open The Word with two publications: The Word Among Us and My Daily Bread. We visit the men in the cell block and share the Good News with them individually. Though a Parish ministry, we were joined by the Novices of the Oblates of Mary Immaculate as part of their apostolic formation.

We have continued our program on Children's Liturgy of the Word for Sunday Masses. Children are invited to go into our adjacent space after the Opening Prayer and return for their participation in the presentation of the gifts.

This year we continued our unique Middle School Program: Summer Camp with Jesus. We had a good attendance and utilized a Scripture Based Program entitled: Encounter. Four of this year's participants are continuing to baptism and/or Confirmation and First Eucharist.

We continue in our efforts to explore the use existing social science to encourage those who have been distracted in their faith to rejoin with us.

The Sacramental preparation of our second and third graders continues with the support of our PSR and School collaborators for their journey to our Cathedral for their Confirmation and First Eucharist.

We continue to encourage the baptism of our young primary school age students. Some continue to baptism for those under 7 and through OCIA for those above the age of reason which is 7.

Order of Christian Initiation of Adults (OCIA)

The Spirit continues to call various members of our community into the faith life of St. Ambrose. 5 Adults were fully initiated at the Easter Vigil. Another, one with us in Baptism and baptized in another Christian Community was fully initiated into our Catholic Community. Additionally, we were blessed with a student at our Community College who was baptized a Catholic at birth was fully initiated with Confirmation at our Cathedral.

Parish School of Religion (PSR)

We had 8 PSR students that became fully initiated into the Church on October 18, 2025. We had one young student that joined our class as she went through the OCIA program and entered fully into the church at Easter 2025. We have two students currently enrolled and preparing to receive their sacraments in October 2026.



Sacraments

Baptisms – We have had 26 Baptisms this liturgical year. These pictures are from just two of them.



Confirmation & First Eucharist

30 parishioners received confirmation and First Eucharist at the Cathedral this year.



Marriages

We had one marriage this year at St. Ambrose Parish, Evan Everitt and Ellen Lindsay.

Funerals

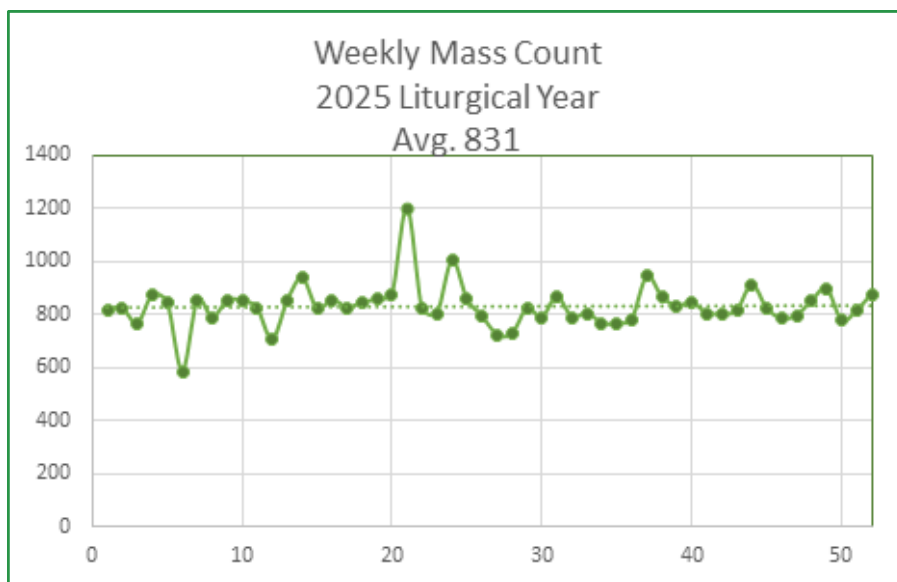
At the annual All Souls' Day Mass this year we, remembered 40 members of St. Ambrose who have gone before us in faith.



Daily Mass

Holy Mass is celebrated every day at St. Ambrose.

1ST SUNDAY OF ADVENT TO FEAST OF CHRIST THE KING



St. Ambrose School

St. Ambrose Catholic School begins its faith formation process as soon as students enter our school. That process begins whether it be for the first time as a preschool or Kindergarten student, or as a transfer in later years of school. Students are provided multiple prayer and spiritual growth opportunities throughout the school day and the school year.

Students in grades K-8 attend weekly Mass and plan school masses with our Pastor and Deacons. Throughout the school year there are many celebrations of our faith that are opportunities strengthen a student's connection to God, including Rosary ceremonies, May/December Crowning of Mary, March for Life events on campus, Eucharistic processions, Adoration, Vocation events, Liturgy services, and celebrations of feast days of Saints.

Religion is part of the core academic curriculum and is taught at all ages. Students in grades 3-8 reflect on weekly messages from Scriptures and from Church leaders. Students participate in the Character Counts program, which reinforces the importance of RESPECT, RESPONSIBILITY, TRUSTWORTHINESS, CARING, FAIRNESS, CITIZENSHIP, and INTEGRITY. These traits are emphasized to the students in the Character Counts program and are best modeled by Our Lord Jesus Christ.



VOCATIONS DAY AT HOLY ANGELS



BACKPACK BLESSING



STATIONS OF THE CROSS



MAY CROWNING



ADORATION

Prayer is an essential part of the daily schedule for students at St. Ambrose. Each month students learn a new prayer and recite that prayer daily during the month with morning announcements. Students pray before mealtimes, with their classes, and other times during the school day and year. The Sacramental preparation process includes the Sacrament of Reconciliation in 2nd grade, and the Sacraments of Holy Communion and Confirmation in 3rd grade.



MISSION MASS AT THE DIOCESE IN SPRINGFIELD

Vacation Bible School

Vacation Bible School utilized the OSV Series "True North" this year. We were blessed to have 22 VBS Volunteers including parents, grandparents, parish leaders and high school students. VBS was well attended with 63 children having fun while growing in their faith.



THE FOUR PILLARS: SERVICE

Building & Grounds

We addressed a major problem this year with the replacement of the roof. A new steeple and cross identical to the old one will be installed next spring.

Several areas of structural damage were uncovered.



Going forward we need to address the parking lot and aging church HVAC among other things.

The St. Ambrose building, and grounds continue to look great and are made beautiful by a large group of volunteers. We are thankful for the enhancements made between the Church and Community Center. This collection of individuals and groups are responsible for different sections of the property at St. Ambrose. This “divide and conquer” approach has kept our building and grounds beautiful for many years. St. Ambrose has been chosen as a Godfrey Pride Inc. Garden Tour site because of our beautiful building and grounds. Individuals with special talents and skill sets have assisted when appropriate with different projects, including things like construction, landscaping, carpentry, plumbing, and more.– Thank you too all.





Empty Nesters

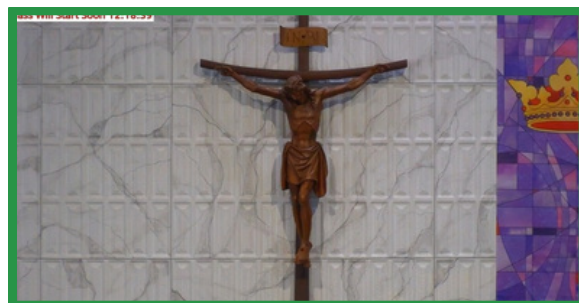
A time for adults to gather, enjoy each other's company, and discuss how we can assist with the needs of the church. Each gathering is held at a local restaurant. Gathering with ones we know and meeting new people is always a great way of doing God's work.

For questions email Rita Robertson at 2teach_1@msn.com

Facebook Live Stream

We have a small group of volunteers who run the Mass live stream to Facebook cameras at 4:30 Mass.

Anyone interested in helping with this technology or willing to assist in other Information Technology (IT) at St. Ambrose please let Deacon Jay know.



Finance Committee

Assisted in development, review, and approval of Parish & School budgets. Performed monthly monitoring of Parish and school financial statements. Provided review of financial need and recommendations for financial tuition assistance for school parents at St. Ambrose. Continued needs assessment for enhancement and implementation of school safety issues including structural upgrades, communication systems, and other procedural requirements. Finance Council members made stewardship pulpit talks resulting in a significant increase in weekly parish financial support. Completed church building roof replacement project, including contractor selection, funding and daily contractor liaison and observation of construction. Participated in discernment process related to Centennial Campaign, receiving the bishop's approval in October 2025.

Money Counters

St. Ambrose relies on those parishioners that are willing to donate their time and talent to keep us running smoothly. Thank you to those 24 parishioners who take turns volunteering to count the weekly offerings received. If you are interested in volunteering, please contact Sandy Willings in the Parish Office.

Ushers/Greeters

Our ushers are ministers of hospitality. St. Ambrose ushers are the first one's people meet as they enter our doors, and the goal of all ushers is to make everyone feel welcomed. We have 39 Ushers who help all the Masses run smoothly up 5 Ushers from last year. Yet, we need more volunteers. A few of our school age young men have moved from Altar Server to Usher.

Knights of Columbus Council 7804



Our council has grown over the last year, we averaged over 1 new member per month for the year.

- Another successful Fish Fry when we were able to contribute to the 8th grade field trip, new carpet for the school and many other charitable organizations.
- The Applefest spaghetti dinner brought in \$2,000 for the school.
- Our ID Drive (Intellectual Disabilities) raised a record amount, and we were able to stand in front of Schnucks, instead of standing in the street. and after Masses This will be donated to local organizations serving those in need.
- Many improvements were made to the Hall, including fiber optic internet, new outside deck and interior painting.
- We helped our Church and a Disabled Veteran with their building and grounds.

We meet on the first Wednesday of every month at 7 pm. Please join us! If you have any questions, contact Dave Stafford, Grand Knight, 618-225-7516



Library

The Parish Library has a selection of religious materials either donated or purchased. They are arranged in subject categories such as Bible, Mary, Saints/Popes, Spiritual Journey, etc. Maintaining the Library is done periodically checking book returns, changing displays, and entering new materials. Currently done by Maggi Behrens and Kris Kline.

In addition to the library check-out books, we have many books free for the taking.



Missions Sister Parish San Juan Batista – Guatemala, Rice Bowl, & DCHJ

The St. Ambrose Missions Ministry includes our sister parish relationship with San Juan Bautista in Jutiapa, Guatemala. We have contributed prayers and financial assistance to our sister Parish this year. St. Ambrose donated \$18,091 dollars this year to San Juan Batista Parish. About half was used for chapel repairs.

We held a Fair-Trade Fair this fall with all the proceeds going to our sister Parish. Last year we made \$406 dollars for our sister parish.



Rice Bowl & Diocesan Campaign for Justice and Hope (DCJH)

Understanding that Catholic means universal, St. Ambrose generously contributes to the Catholic Relief Services (CRS) Rice Bowl \$1,675 and the Diocesan Campaign for Justice and Hope \$1,043.50.

St. Serra International (Vocations)

We had a successful year with St. Serra activities. We meet at noon the 2nd Wednesday of the month at St. Ambrose.. We have Mass and typically feature a priest or religious speaker at lunch. Our Fully Alive Vocation Program for all 6th graders in our deanery was held at Holy Angels in Wood River with Mass by the Bishop (*see photo page 11*). It's been so successful that the Diocese has expanded it to the entire Diocese with 4 deanery programs.

We also hold a Day Lenten Retreat in March with reflection, Mass, Lunch, and confession. All held at St. Ambrose. Come join us on the second Wednesday of every month. If you have any questions please call Dave Stafford 618-225-7516.

Pastoral Council

The St. Ambrose Parish Pastoral Council is comprised of parishioners called by the Pastor to serve as a consulting and advisory board to the Pastor by promoting and ensuring that all aspects of Parish life reflect the mission and ministry of Jesus Christ in accordance with norms, rules, and customs determined by the diocesan Bishop and Church. The Pastoral Council consists of a minimum of eight lay parishioners and clergy assigned to St. Ambrose. The council meets monthly, and is subdivided into the following committees: Liturgy, Faith Formation/Education/Evangelization, Stewardship/Discipleship, Community Builders/Hospitality, and Social Justice.

Right to Life

St. Ambrose is active in right to life activities. Right to Life literature is at each entrance of the church. We send prayer/novena opportunities from the USCCB to a core group of parishioners, especially in January for the Right to Life March in Washington. Also, legislative information from the USCCB for us to contact our legislators' concerning proposals for life issues.



Members of St. Ambrose actively participate in the, the Life Chain the first of October and other pro-life efforts. We support THRIVE Metro East in their work with women seeking guidance and support during a pregnancy. We participate in two 40 Days for Life Campaigns by adopting a full day, once in the spring and once in the fall, where our parishioners pray peacefully in front of the Granite City abortion facility.

Grief Support

Grief support is provided under the direction of Tom Schmidt, retired grief and trauma counselor. Grief support is for anyone grieving the loss of a spouse, parent, child, grandchild, sibling, friend, or pet. Grief Share meets every Monday at St. Ambrose from 5:30 – 7:00 PM and Compassionate Friends meet the last Friday of the month 6:30–8:30 PM. Please contact Tom at tseda141951@gmail.com to initiate participation in this ministry.

Sacristan, Church Decoration and Cleaning, Church Linen Launderers

The Parish Sacristan(s) oversees the smooth functioning of the liturgy by making sure there are such items as candles, wine, hosts, altar linens, worship aids, bulletins, children's coloring pages, envelopes, etc. available. The sacristan secures the church after liturgies and prepares it for the next event under the direction of our current sacristan, Sheila Mullen. The sacristan is assisted by those who volunteer to launder the church linens and server robes and those dedicated to clean the church in preparation for the weekend liturgies. Contact Mary Jo Zykan at the parish office if you are interested in volunteering.

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Seasonal decorations in the church are provided by volunteers who strive to make the worship space vibrant and appealing to the eye, with the sole purpose of leading the faithful to an encounter with the Holy. Volunteers are always needed especially for the Christmas and Easter Seasons. Contact Linda Wickenhauser if interested in helping.

St. Ambrose Community Outreach (SACO)

St Ambrose Community Outreach is a parish sponsored volunteer organization dedicated to helping those in need. Through the generosity of St Ambrose parishioners, and the efforts of twelve dedicated individuals and several support personnel, SACO was able to assist people with water and electric bills, burial expenses, prescriptions, medical transportation, State of Illinois ID's, and temporary storage in a homeless situation.

In addition, team members and support personnel delivered donated appliances and air conditioners to several local families. SACO also provided monetary support to Crisis Food Center, Catholic Charities, and the Alton Overnight Warming Center. SACO members assembled and delivered Easter Baskets to Oasis Women's Center and Catholic Charities, and contributed to Catholic Charities Christmas Food Basket Program, and partnered with St Ambrose Women's Club for Christmas bags delivered to our homebound parishioners.

SACO welcomes other St Ambrose parishioners who would like to help our neighbors in need in the Alton and Godfrey area.

School Advisory Council

St. Ambrose School Advisory Council, with Erin Kochan serving as Chair, is an advisory body who meets for matters pertaining to the educational programs and facilities of the school. The purpose of the Advisory Council is to advise the Pastor on policies and development of goals and objectives relative to the school as well as advising the principal in the implementation of these policies. In this past year, the Advisory Council has advised on the dress code and bullying policies, safety and security, Math and Science curriculums, the Family School Agreement, volunteer hours, calendar items, and much more.

St. Ambrose Parent Association (SAPA)

It is the mission of SAPA to support St. Ambrose School through volunteer work, funding efforts, parent education, and sponsoring and coordinating various events within the school community. Our goal is to support educational opportunities for our students while also supporting the Administration's efforts to enhance the teaching and learning environment. We also strive to foster pride in St. Ambrose School by building and sustaining a community among the parents, students, faculty, administrators, staff and alumni.

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Our SAPA team had another busy year hosting 13 different school activities as well as 9 fundraising events. Just to give you an idea of a few: We kicked off the school year with Night at the Playground – a big playdate for kids to play and the parents to meet and mingle. We hosted our 2nd Annual Community Christmas Day at Krueger’s Orchard, paired with a Toys for Tots drive. Our St. Ambrose community stepped up even bigger than last year filling 6 bins that were overflowing with toys for kids in our community. Trivia Night was held in November and we had a great turnout selling 17 tables and raising over \$6,400.

We continued the family events after Christmas break with St. Ambrose Family Day Ice Skating at the Loading Dock, as well as Family Day at Bowl Haven. CashBash was once again an enormous success, just shy of completely selling out all 500 tickets and pulling in \$30,000 in profit. Last, but absolutely not least, our Golf committee knocked it out of the park this year with the most successful tournament to date – and from what we hear, an extremely well-organized and fun one, too. The event raised over \$27,000 this year and we are so thankful to the committee for all their hard work and effort to pull this off.

In total, SAPA raised over \$73,000 for the parish this past year. We could NOT have done it without the help of the families who stepped up to volunteer their time, talent and treasure. We also could not have done it without the generous support of our parishioners. With the proceeds from these events, we can provide treats and lunches for our teachers to show our appreciation.



BACK TO SCHOOL NIGHT ON THE PLAYGROUND



CITY WIDE CLEAN UP DAY



TRIVIA NIGHT



HALLOWEEN PARADE



COMMUNITY CHRISTMAS

St. Ambrose School Volunteers

Parents and Grandparents at St. Ambrose Catholic School have many opportunities to volunteer and support the school and share their gifts of time, talent, and treasure. Volunteers continue to be active in our school and help provide many important services for our school and our students. Some of the volunteer opportunities include,

- Serving and Assisting during Lunches
- Coordinating the Maralee Juravich St. Ambrose Catholic School
- Library as librarians
- Working with younger children in the ROAR reading program
- Chaperoning field trips
- Volunteering on Special Event days like Picture Day, Grandparents Day, MAP testing, Catholic Schools Week Activities, Fat Tuesday, Class Events, the School Social and at Candle & Rose Mass.
- Coaching St. Ambrose Sports Teams
- Sponsoring Extracurricular Activities
- Working with yearbook and IT
- Participating in and helping coordinate St. Ambrose fundraising activities with our St. Ambrose Parent Association (SAPA)



GRANDPARENTS DAY MASS



PARENT COACHES



TRUNK'N TREAT NIGHT



CLASS OF 2026 CAMP ONDESSONK TRIP



GODFREY FIRE DEPT. VISITS STUDENTS