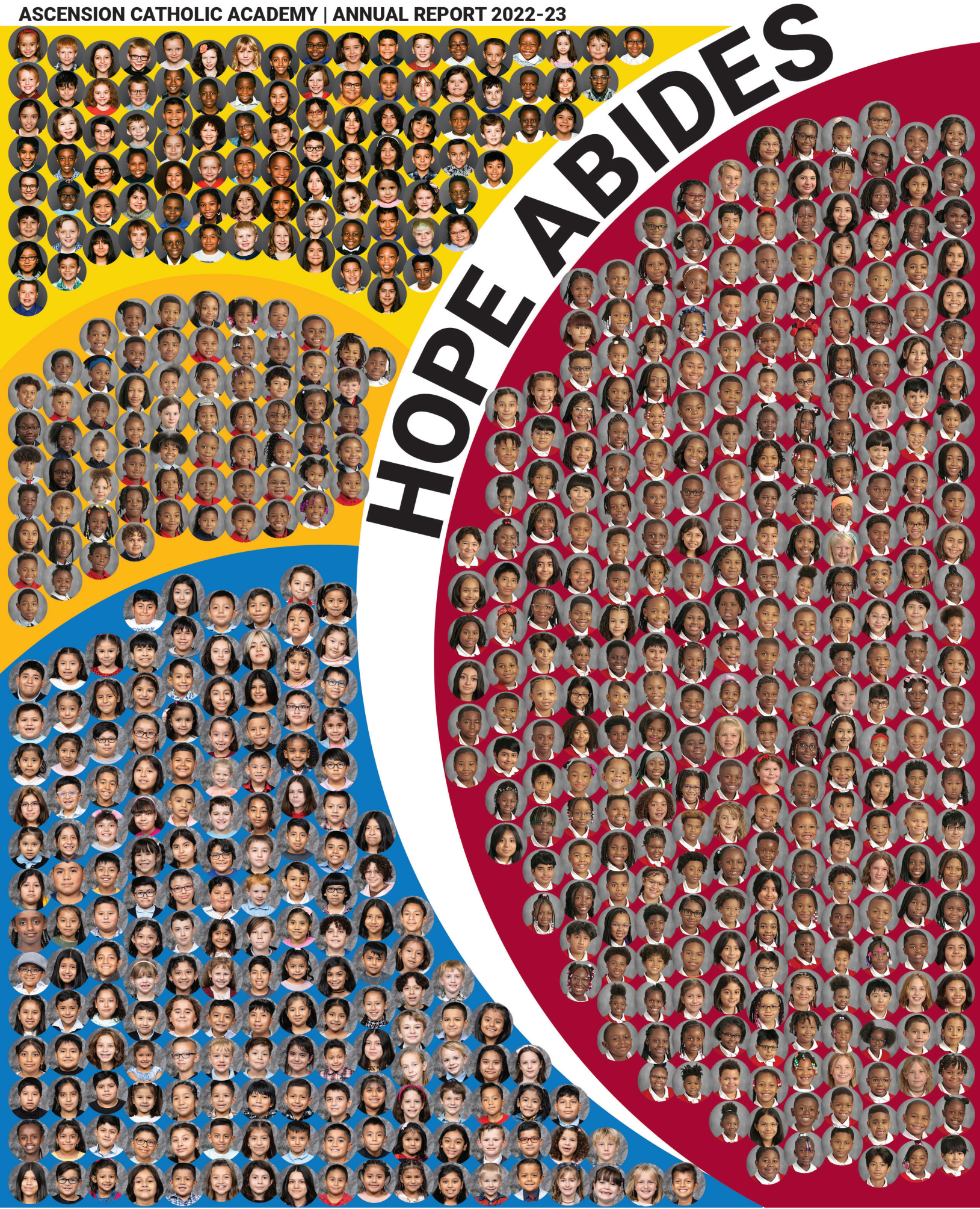




You empower excellence, faith and hope

Dear Friends,

Hope is alive in North and Northeast Minneapolis as well as in the Rondo and East Side neighborhoods of St. Paul.

Your dedication to our scholars and families is truly heartwarming and inspiring.

Because of you, our scholars find hope in their relationship with God and the knowledge that they are beloved children of God. You provide them with the hope of a future that includes a high school diploma, post-secondary education, and a voice in civic affairs. .

You give them hope for a future free from the multi-generational and situational poverty that many of them face, offering a pathway to thriving wages and meaningful careers.



ASCENSION
CATHOLIC ACADEMY

Your commitment to providing access to a rigorous, Catholic education opens doors to opportunities that would otherwise be out of their reach. May your efforts to instill hope also bring

hope for the future of our communities, our country, and our world.

We are so grateful for you. Thank you!

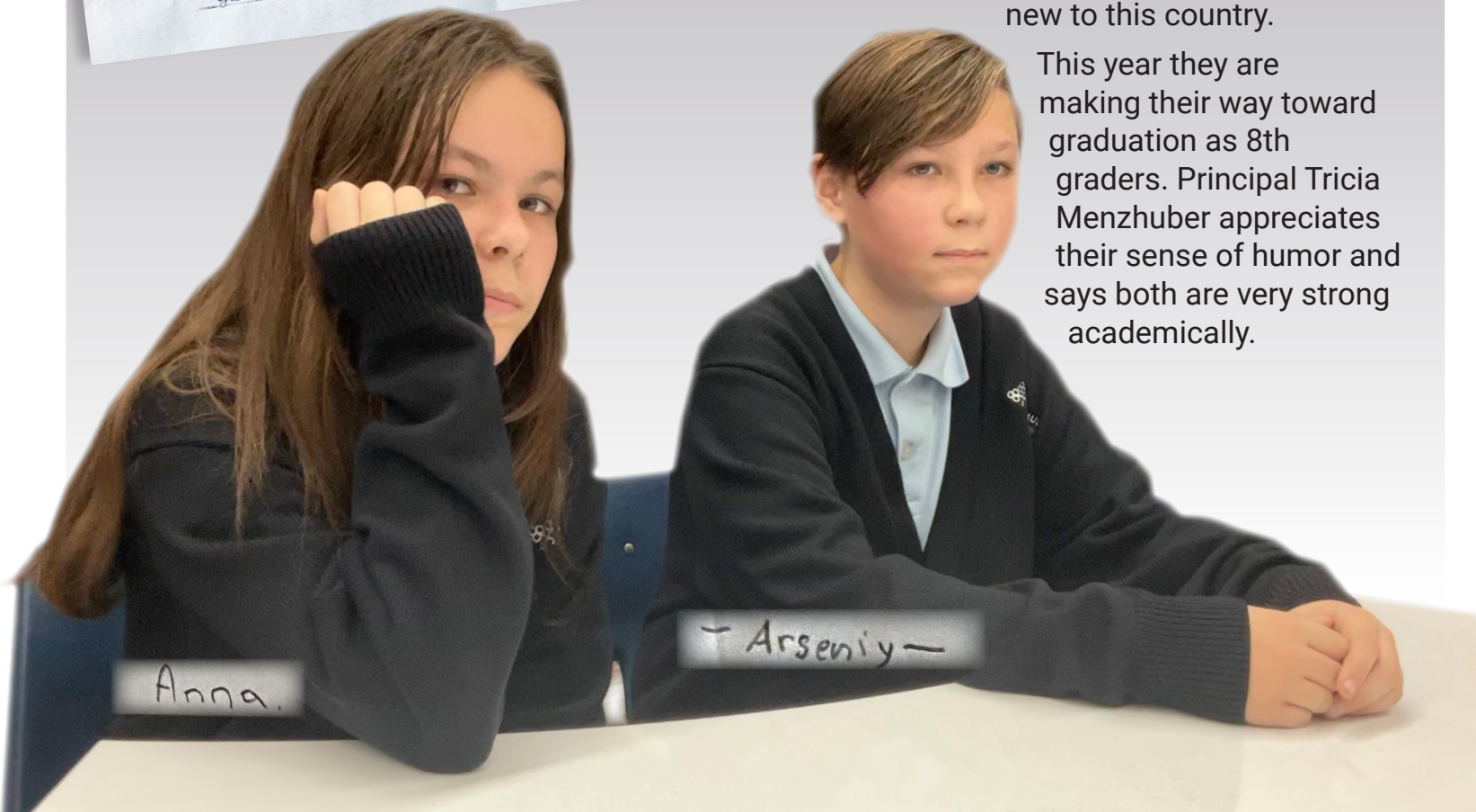
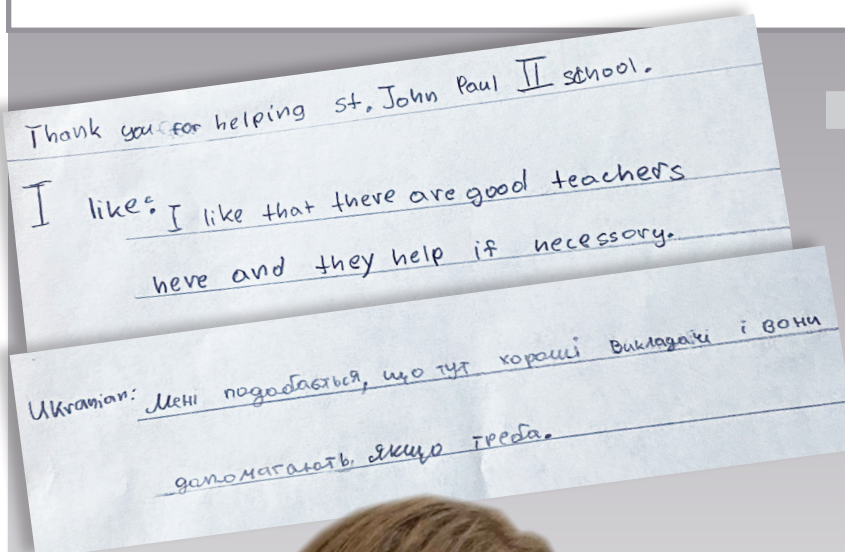
Peace,

Fr. Dale Korogi
Executive Director

Patricia Stroman
President

Twins Arseniy and Anna arrived in Minnesota with their parents during the summer of 2022, emigrating to the United States to escape war-torn Ukraine. They enrolled in 7th grade at St. John Paul II Catholic School that fall and benefitted from the first year of JPIL's Newcomer Experience, which eases the way for scholars and families new to this country.

This year they are making their way toward graduation as 8th graders. Principal Tricia Menzhuber appreciates their sense of humor and says both are very strong academically.



Mary Ellen Doherty met Eduardo on the first day of school and helped him put his supplies in the proper places.

Why wait? Reading Corps tutor takes a leave and dives right in

Mary Ellen Doherty was discussing why she took a leave of absence from her job to join Reading Corps when a young scholar appeared and wrapped her in a hug. No further explanation needed!

Doherty taught biology for 12 years at Normandale Community College in Bloomington and felt ready for a change. She saw an item in the Church of the Ascension newsletter seeking people to work at Ascension Catholic School helping children learn to read. She first thought that it would be a good challenge during retirement. Her second thought was, why wait?

She is assigned to a first grade class where she does "anything I can to get them to improve their reading ability."

The challenge is keeping the scholars' attention. "They don't realize how important reading is," Doherty said. "They are at an age when they don't understand the importance of what everyone is trying to teach them."

Eduardo is one of the scholars she tutors. He is learning to speak English and to read it at the same time. Recently, he began to recognize and read three-letter words. Seeing his progress was wonderful, but seeing him celebrate his own progress was even better, Doherty said.

"He was so excited," she said. "He was shouting, 'I love to read!'"

ASCENSION
Catholic School

1726 Dupont Ave. N
Minneapolis, MN 55411

K-8 Enrollment: 313
Free/Reduced Lunch: 81%
Scholars of Color: 96%
Scholars Learning English: 13%
Scholars Who are Catholic: 15%

Principal: Benito Matias
ascensionschoolmn.org

ST. JOHN PAUL II
Catholic School

1639 4th St. NE
Minneapolis, MN 55413

K-8 Enrollment: 196
Free/Reduced Lunch: 70%
Scholars of Color: 86%
Scholars Learning English: 72%
Scholars Who are Catholic: 92%

Principal: Tricia Menzhuber
johnpaulschoolmn.org

ST. PASCAL
REGIONAL
CATHOLIC SCHOOL

1757 Conway St.
St. Paul, MN 55106

K-8 Enrollment: 113
Free/Reduced Lunch: 66%
Scholars of Color: 78%
Scholars Learning English: 6%
Scholars Who are Catholic: 72%

Principal: Inna Collier Paske
stpascalschool.org

SAINT PETER CLAVER
CATHOLIC SCHOOL

1060 Central Ave. W
St. Paul, MN 55104

K-8 Enrollment: 89
Free/Reduced Lunch: 82%
Scholars of Color: 98%
Scholars Learning English: 1%
Scholars Who are Catholic: 9%

Principal: Terese Shimshock
stpclaverschool.org

From St. Pascal scholar to member of the board

Jerry Karel remembers fondly his time as a scholar at what was then called St. Pascal Baylon Catholic School on St. Paul's East Side.

"St. Pascal Grade School really established a firm foundation for me when I was a youth," remembers Karel. "I was able to develop spiritually, academically, socially and even athletically. And I made life-long friends."

Little did Karel realize at the time he was a student what an integral role he would play in the school's future.

A 1972 graduate of St. Pascal and a current Ascension Catholic Academy (ACA) board member, Karel got his undergraduate degree from St. Mary's College (now University) in Winona and a graduate degree in Operations Research from Stanford University. Following a stint at Bell Laboratories, he embarked on a 32-year career at 3M before retiring in 2017. His cousin, Steve Karel, recruited Jerry to join the board at St. Pascal school, which was navigating challenging times.

"During my time there, we went through a few major transitions," recalls Karel. "The first involved our expanded role from a parish school to a regional school (St. Pascal Regional Catholic School). That is,



we became the Catholic grade school for the entire East Side of St. Paul."

Karel, who today mentors and coaches business leaders, says he worked very closely with St. Pascal Regional (SPR) Principal Inna Collier Paske and other stakeholders to help define the school's vision.

"Inna drove us to articulate the essence of what kind of school we wanted to be long term. So, we went through a process involving parents, teachers and the board to lay out the specifics of that initiative. In the end, we had defined the key elements under our four pillars of Believe, Love, Learn and Connect."

After becoming board chair for SPR in 2020, Karel helped lead the effort that brought SPR into Ascension Catholic Academy in 2022.

Karel sees SPR as an anchor for Catholic education on the East Side, serving the community "by enabling scholars to develop their sense of values, community, and spirituality while also providing an excellent education in the core academic areas. My hope now is that we continue to move forward with a focus on our four pillars so that many others can have a wonderful experience like I did."

FAVORITE TEACHER

Mr. Crone was the middle school English Teacher. He really was excellent at teaching proper grammar and sentence structure. Sister Carmeline was also very memorable. She was a little kooky, but in a fun way. And she was an excellent middle school math teacher.

FAVORITE MEMORY

I remember doing a multi-page term paper on Robert F. Kennedy. I had to do a lot of research using multiple sources in the library, and, of course, all of these sources required proper acknowledgment. I was quite proud of the result!

FAVORITE SPORT

We were quite a big school at that time with two full classrooms in every grade. There were a lot of good athletes. We had enough kids to fill several sports teams. I played football, basketball and baseball for St. Pascal teams. I'm not exactly sure which of those was my favorite, but I know that we did very well in all of them!

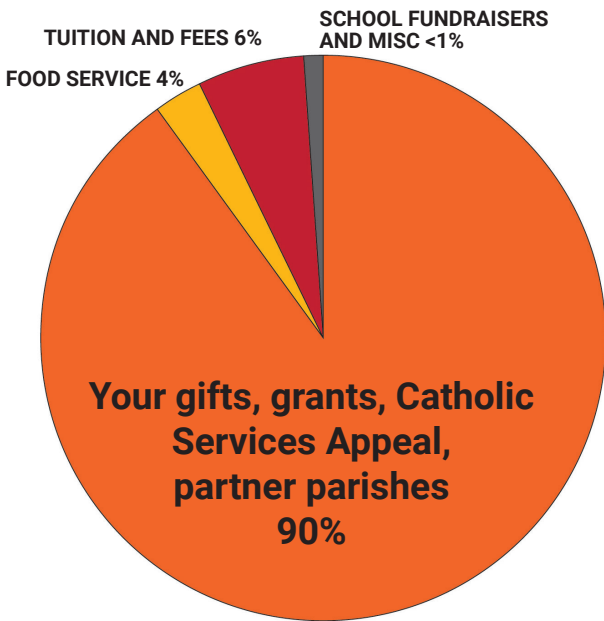
Our financials

Ascension Catholic Academy is fiscally conservative with **79% of our expenditures going to salaries and benefits**. Of our income, a vast majority — 90% — comes as gifts from individuals, partner parishes and foundations. Scholar tuition and fees add up to 6% of our income.

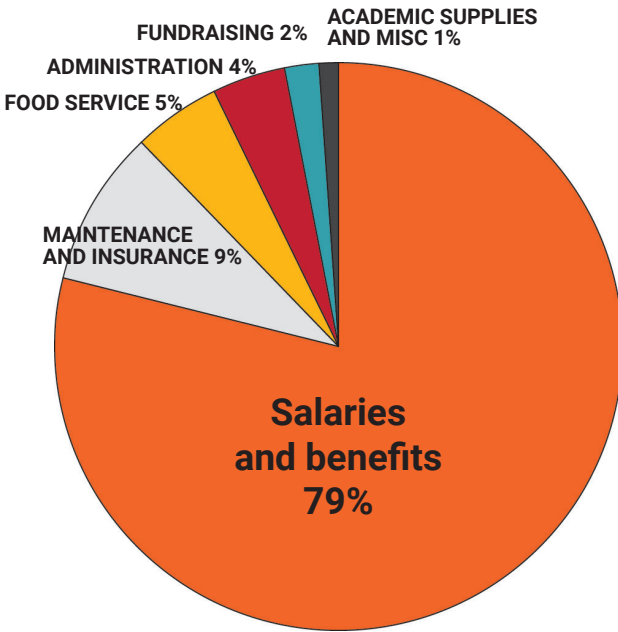
Income	2022-23 actual	2023-24 budgeted
Regular Income	\$1,321,728	\$1,547,414
Special Income	6,583,128	7,297,030
Fundraisers	34,020	39,150
Cafeteria	350,316	364,000
Athletics	6,270	4,500
Miscellaneous	23,761	20,000
SLAM	135,441	230,000
TOTAL INCOME	\$8,454,664	\$9,502,094
Expenses		
Salaries	\$5,598,795	\$6,226,577
Benefits	1,046,833	1,325,468
Administration	351,295	438,786
Advancement	141,462	212,250
Academic	117,143	129,450
Athletics	6,385	4,500
Utilities	352,889	353,517
Repair and Maintenance	363,424	322,425
Insurance and Assessments	55,386	51,057
Miscellaneous	11,985	5,150
Cafeteria	401,421	418,450
SLAM (non-salary)	12,691	8,500
TOTAL EXPENSE	\$8,459,708	\$9,496,129
NET INCOME	-\$5,045	\$5,964

Note that this is the budget for the entire Academy, which combines Ascension, St. John Paul II, St. Pascal Regional and St. Peter Claver Catholic Schools with the Academy Central Operations.

2022-23 INCOME



2022-23 EXPENSES



2023-24 Ascension Catholic Academy Board

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Vice President, Asset Management Administration, Thrivent

Suzie Colianni
Community Volunteer

Fr. Christopher Collins
Ex-officio, Church of St. Peter Claver Parochial Administrator

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Sr. Account Executive, Sedgwick

Mary Ann Dorsher
Independent Education Management Professional

Fr. Kevin Finnegan
Ex-officio, Our Lady of Grace Pastor

David Gannon
Managing Partner, UBS Ascension parishioner

Sharon Hill
Senior Vice President, Federal Reserve Bank of Minneapolis

Fr. Spencer Howe
Ex-officio, Holy Cross Pastor

Stephen Imholte
Imholte Strategic Consulting

Dr. Josie Johnson
Emeritus, Civil Rights activist

Jerry Karel
Independent Advisor, Mentor and Consultant; Strategic Advisor at Mentium

Fr. Dale Korogi
Academy Executive Director, Church of the Ascension Pastor

Barry Lieske
Retired President, DeLaSalle High School

Fr. John Mitchell
Ex-officio, St. Pascal Baylon Pastor

Mark Rauenhorst
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Sharon Ryan
Community Volunteer

Suzi Kim Scott
National Communications Leader

Patty Stroman
Ex-officio, Academy President

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We did not list anyone who made a gift anonymously.

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time — to us during Fiscal Year 22-23. Also listed are those who supported Friends of Ascension Catholic School, a separate 501(c)3 that directs gifts to Ascension Catholic School’s Annual Fund.

You play a vital role in the success of our scholars. We couldn’t be more grateful! Thank you.

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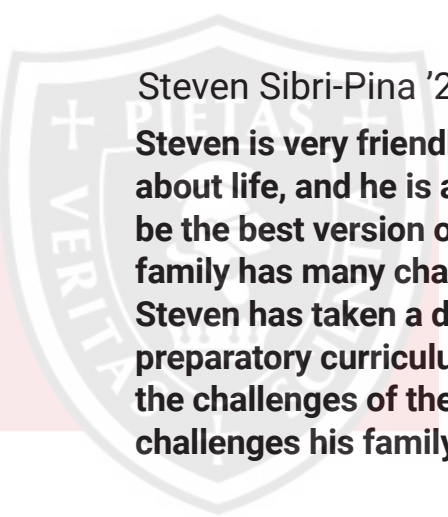
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ACA HIGH-SCHOOL SUPERSTARS

Ascension Catholic Academy schools prepare scholars for high school. Look no further than high school graduation rates. Nearly 99 percent of Academy scholars have graduated from high school since the Academy’s inception in 2016. • The graduation rates, however, tell only a part of the story. While not every graduate is perfectly prepared for every aspect of high school, Academy schools help scholars develop confidence, character and social skills. In short, our schools Empower Excellence by providing a strong, faith-based education and other tools to succeed in life after the Academy. • Nowhere is this better illustrated than in the words of high school teachers and staff.



Steven Sibri-Pina ’24, Ascension Catholic School

Steven is very friendly, he is enthusiastic about life, and he is always striving to be the best version of himself. Steven’s family has many challenges to deal with. Steven has taken a demanding college preparatory curriculum, and despite the challenges of the pandemic and the challenges his family has faced, Steven

has done exceptionally well in all of his courses throughout his time at BSM. He has a “never give up” mantra that keeps him going when it would be easy to give in and slack off, and he is determined to be the first child to go to a four-year college in his family.

Amanda Anderson • Guidance and College Counselor
Benilde - St. Margaret’s

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Jeremiah Russell ’23, Ascension Catholic School

Jeremiah Russell showed some of the most growth I have ever seen over his 4 years in the drama department. He started out as the shy unassuming kid with a fanny pack who had a really nice voice to

becoming a true leader, looking out for the well-being of those around him and thriving during performances. Loved having him as a part of the BSM Drama family.

Jake Mahler
Artistic Director, Benilde - St. Margaret’s

Anabelle and Manny Gbedjangni ’24, Ascension Catholic School

Both started at DeLaSalle while we were in our hybrid year with students alternating in-person and distance learning. They adapted amazingly well to the new, weird school

dynamic from both an academic- and a social-preparedness perspective.

Malcom Newman
9th grade math and science teacher, DeLaSalle

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Uriel Richmond '26, St. Peter Claver Catholic School

I have taught Uriel as a freshman and again as an upperclassman. He loves his religion classes, right now he is in Church History and clearly shows the joy and love of Christ with his classmates. He loves to joke with his friends and classmates, he studies hard and participates in class. Uriel has a heart for service, and is going on a mission trip to

the Blackfeet reservation to partner with our Lasallians in Montana. He and his friends also go above and beyond at their parish working with Confirmation students, where Uriel clearly cares about the education of the students. He is a wonderful, irreplaceable, and unrepeateable presence in our school.

Erin Bourget
Religious Studies teacher, Hill-Murray

As a 9th grade English teacher, I have taught a handful of your former students from St. Peter Claver. Most of them appear to be at, or near, where we are hoping they might be by the time they are ninth graders. Writing as you know is a process, and very detail oriented, but their thoughts, ideas, and

analysis of material in their writing is good. The students I had as 9th graders also appear to enjoy reading, and are reading at a 9th grade level upon entry to CDH. Tell the teachers at St. Peter Claver to keep up the good work. They are doing admirable work.

Jesse Cusick
English teacher, Cretin-Derham Hall



Mara Kable grew up in Golden Valley. She graduated from the University of Notre Dame in 2014 and worked at the Basilica of St. Mary. She and her husband recently moved to Boston where she is studying at Boston College.

Mara wrote this to explain why she, as a young donor, makes recurring gifts to Ascension School.

Why I give to Ascension Catholic School

I can't recall exactly when I started my recurring giving to Ascension, but I became aware of Ascension School because of its relationship with the Basilica as a "sister parish," and I most likely heard about this for the first time during one of the annual masses in which a representative from Ascension presides at the Basilica.

I was struck by this relationship because whenever I had heard in the past about churches having "sister parish," those sister parishes had always been located far away, likely in a poorer country. It was very striking to me that our sister parish was just a few miles away. This proximity seemed uncommon and therefore special, which drew me to wanting to know more about the Ascension community and school.

In 2017, Janice Andersen from the Basilica organized a Northside bus tour. We met at Ascension, and Don Samuels [former City Council member] gave us a tour of the neighborhood. I was by far the youngest person on that bus — I think a lot of people were surprised to see me. Having grown up in Golden Valley, I had always been physically close to North Minneapolis but had rarely been in the neighborhood. It felt simultaneously wrong to be a tourist in a marginalized neighborhood but also wrong if I were to continue excluding an entire neighborhood from my understanding of Minneapolis. I had already been discerning a call to move to North Minneapolis, and this visit to Ascension was pivotal in my decision to move there in 2019.

I came to look at the Basilica's relationship with Ascension in what I suspect is an unusual way. It has always seemed to me that American parishes with "sister parish" relationships tend to view themselves as the big sister, needing to look after their little sister by providing financial assistance and volunteers. I saw the Basilica's relationship with Ascension as the inverse: Ascension was our big sister, leading us in so many ways, challenging our parish to live the Beatitudes rather than just recite them. One of the very clear ways that Ascension does that is by being Christ's presence in a

part of our city that too many well-meaning people entirely avoid. The Ascension school provides the fullness of a Catholic education to families and children who can't drive their kids to private schools across town. My parents would have loved a Christian education for me and my brother, but the cost and inconvenience made that too difficult. Neighborhood Catholic schools are organized forms of Christ at the margins, meeting his children exactly where they are.

After moving to the Northside, it was always in the back of my mind that I would eventually leave the Basilica and make Ascension my parish, particularly when I reached the point of having school-aged

Ascension is Christ's presence in a part of our city that too many well-meaning people entirely avoid."

children. I always held it as a strong possibility that if God blessed me with children, they might attend Ascension school. My husband and I would occasionally attend mass and other events at Ascension. We especially loved being there for the Feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe as this is an important feast day for both of our families. However, God called me to take a new direction with my career that called me to leave Minnesota, and my husband and I responded by relocating to Boston last year.

My heart still aches when I think of the home we left behind in Minneapolis, which might be part of why I still give to the Ascension school despite the distance. I continue to believe in the importance of its work as one of many communities supporting children and families in Minneapolis.