

September, 2012

### **CATHOLIC FOUNDATION DONORS ANSWER PRAYERS AT ST. AUGUSTINE PARISH**

#### **A long awaited new parking lot at St. Augustine parish kick-off the school year in a positive light**

A parent picks up a St. Augustine student after school in the school's new concrete parking lot. Parents welcomed the new St. Augustine Catholic Church and School back parking lot when school began this year.

A new parking lot to most is just a new parking lot. But when it brings a community closer together, a new parking lot is reason to celebrate!

After years of complaints, a parking lot that was an eye sore and a danger was transformed as St. Augustine School and parish as they roll into carpool lane in a new parking lot. It makes carpool a safe and easy task for parents and teachers and it creates a safe place for church parishioners to park on the weekend.

The community came together to make it happen with a \$40,000 grant from The Catholic Foundation, a \$10,000 donation of rebar and volunteers who helped throughout the process. The leader of this initiative was a parishioner Danny Chavez who has been a St. Augustine parishioner for 25 years, and has a grandson who attends St. Augustine Catholic School. Though he coordinated the entire process, including the grant request to The Catholic Foundation, Chavez is humble about taking credit.

"With the help of The Catholic Foundation, other donors and people from the community, we got it accomplished. I talk to our parishioners about being owners of the parish. Once everyone takes ownership, they become a part of everything we do. Alone we can't accomplish big projects, but together we can," said Chavez.

It also was important to Principal Marian Davis that this project be completed. "Having their kids here at St. Augustine gives these families hope for the future. Our working parents want their children to have a good Catholic education and spiritual direction," she said.

Davis said that parents of her students are committed to their children's education and to the school, and she feels it is important that their wishes are heard.



Demolition of the old parking lot began on the very last day of school. The entire project was completed by early August, with plenty of time before the new 2012-2013 school year began.

The new parking lot benefits more than the school. The parking lot is used by the entire parish, which serves approximately 10,570 parishioners and 2,000 families. Weekly Mass attendance averages 4,300, and the majority of the Masses are held in Spanish.

St. Augustine's new parking lot is just one of the many projects The Catholic Foundation has supported at this parish. Because of donor commitment to the Foundation's mission, the Foundation has invested more than \$645,000 into St. Augustine Catholic Church and School since 1989, providing funds to help with computers, building repairs, tuition assistance, science equipment, a new roof, new flooring, new curriculum and more.

Davis feels that The Catholic Foundation has helped keep the school alive, and Chavez agrees. "I can't see us surviving without The Catholic Foundation," said Chavez. "At St. Augustine, there are so many things we would never have been able to do without the Foundation's support. When I speak to the parishioners about the Foundation helping our parish, it just motivates them. If someone from the outside is helping us, why can't we help ourselves? We need to do our part. And they always step up."

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