

Service to the Community

Aid to the Needy

Parishioners from our parishes generously donate supplies and funds and volunteer at several local organizations that help the needy within our communities. Just a few of these organizations include the Soup Kitchen, Meals on Wheels and JCOC. We are fortunate to have these parishioners be so active in serving the community.



Pro-Life

Our parishes are active in the local Pro-Life movement. Prior to COVID there was an annual Pro-Life march from the church to the city square. Both parishes also support our local pregnancy center through fundraising and other events as well as volunteering. The Knights of Columbus also had a fundraiser that helped purchase an ultrasound machine for the Sav-A-Life pregnancy center.



Trunk or Treat for the community

Every year our parishes host a very successful Trunk or Treat event that is open for everyone to attend. Our knights of Columbus are always generous with their time and resources to cook and provide free hotdogs for everyone and wonderful decorations for all to enjoy. It is a wonderful evening for the youth and parishioners of all ages to come together for our church kids and children within our community.



Christmas Parade

Every year our youth work together to build a parade float with a Nativity theme for the local Christmas Parade. All of our parish children are invited to ride on the float dressed in costume. It is a wonderful way to bring together kids of all ages and allow them to represent our parishes to the community.



Food and gifts for the elderly and shut-in

Our parishioners are generous in time, donations and selfless acts in order to care for our needy, sick and shut-in parishioners. The PSR kids also play a significant role by making gingerbread houses every year for those receiving Christmas food and gift bags. The kindness and compassion shown towards the most vulnerable in our parish by fellow parishioners is a true example of what it means to live the faith.



St. Charles Borromeo and St. Joachim

Two Churches; One Heart

Fr. Thomas Nattekkadan
Parish Administrator



Parish Staff

Permanent Deacon: A.B. King

Church Secretary: Tricia Thornton

Financial Secretary and DRE: Brandi Bright

St. Charles Borromeo

The story of St. Charles Borromeo begins in the 1860's when General Joseph W. Burke came with his union troops and camped on an area that is now a part of Jacksonville State University. General Burke decided to make Jacksonville his home, and his family became the first Catholic residents in the area. A small church was later built, but disbanded before the 1930's.

In the 1930's Jacksonville State Normal School, now Jacksonville State University, became known as the Jacksonville State Teachers College. Also during this time, Fort McClellan became a permanent post. These changes resulted in significant growth of the college and army base, which meant more Catholic students and military to the area. Mass was offered in a room made available by the city in the Recreation Center.

In 1962, Rev. Frank Giri, pastor of Sacred Heart Parish in Anniston, purchased a house in Jacksonville where Mass could be held. The church was named Our Lady Seat of Wisdom Student Center (Our Lady of Wisdom). During this time the church served as a Mission of Sacred Heart and catered to students of Jacksonville State Teachers College, even becoming a Newman Center.

By the 1970's the number of Catholics had increased to the point that they were outgrowing the building. At this time Rev. Donald J. Grainger, assistant at Sacred Heart and minister to St. Joachim and Our Lady of Wisdom, began raising money in order to build another church. Once the church was constructed the old building was put to a new use and is currently the office and Education Building of St. Charles Borromeo.

On Sunday, April 16, 1972, the new church was dedicated by Bishop Vath and was given the name St. Charles Borromeo. At this time St. Charles was no longer a mission church and Father Peter McDonald was appointed as its first pastor.

Later, in 1978 the house next door to the former church building was purchased for use as a rectory. In 2000 the land across the street from the rectory and former church building was purchased. The Parish Life Center was built in 2003. Later, a portion of the land across the street was cleared and paved to solve the parking issue. Currently, there is a total of 6 acres that makes up St. Charles parish.

In 2017 the Parish Life Center was renamed and dedicated to our priest of 10 years who passed away, Fr. James Macey. It would now be named Macey Hall. In 2019 the Education Building would be renamed following the death of our priest, Fr. Jim Handerhan. It is now known as Handerhan Hall.

In March 2018 St. Charles Borromeo received major damage after being hit by an F-3 tornado. All buildings received significant damage. Once the roof was secured, the building deemed safe for use and the inside was able to be kept dry with specially installed units, the church office was moved to the least damaged building, Macey Hall. PSR classes and Mass were also held in Macey Hall. The rectory was repaired and power restored within a few weeks. The church repair was completed in August 2018 and the office and education building repairs were completed in September, 2018. The final work was done on Macey Hall and the church grounds soon after.

Currently, St. Charles has approximately 120-130 registered families.



St. Joachim

In the beginning, Catholics in Piedmont were small in number. Mass was held irregularly in a private home for many years. However, the number of Catholics grew and around 1960 two acres of land were donated in hopes that a church could be built. Fundraising began, and in 1961 construction on the current St. Joachim church began.

Like St. Charles Borromeo, St. Joachim started out as a mission church under Sacred Heart. Fr. Frank Giri was the pastor of Sacred Heart at the time. He is the one responsible for seeking approval from Archbishop Toolen to begin construction on a new church.

On April 1, 1962 St. Joachim church was dedicated by Archbishop Toolen. Its name came from a request made by Archbishop William O'Brien. Fr. Donald Grainger ministered to the congregation. There would be no mention of the church or its dedication in the Anniston or Jacksonville newspapers.

Much of the furnishings and finishing touches for St. Joachim were

donated by various people. A blacksmith from Anniston donated the iron work inside the church that separates the Sanctuary from the recreation area. The Baptismal Font was donated by the Sisters of Charity in Gadsden. A parishioner donated the organ and a parishioner's mother gave the marble altar as well as the marble altar rail. The large wooden cross behind the altar was made from salvaged wood from the old Frances E. Willard school in Piedmont.

There are approximately 30 families who actively attend St. Joachim.



Church Committees

Organizational Committees:

- St. Charles Finance Council
- St. Joachim Finance Council
- St. Charles Building Committee
- St. Charles Maintenance Committee
- St. Joachim Maintenance Committee

Liturgical Committees:

- Eucharistic Ministers
- Ushers
- Sacristans
- Lectors
- Auditors
- Cleaning Ladies



Macey Hall



Office and Handerhan Hall



Rectory

The things we share that make us one

Knights of Columbus

In 2004 the Knights of Columbus at St. Charles Borromeo began as Council #13513. The Knights are an active group with members from both parishes who do tremendous work for the parishes and community. From helping with table and chairs, parish maintenance, parish activities, fundraising for local charities, assisting with spiritual life in hosting such things as the Silver Rose Ceremony, etc., the Knights can always be counted on to lend a hand for the good of the parish.



Parish School of Religion

Our Parish School of Religion is held at St. Charles Borromeo in Handerhan Hall. It consists of students from both St Charles and St. Joachim and students range from kindergarten to high school. There are 5 local schools and home school represented.



Rosary Prayer Group

The Rosary Prayer Group started in 1980 and is an active group of parishioners from both of our parishes. They not only meet regularly to say the Rosary together, they serve to lead the Rosary for funerals and special occasions as well as praying for individual prayer requests.



Catholic Student Organization

The CSO is the group on which St. Charles Borromeo was founded and built. It has remained constant since the 1930's and thrives today with a strong and diverse group of students. Currently, the CSO is made up of students from 4 states and 4 countries as well as many locals.



Community Yard Sale

A tradition that began at Our Lady of Wisdom (now St. Charles Borromeo) in the 1970's, St. Joachim and St. Charles Borromeo team up every year for a huge yard sale. People within the parishes and the community donate items. We often have people from as far away as Birmingham and neighboring counties attend the sale. It is by far our largest fundraiser of the year.



Church Choir

Our church choir is made up of parishioners from both St. Charles and St. Joachim who play and sing at both parishes. They are truly a team that work together for every occasion to ensure we have beautiful music for every service held, no matter what time of day or what day of the week. We are so grateful for their hard work and dedication.



Gardening and Grounds keeping

Between the grass, flower gardens, sidewalks, and general outdoor maintenance, there is much to do at both parishes and rectory. However, there is always a team of members from both parishes who are willing to pressure wash, weed gardens, haul mulch or straw, or do maintenance.