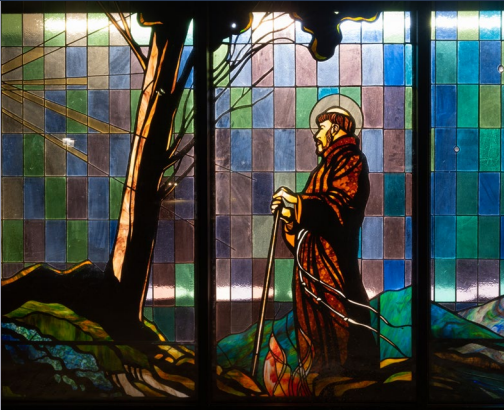




## Franciscan Renewal Center

Peace. Renewal. Good.

### Gratitude Report • Fiscal Year 2023



*The Franciscan Renewal Center was founded as a Catholic retreat center, called Casa de Paz y Bien, by the Order of Friars Minor in 1951. Still affectionately referred to as the Casa, the Franciscan Renewal Center remains an active religious community that seeks to follow in the footsteps of Saints Francis and Clare of Assisi. The Casa is a sponsored ministry of the Province of St. Barbara and works cooperatively with the Roman Catholic Diocese of Phoenix.*

*Activities at the Casa include:*

- *daily and Sunday Mass at Our Lady of the Angels Church*
- *meetings and conferences for religious and nonprofit groups*
- *individual therapy and counseling*
- *support groups*
- *education, retreats, and events*
- *faith formation*
- *young adults ministry*
- *volunteer ministries in service of the poor and vulnerable*

Discover more at [thecasa.org](http://thecasa.org)

Find us on social media: [TheCasaFRC](https://www.facebook.com/TheCasaFRC)

Dear friend,

Through purposeful growth, we strive to reach as many people as our resources and vision allow. This year, we celebrate increased participation in our services and welcomed many new friends. Thank you for making this possible!

Mass attendance grew 20% over last year and 100% since 2021, not including almost 900 weekly online views. What is attracting this robust interest in our liturgies? People share that it is our faith formation programs for families and young adults, sacramental preparation, OCIA process, vibrant music, welcoming community, and of course, the presence and preaching of our Franciscan friars.

More people are coming for retreats and programs, too. Participation is up 74% this year and 137% since 2021. We have listened to community feedback and developed a balanced approach to offerings that inspire spiritual growth, healing, and personal development. And you tell us how significant these opportunities are for creating bonds in a sacred and supportive environment.

This year, we hosted the highest-ever overnight occupancy of nonprofit groups! Participants value our accommodations and hospitality, often booking far in advance. Our healing ministries of counseling, therapy, support groups, and spiritual direction continue to thrive, and our social concern outreach ministries consistently attract new volunteers as people seek meaningful ways to serve others.

The community is invested in this good work. We have seen the largest growth in our Tau Society since its inception, and our volunteer staff has grown to 490 people. The stories in this report demonstrate our shared impact on individual lives.

Mission integration with all Franciscans is our priority. The Franciscan Renewal Center is continually progressing, becoming a primary and nationwide epicenter for preserving and providing the ever-needed message of Franciscan spirituality, values, and characteristics.

Charles Brown, Executive Director  
Franciscan Renewal Center

Fr. Page Polk, OFM, Rector  
Our Lady of the Angels Church



## Renewal through Spiritual Growth



For several years I attended Mass every week at the Franciscan Renewal Center without any real understanding of Catholicism or exactly what was happening in front of me. I came alone and usually left quickly when it was over. I had already attended six services at other denominations on six Sunday mornings around Phoenix. Each of these just one time.

I cannot explain exactly why I wanted to keep coming to the Casa. People were energized, intense about the service, and greeted and

talked energetically to each other. In 2018, I read about RCIA in a handout. “Do you want to become Catholic?” — it asked. I attended a few meetings as an interested skeptic. I hung onto doubts and had to decide — do I stay in the program or not? I decided to relax, lighten up, and open up. Gradually the teachings, conversations, and friendships began to pull on me. I began to grasp what I was hearing about faith, hope, how to pray, and why to pray. I saw the reasons others were drawn to the Casa: the foundational structure of the liturgy, the messages inside the beautiful music, the Catholic strength, and the Franciscan heart.

I was confirmed at the Easter Vigil in 2019. Since then, I have new close friends and a growing faith. Becoming Catholic does not stop with Confirmation. In fact,

it is the beginning. For me, the “becoming” will be lifelong. Today, I am, through this journey, stronger and confident in my faith.

It is important to my continued growth to give back, and I’m doing that by membership in the Tau Society and serving on the lead team for OCIA — Order of Christian Initiation for Adults. To be able to touch others in the way the Casa has touched me is core to my continued spiritual “becoming.”

— *Christine Craft*

### **2023 Highlights Include:**

- 1,891 registered members of Our Lady of the Angels Church
- 120 families served by the Family Catechesis Ministry
- 71 infant Baptisms
- 53 students received Sacraments of First Eucharist and/or Confirmation
- 9 adults Confirmed through RCIA(OCIA)
- 995 spiritual direction sessions

## Renewal through Healing & Transformation



In November 2019, God called home to heaven my youngest daughter Eryka during the birth of her third child. The day began with joyful anticipation as I followed her to the hospital, expecting to meet my new granddaughter in Eryka’s arms. It ended in devastation when I learned my daughter — whose

passion for all children inspired her work as a Child Life Specialist at Phoenix Children’s Hospital — was gone and would never hold her new baby.

During my grieving journey, I turned to Jesus for guidance and found comfort in the Casa’s Healing Garden. I dedicated a bench in Eryka’s memory, which has been part of my healing as I visit daily and remember my daughter. I know that Jesus and St. Francis are watching over her.

Being a member of the Tau Society has also been a part of my healing; I have met so many community members who share the

same passion I have for the Casa. I look forward to volunteering with the Casa Gardeners ministry and tending to the beautiful grounds that bring me peace. I am grateful for this sacred place that welcomes all who seek fellowship, spiritual growth, and meaningful ways to serve others. — *Salvador Barba*

### **2023 Highlights Include:**

- 1,913 participants in adult education programs
- 416 behavioral health therapy sessions
- 87 clinical supervision sessions for therapists in training
- 20 volunteer licensed behavioral health therapists

## Renewal through Service to Others



I was introduced to the Franciscan Renewal Center (the Casa) about seven years ago and was immediately drawn to the tranquility it provided. I often visit various churches, retreat centers, and places of prayer to see what God is up to in our world and to center myself on the Lord. When I arrived at the Casa, I found exactly what it seeks to provide: Peace, Renewal, and Good — all in the name of Christ. Over the years, I have been blessed to meet with

one of the Casa's spiritual directors. Here is my experience.

The Casa offers me peace. I always look forward to meeting with the spiritual director because the time brings me great peace. My heart is always content as I drive toward the Casa; I feel peace come over me. The entire experience is calming.

The Casa offers me renewal. I am offered a fresh perspective on life whenever I am on the grounds. It is like I am given a chance to start over with newness. I always leave with a healthy, fresh start.

The Casa offers me good. This is, of course, the goodness of God. Psalm 145:9 reminds us, "The Lord is good to all; he has compassion on all he has made." This is most certainly true. God's people at the Casa seek to live in God's ways by

doing good, and it shows.

Peace, renewal, and goodness radiate from the campus and people of the Casa. They are a blessing to our community, and I thank God for their ministry.

— *Pastor Matthew Knopf, Executive Pastor of Innovation, La Casa de Cristo Lutheran Church*

### 2023 Highlights Include:

- 15,752 non-profit meetings/retreats participants
- 1,145 overnight stays for private retreatants
- \$39,000 raised for Casa Franciscana Outreach
- 2,190 items donated to Phoenix Welcome Center for Asylum-Seeking Families
- 2,852 lbs. of food collected for area food banks
- 136 community service opportunities

## Our mission in action and in celebration | 2023 Volunteer Ministries

### ADULT EDUCATION, RETREATS, ADMINISTRATION

- Administrative
- Fine Arts
- Hosts/Check-Ins
- *The Saint John's Bible* Docents
- Church Art Tour Docents

### FACILITIES

- Gardeners/Grounds

### FAITH IN ACTION

- Act, Love, Walk, Justice Formation the Franciscan Way
- Andre House Bin Transportation
- Apache Fair Trade Co-op
- Care for Creation
- Casa Grounds for Solidarity
- Casa Habitat for Humanity
- Casa Valley Interfaith Project
- Casa Veterans
- English as a Second Language
- Hunger Action
- *Just* Scripture

- Matthew 25: Asylum Seekers
- Peace Ministry

### FAMILY FAITH FORMATION

- Family Catechesis
- General Faith Formation for Families
  - Children's Liturgy of the Word
  - Children's Sacraments
  - Infant Baptism
  - RCIA
  - Sacrament Preparation
- Youth and Young Adult

### GUEST SERVICES

- Guest Services Desk Volunteer

### LEADERSHIP

- Board of Directors
- Board Formation & Governance Committee
- Development Committee
- Finance Committee
- Gratitude Team
- Master Plan & Building Committee

### LITURGICAL

- Altar Linens
- Art & Environment
- Cantors
- Choir
- Counters
- Donuts and Coffee Hospitality
- Extraordinary Minister of the Eucharist
- Handbell Choir
- Hospitality
- Lectors
- Liturgical Movement
- Livestreaming
- Prayer Partners
- Sacristans
- Sick & Homebound

### THERAPY, SUPPORT, AND COUNSELING

- Volunteer Psychotherapists
- Support Group Facilitator

# Fiscal Accountability at the Casa

## As reported from the Board of Directors

By Fiscal 2023 Chair Diane Catlin and Treasurer Steve O'Neill

The Franciscan Renewal Center's ministerial business lines focused on healing, recovery from the unprecedented recent pandemic, and renewal. The community members' generous support and over \$760K from the Employee Retention Tax Credit (ERTC) program (a component of the CARES Act) furnished a foundation of resources for essential needs. Engaging liturgies, retreats, and programs, coupled with conference and lodging space options for non-profits returning to normal operations, provided support for operations to return to pre-pandemic levels in many areas. These strong, dedicated efforts by all departments resulted in historic levels relative to budget.

The Franciscan Renewal Center continues to benefit from the diligent and dedicated efforts of friars, staff, volunteers, and paid professionals who cooperatively share time and expertise to review, scrutinize, oversee, and govern all fiscal matters. Their efforts, in conjunction with the detailed work of the Finance Committee and FRC Board of Directors, ensure compliance with all accounting and legal requirements to ensure the financial reporting provided is accurate and in line with specific non-profit industry regulations. More importantly, these individuals ensure that financial gifts and the underlying controls over the receipt and use of these gifts are treated in accordance with donor intention and in line with budgetary constraints. These efforts enhance stability and ensure effective cash and financial management.

Through the generosity of thousands of community members, friends, and foundational grants, the Casa maintained operations under strict expenditure guidelines to effectively operate within its financial means for the fiscal year ended August 31, 2023. We are blessed by God's grace to share the following financial highlights of fiscal 2023:

## Ongoing Operational Activities

Support from Programs and Services Offered*	\$ 6,629,279
Less Related Expenses	(5,219,219)
<b>Net results for ongoing operational needs**</b>	<b>\$ 1,410,060</b>

\* These revenues include core operations, unrestricted gifts, and the \$760K from the ERTC program.

\*\* These funds support future construction-related needs and escalating staff and other inflationary expense areas.

## Construction Update

During fiscal year 2023, generous community gifts supported the completion of the parking lot, Konfara renovations, campus-wide landscaping efforts, roofing upgrades, water well feasibility drilling and pad, trenching and installation for a new fiber optic infrastructure, friary renovations, chair pad replacements, new tables and chairs for guest comfort, articulating lift, air conditioning units throughout the property, kitchen equipment, *The St. John's Bible* stand, lighting and other infrastructure improvements. Construction efforts were funded through operating results or funds dedicated for those purposes. All construction efforts remain debt free.



**Franciscan Renewal Center**

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Scottsdale, Arizona 85253

480.948.7460 | [thecasa.org](http://thecasa.org)

Social Media: [TheCasaFRC](https://www.facebook.com/TheCasaFRC)

The Franciscan Renewal Center is a 501 (c) (3) non-profit organization.

## Endowment

Investments restricted to Endowments totaled \$5,680,322 as of August 31, 2023. In line with the overall policy in place, the FRC uses a small percentage (4% of a three-year rolling average) of these funds to support ongoing operations. So, gifts made to the endowment fund will financially assist the current operations while providing a stable base of support for future generations.

For information on making a gift to support the Endowment or ongoing Sustainability, please visit [www.thecasa.org](http://www.thecasa.org) under "Donate" or email Amy Jo Hutchison at [amyjo@thecasa.org](mailto:amyjo@thecasa.org).

***Your support continues to enhance  
and strengthen our mission.***

***Thank you for your generosity.***

For more detailed information, please refer to the complete Franciscan Renewal Center Annual Financial Statements available online at [thecasa.org/about-the-casa](http://thecasa.org/about-the-casa)