

## **“REBUILD MY CHURCH!”**

said Jesus to St. Francis, from the cross

### **ONGOING IMPROVEMENTS TO SACRED HEART CATHOLIC PARISH FROM AUGUST 2022 THROUGH MAY 2025**

1. We have completed the renovation of our daily Mass chapel and had it officially named “The Oratory of the Immaculate Heart,” saving heating and cooling costs by transferring smaller liturgies from the main Church.
2. We have secured a \$250,000 grant from the Colorado Historical State Fund to put in a new 50 year warrantied shingle roof over the main Church (**now completed**), to replace eroding brick around the entire property, refurbish & repaint existing roof water gutters and downspouts, and repair & update several metal access gates around the property.
3. We implemented and completed a grant with the Colorado Energy Outreach coalition in order to transition all interior and exterior lighting to LED. The interior of the main church is significantly brighter and we added more security lighting around the property. The grant also included weather sealing to all exterior windows and doors from temperature intrusion from the outside. As a result, we are now in compliance with Colorado’s Building Performance Program and energy code regulations.
4. Our Marian Garden has been completely renovated and is used regularly for ministry family gatherings. We also redirected all Church main roof rainwater and snow accumulation away from the foundation of the building, installed new sod and a new sprinkler system, and added privacy fencing with lights.
5. We replaced 18 antiquated, non-fire-rated doors and their frames. Some of the new fire rated doors include windows for some of the religious education classrooms as well as for my personal office.
6. We rekeyed the entire property, moving from 120 different keys down to 6, with 1 master key. There are different keys for each section of the property and access to each location has been limited appropriately.
7. We replaced almost all of our old and broken office furniture with new or newer, better-quality furniture for everyone.
8. We have discarded thousands of pounds of old filing cabinets as well as old files, old furniture, and garbage—recycling them where possible—and removing them from the property as necessary.
9. Several boxes of historical artifacts have been brought to the AOD Archives for preservation—***we are the oldest continuously operating church in the Archdiocese of Denver and in the state of Colorado!***
10. All the air ducts of all the buildings have been professionally cleaned for the first time since their installation—creating a dramatic improvement in air quality for everyone that shares this space.
11. Nest thermostats were installed in six different locations to help manage and lower overall energy costs.
12. We are using the Archdiocese of Denver’s online giving platform with an app and credit card reader to receive donations online, to sell tacos, and to help with other fundraisers—at no charge or fee to the parish.
13. We have all new, internet-based telephones, updated and improved WIFI system, and an upgraded and updated system of 41 cameras with backup video recording for 30 days throughout our buildings—inside and out—with cameras in all Religious Education classrooms.
14. All of our Religious Education catechists and volunteers are now Safe Environment certified and trained, and have completed their background checks.
15. All of our ushers and anyone handling money at the parish have been background checked to make sure that your cash donations are safe in their hands.
16. Our Religious Education program has transitioned to a two-year program, requiring parents to receive formation as well as their kids. Our RE parents and their kids begin our RE classes every week with daily Mass. Our RE families also attend a family weekend retreat every year at Annunciation Heights Catholic Retreat Center near Estes Park. We are over 150 people and the largest group that attends Annunciation Heights every year.

17. We are working with *Familias Virtuosas* to provide presentations to parents every Tuesday night while inviting anyone from the parish to join as well—covering topics on the faith, communication, addiction, mental health, prayer, etc.
18. We have transitioned to Parish-Soft & Gabriel-Soft software to register families and track donors with over 550 registered families.
19. Our parish Archbishop Catholic Appeal collections went from less than \$4,000 per year for over three years in a row to over \$14,000 in 2023 & 2024!
20. We have consolidated our credit card and bank accounts to just one bank and one credit card.
21. We successfully passed our Archdiocese of Denver audit. The auditor stated that in her “25+ years of work, she has never seen such a dramatic improvement over such a short period of time.” Possibly for the first time in many decades, Sacred Heart is no longer designated a “high risk” parish and now is considered “low-moderate risk” with this last audit. *Your donations are safe with us!*
22. The parish website has been completely revamped, making homilies, bulletins, flocknote and other community resources available online.
23. We have added several masses in Spanish, and we now have daily Mass available in Spanish from Tuesday through Thursday at 6:30 p.m. in our daily mass chapel of The Immaculate Heart.
24. We now offer our own Quinceñera formation for the girls which consists of 8 classes from Endow ministries, along with masses available to them in our Church to celebrate this important cultural milestone in their lives.
25. We have repaired the entire property to make it much more safe in the event of a fire, fulfilling the long list from the Fire Department’s Order to Comply Letter. The list of improvements and changes to meet the Fire Department is too long to mention here, but. . . *You and your children are safer on our property than ever before!*
26. We now have all four, insulated, garage doors working with 4 parking spaces for staff to park indoors.
27. We now also have new exterior LED lighting all around the property as well as video surveillance signs.
28. We now have a new towing company contract for unauthorized parked vehicles in our parking lot and garage driveway.
29. We have upgraded all our old kitchen appliances in the parish hall kitchen with brand new, modern ones (gas stove, a new refrigerator/freezer, microwave/convection oven & a Vitamix to make our Mexican salsas!)—that are all energy efficient and much safer to operate.
30. We are actively working with *Fidelis Catholic Credit Union* to open a branch on our parish property in June of 2025 to provide Catholic, personal banking options for our parishioners—focusing on helping many get out of predatory loans of 20% and higher, so as to access lower interest rates on their vehicles and homes as well as to help them create or improve their credit history. In addition, *Fidelis* will be paying the parish \$700 a month to rent the space.
31. We installed a brand new Bose digital sound system in the church, affording us 4 usable microphones, plus the ambo mic, and a beautiful, modern choir setup and sound control system in the choir loft. There are only 4 small speakers, hardly noticeable, that make for the best sound system the church has ever had in its 145 years of existence and allows the beauty of the church’s interior architecture and artwork to stand out more. We also have a new, digital piano in the choir loft that plugs into our sound system.
32. We installed book holders in the back of every pew to make the missalettes and song books more accessible during mass.
33. We were able to get out of a \$350 a month garbage disposal contract with Waste Management and now, with a new company, only pay \$115 a month for the same service, *plus recycling!*
34. We also canceled our Comcast subscription of about \$330 a month for internet, WIFI and telephones and now only pay \$155 a month (with a new company) for internet based phones, and Internet/WIFI at up to 1 Gig. speed with WIFI available throughout the property!
35. We landed a grant (11/29/2023) for \$47,000 to replace our non-code compliant kitchen stove hood and exhaust with a hood that can extinguish fires and that will be code compliant—making our kitchen safer than ever (it’s directly underneath the main church’s wooden floor and pews, so we can’t have a fire there!). We hope to have construction completed by the summer of 2025 and our new hood ready to go!

- A. Also, the entire ceiling surrounding the kitchen area also now has 5/8<sup>th</sup> Fire retardant drywall covering every inch of the entire area—over the already existing plaster and wood, original ceiling.
36. We completely removed the old flooring down to the foundation and put in a nice, lasting laminate flooring in our small bookkeeper's office with a fresh paint job and new curtains.
  37. Decades of old cables from antiquated phone and internet systems were removed from the façade of the office/rectory facing 28<sup>th</sup> street, leaving the brick pristine and the building closer to its original appearance.
  38. We worked with the Archdiocese of Denver real-estate department and a recommended real-estate broker and are arranging the renting of the parking lot when the parish doesn't need it (bringing in an estimated \$30-40,000 per year in income for us), leaving a seven year, annually renewed contract that contributed only \$9,600 per year to the parish.
  39. Baby changing tables have been installed in the office and kitchen bathrooms—Mom's (& dads) and their babies are welcome here, *always!*
  40. We have finalized a lease with St. Raphael's Catholic Counseling services to use an available office space for their practice and "charging rent" by providing our parishioners with up to \$1,000 a month in free psychological services. Many of our parishioners do not have health insurance and could not afford therapy otherwise—let alone in Spanish and with a Catholic understanding of the human person!
  41. **We just landed a *second* \$250,000 grant with the Colorado State Historic Fund** to replace all the dry, rotted wood along the base of the roof--along the façade—and around the stain glass windows of the church, the bell tower, and to repaint the bell tower and redo the stairway leading up to the Main Church!!! Work will begin June or July of 2025.
  42. We have installed brand new, state of the art, signage around the outside of the Church property and within it—no one should have a problem finding the bathrooms, our daily mass chapel, the parish office entrance, or know who we are—thanks to a QR code, prominently placed on the main Church sign. They will also know that we are proudly a Roman Catholic Church of the Archdiocese of Denver!
  43. We have replaced the flat roofs above the main sanctuary of the church as well as above the Church bathrooms (the old sacristy) with a 20 year warrantied material—after significant water damage was discovered.
  44. Key access and major improvements have been completed for all remaining exterior gates and doors around the church property.
  45. Major structural and electrical repairs, improvements and reinforcements have been completed in the attic space of the church—it was scary what we found! But the roof and it's structural support is stronger than ever now. PLUS, we cleaned up 144 years' worth of dust, concrete bits, plaster pieces, garbage, squirrel and pigeon carcasses from the attic—you wouldn't believe what we found up there!
  46. The door access to the attic (above the flat roof to the sanctuary—you can see it from Lawrence St., in front of the Catholic Charities Marjory Reed daycare center) has been reinforced, repaired and repainted with a new latch lock; and the two air vents on either side have new chicken wire and screens covering them to keep those pesky squirrels and other critters out!
  47. Turns out the brick walls of the Church are bulging outwards and the engineers tell me that that is "no bueno!" So we are drawing up plans to place tension wires from one wall to another to keep them from moving any more—it won't be pretty, but it'll keep the new roof from potentially falling on people's heads decades from now.
  48. At some point in early 2026, we will be repairing the damaged plaster in the Church ceiling, repainting the entire interior and refinishing the floors—removing the carpet that has gone well past its prime since it's installation around the year 2000.
  49. We have all new parish stationary with our new parish logo, and car bumper/window stickers to buy with the logo to support and promote our parish—just remember that when (& how) you drive, people will know where you go to Church!
  50. Investigative cuts were made into the original roof during the roof replacement to examine structural integrity and potential weight bearing loads for any work that could be needed in the future. We like to plan ahead and make sure we are doing things right the first time and putting "safety first!"

51. We are working with Colorado Energy Outreach and acquired grants to help lower the cost (about 35% reduced cost to operate) of replacing 2 roof top HVAC units that are past their expected life span and converting them to dual pump units that use both gas and electric and are much more efficient than our current RTU's! These RTU's heat and cool the parish office and rectory (where the pastor lives upstairs). We also acquired a brand new, high efficiency HVAC system for our new Fidelis Credit union bank branch that also cools and heats two other RE classrooms.
  - A. We received \$51,000 in rebates off the entire project cost of \$56,000 for 3 new HVAC units!
52. All metal, decorative gates around the property are being repainted to stave off rust and make the property's security exterior gating beautiful and like new. It's a high gloss black paint & it shines!
53. Our Marian Garden and Office grass area are now on WIFI enabled sprinkler systems that Father Eric can operate from an app on his phone! Isn't technology wonderful?!
54. The external sanctuary closet on the northeast corner of the church has a new 20 year roof and the damaged drywall has been replaced with a 5/8's fire retardant drywall with the floor perimeter secured by concrete and the interior repainted. The exterior roof and base of the closet also have a new color matching drip edge to avoid any future, further water damage to the wood exterior and base.
55. Our entire outdoor landscape has been renovated with several dying trees removed and a tri-color rock base laid all around to match our property's building colors. A \$27,000 job completed for just the cost of the 95 tons of rocks (no shipping charged either)--\$7,000 total! No more maintenance or water usage which will pay for itself in a matter of a few years.
56. All of the Church's historic water downspouts have been repainted and the Main Church roof water gutters lined with an EDPM membrane to preserve it for another 100+ years and keep our exterior as historic as possible.
57. The stairs into our Fidelis Catholic Credit union have been demolished and redone to meet code specifications and keep people safe while using them to visit our own bank branch which we hope will open soon. In the meantime, Fidelis has begun to pay us the \$700/month in rent along with the \$1,400 downpayment.
58. Three new, code compliant doors have been added to our property replacing old, narrow wood doors with metal fire retardant doors in our garage and into and out of the credit union.
59. **We also just got a \$103,000 grant from the Office of Climate Action, Sustainability and Resiliency (CASR)** through the Renewables and Resiliency Incentive program for Human Service Providers of the city of Denver to pay toward \$124,000 solar panels with Elite Roofing and Solar that will cover our Office/Rectory and four car garage roofs providing 118% of our current electrical usage—saving us thousands of dollars a year in energy expenses for many, many years to come! We are the oldest building in the Archdiocese of Denver with the newest technology to lower our carbon footprint and bring massive savings to our parish's monthly expenses! We want to live in a cleaner Colorado and Pope Francis would be proud!
60. We have installed a brand new roof with J&K roofing, TPO material which is a 20 year warrantied material with a 5 year labor warranty, roof on our Office/Rectory and four car garage that is white and whose metal endcaps and garage tiles on the front will match the tiles and metal detailing on the Church roof. This was completed in January of 2025. The previous two roofs were at least ten years past their need for replacement, and showed a lot of water damage underneath.