

Pastor's Notes: Interview with Sandy Pricer of the St. Ambrose Catholic Homeschool Co-op - Part 1 of 2 May 2, 2021

On April 24, 2021, I interviewed Sandy Pricer, Basilica parishioner and the founder and co-director of the St. Ambrose Catholic Homeschool Co-op. Below is the first part of our interview. The full interview can be found on the Basilica's website along with my Pastor's Notes.



Fr. Carter: So let's begin in the name of the Father, Son and the Holy Spirit. Amen. Good and gracious Father, thank you for allowing us this opportunity to talk with a parishioner who does so much good in our community and to highlight the work that she and others have done through this ministry. In Jesus' name we pray, Amen. All right, so I'm here with Sandy Pricer, who is the founder and Co-Director of the St. Ambrose Homeschool Co-op. Welcome, Sandy.

Sandy Pricer: Hi, Father, thank you for having me.

Fr. Carter: So, this isn't the first time you've been interviewed by me. Even in your backdrop, you can see the RISE UP Cooperative, which we talked about not too long ago. So, the image of the St. Ambrose Homeschool School Co-op is of a bee in the hive, and you are kind of a busy bee. Get it? You know, having all the things that you're doing, collecting all that wonderful good, and turning it into the sweet nectar of grace. Awesome. So tell me about the St. Ambrose Homeschool Co-op.

Sandy Pricer: Absolutely. So I started St. Ambrose Co-op in January of 2015. I came to you shortly after my husband Joe and my family became parishioners at the Basilica, because there wasn't a Catholic Homeschool Co-op in the area. I believe that still holds true. I believe that we are still the only Catholic Homeschool Co-op. There are plenty of secular and other denominations out there. And my family and I were a part of several of them. But there was always still something, of course, lacking in what we wanted when we were parts of those other groups. And since there wasn't one, I decided to start one. And with your help, and your grace, and patience with me, we started it, like I said, in January of 2015. And we're really just a place for other Catholic homeschooled to come together and help educate our children together with like-minded families, where we can connect and learn together and grow together. And it's been an amazing adventure. I've greatly enjoyed the relationships that we've all made and have continued to form.

Fr. Carter: Awesome. Well, in a nutshell, what is a homeschool co-op?

Sandy Pricer: Well, I actually printed off my FAQ's, which can be found on the Basilica website. And in the FAQ's, it basically says that a co-op is a group of like-minded families who meet together and work cooperatively to achieve common goals. So co-ops can be different things, depending on each individual cooperative. St. Ambrose is more of an enrichment co-op. So we don't provide core classes like math and English. We do provide science, because we like to provide some of those classes that maybe the parents don't have time for at home. They maybe don't have the equipment, or maybe they don't want the mess, like an art class, a science class.... So, we enrich the core classes that your kids would take at home or at a different group.

Fr. Carter: So it's kind of like those areas of education that are better done cooperatively, just as individual study. That's wonderful. So how does the St. Ambrose Catholic Homeschool Co-op differ from other co-ops in the area?

Sandy Pricer: With my experience and some of the other co-ops, primarily, it's our Catholic aspect. You could join another co-op and you won't get the Catholic education, the Catholic elements that we try to incorporate in every single one of our classes. In addition, since we're on the Basilica campus, we have the opportunity to attend daily Mass together as a group on Friday mornings. We're just able to really strengthen that Catholic community and education and learning, where you can't do that in other cooperatives in town.

Fr. Carter: What particular classes does the St. Ambrose Catholic Homeschool Co-op offer?

Sandy Pricer: Well, each year we offer a couple different ones. So this coming school year, the 2021-22 school year, we are offering - and it's behind me, and we've posted it on Facebook and the website - we're offering theology, which we actually do offer every year, because we feel strongly about strengthening that Catholic foundation for our kids and our families. We also are offering a science lab - very hands on, get in there and play with things; learn things, while you have your hands in stuff - science lab. We're offering Latin. And we offer Latin every year now, too, because we feel strongly, again, about our Catholic roots. And Latin seems obviously like the logical language to offer. History and Geography are on the list for this year as well. And again, they're all Catholic sound. The foundation is kept Catholic. We don't use any secular books or information. It's all Catholic. So that definitely makes us stand apart. We don't at this moment have any high schoolers enrolled. However, we do have preparation. If we do have any high schoolers enrolling, we will offer them Latin, theology, biology, and grammar.

The interview will conclude in the May 9 pastor's notes, and the video and transcript will be posted on the Basilica's website, stspeterandpaulbasilica.com. For more information, visit the St. Ambrose Homeschool Co-op web page on the Basilica website, under Ministries. Also visit the St. Ambrose Homeschool Co-op Facebook page. If you would like to volunteer, join, or inquire, email stambrosecoop@gmail.com to contact the St. Ambrose Core Committee.