

The Paulist Center

Community Impact Statement for Fiscal Year 2023 (September 1, 2022 – August 31, 2023)

A YEAR OF RENEWAL and RETURN TO MISSION

“We’re back!” That’s a phrase people used repeatedly at various Paulist Center events and liturgies this past year. After forced isolation due to Covid-19, there was energy and excitement at 5 Park Street as more members returned to in-person worship and in-person ministries, and as newcomers joined us.

The Finance Committee presents an Annual Financial Statement, usually in mid-November. This year, we are placing that statement in the context of our mission. The Paulist Center exists to proclaim the Gospel of Jesus Christ, particularly through our Mission Statement:

*Attentive to the Holy Spirit and nourished by vibrant liturgy,
we are a Catholic community that welcomes all,
fosters healing & reconciliation, and acts for justice.*

We are pleased to present this first annual Community Impact Statement, detailing all that we in the Paulist Center Community accomplished together in Fiscal Year 2023. Please prayerfully ask yourself: what does membership in the Paulist Center Community mean to me? Given my current circumstances, can I invest more of myself (through time, talent, and/or treasure) in the Paulist Center, so that others may experience God’s merciful love through this community?

You’ll find the financial statement at the end of the report. If you have any questions, concerns, or suggestions, please do not hesitate to reach out to anyone on the Pastoral Staff, the Pastoral Council, or the Finance Committee.

LITURGY and MUSIC

The Paulist Center continues to be a place devoted to thoughtful, deliberate liturgy, with good preaching and music, executed with noble simplicity. On average, **Mass attendance** was up 40% per month in FY 2023 compared to FY 2022. We continue to offer livestreaming for Sundays and holy day liturgies, plus other special events, at [youtube.com/ThePaulistCenter](https://www.youtube.com/ThePaulistCenter). Approximately 200 people watch at least part of the Sunday Mass online.

Our **Advent-Christmas Concert** returned for the first time since 2019. Featuring music selected and/or arranged by Norm Gouin, writing & artwork by author Jan Richardson, the efforts of 26 musicians & 4 lectors, and a children's dance presentation (Sunday performance only) organized by Christine Tardiff, it was a spiritually powerful experience. The community generously gave \$8,291 in sponsorships and free-will donations, resulting in one of the most financially successful concerts in Paulist Center history.

Our **Lector Teams** resumed in January 2023 and the **Worship Committee** began meeting again in May 2023, increasing lay leadership roles in the liturgy. Scores of volunteers came together to organize our most elaborate celebration of the **Paschal Triduum** in 4 years, including the initiation of 5 young adults into the Catholic faith at the Easter Vigil. Throughout the year, other members joined the ranks of **Music Ministers, Sacristans, Hospitality Ministers, Eucharistic Bread Bakers, and Livestream Production Managers**. A new generation of children got involved with our **Liturgical Dance Ministry**. After 2 years of maintaining a weekly communal online prayer experience tailored to families, with a large role for lay leadership, the **Zoom Family Liturgy of the Word** Team continued to meet on a monthly basis as people returned to in-person worship.

COMMUNITY BUILDING

Community Coffees after many Sunday 10 am Masses resumed in September 2022. We are grateful to Raoul Vincent for organizing the coffees when there were special events for our Family Religious Education Program and to the other volunteers who organized 7 other coffees during the 2022-23 academic year.

The **Family Retreat** returned to Craigville Retreat Center on Columbus Day weekend.

One ministry hit especially hard by the pandemic was our **Young Adult Ministry**. It was a rebuilding year for YAM, facilitated by two part-time young adult ministers: Mairead Murphy (through November 2022) and Anna Costello Duran (starting in January 2023). Through her ministry, Anna personally interacted with approximately 75 different people aged 22-39, including those active in the Paulist Center, those who have had little formal contact with organized religion, and those somewhere in between. YAM's in-person events this year included a variety of social, spiritual, and service events.

The Paulist Fathers' national "Spirit of Hecker" Awards broadcast honored our **LGBTQIA Ministry**. The group offered various events and socials throughout the year, providing support for people who identify as LGBTQIA, as well as for family and friends. In Lent, the ministry again organized weekly prayer services for our entire community, as they had done regularly during the height of the pandemic. They are one of 7 groups in the Archdiocese of Boston's Catholic LGBTQIA Collective, which sponsored a table at the Pride Parade and provided monthly online support sessions for family and friends of people who identify as LGBTQIA.

After a 3-year hiatus, we held our 40th **Auction** in April 2023, appropriately titled “Back In the Saddle Again.” Many thanks to our Co-Chairs Anna Costello Duran and Tara & Michael Rousseau, plus the countless other volunteers who created a fun night for everyone and helped us raise \$66,128, our most financially successful fundraiser ever!

SOCIAL JUSTICE: CHARITY and ADVOCACY

After serving only take-out meals from the chapel vestibule each week since March 2020, the **Wednesday Supper Club** returned to serving sit-down meals with dignity to 75-120 guests in October 2022. The **Emergency Food Pantry** continued to provide 500 neighboring food-insecure families with groceries every month.

Our **Creation Care** sponsored weekly “Voices from the Pews” talks on Zoom during the Season of Creation (Sept 1 – Oct 4), provided reflections throughout the seasons of Advent & Lent, arranged for all leftovers at the Auction to be composted, and challenged people to stop doing business with banks that continued to invest heavily in fossil fuels. Our **Racial Justice Advocacy Group (RJAG)** collaborated with our Family Religious Education Program on 5 intergenerational education events focused on racism and bias; they also invited members to participate in Greater Boston Interfaith Organization’s advocacy for statewide housing justice policies. As co-organizers of a Catholic Charities POWIR site with St. Cecilia Parish, the **Immigration Advocacy Group (IAG)** continued the work begun in FY 2022 to resettle 30 people from Afghanistan by providing tutoring, transportation, furniture, food, and companionship. IAG also offered a number of opportunities for advocacy for our immigrant and refugee brothers and sisters.

Making up for lost time during the beginning of the pandemic, we solicited nominations for the three **Isaac Hecker Awards for Social Justice**. Cherylann & Len Gengel of the Be Like Brit Foundation were chosen as the honorees for 2021, and Sr. Norma Pimentel, MJ, of Catholic Charities of the Rio Grande Valley is the honoree for 2022. We are not ready to publicly announce the 2023 honoree. Awards for all three years will likely be given at Masses held during FY 2024.

The Paulist Center commitment to justice is deeply woven into the fabric of who we are. We gave away 5% of our offertory and split it equally as **Community Gifts** of approximately \$492 each among 52 charitable organizations aligned with the Paulist Center mission. We continue to pay a premium for **Recycling Services**, powering our building with **Renewable Energy**, and paying our staff a **Just Wage**. Preaching at the Paulist Center often digs into social justice issues related to the scriptures of the day.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION and SACRAMENTAL PREPARATION (Families and Adults)

Speaking of renewable energy, the primary source for the additional excitement at the Paulist Center in FY 2023 was the return of children to in-person **Family Religious Education and Sacramental Preparation Programs** after 2 years of remote study! There were **46 children and teens** in the Family Religious Education Program, spanning grades K-10. We celebrated the baptisms of **19 children**, many of them at weekend Masses for the first time since March 2020. Our Sacramental Preparation program celebrated **16 First Holy Communions** and **10 Teen Confirmations**.

Our first cohort went through the **Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults (RCIA)** since the pandemic began. The **3 catechumens** in RCIA were baptized at the Easter Vigil, and they joined the **2 already-baptized candidates** of the cohort in being confirmed and receiving their First Holy Communion that night. In addition, we prepared **6 people** in the greater Boston area for **Adult Confirmation**: 3 in fall 2022, 3 in spring 2023. We celebrated the **weddings** of **4 couples** in the Paulist Center Community.

The Paulist Center continues to be 1 of 2 institutions in the Archdiocese of Boston that runs a large-scale **Marriage Preparation** program. We ran 7 sessions throughout the year, reaching a total of **approximately 400 couples**, including our first 2 in-person sessions since early 2020.

In the fall, the **Adult Education Committee** helped organize an online session on Scripture Study for **8 people**. In the spring, they helped us organize a 2-day Symposium on Faith and Mental Health, with 2 of the 4 speakers flown in from other parts of the country, and approximately **50 people** in attendance.

STAFFING

The Paulist Center continues to be served by the equivalent of 9 full-time employees: 5 full-time employees and 1 part-time employee on the **Pastoral Staff**, 2 full-time employees and 1 part-time employee on the **Administrative Staff**, and 1 full-time employee and 1 part-time contractor on the **Custodial Staff**. The Paulist Center Community's commitment to pay its staff a living wage helps us to retain talented staff over the long term, compared to most other Catholic churches. Combined, our employees have served more than 100 years at the Paulist Center! Because 2 of the 7 floors of the building are the Paulist residence, the Paulist Fathers pay 15% of the salary and benefits of the full-time and part-time staff who assist with the upkeep and operations of those floors.

FY 2023 was a time of transition for our clergy on the Pastoral Staff. Paulist Fathers **Rich Andre** and **Ed Nowak** arrived as the new Director and Associate Director, respectively, in the last two months of FY 2022. Fr. Ed, here on a short-term assignment, transitioned to part time work starting in March 2023 and moved to Washington, DC in June. In July 2023, we welcomed back Paulist Father **Rick Walsh**, who had previously served at the Paulist Center 2010-18.

COMMUNICATIONS

We invested a lot of effort in communications this past year. For the first time since March 2020, **the Bulletin** returned to being a weekly publication. Due to having more information to share each week, we reduced the font size in March 2023. The bulletin can be found online at paulistcenter.org/weekly-bulletin/.

The electronic Missive, started in March 2020, is distributed to approximately 1000 individuals each week. An average of 630 people (62.3%) opened the Missive each week in FY 2023, which is remarkably higher than e-newsletter open rates across all industries (35%), or even among faith-based organizations (44%). To receive the Missive every Friday, please start the registration process at paulistcenter.org/becoming-a-member/.

We have significantly increased our use of social media this past year. We continue to post to **Facebook** and **Instagram** almost every day, but we reduced our posting to **Twitter** after revisions to the platform in July 2023 made it more laborious to post there.

FINANCIAL REPORT

We had predicted a substantial deficit in each of our last five fiscal years, but in each year between 2019 and 2022, something unexpected happened that balanced the budget: a large one-time donation, a staffing shortage, the Paycheck Protection Program Loan, or the Employee Retention Tax Credit.

In FY 2023, our luck ran out: we ended the year with a deficit of **(\$91,000)**. The good news is that this was only about half of the deficit we had projected at the beginning of the year, **(\$173,000)**. This reduction was due in part to your generosity in our fundraisers and appeals, to the 9% of our members whose increased offertory giving nearly balanced the reduced giving other members needed to make, and to building repairs being less than anticipated (although we spent \$20,000 upgrading the sound system). We are grateful to have a sufficient cash reserve to cover the (\$91,000) shortfall.

Our expenses continue to rise due to inflation, healthcare, and utilities, so we are projecting a **(\$160,000)** deficit in FY 2024. Our reserve can cover a few years of deficits before we would need to make operational changes. Like most churches, nearly all of our controllable costs are related to personnel. Reducing personnel would reduce the number of ministries that we can support.

We know that you are committed to the mission of the Paulist Center. But please prayerfully consider if you could further help us:

1. **Can you increase your recurring giving?** Not everyone can. But if you're not among the 9% of households who increased their giving in FY 2023, please pray if you can in FY 2024.
2. **Invite friends and neighbors to join us** for ministries such as the Wednesday Supper Club or Young Adult activities, for Mass, or for special events such as the Hecker Award, the Advent-Christmas Concerts, or the Auction.
3. **Volunteer for ministries that help us build up and expand our community.** We are currently looking for key leaders to help with Marriage Preparation, Lenten Small Groups, and the Auction. If you are not able to help, can you suggest someone else to us?

There are many reasons to remain optimistic. Most giving trends seem to be moving in the right direction. The Paulist Center continues to be an intentional community that welcomes and incorporates people on the peripheries of the Catholic Church — including young adults, women called to share their ministerial gifts, members of the LGBTQIA community, racial minorities, and the financially disadvantaged. We continue to draw people from all over the metro Boston area, guided by the Holy Spirit, committed to vibrant liturgy, healing, reconciliation, and justice.

THE PAULIST CENTER

Statement of Activities

	Year Ended August 31, 2022			Year Ended August 31, 2023		
	Unrestricted	Temporarily & Permanently	Total	Unrestricted	Temporarily & Permanently	Total
		Restricted			Restricted	
Revenues and other support						
Collection income	\$ 498,172	\$	\$ 498,172	\$ 491,582	\$	\$ 491,582
Donation income	120,231		120,231	92,604		92,604
Appeal income	119,394		119,394	158,537		158,537
Distribution from Endowment	72,200		72,200	77,724		77,724
Rental income	9,018		9,018	9,768		9,768
Fundraising income	0		0	74,419		74,419
Program income	67,133	84,468	151,601	80,204	70,047	150,251
Other income ¹	636,513		636,513	522,138		522,138
Gain/Loss on Endow		(262,312)	(262,312)		136,148	136,148
Total revenues and other support	<u>1,522,661</u>	<u>(177,844)</u>	<u>1,344,817</u>	<u>1,506,976</u>	<u>206,195</u>	<u>1,713,171</u>
Expenses:						
Salaries and Benefits	741,819		741,819	811,951		811,951
Maintenance expenses	65,996		65,996	51,306		51,306
Office and professional expenses ¹	509,418		509,418	506,010		506,010
Printing and copying expense	7,108		7,108	9,682		9,682
Fundraising expenses	0		0	16,272		16,272
Utilities	84,766		84,766	79,737		79,737
Insurance	57,383		57,383	62,343		62,343
Family religious education expenses	2,098		2,098	7,309		7,309
Adult education expenses	250		250	41		41
Liturgy&Music expenses	13,956		13,956	35,779	²	35,781
Social justice expenses	2,224		2,224	1,062		1,062
Other program expenses	9,370		9,370	17,240		17,240
Supper club expenses		40,445	40,445		44,798	44,798
Sister community expenses		2,500	2,500		2,500	2,500
New ministry fund		4,083	4,083		8,025	8,025
Schiff fund expenses		0	0		0	0
Lay ministry scholarship		0	0		1,000	1,000
Community tithe		26,096	26,096		25,615	25,615
Food pantry		5,018	5,018		6,722	6,722
Endowment Expenses (including distribution)		83,921	83,921		88,081	88,081
Total expenses	<u>1,494,388</u>	<u>162,064</u>	<u>1,656,452</u>	<u>1,598,732</u>	<u>176,741</u>	<u>1,775,473</u>
Change	28,273	(339,908)	(311,635)	(91,756)	29,454	(62,302)
Fund balance beginning of the year	<u>620,434</u>	<u>\$ 2,068,941</u>	<u>\$ 2,689,375</u>	<u>\$ 648,707</u>	<u>\$ 1,729,033</u>	<u>\$ 2,377,740</u>
Fund balance end of the year	<u>\$ 648,707</u>	<u>\$ 1,729,033</u>	<u>\$ 2,377,740</u>	<u>\$ 556,951</u>	<u>\$ 1,758,487</u>	<u>\$ 2,315,438</u>

Notes:

¹ Includes equal accounting entry on both income and expense for "contributed rent" for Center's use of the building from the Paulist Fathers in NY, building owners
In 2022 the income line also included ERTC of \$180,792

² Includes \$21,000 of chapel audio improvements

Note that it is the Unrestricted Income and Expense columns that are our primary concern this and most years.

The Paulist Center thanks you for your continued support. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact our Administrator, Patty Simpson, at 617-948-2428 or patty@paulistcenter.org.