

Parish Mission Expands to Include Asylum Seeker Ministry

A group of about 10 St. Anna's parishioners and two friends of St. Anna's, now organized as the Rainbow Initiative of St. Anna's NOLA (RISA NOLA), is preparing to be partnered with an asylum seeker (a non-US citizen who is claiming the right to asylum under US law based on membership in a persecuted group or other recognized status). Another church will provide housing, which means our financial undertaking will be modest. RISA NOLA's ministry, which is supported by the vestry, will focus on other types of support. Please see the report below for more information on this exciting new ministry of St. Anna's Parish. -- Bill Glew, Annagram Editor

Report of December 10 Meeting of RISA NOLA

Members of Rainbow Initiative, St. Anna's NOLA, met with leaders from Home Is Here NOLA (see page 2) on Sunday, December 10, 2023 to discuss and vote on the "Memorandum of Understanding" between the two groups. This would allow St. Anna's to move ahead in its efforts to aid LGBTQ+ refugees and asylum seekers coming to the United States.

The group (known as RISA NOLA) agreed to raise \$2,000 in support of the initiative and volunteers were appointed as "point persons" for various activities and committees, including social support and accountability, interpreters, ride coordination, housing, food, employment, finance, and healthcare.

Other activities to be pursued include arrangements for childcare (should we be partnered with an asylum seeker with children), educational programs, cultural orientation, and fundraising.

Anyone interested in working on or contributing to the important new mission at St. Anna's should contact Claire Brooks, Randy Lovejoy, or KB Lovejoy. -- V.P. Franklin



Mission Statement

Rainbow Initiative of St. Anna's NOLA

Consistent with the goals of the Rainbow Initiative (Episcopal Migration Ministries), the mission of RISA NOLA (Rainbow Initiative, St. Anna's, NOLA) is to bring visibility and aid to LGBTQI+ refugees and asylum seekers. We work in partnership with similar organizations to welcome forced migrants, providing initial housing, food, and other necessities; then walking with them as they move toward self-sufficiency.



RISA NOLA members meeting to plan for partnering with an asylum seeker in Greater New Orleans. Meetings will be held 12-1 every Sunday in a Sunday school room as RISA NOLA prepares for, and is eventually matched with, an asylum seeker.

Partnering organizations:

Home Is Here NOLA (homeisherenola.org), a Louisiana nonprofit that trains and supports groups wishing to partner with asylum seekers in our state

The Rainbow Initiative, Episcopal Migration Ministries' response to General Convention 2022 Resolution "On Supporting LGBTQI+ Refugees and Asylum Seekers." (<https://episcopalmigrationministries.org/rainbowinitiative/>)



Your Food Pantry Ministry

By Ed Collins, co-chair

I want to take a minute to tell you a little about your Food Pantry. We help about 55 families each month with about 22 volunteers. Most of our volunteers are members of St. Anna's, but quite a few are not!

We usually deliver 2 bags of groceries, all shelf stable items, basically the same assortment every month: tuna, beans, rice, soup, cornbread mix, mac and cheese, cereal, etc. Our idea is that these groceries will help our families during the lean days at the end of the month. It usually amounts to about 35 pounds of groceries on the third Saturday of every month.

This month we will have a lot extra thanks to our Food Pantry partners. St. Paul's Episcopal church usually has two food drives a year for us. They always bring more than a month's worth of groceries.

Trinity School is bringing laundry baskets, full of holiday treats. St. Martin's School also had a food drive. So we are well stocked for the holidays.

Let me tell you about some of our other partners. Last week, VP and I picked up several bags of canned goods from The Phoenix Bar on Elysian Fields. They always have a box for canned food donations, right by the front door. And so far this football season, the Friendly Bar, at Chartres and Marigny Streets, has donated more than \$2770 that they raise as part of a neighborhood meal that they have during every Saints game. This is enough to underwrite the \$50 gift card we try to give each family at Christmas.

We can always use another driver to deliver groceries. Teams of 2 are nice, but not required. We also need somebody to help pass out bags to our families who pick up groceries Saturday morning, and people to help with our record keeping and contacting our families. So if this sounds like fun, talk to Chuck Coleman, or Ed Collins.



Search Committee Update

by Bill Glew, Chair

As previously announced, the Parish Profile and Office of Transition Ministry questionnaire have been posted on St. Anna's website (click on Parish Transition button). The Search Committee will be accepting applications through Friday, January 19, 2024. Several applications have already been submitted. Our obligation of confidentiality to protect applicants means the Search Committee can share only general process information.

The Search Committee met in mid-December to prepare a set of questions for initial interviews, which should begin in January via Zoom.



From the Episcopal News Service: Second annual observance of Religious Life Sunday to be observed Jan. 21, 2024

Our vowed religious—living as monks, nuns, sisters, brothers, and friars—have deep experience of traditions and practices that assist in developing spiritual growth and discernment. Vowed religious teach about prayer practices, lead retreats, give spiritual direction, assist in writing and living a rule of life, give presentations about the spiritual journey, and provide spiritual friendship.

For more information see www.religiouslifesunday.org

Gifts for the Children of Anna's Place NOLA



St. Anna's Parish Calendar

DECEMBER 17, 2023 - JANUARY 21, 2024

Virtual Morning Prayer and Compline offered M-F at 8am and 9pm on Facebook Live

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Dec. 17 - 3 Advent Sunday School - 9am Inquirers Class - 9am Rosary - 10am Choir - 10am Mass - 10:30am	Dec. 18	Dec. 19	Dec. 20 Choir - 6-7pm	Dec. 21 Book Club 6-7:30pm	Dec. 22	Dec. 23
Dec. 24 - 4 Advent No Sunday School No Inquirers Class Rosary - 10am Choir - 10am Mass - 10:30am RISA NOLA - 12-1pm Christmas Eve Mass- 11pm	Dec. 25 Christmas Day Mass - 10:30am	Dec. 26	Dec. 27 No Choir	Dec. 28	Dec. 29	Dec. 30
Dec. 31 No Sunday School No Inquirers Class Rosary - 10am Choir - 10am Mass - 10:30am RISA NOLA - 12-1pm	Jan. 1	Jan. 2	Jan. 3 Choir - 6-7pm	Jan. 4 Book Club 6-7:30pm	Jan. 5	Jan. 6
Jan. 7 - Epiphany Sunday School - 9am Inquirers Class - 9am Rosary - 10am Choir - 10am Mass - 10:30am RISA NOLA - 12-1pm	Jan. 8	Jan. 9	Jan. 10 Choir - 6-7pm	Jan. 11	Jan. 12	Jan. 13
Jan. 14 - 2 Epiphany Sunday School - 9am Inquirers Class - 9am Rosary - 10am Choir - 10am Mass - 10:30am RISA NOLA - 12-1pm	Jan. 15	Jan. 16	Jan. 17 Choir - 6-7pm	Jan. 18 Book Club 6- 7:30pm	Jan. 19 Food Pantry Packing 4:30pm	Jan. 20 Food Pantry Delivery 9:30am