

St. Ambrose Catholic Homeschool Co-op

An Interview with

Very Rev. David Carter, JCL, JV, Pastor and Rector of the Basilica of Sts. Peter and Paul
and
Sandy Pricer, Founder and Co-Director of the St. Ambrose Homeschool Co-op

April 24, 2021

Full Transcript of Interview

On April 24, 2021, Fr. Carter interviewed Sandy Pricer, Basilica parishioner, and the Founder and Co-Director of the St. Ambrose Catholic Homeschool Co-op. The full interview can be found on the Basilica's website along with Fr. Carter's Pastor's Notes for May 2 and May 9, 2021, accessible at stspeterandpaulbasilica.com/pastors-notes.

Fr. David 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. David 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 homeschoolers 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. David Carter

Awesome, 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. David 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. David Carter

Awesome. 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 Catholically 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.

Fr. David Carter

Great, awesome. Who teaches the classes?

Sandy Pricer

The parents teach the classes primarily, because we are our kids' first teachers, right? The mothers and/or fathers that are available teach the classes. And they can - if they're not fluent, but they're comfortable with Latin - they can teach a Latin class. If science is something they're really interested in, then they can come help in the science class. We also have reached out to our parish community, and we've had UTC professors and students help teach the classes before as well, in addition to people like yourself, Father. We've had the priests of the Basilica teach classes, as well. So we make sure that they're definitely not going to teach our kids anything against our Catholic faith. That's first and foremost. But it's, again, this group that we're growing with and learning with.

Fr. David Carter

Awesome, awesome. What could a family gain from being part of the St. Ambrose Catholic Homeschool Co-op?

Sandy Pricer

You can definitely gain the Catholic community. Because I feel that so many times, we go to Mass and we leave, and there are opportunities to meet other times. But sometimes when you have a lot of young children, it's not as easy to connect with others, even if there's other events. So being able to join a Catholic co-op like St. Ambrose, you're able to form those relationships, make them stronger, and have that support system, that you're with other like-minded families in a very similar life season as you are.

Fr. David Carter

That's awesome. If a family were to have more questions about the St. Ambrose Catholic Homeschool Co-op, who would they contact and how?

Sandy Pricer

We have an email address that is on our Facebook page and on the Basilica website.

Fr. David Carter

I'll share the Basilica website here just to see if we can see all that. So this is on the stspeterandpaulbasilica.com. And it's in the section under the Home section at the top. Well, no, I'm not seeing the Home section.

Sandy Pricer

Ministries....

Fr. David Carter

There we go. There it is. Ministries, there we go. And it's down here. Homeschool Co-op. Yep. Boom. And here's our St. Ambrose Homeschool Co-op. And you said that there is information right here, the documents, things like that.

Sandy Pricer

The FAQ's, the registration process, all that, and then our email address and the contact button, and it's also on the flyer. Our class schedule. So that definitely helps give a lot more information if you have more questions, but you can contact us to ask more as well, for sure. We have a core group of ladies that are our leadership board. And so one of us will be responding to all emails to answer all questions and welcome all potential new families.

Fr. David Carter

Now tell me about the image right there: "St. Ambrose Homeschool Co-op" with a beehive and the butterflies. Where did that come from?

Sandy Pricer

That particular banner the kids made. And when we were finding St. Ambrose, we searched different saint names to name ourselves after. And St. Ambrose, because of that hive and the bees and the workers, kind of like you mentioned earlier, we felt, was a very appropriate representation of our co-op, because we want to be together in a working hive to help build the Catholic community.

Fr. David Carter

Beautiful, beautiful. Awesome. I know that it's always been a joy for me to see the kids come on campus and see the life of them and also to be privileged to teach for so many years. Are there any upcoming sessions that would be a good invitation point for people?

Sandy Pricer

Absolutely. For anybody interested in St. Ambrose and you do have more questions and you want to talk to me or one of my core ladies in person, we have a virtual meeting coming up on May 20. And

information and Zoom links will be sent out soon. But that would be a great time to hop on Zoom and just ask seasoned homeschoolers about homeschooling and St. Ambrose in particular. We also have monthly informal playdates, that families within the Catholic community can come and meet each other and ask questions there and just get to know each other.

Fr. David Carter

Awesome. Well, we invite everybody to spread the word about the good that's found in the St. Ambrose Catholic Homeschool Co-op. And we thank you, Sandy, for all the work that you have put into it and the heart and soul, like you do for everything. And it's an awesome thing to see our community come together to educate our children from especially those families who are choosing that beautiful, noble path of homeschooling.

Sandy Pricer

Thank you, Father.

Fr. David Carter

Thank you and God bless.

For more information:

The full video of the interview is available on the [Basilica's website](https://stspeterandpaulbasilica.com), <https://stspeterandpaulbasilica.com>.

Visit the St. Ambrose Homeschool Co-op web page on the Basilica website, under Ministries.

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.