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St. John Vianney Parish's Journey by Carl Beyer & Friends

St. John Vianney became a Mission Church in 1997. I did not come on board until the year 2000, when we sold our computer store in Albuquerque and I started having more free time. We found St. John Vianney Mission Church Mass being held at Colinas del Norte Elementary School. So, my recollections will start in the year 2000.

After attending Mass for years in St. Thomas Aquinas' cry room and then going to many Masses around Albuquerque, we immediately found a home in this small Church community, currently meeting for Masses in a school cafeteria. Because my eldest was a student there when Colinas del Norte opened and spent seven years there, we were very familiar with the school. It was not long before our family was setting up and taking down the chairs for Mass. One of my favorite parts was transforming the stage into an altar. We had a portable altar to set up and then put up St. John Vianney's picture and, when a priest came, we had a Church. I imagine that is how the first Christian churches were. Then within fifteen minutes after Mass, the space was again a cafeteria.

In 2002 our Church moved to St. Thomas Aquinas School's chapel. I had been there before the school opened, coordinating the wires to be pulled for the PCs. This is where my two youngest were attending school and again it seemed like a natural move. We had pews and a permanent altar. But during the summer Masses it was like a sauna! We had to bend the rules and allow the ushers not to wear their suit jackets because it was so hot. I am not sure which year it was, but soon Father Mansfield was assigned to us and we had Our Priest.

In October 2005 we published our first bulletin. Starting with a single sheet, it has grown to our present four pages with the evolution of our parish. Soon it will be our only bulletin, no longer an insert along with our Mother Church's bulletin, which will further signify our evolution.

Along the way we started a capital campaign. Talk was about the eight acres over near Colinas del Norte School where we were going to build a multipurpose building to serve as our Church. Thanks to the many talented parishioners who worked on it, the dream came true and in 2009 we moved into our present building.

Being the numbers guy I am, I have kept track of our weekly Mass attendance over the years, and it has been like this: 2001, 119 people; 2002 – 142, 2003 – 172, 2004 – 212, 2005 – 246, 2006 – 315, 2007 – 354, 2008 – 387, 2009 – 750, 2010 – 790, 2011 – 837, 2012 – 823 and 2013 – 914. What a nice, steady growth we have had - at a pace at which we could make adjustments and take on more responsibilities as we could handle them.

And now in the year of 2013 and the month of July we will be all grown up. We will be our own Parish. I am sure Father Mansfield and our heads of ministries will still look to our Mother Church for advice and guidance, but the final decisions and path will be our own. I am sure we will stumble, fall and get back on our feet, but I know God smiles on this Church whose community you can call home. St. John Vianney Parish will be a huge success.

I would like to thank all those who have worked so hard to see this day arrive. Many have given countless hours to serve their Lord by serving St. John Vianney Mission Church and are so appreciated. Even those who have done minor tasks are to be thanked for this; all is in God's plan. Each according to his talents and treasure.

Our journey is not ending as we become a Parish. It is just the beginning, seeing God's House on Earth come to fruition. God Bless you ALL. Go forth and celebrate with us on July 1st. See you there.