

FAITH & FAMILY

IN *Ahwatukee and Chandler*



INSIDE THIS EDITION



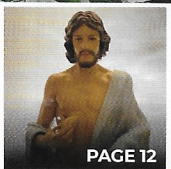
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WHO ARE THE PORTERS OF ST. JOSEPH?


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WHO ARE THE PORTERS OF ST. JOSEPH?

Article by Teri Pistacchio Aguiar, Ph.D. | Photos by Adam Beltran Photography



The Porters of St. Joseph

“I would rather be a doorkeeper in the house of my God than dwell in the tents of wickedness.”
— Psalms 84:10

On any given Sunday at Corpus Christi Catholic Church, you might notice a group of men standing quietly near the doors, along the walls, or just far enough back to see everything without being seen themselves. They are not ushers, though they will gladly help you find one. They are not merely security guards keeping watch. And they are definitely not ho-hum parishioners.

They are the Porters of Saint Joseph, a men’s volunteer apostolate with the mission to imitate St. Joseph as the Protector of the Holy Church, Pillar of Families, and Terror of Demons. It’s not a title you see on many business cards, but it does make for excellent conversation starters.

A “porter,” or doorkeeper, was one of the minor holy orders in the early Church, according to an informative 2025 article in the National Catholic Register. The Porters of St. Joseph are a growing presence in Arizona parishes and a welcome sight to parishioners and clergy alike. This group

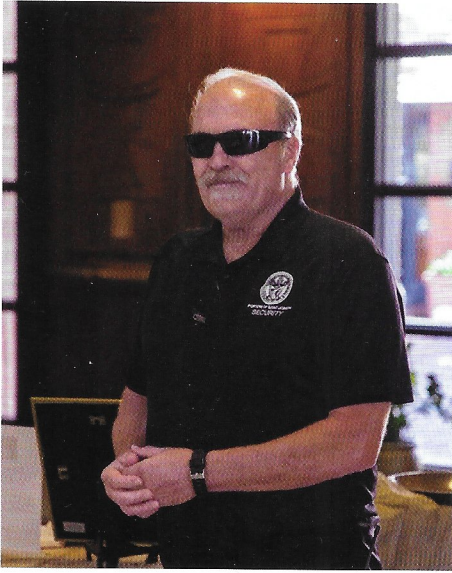
of courageous gentlemen strives to emulate the foster father of Our Lord and devoted husband of the Blessed Virgin.

So what do they do? In essence, the Porters help ensure that parishioners can worship in peace. They keep a watchful eye so that our priests can focus on the Mass and help safeguard the tabernacle. At the same time, they are trained for medical emergencies and leadership in crises. That means one minute they are greeting families with a smile, and the next they are running to retrieve the defibrillator.

Just recently, two parishioners lost consciousness during Mass, and the team stepped in quickly and in an orderly fashion to resolve the situation. Nothing bonds a group of men quite like coordinating calmly in a moment of urgency.

Required quarterly trainings cover everything from de-escalation to active-shooter scenarios, as well as CPR, self-defense, and “Stop the Bleed.” It’s a formation program that manages to be both deeply spiritual and surprisingly action-packed — like retreat meets boot camp.

But beneath all of this is the real mission: to live holy lives and lead their families toward heaven; the ministry is simply the instrument. Many of the most powerful moments are those that can’t be shared publicly—stories of



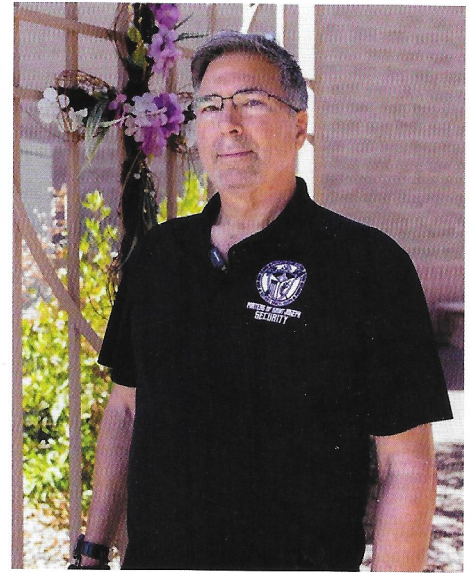
Gene Griffin in position in the vestibule

strong sense of belonging; a common bond formed in Christian brotherhood with like-minded men. Some call it a “band of brothers,” especially those with military backgrounds. Some think of it as a faithful “fraternity” (minus questionable college decisions and with significantly better accountability). Others call it a “tribe within a tribe.” However defined, it’s a group of men who genuinely care about each other, their families, the community, and their faith in the Holy Catholic Church.

At Corpus Christi, there are currently about thirty members, organized with a Captain (Steve Dean), Executive Officer (Nick Markette), Spiritual Officer (Michael Comaduran), Training Officer (Doug Hunt), Recruiting Officer (Ted Kennedy), and team leaders for each Mass. Their backgrounds vary widely—former first responders, engineers, coaches, jujitsu instructors, and men who simply have a heart for service. Some are natural peacemakers; others bring technical expertise; all bring a willingness to serve.

Many of the Porters would agree that this ministry has brought structure and purpose to their lives. Each morning begins with a Scripture verse sent by the Spiritual Officer through their Telegram channel, grounding them before the noise of the world sets in. It’s a small habit with a big impact.

If there’s one message they’d like to



Steve Mazade in position near north gate

share, it’s this: They are growing. From seven original members to thirty today, the Porters continue to expand, both at Corpus Christi and across the Dioceses of Phoenix and Tucson. They’re not looking for just anyone, but for men who are committed, faithful, and ready to serve with both humility and courage. Know anybody like that?

In a world full of distractions, it’s comforting to know that at least at church, someone is holding the door open—not just to the church, but to heaven—and making sure no one slips out early before the final hymn.

men growing in faith, overcoming struggles, and becoming more grounded in purpose. These changes ripple outward, strengthening families and friendships. Some of the men have even taken their commitment to this ministry as inspiration to get in better physical shape to fit the role. Indeed, during this past Lent, 13 men participated in a fitness challenge and lost a total of 80 pounds—proof that sometimes the road to holiness includes fewer donuts.

What keeps them coming back, week after week? Camaraderie. Connectedness. Service. There’s a

Do you know a fellow parish member who has a story to share? Nominate someone you’d like to see featured in one of our upcoming issues! Contact us at taguiar@decidedexcellence.com.



You Belong Here!

Shadow Days:
 September 23, 2026
 October 28, 2026
 November 18, 2026
 January 20, 2027

Open House:
 November 14, 2026

Application Opens:
 November 2, 2026



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(Website updated in August)