



School welcomes new chef

In August, Saint Augustine welcomed a new chef to the school.

Ms. Flor Ramirez prepares 150-160 delicious meals each school day for the school's students, including meatless offerings on Fridays, a recognition of Good Friday, when Jesus died on the Cross.

A native of Guatemala, Ms. Ramirez replaced Mr. Ernesto Alas, who continues at St. Augustine Parish through serving as a chef at the rectory for Rev. Patrick A. Smith, pastor. Chef Ramirez is assisted in the kitchen, which is located in the basement of the school building, by Ms. Juana Escobar.

Chef Ramirez brings 10 years of experience as a chef to Saint Augustine, including working in African, American, and Latin restaurants in Maryland and Washington, D.C. She has also worked in a catering company.

"It is beautiful," she said in Spanish to a recent visitor to her kitchen, describing how it feels to make a meal that everyone enjoys. With a small necklace of the Virgin Mary around her neck, she said she likes every part of being a chef, and it

makes her happy when she does her job well. Motioning toward Ms. Escobar, a native of Mexico, she said that tacos, a typical staple of the Mexican diet, are one of her favorite foods to eat.

With her hair covered, wearing a white N-95 mask and see-through plastic gloves on her hands, per D.C. Health Department regulations, Chef Ramirez went about baking chicken cutlets on a late Monday morning while Ms. Escobar cut orange slices for the school's lunch meal.

She continues a tradition in recent years, begun by Chef Alas and predecessors in the St. Augustine School kitchen, of preparing delicious and healthy meals for our students and staff.