Dear SJCS Parents,

I’m writing this letter in the midst of a very busy couple of weeks during faculty/staff orientation. I found a few quiet moments late one afternoon to take my laptop to the picnic table outside of my office. As I sat there working, the girls cross country team walked by heading to the front lawn to begin practice. This is a typical scene for a mid-August afternoon except, of course, that the girls were wearing masks. About the same time, Mrs. J. stopped by to tell me that she ran into a group of athletes in the gym. She asked them how they were doing, sympathizing with them about having to wear masks to school. I love what one girl told her, shrugging it off as no big deal: “Wearing a mask is WAY better than going to school at home.” I’m thinking that this might be our mantra for the new school year.

Frankly, it’s been an emotional couple weeks for the faculty and staff as we’ve worked to make sure we have everything in place for students to return to school as safely as possible. In the midst of all of the planning and thinking about what we will and won’t be able to do this year, at least initially, I’ve been more cognizant than ever of just how great a privilege it is for our students to be given the opportunity for a first-rate, Catholic school education and, in particular, for the opportunity to learn from our teachers, who I believe are some of the best in the business.

It will be important to keep this in mind as we navigate the coming weeks and months. While we have returned to in-person education, we are far from being able to return to life as normal at St. Joseph’s Catholic School. The necessity of physical distancing and mask wearing is going to limit school activities and, in some cases, eliminate them entirely for the foreseeable future.

As the novelty of being back in school wears off and students begin to miss some of the events and activities that they are used to, I think it’s important for you to understand the school administration’s perspective. Essentially, it is this: we are hesitant to undertake or permit any events or activities that could jeopardize or risk the continuing viability of in-person education. With each week and month that passes without incident, we will look to add back events and activities to the calendar with modifications as needed. With this in mind, I’m asking that you please help moderate your students’ expectations and emotions as we take this one step at a time with the priority of ensuring that in-person education can continue.

Introducing St. Joseph’s Newest Staff Members

Since August News and Notes, we have added a handful of teachers to our staff. Most of these additions were necessitated by the number of unprecedented applications we received during the months of July and August, particularly for the middle school grades. In an effort to accommodate these students, we have added sections to both 6th and 8th grades and have had to hire teachers to cover those classes. Thankfully there were excellent teachers available as you can see below.

Please extend a warm SJCS welcome to:

Mr. Chris Goodman, is the school’s new 8th grade history teacher. Chris, originally from Lexington, SC, moved back to SC this summer from Arizona, where he taught MS history and was the assistant athletic director and head football coach at a charter school. Chris holds a BS from the University of South Carolina and is a US Marine Corp veteran.

Julie Rzepinski is the school’s new Aquinas Director and Remote Learning Specialist. She is a native of North Carolina and holds a BS in mathematical education from NC State. She recently moved to Greenville from Wisconsin. Julie has nearly three decades of experience as an educator working as a math teacher and resource teacher.
Courtney Vaughn, a certified school counselor, is SJCS’ new and first counselor dedicated to the needs of our middle school students. She holds a BS in Psychology and an Ed.S and M.Ed in School Counseling from Clemson University. Courtney has worked previously with Mrs. Charlton at Mauldin High School.

Sydney Walsh is the school’s new Algebra I teacher. She is new to Greenville, having moved recently from Indiana, where she taught Algebra and coached soccer. Sydney holds a BS and MA in mathematics teaching.

Finally, I want to thank Carolyn Johnsen and Sarah Wicker for their faithful service to the school over the years. They have recently decided to pursue other opportunities. Both were particularly loved by their students and colleagues and will be missed.

In closing, please join us in praying for the following members of the SJCS family: for Sandon Brown on the loss of his grandmother; for Sophie Iacovelli on the loss of her aunt; and for Mary Cummings’ speedy recovery from knee surgery.

With love and prayers,
Keith Kiser
Headmaster

Things You Need To Know

HS Course Add/Drop Period, August 24-September 4
Students may request schedule changes during the Add/Drop period August 24-September 4. BEFORE requesting any schedule change, students and parents should review the Schedule Change Policies pertaining to Add/Drop on page 5 of the 2020-2021 High School Course Catalog. Add/Drop forms will be available through the College Counseling Office (Room B208).

Voter Registration Drive, September 3
There will be a voter registration drive for students on September 3 in Room B205 (Mrs. Carr’s room) during the Study Help period. Bring your Chromebook and driver’s license. It will take about ten minutes.

HS Youth in Government Interest Form Due September 5
Students in grades 9-12 who are interested in being a Youth in Government delegate, and have NOT attended as a member of the SJCS high school delegation in the past, should fill out the interest form found HERE. This includes freshmen who attended YIG in middle school. The statewide, in-person convention will take place in April and there will be meetings and opportunities for workshops and activities leading up to the convention. Students must log in to their school Google Chrome account before filling out the form.

Labor Day, September 7
There will be no classes. The school and school offices will be closed.

Bell Schedule Beginning September 8
• The whole student body will begin five-day a week instruction on September 8. A detailed bell schedule can be found HERE. We did want to remind you about two important changes previously communicated in the August News & Notes.
• We have moved our dismissal time up on Wednesday to 12:05 PM. This is because we will not have a mandatory All-School Mass on Wednesday mornings as long as large group gatherings are discouraged during the pandemic. Instead, we will offer an optional Mass each Wednesday afternoon beginning at 12:20 PM for those who would like to stay. Mass will conclude at 1:00 PM.
• The other significant change is that we have moved the Study Help period on Thursdays to the end of the day. Any student who drives may fill out the waiver (found HERE) if they wish to have the option to leave at 1:50 PM on Thursdays. Parents who wish to pick up their non-driving students early may do so through the front office by following the usual early dismissal protocol.
• Late stay will still be available until 6:00 PM every day after school for those who need to pick up children after work.

HS Fall Play Auditions, September 9 & 10
Auditions for the HS Fall Play will be September 9 and 10. Students will only need to attend one of these days. These auditions will be open to all HS students. More information will be emailed to HS students in the next week or two. Additionally, an interest meeting for students considering involvement will be immediately after school on August 31 and
Attractions Book Fundraiser, September 9-30
The Attractions Book sale is back and will be September 9-30. There are TONS of coupons and savings in one small book. The money raised will be used to fund the needs of the school. Each student will receive one book to sell and will be encouraged to collect orders for additional copies at $20 each. Orders can also be placed online. There are some great incentives for Households and individuals who sell the most books. All unsold books need to be returned in their original envelope by the last day of the sale. Questions? Contact Jackie Zannino.

Parent/Student Handbook Acknowledgement Form Due September 14
The 2020-2021 Parent/Student Handbook is now available on the SJCS website and HERE. The Handbook Acknowledgement Form on the last page should be printed, signed by both student (one form for each student) and parent, and turned in to Mrs. Hawkins on the front office by Monday, September 14.

National Social Studies Honor Society Elections, September 16
National Social Studies Honor Society elections for officers will take place on Wednesday, September 16. Members who are interested in running for office should send a statement of interest to Mrs. Carr by September 9, indicating which position they wish to run for and why. This statement will be shared with all NSSHS members. The positions for President, Vice-President, and Secretary/Treasurer are open. Voting will be done electronically on September 16.

HS Fine Arts Coffeehouse, September 18
The first Coffeehouse of the school year, sponsored by the Fine Arts Department and the Jubilate Arts Guild is currently scheduled for Friday, September 18 from 5:00–7:00 PM. Plan for an evening of coffee, fellowship (at a distance!), and open-mic entertainment. More details regarding this event will be announced to students at the beginning of the month.

Virtual Meet the Teacher Night, September 23
This year, Meet the Teacher Night will be a virtual event. More details regarding this event will be emailed to families in the upcoming weeks.

Mid-Quarter Grades Progress Update September 25
An email will be sent to parents at the mid-quarter point, September 25, as a reminder to check your child’s progress and contact the teacher with any questions or concerns. Instructions for access to FACTS Family Portal can be found HERE, at the bottom of the Students and Parents resources page.

All-Parent Coffee, September 30
Immediately following morning drop-off, SJCS parents are welcomed and encouraged to come to the Cafeteria to pick up a boxed breakfast and then have a seat in the JPII Center (seats will be physically distanced and marked appropriately). From 8:00-9:00AM, Headmaster Keith Kiser, other school administrators, and several parent volunteer leaders will be on hand to share information about the new school year, talk about opportunities for involvement, and be available to answer your questions. This is a great opportunity to hear from school officials and parent leaders in an informal setting. (Please note all visitors entering the school must wear a face mask and have their temperature taken at the Front Office).

Seniors & Parents College Counseling Meeting
Our annual meeting for seniors and their parents will be held virtually this year with an additional Q&A session. Meeting date and details will be emailed to all seniors and their parents at the beginning of September.

Senior Students College Counseling Nuts and Bolts Meeting
The College Counselors will be meeting with all the seniors during lunch to review various procedures students will need to follow throughout the college application process. The meeting date and details will be emailed to students and parents at the beginning of September. All seniors must attend this very important meeting.

Financial Aid Night for Senior Families
We will have a College Financial Aid Officer conduct a general Financial Aid meeting to discuss the various types of aid, scholarships (including the state scholarships, scholarships through the colleges and private scholarships), the CSS Profile, federal money (grants, loans, work study) and a general overview of the FAFSA for this year’s graduating seniors. The meeting will be held virtually in October and details will be sent to all senior families in September.
**Ninth Grade PSAT Testing, October 14**

All freshmen will take the PSAT 8/9 on Wednesday, October 14 with dismissal at 12:05 PM. The purpose of the PSAT 8/9, which is the first in the College Board’s SAT Suite of Assessments, is to establish a starting point in terms of college and career readiness as students transition to high school. The results help educators and students figure out what students need to work on most so that they are ready for college when they graduate from high school. Further test details will be communicated in the October News and Notes. Questions? Contact Melissa Broering.

**Tenth & Eleventh Grade PSAT Testing, October 14**

The PSAT will also be administered to all sophomores and juniors here at school on the morning of Wednesday, October 14, with dismissal at 12:05 PM. This test is a shortened, practice version of the SAT and it provides a good opportunity for students to get comfortable with the format, pacing and questions on the SAT. For juniors, this test also serves as the National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test (NMSQT) and it is the only way to be considered for National Merit scholarships. In September, students will receive a PSAT booklet which includes a complete practice test with answers. Further test details will be communicated in the October News and Notes. Questions? Contact Melissa Broering.

**Confirmation Preparation**

Seventh and eighth grade Catholic parents should contact their home parish to find out about registration for Confirmation preparation. Though St. Joseph’s 7th grade Religion classes cover Confirmation, each parish has its own requirements and they need to know which children are planning to be confirmed in the upcoming year. This is usually during 8th grade, but depending on the parish date for Confirmation, some preparation may begin in 7th grade.

**Student ID Cards**

All students will be required to wear their ID cards at all times this year. ID’s will be available sometime after yearbook photos are taken on August 31 and September 1. The school will provide students with their first lanyard.

**Student Directories**

Student Directories are available through FACTS. Information on how to access the directory can be found [HERE](#) under the Parent Resources/Forms and Links tab on the home page of our new website. Click on FACTS Instructions/How to access the student directory.

**NEW! Change Regarding Outerwear**

We announced in June that with the change to using Lands’ End as a uniform provider, only Lands’ End outerwear would be permitted as part of the casual uniform. However, due to the many changes our students are experiencing this year, we have decided to still allow non-Lands’ End outerwear for this year only (it must still be school-approved outerwear, eg SJCS athletic sweatshirts). Beginning with the 2021-2022 school year, only Lands’ End outerwear will be permitted to be worn as part of the casual uniform.
From the Middle School Director

As I write this piece, we are days away from physically bringing our students back to campus for the first time since mid-March. I know I will be overwhelmed with joy at their return.

Our goal this summer was singular in focus: safely returning our students to campus in the fall. My personal motivation for this singular focus was that a St. Joseph’s education is designed to be relational and communal. While the academic growth of our students is of great importance, I am convinced that their social, emotional, and spiritual growth is what has been most impacted by our inability to be in-person together. With safety of paramount importance, we need to be together again.

As we begin a school year that will certainly have its share of challenges, I take comfort in the knowledge that the uncertainty and anxiety caused by these challenges can be mitigated with practices that support the foundational elements of the St. Joseph’s community. The courage and strength needed to sort through the uneasiness and uncertainty can be achieved through:
1. A commitment to prayer
2. A community of trusted friends and confidantes
3. Sound research and informed decision-making
4. The ability to improvise and adapt the plan
5. Deep gratitude for all of it, including the ability to engage in the previous four practices

Our return to in-person learning is predicated on these practices. I have incredible faith and trust in our St. Joseph’s community, and I am certain that we can do what we do best safely and excellently.

“Forward, no matter what happens! Cling tightly to Our Lord’s hand and remember that God does not lose battles.” - St. Josemaría Escriva

From the High School Director

Relationships are the key. That’s an old lesson in education, but one that bears repeating. Our whole model is based on establishing relationships with our students, and those relationships begin with trust. The kind of trust that is necessary in a classroom is similar to, but not exactly the same as, the trust that develops within friendships. In classroom relationships, the students need to trust that the teacher is going to give them the tools necessary to be successful. In the short term, that can mean things like preparing students for quizzes and tests. In the long term, it’s about preparing them for college, citizenship, and life. Students also need to trust that teachers entered the profession not because they like summer vacation, but because they are genuinely committed to promoting their students’ well-being.

Teachers need to trust students as well. Teachers can plan much more creative and impactful lessons when they know their students are going to give them some leeway in terms of how things are presented. It can be very tempting for a student to throw in the towel on a hard concept if they don’t get it right away, and that can short-circuit a teacher’s desire to introduce higher-level thinking. I always encourage students to remember, we’re in this for the long haul. Classes may take place in 47-minute increments, but learning goes well beyond that artificial limitation.

Thank you for your trust, and welcome to the 2020-2021 school year!
Knights Athletic Booster Club
Did you know the Booster Club accounts for 23% of the overall Athletic Program budget? Every year, the Knights Booster Club raises money and works directly with our Athletic Director, Eric Nash, to supplement the athletic budget to better serve our student athletes. Please support our Knights! Our athletic program needs our Booster members more than ever during this unprecedented time. Even if we cannot have full stands of cheering fans this year, our student athletes count on our Boosters to provide the financial support to help us continue our program of excellence. We invite everyone to join the Booster Club this year to help us achieve our goal of 100% participation. Click HERE for information about the Knights Athletic Booster Club.

Over the last several years the Booster Club helped purchase: new baseball and football scoreboards, storage system for athletic uniforms and equipment, new flooring and dumbbells for the weight room, new benches for the tennis courts, new chairs for our teams in the gym, repair work on gym bleachers, enhancements to the stadium concession stand, state championship and senior banners, iPads for concessions, Pep band t-shirts, and the coaches appreciation dinner.

Sports Participation Requirements
Any student participating in a sport at SJCS for the 2020-2021 school year must have a physical dated after April 1, 2020 and complete the required forms ONLINE prior to the first practice. NO PAPER FORMS WILL BE ACCEPTED, NO EXCEPTIONS! The required forms that must be filled out online prior to participation are: Pre-Participation History and Pre-Participation Sports Physical Exam, Parent Consent Form, Concussion Form, a copy of your athlete’s birth certificate, and Steadman Hawkins form. All required athletic forms must be submitted through PlanetHS found HERE. The updated forms and information on how to create the parent and student login at Planet HS can be found HERE. Look for the Athletics box. Be sure to type St. Joseph’s Catholic School in the search line when looking for our school.

Volunteers Needed
Please contact Teresa McGrath for more information on how to volunteer for either of the opportunities below:
- Any parents or students willing to donate their time and talents to the Fine Arts Department through their sewing skills
- Any parents willing to assist in the Scene Shop during after-school and Saturday crew sessions

Jubilate Arts Guild
Help support the Fine Arts Department by joining the Jubilate Arts Guild (JAG). With membership support this past year, we were able to purchase several items to benefit the department, including sheet music, microphones, art supplies, instruments, and much more. The membership form with details about member levels and benefits for 2020-2021 can be found HERE. Contact Jubilate Arts Guild President Amanda Warlick to find out how you can support our Fine Arts students and teachers.

The Jubilate Arts Guild is looking for parents interested in serving on the JAG committee for the 2020-2021 school year. We have vacancies for Secretary, Membership (VP Elect), Tech Week Meal Coordinator, Concession Coordinator, Concert & Art Show Coordinator, Ways and Means, Sponsorship/ Program Ads. If you are interested in these opportunities or sharing your time and talents in support of the Arts in additional ways, please contact Jubilate Arts Guild President Amanda Warlick for more information.

Two Additional Ways to Support the Fine Arts Department
- Purchase Red Door ornaments HERE.
- The Christmas Wreath Sale starts in October. Purchase a Christmas wreath for your family or gift one to a friend or relative. They will be delivered to any address you choose the first week of December. Ordering details coming soon.

Jubilate Knight for the Arts 2021
Mark your calendars for our Fine Arts Department’s annual talent competition, Jubilate Knight for the Arts, on Saturday January 23, 2021. All members of the school community are invited to join in a talent competition. The sale of voting tokens aids in funding the needs of our dance, choral, instrumental, theatre, and visual arts programs. Preparations for this family-friendly evening begin in the fall. To join the planning committee please contact, Christine Baltz or Amanda Warlick.
From the Parents Guild

From the Parents Guild President
Welcome to another great school year! We pray you enjoyed your summer. Family involvement is essential for the success of our school. Parent participation continues the strong tradition of an engaged and lively community atmosphere, where our students and families are supported and thrive. Each year, we reach out to our families and provide them with opportunities to engage within our daily school life by using their God-given gifts to serve our community. You can find out how to get involved by clicking HERE. We invite you to prayerfully consider how your time and talents can contribute to the life of the school and make St. Joseph’s an even more vibrant and engaging community. Your help is wanted, needed, and appreciated. PLEASE NOTE: Checking a box indicates an interest to help serve at the event. All interested volunteers will be contacted by the lead to verify your availability to serve. Questions? Contact Aimee Lonergan.

Your Donations for 2019-2020!
Thank you to everyone who donated time, talent, and financial support to the Parents Guild last year. Your generosity has provided funds for teacher luncheons, Grandparents Day, support for the Sunshine Committee, gifts of appreciation for the faculty and staff, Catholic Schools Week, and much more. This year, the Parents Guild was able to donate one promethean board, $1,000 to the library, $1,000 to technology to purchase new iPads and $200 to the new Aerospace Club. Congratulations to the St. Joseph’s Family!

Did you know your groceries and Amazon purchases can help raise money for St. Joseph’s?
In just a few minutes, you can set up your account and help us start gaining rewards with:

• **Publix Partners:** It’s easy to participate, and we’ll no longer use the plastic tag. Begin by setting up your online account HERE. Then click on “My Publix Partner” and enter “ST JOSEPH’S CATHOLIC SCHOOL – GREENVILLE, SC” or 29607 and click on St. Joseph’s Catholic School to designate your savings. When finished, use your phone number at checkout during your weekly Publix visits and help us continue to raise money for SJCS. To date, we’ve raised more than $56,000 through this incredible program!

• **Harris Teeter Together in Education:** Register your VIC Card or sign up for eVIC card HERE. Once your account is set up, scroll down to Together in Education and type in the code for SJCS: 5284. Please note the program runs from October to May and this process needs to be renewed every year.

• **Lowes Foods:** Join the Cart to Class program by clicking HERE. We are listed under “St. Joseph’s.” Once you’ve selected and saved our school, we will begin receiving rewards from your weekly shopping trips.

• **Amazon Smile:** Help us raise money each time you make purchases on Amazon by using Amazon Smile. To designate SJCS, click HERE. We are listed as St. Joseph’s Catholic School Inc. In order for us to receive savings, please use smile.amazon.com for your future Amazon purchases.

**Box Tops**
You can still clip and send your box tops to school! However, the Box Tops program will become digital-only soon. Participating brands have changed their packaging from a traditional Box Tops clip to the new Box Top label. If you see the new label, use the Box Tops app to scan your receipt. The app will find participating products purchased at any store and instantly add cash to our school’s earnings online. Box Tops are still worth 10¢ each for our school. To download the app and find more information, click HERE.

**Looking for Spirit Wear or Locker Ladders?**
Although our School Store is temporarily closed, the Development Office is helping us and has spirit wear and locker ladders available for sale. Contact Rachel Neubauer for more information.

**Used Uniform Sale**
Thank you go Debbie Cruz and her team for organizing another successful Used Uniform Sale. This is Debbie’s last year, and we are in need of a volunteer(s) to take over. If you are interested, please contact Aimee Lonergan.
College Rep Visits
With COVID-19 and college travel restrictions, many of our college visits will be done virtually this school year. Students **MUST** sign up for these visits in advance (at least one day prior to the event) so that an appropriate size room can be secured for social distancing guidelines. Students will not be permitted to attend a college visit that they have not previously signed up to attend.

Numerous colleges have already scheduled campus visits and we are currently working to schedule several others. These visits will be communicated via Scoir and on the College Counseling page of the SJCS website under “Colleges Visiting SJCS”. Students **must** register for visits through their Scoir account, at least one day in advance. We attempt to schedule as many of these visits as possible during the high school lunch period so that juniors and seniors can participate without missing class time. However, sometimes visits will need to take place at another time during the school day and in these cases; those students who have a particular interest in the college will need to ask permission from his or her teacher to be excused from class. This will take place at the discretion of individual instructors. Please encourage your child to attend as many of these informal meetings as possible. These sessions provide great opportunities for students to talk with the college reps in a relaxed setting along with their classmates. Please see the email that was sent in August with further instructions for students.

From the Development Office

**Thank You**
Thank you to the Demas Family (Mug & Muffin Cafe) and the SJCS Parents Guild who generously provided a delicious catered lunch for the faculty and staff during orientation. The faculty and staff were grateful for such an enjoyable and delicious meal. Thank you!

**Annual Fund**
Our goal this fiscal year (July 2020 – June 2021) is to engage the financial support of 100% of our school families, faculty, and staff in giving to the Annual Fund. We will track participation numbers by grade level throughout the year, starting in October.

The Annual Fund provides approximately 6% of the school’s overall budget. It accounts for 75% of the funding that is not covered by tuition. These dollars are raised every year through the generosity of our community, and provide tuition assistance, support for academic programs, athletics, fine arts, campus ministry, and enrich student life. Our Annual Fund goal for this year, which includes proceeds from the Gala, is $500,000. Please contact Kevin Meyer with any questions, and download your Annual Fund Donation Form today!
From the Business Office

Cafeteria Service
Flik Dining Services is the SJCS cafeteria service. This year, due to safety concerns, all lunches must be preordered by Wednesday of the week before, no exceptions. All lunches will be a boxed lunch. In the beginning, we will only be offering sandwich and salad options, with hot lunches to follow. All lunches will include a drink and no substitutions will be allowed. All lunches will be $5.25.

Lunch orders for each student will be placed through the FACTS Family Portal and charged to your school account. Balances from “My School Bucks” were credited to your FACTS account on Friday, August 21.

To order lunches:
• Go to your FACTS Family Portal (It must be the parent’s account, not the student account)
• Select Student
• Select Lunch
• The weekly calendar will appear. Select the date at the top for the week you are ordering for and you will see your lunch choices
• Click on “+ Create Web Order” at the top in the blue box
• Fill in the quantity you want to order for each item/day and then click “Order Items” to place your order.
• Repeat this process for each student ordering lunch.

All orders must be in by 5:00 PM on Wednesday for the entire following week. For example, lunch for the week of September 14, 2020 must be in by 5:00 PM on Wednesday, September 9, 2020.

Tuition Credit Program
Thank you to many of our school families for employing our new Student Recruitment Tuition Credit Program this past school year. We greatly appreciate you referring families to SJCS! This program is ongoing and we hope that more SJCS parents will choose to take advantage of this for 2021-2022 recruitment. As a reminder, click HERE to read about the program, and note that the $500 tuition credit will be issued on your November statement after the student you referred has attended classes for one quarter.