



ST. JOSEPH'S
CATHOLIC SCHOOL
NEWS & NOTES

Striving to form the MINDS, HEARTS, and SOULS of its students in the likeness of Christ.

From the Desk of the Headmaster

The Year of St. Joseph

Greetings from St. Joseph's Catholic School!

Well, it is certainly good to be back in the building again. A school building without students is a rather dull and depressing place. I can imagine that you might say the same thing about your teenagers when they don't have the opportunity to go to school in-person! It's our hope that taking two virtual weeks at the start of the second semester will help us avoid a greater disruption of in-person education later in the semester. Please do your part by diligently following the school's COVID protocols and keeping students who are ill out of the building by consistently completing the daily Magnus Health App.

As I mentioned in my letter to you in early January, Pope Francis recently proclaimed 2021 a year particularly dedicated to the contemplation and intercession of St. Joseph. Last month Bishop Robert Guglielmone proclaimed an act of consecration entrusting the Diocese of Charleston to St. Joseph's care. At St. Joseph's Catholic School, I would like to see us embrace a tradition in the church of dedicating Wednesdays to St. Joseph's intercession. We've talked about this as a faculty and we're going to look for ways to remind the students on Wednesdays, in particular, that they can go to Joseph for help with all manner of concerns and problems. St. Joseph is quite a remarkable person, who set aside his hopes and dreams for a life of greater purpose, meaning, and ultimately happiness to serve as the Husband of Mary and Foster-Father of Jesus. Joseph is known for his many virtues captured in the titles given to him by the Church, including The Worker; Patron of the Dying; Patron of the Universal Church; Patron of Fathers, Travelers, and Immigrants; Most Pure; Most Obedient; Mirror of Patience; and my favorite: Terror of Demons. I'm personally grateful to St. Joseph for bringing me to Greenville and this school, in particular, two decades ago, but that's a story for another time.

As part of dedicating Wednesdays to him as a school community, I'd like to ask every family to say the school prayer (found [HERE](#)) together at some point on Wednesdays, perhaps at dinner. My recommendation is to take the thing that you are most concerned about as a family and entrust it to Joseph's care and protection. I am confident that Joseph will answer your prayers and shower graces on your family, including graces you might never see or recognize as such. As school leader, I want to see what Joseph does with us as a school community when our families entrust their cares to him.

Among St. Joseph's virtues highlighted by the Pope, he points out that Joseph was **creatively courageous** in the face of difficulties and Francis calls on us to do the same. Creative courage, Francis said, "emerges especially in the way we deal with difficulties. In the face of difficulties, we can either give up and walk away, or somehow engage with it. At times, difficulties bring out resources we did not even think we had."

"God always finds ways to save us, provided we show the same creative courage as the carpenter of Nazareth, who was able to turn a problem into a possibility by trusting always in divine providence."

I am grateful for the members of our school staff who have found meaningful ways to engage students, parents, grandparents, and donors despite the pandemic. Even with all of the obstacles, restrictions, and setbacks, our teachers, coaches, staff, and parent volunteers have found ways to provide our students with a St. Joseph's Catholic School experience, which might be the reason that our admission applications (and this without the benefit of an Open House) and donations to the school are historically high for this time of year.

Speaking of admissions applications for 2021-22, this is a friendly reminder that SJCS has a referral program that nets current St. Joseph's families a \$500 tuition credit for any student who enrolls in the school based upon that family's recommendation. Full details found [HERE](#). Since over 40% of our parents tell us their kids are at St. Joseph's because

of a friend's recommendation, please do what you can to spread the good word about St. Joseph's to family and friends.

I know that we are all longing for the day when life in general and life at school can return to "normal." I am right there with you. Until that happens, we are going to continue to be creatively courageous by looking for ways to do the things that our students need from us. For example, there are meetings this week to try to figure out how we can have an in-person Gala and Prom this year, even if it means moving both events outside. Stay tuned for more to come about this and other spring events in the weeks and months ahead.

In closing, let's double down on our commitment to pray for an end to the pandemic, for all healthcare workers, and for all those suffering from the loss of loved ones. Please join us in praying for the following members of the SJCS family: for Shaun, Becky '17 and Jen '15 Lapinski on the passing of their grandmother; for Sarah and Thomas '17 Poteat on the passing of their grandfather; for Hailyn Walker on the passing of her grandfather; for Grace Frisch on the passing of her grandmother; for Sara and Emily Gushue on the passing of their grandfather; for Colin and Sydney Slater on the passing of their great-grandmother; for Maddie Doniel on the passing of her grandfather; for Rod McClendon on the passing of his sister; for Jennifer Church on the passing of her father-in-law; for Michele Houmis on the passing of her mother; for Barbara McGrath (and daughters Julie '02 and Carolyn '99) on the passing of her mother.

With Love and Prayers,
Keith F. Kiser
Headmaster

Things You Need To Know

Student Absences & Remote Learning

Students who are going to be out for only a short time (one or two days) do not need to work with the Remote Learning Specialist to keep up with their classes. They can email teachers directly and, if appropriate, attend class virtually according to the plans for the day. Long-term arrangements for virtual learning due to COVID or other reasons must be organized in advance and have the proper medical clearance.

Admissions Open House Cancelled for January 31

Out of an abundance of caution related to the rise in COVID-19 in our community, this event has been cancelled. If you or someone you know would like to schedule a personal tour, please contact [Admissions](#).

Romeo & Winifred, February 4

In celebration of Catholic Schools Week, the SJCS Fine Arts Department will be presenting the thirteenth annual 8th grade play on Thursday, February 4. The current plan is to perform live for the families of the 8th graders involved and to livestream that evening. However, a back-up plan will be to record the performance and stream on the Fine Arts YouTube page at a later date. Keep an eye out for more information as we get closer to the performance event.

Final Priority Admissions Testing, Saturday, February 6

The final priority admissions testing date for Fall 2021 enrollment is Saturday, February 6 for all grades. Applicants who test on or before February 6 will be the first ones to receive admissions notifications. February 6 is also the final merit scholarship testing date for new students entering ninth grade. There is one more scheduled admissions testing date on Saturday, March 13. Please don't miss these dates if you or someone you know has an applicant interested in SJCS for next year. Applicants sign up for testing when they complete the online application. Contact [Admissions](#) for more information.

Junior College Planning Night, February 9

With the current restrictions on large group gatherings at the school, we have decided to hold our annual meeting virtually. We will send you information on this event prior to the meeting date of February 9. Brand R. Stille, Vice President for Enrollment at Wofford College, will be joining us and presenting on some of the following topics: College Admission Calendar, Key Terms (Early Decision, Early Action, Rolling Admission, Wait List, Common Application, etc.), Student/Parent/School Responsibilities, How to Research College Information, College Entrance Exams, and Financial Aid. At least one parent must attend with their student. We will let you know who your college counselor will be and will begin scheduling individual student/family meetings following this meeting.

Freshman and Sophomore College Counseling Night, February 11

With the current restrictions on large group gatherings at the school, we have decided to hold our annual meeting virtually.

We will send you information on this event prior to the meeting date of February 11. During this meeting, we will be discussing general academic and college planning items. Holley Springfield, Admissions Advisor for Auburn University, will also be presenting on student involvement, course selection, and general college search items. All freshman and sophomore families must attend this meeting at least once (either during the students freshman or sophomore year).

Jubilate Knight for the Arts Talent Competition and Fundraiser, February 13

- It's time for one of St. Joseph's most anticipated annual events, the ***Jubilate Knight for the Arts Talent Competition!*** This year's program will be a one-night only virtual event so plan now for a family viewing party on Saturday, February 13 at 7:00 PM. This annual fundraiser for our Fine Arts Department is always a crowd favorite, and work is underway to maintain the caliber entertainment that you expect. This year's event will be streamed on both our the school's Facebook page and YouTube channel and will incorporate pre-recorded performances with a live announcement of our winners. Be on the lookout for registration information the week of February 8.
- To make the evening even more fun, be sure to order your **Jubilate Knight-In Kit: It's the Bomb!** Your kit will include two ever-popular hot chocolate bombs, microwave popcorn, and movie-theater candy, as well as SJCS drink koozies and special suggested viewing party recipes from a few of your favorite St. Joseph's faculty and staff - all to be enjoyed while watching Jubilate Knight and voting for your favorite acts! **Order your Jubilate Knight-In Kit [HERE](#).** Orders are due Friday, February 5.

Presidents' Day Off, February 15

There is no school on Monday, February 15 in observance of Presidents' Day. The school and school offices will be closed.

Ash Wednesday, February 17

Mass will be offered before the start of school where ashes will be blessed (not distributed). There will be a Liturgy of the Word (not a Mass) and the distribution of ashes during the optional 12:20 PM time. Both events are closed to the public and are for students, faculty, and staff only.

Schedule Week of March 1/Minimester Cancelled

In light of the significant restrictions that would have to be observed, St. Joseph's will not host the annual Minimester this spring. We will have an abbreviated week, with classes meeting as normal from Monday, March 1 to Wednesday, March 3. Thursday and Friday of that week are teacher in-service days and classes will not meet.

NO SCHOOL, March 4-5

There will be no school on Thursday, March 4 and Friday, March 5 so that the faculty and staff may attend a virtual retreat.

Annual Lenten Fish Fry-DRIVE THRU, March 12

Mark your calendars for an SJCS favorite, the Annual Lenten Fish Fry on Friday, March 12. This year, we will again be offering Alumni Parent, Charlie Sutter's delicious fish dinner. Please Note: Due to COVID, all meals will need to be pre-ordered and a selected pick-up time chosen for a Drive-Thru pick-up of your meal. Meals can be ordered [HERE](#).

Ready to Travel Again?

Currently SJCS has 2 international trips planned and active.

- A trip to Japan with Mrs. and Mr. Carr is scheduled for June 2021. Visit Tokyo, Japanese castles, Hiroshima, and Kyoto. This is a private tour with just our students. Our tour company, Explorica, has a very generous refund and rescheduling policy! Interested? Contact [Mrs. Carr](#).
- If this summer seems too soon, Spring Break 2022 also has an active trip! Come travel to England and Scotland on a carefully curated trip to London, Edinburgh, and Glasgow among others. A stunning Loch Ness cruise and High Tea experience at an English estate, as well as a Harry Potter tour are included. Interested? Visit [Explorica](#) and use the trip ID Code *Neighbors50-85* to see the full itinerary and to sign up, or contact [Mrs. Carr](#).

Middle School Supplies Replenishment

At this point in the school year, your child's school supplies probably need a little boost. The teachers have mentioned that many students are in need of paper, pencils, marking pens, etc. Please check with your child and send them with needed supplies in order to be prepared for class. In addition, teachers have mentioned that the tissues and antibacterial wipes are dwindling. If your child is able to bring in one of these to their Household, it would be very much appreciated.

From the Middle School Director

There's a new phrase in our house. My 9th grader started saying it a few weeks ago, and I wasn't sure if it was meant to be a compliment or a criticism. Maybe you've heard it ... but it has to do with being different. "He's just different." "We're just different." "I'm just different." When I heard Johnny use this phrase in reference to Aaron Rodgers - "Man, he's just different ..." (when the Green Bay Packers upended the LA Rams in the NFC Divisional Round), I surmised that the phrase was, in fact, meant to be a compliment. Apparently, being "different" is now a cool thing.

With pandemic restructuring in our building, my office moved to the Sixth Grade Academy floor this fall. This meant I would be closer to the youngest students in our building, and - with more doors open to promote airflow - in regular earshot of teacher instruction. Due to excellent teaching, I have refreshed my basic Algebra skills, gained a renewed appreciation for the properties of electricity, learned some new things about Ancient Greece and brushed up on prepositional phrases. And I say all that because I want to convey that our teachers are ... well, they are just different.

Day in and day out, our teachers present material to our students with an enthusiasm that is contagious, despite what outside pressures or problems occupy their mind. And there are a lot of those these days. It is one thing to prepare a lesson, and it is quite another to deliver that same lesson - enthusiastically and vigorously - five times over. Now, I love middle school students, but grabbing their attention isn't always easy! At St. Joseph's, we expect a lot from our teachers. The excellent education we deliver is not accomplished through special books or some fancy curriculum. It's our teachers. They are ... well, they are just different. They present a proposal to every child in our building about how to live an authentic, Catholic Christian life - true to the gifts and talents that each of us is called to use in service to our world. It is an amazing and life-changing invitation.

With the virus still having a stronghold in our community, our Winter Open House scheduled for January 31 has been cancelled. However, our Admissions Office is beyond busy providing personal tours. So, if someone you know is looking for an education that can't compare to anything else out there because it is ... well, it's just different ... then be sure to send them our way. Being different has proved to be a good thing. A very good thing.

From the High School Director

Concerns over COVID prompted many families to explore independent schooling this past summer, and one question that came up over and over concerned our weekly schedule. On Monday, Tuesday, and Friday, we have all our classes for about 50 minutes while on Wednesday and Thursday we have only half the classes but have them for an extended block of time. Many parents are familiar with either the traditional model of every class every day, or the block schedule where students have half the number of classes per day but for longer periods of time. We have a mix. Why? Well, there are several benefits to our schedule:

- The extra time we have on Wednesday and Thursday gives us an opportunity to focus on our school's mission through Mass, various assemblies, or other "extracurricular" aspects of what we do at St. Joseph's. While it's true that COVID has thrown some of that a curve ball, we believe that purposeful, intentional attention to spiritual and moral development has to be represented in the schedule. If you want to know what a school takes seriously, look at their schedule. What made it in, and what got squeezed out, is an indicator of what the school's long-term values really are. Our modified schedule on Wednesday and Thursday gives us a chance to focus on these things every week, rather than only when we "make it fit."
- Extended class periods give students more opportunities for labs, project work, and writing assignments. Sometimes the extra 20 minutes in those Wednesday/Thursday sections give students the time they need to deepen their understanding or revise their work in ways that have both short-term (grades) and long-term (understanding) benefits.
- Our schedule allows for a break mid-week. We know we ask a lot of our students, and giving them a break mid-week helps them be more responsive to what's going on in their lives. With only half the classes meeting on Wednesday, for instance, our students can devote extra attention to those classes when needed because they don't have so many assignments due each day.
- Block-scheduling is a popular alternative these days because it gives increased attention to fewer topics at one time. The problem is that in a true block schedule, an extended absence can set a student back significantly further than it would in a traditional format. Our modified block gets the best of both worlds. We get broader coverage throughout the year, with regular opportunities to go deeper every week.
- Finally, our schedule means that students keep up their skills in every discipline throughout the year. Some disciplines, math and language especially, require sustained exposure, not just concentrated, but ultimately shortened, learning opportunities. Our modified block schedule sustains exposure over the whole year while also allowing for regular opportunities to review and deepen student skill-development.

From the Academic Support Services & College Counseling Office

Senior College Acceptances/Scholarships

Please continue to share your good news and update the college counseling office of college acceptances and scholarship awards.

From the Athletic Department

Spring Sports Tryouts Begin February 1

Please note that all required athletic forms MUST be uploaded [HERE](#) before tryouts begin.

- Boys & Girls Track and Field: February 1-5. Monday & Friday from 3:30-5:00 PM; Tuesday & Thursday (at JL Mann) from 5:00-6:30 PM; Wednesday from 1:30-3:00 PM
- Boys JV & Varsity Soccer: February 1-5 from 3:30-5:30 PM
- Girls JV & Varsity Soccer: February 1-5. Monday & Tuesday from 5:00-7:00 PM; Wednesday from 1:00 - 3:00 PM; Thursday & Friday from 3:30 - 5:30 PM
- Girls MS Soccer: February 8 from 3:30-5:00 PM; February 10 from 1:30-3:00 PM; February 12 from 3:30-5:00 PM
- Varsity Baseball: February 2-4 from 5:30-7:45 PM
- JV Baseball: February 4, 5, 8 from 4:30-6:00 PM
- MS Baseball: February 22, 24, 26 from 3:30-5:00 PM
- Girls Lacrosse: February 1 from 3:30-5:00 PM at Sunset Park
- Boys Lacrosse: February 1 from 4:30-6:00 PM at Sunset Park
- Boys JV & Varsity Tennis: February 1-5 from 3:30-5:00 PM
- Softball: February 1 from 4:00-6:00 PM
- Boys Golf: February 3 & 10 at 3:00 PM at The Preserve at Verdae

Sports Participation Requirements for 2020-2021

Any student participating in a sport for the 2020-2021 school year at SJCS 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! If you were an athlete in 2019-2020 please use your existing login. The required forms that must be filled out online prior to the first practice are: Pre-Participation History and Pre-Participation Sports Physical Exam (please print and take with you to your doctor and then upload), 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 Planet HS (formerly Arbiter Athlete) found [HERE](#). Information for new athletes on how to create the parent and student login at Planet HS will be available on the SJCS website under Athletics. Be sure to type St. Joseph's Catholic School in the search line when looking for our school.

Third Annual SJCS Athletic Department Golf Tournament, August 6

Save the date for the third annual SJCS Athletic Department Golf Tournament at The Preserve at Verdae golf course on August 6, 2021. The Athletic Department will be hosting this fundraiser for all sports teams. These funds will be used to support all the teams that make up St. Joseph's athletics. This has replaced many of the individual fundraisers that each team has done in the past. We strongly encourage the whole St. Joseph's community to participate in the golf tournament. All alumni, families, and friends are welcome! Look for more details in March.

Knights Athletic Booster Club

The Knights Athletic Booster Club is the all-sport Booster Club for SJCS. The Goal of the Booster Club is to support our student-athletes. Each year, we raise money and work directly with our Athletic Director, Eric Nash, to supplement the athletic budget to better serve our student-athletes. Thank you to all who have joined the Booster Club so far this year. We have a record number of memberships and our student athletes and coaches are grateful for your support. We do have a goal of 100% participation every year and it's never too late to join. If you haven't joined, you can join at any time [HERE](#).

From the Business Office

Re-Enrollment Deadline, March 15

Re-enrollment for 2020-2021 school year will be completed online through FACTS. In late January, when the next school year's tuition rates are published, parents will receive instructions on how to complete the re-enrollment process. The deadline to complete this process is February 16, 2021.

Flexible Tuition

Flexible Tuition offers individualized tuition rates for families based on a family's documented financial ability to pay. Any family that is unable to pay the full price (which is set based upon the real cost to educate a student at SJCS) is invited to apply for an individual rate. That rate will be determined based upon a strictly confidential analysis of the family's financial position with the assistance of FACTS, an independent, third-party organization. Flexible Tuition is awarded on an annual basis and must be applied for each year. To get to the FACTS application website, click [HERE](#).

Tuition Insurance

- St. Joseph's has, for several years, maintained a no refund policy related to tuition. After July 1 of each year, tuition is owed for the entire year whether or not the student completes the school year. St. Joseph's incurs expenses, such as faculty salaries, based on the expectation that our families will pay for the entire year and is, therefore, not in a position to cancel or reduce those financial obligations when a student withdraws.
- To help overcome some of the uncertainty for our families, St. Joseph's now offers an optional tuition insurance policy for our families. All families have the option to accept or decline the policy during enrollment. If the family declines to purchase the insurance and their student withdraws, the family will be expected to pay tuition for the remainder of the school year. More details about the tuition insurance program will be provided with your student's re-enrollment.

Senior Tuition Accounts

In order to participate in Baccalaureate Mass and Graduation, all senior tuition and fees must be paid in full, except for the June tuition, by May 20, 2021.

From the Parents Guild

Graduation Yard Signs

Calling all senior parents! We have partnered with VIPdecals.com for you to purchase graduation signs customized for your son or daughter. These are white outdoor yard signs that are 24" wide x 18" tall and include a stand. The price for a single-sided personalized sign is \$25, double sided is \$35. Check out the signs [HERE](#).

There are two due dates and delivery is FREE to the school for pick up or you can send direct to your home (at an additional cost). Due to the concerns and restrictions regarding COVID, we will work with you to ensure a safe delivery, however our plan is to have all signs placed outside the front office based on delivery dates below:

- **1st Batch of Signs: Order by March 21 for free delivery by March 31**
- **2nd Batch of Signs: Order by April 25 for free delivery by May 5**

This is a great way to showcase your son/daughter! Plus, for every sign sold, the school will receive monies to support future initiatives sponsored by the Parents Guild, including promethean boards, iPads, water bottle fountains, etc. Questions? Contact [Anne Stein](#).

Looking Ahead to 2021-2022 School Year

Are you interested in getting involved? We are now making plans for next year and would love your input. We have many opportunities to serve on the Parents Guild Board, as committee chairs, and much more. Contact [Kimberly Masters](#) for more information.

From the Development Office

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. As of January, an impressive 46% of our school families have contributed. Congratulations to the 7th grade which is leading with a **grade level participation of 56%**! We will continue to track these participation numbers through the Gala in the spring.
- The Annual Fund provides approximately 6% of the school's budget 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. The **Annual Fund total through December was \$283,000!**
- Please contact [Kevin Meyer](#) with any questions, download your [Annual Fund Donation Form](#) or give [online](#) today!

2020 Tax Statements

Giving statements for 2020 will be distributed by January 31. These statements are meant to assist with tax preparation. For any questions regarding these statements, please contact [Kevin Meyer](#).

Annual Auction Gala Update

Mark your calendars for the 2021 Annual Auction Gala on Friday, April 23. Our Gala Committee members, faculty/staff, students, and parents are working together to diligently prepare for our school's largest fundraiser that supports our students. Stay tuned to your email for details pertaining to the nature of our Gala. If you are interested in volunteering or donating a silent or live auction item, contact [Megha Lal](#) (Gala Chair), [Amy Cassidy](#) (Gala Co-Chair), or [Rachel Neubauer](#) in the Development Office

The Gala Committee Needs Your Help

The Gala Committee is in need of:

- Bottles of wine for the wine pull
- Baskets that can be used for Silent Auction
- Vacation homes or timeshares to be auctioned off

If you are able to help, contact [Megha Lal](#) (Gala Chair), [Amy Cassidy](#) (Gala Co-Chair), or [Rachel Neubauer](#) in the Development Office.