



— Saints Simon and Jude Mission Statement —

Through the Immaculate Heart of Mary we at Saints Simon and Jude School, commit ourselves to learning, proclaiming and living the Good News of Jesus Christ. We strive to educate and develop all for Catholic leadership in the church and community, enabling one another to serve with Compassion, Courage and Competence.

Letter from Sister Regina

A Happy and Blessed 2021 to one and all! Thank you very much for your many kindnesses to me during this Christmas Season. The greetings, cards, and gifts were all greatly appreciated and enjoyed. I am grateful for your thoughtfulness and generosity. I am truly blessed to be part of this wonderful parish school family! Know that you and your families are remembered very specially in my prayers of thanksgiving.

This Sunday, the Church celebrates the Feast of the Baptism of Our Lord. This feast concludes the Christmas Season. The Church/we now enter Ordinary Time until Ash Wednesday when the Lenten Season begins. The feast of Our Lord's baptism allows each of us to recall our own baptism when we received God's grace. For most of us, our baptism took place when we were infants. As our fifth graders learn about the sacrament of Baptism in Religion, they create a poster highlighting their own baptism. These posters are displayed for all to enjoy. When our seventh graders receive the sacrament of Confirmation they profess their baptismal promises that were spoken for them by their Godparents. Many of our children have been present at the baptism of younger siblings. Pictures and videos have captured the special day of our Baptism. Spend some time with your child/ren recalling this grace-filled day. Baptism is truly a wonderful gift we are given where we, created in the image and likeness of God, become God's beloved sons and daughters.

Prayer for the New Year

O God of time, bless the time that You have given us. O God of eternity, help us to use this time that we have with our sights set on eternal life with You.

We begin this New Year filled with hope in You. We start by placing our trust in You. We believe in You, increase our faith during this year. May each day of this year be spent in loving You.

May the time that You place in our trust this year, be a time of peace. Make us peacemakers.

May the time that You place in our trust this year be a time of justice. Help us work towards justice.

O God, we place our lives in Your care this year. Bless us, our families and our friends, and all those who begin this year in faith, with hope, and in love. Amen.

We look forward to welcoming everyone back to in-person learning on Monday, January 11. Virtual learning remains an option.

May Our Mother of Perpetual Help be with us and keep us all safe and healthy.

From Sister Barbara Jude

The Saints Simon and Jude Parish Community is beginning our annual Baby Formula Emergency Food Drive.

We know how expensive baby formula is from the stores. Parents who do need the formula are very, very grateful for any size container that is donated. Please bring to school by Friday, February 12th and place inside the containers by the exit doors.

God bless you and your generous hearts.

Important Registration Reminder for 2021-2022 School Year

Thank you to all our families who have registered your child/ren for the fall of 2021. We've had a great response and look forward to another school year at Saints Simon and Jude! If you completed the form, you should have received an email confirmation.

The registration process is simple and only takes a minute or two to complete. Due to high demand combined with the need to maintain capacity due to Covid restrictions, we ask that you complete this process by Sunday, January 10, 2021. [Click here to access the online enrollment form on the school website.](#)

Here are a few important items to note:

1. We want our current families to have the first opportunity to reserve your child/ren's spot/s and register new siblings, prior to accepting new family applications on January 12, 2021. If you are undecided for any reason, please note this on the form.
2. If you register prior to January 12, 2021, you will receive a \$50 discount and the fee will be added to your FACTS account on January 12 (and will withdraw 10 days later). **If you have a financial hardship with the fee, please make a note on your enrollment form and we will be in touch.**

Total Registration Fee prior to January 12: \$200 for one child, \$300 for two children, \$400 for three or more children

Total Registration Fee beginning January 13: \$250 for one child, \$350 for two children, \$450 for three or more children

3. The [2021-2022 tuition rates](#) were developed in conjunction with the SSJ School Board and parish Finance Council. Tuition assistance is available for all Saints Simon and Jude families who qualify or have a short-term financial need. To submit an application for the 2021-2022 school year, [click here](#) to access your FACTS account. Please contact Sister Regina if you have an immediate need for this school year.

SSJ's Annual Fund Campaign & Company Matches

Thank you to everyone who has supported our School's Annual Fund! We are off to a great start! There have been over \$57,000 in gifts and pledges toward our \$150,000 goal. If you wish to make a gift to support the many needs for our school children, all levels are greatly appreciated. There are brochures and envelopes in the church narthex or you can give online at school.simonandjude.org/annual-fund. More details on our funding priorities can be found in the campaign brochure and website.

Proceeds from our spring Night at the Races event/auction will also support the Annual Fund campaign. Watch for more information as we determine if the event can be held in-person or virtual.

Also, did you know that many companies will match your gift to SSJ? Past matches have been received from Bank of America, CTDI, Johnson & Johnson, Northwestern Mutual Foundation, Vanguard, and many others. Most companies have convenient, online platforms where you can request your match to SSJ.

Thank you for supporting our school and the mission of Catholic Education!



The Saints Simon and Jude Annual Fund supports the many needs of our school including technology. SSJ's technology needs are greater than ever as we offer in-person and virtual school options during the Covid-19 pandemic. We have expenses related to new equipment and Chromebook upkeep for students in kindergarten to grade 8 who have school issued one-to-one devices (K and 1st grade touchscreen Chromebooks are coming very soon!). Other needs include new classroom SmartBoards with interactive displays. SSJ also continues to integrate STREAM (Science, Technology, Religion, Engineering, Arts, and Math) into its curriculum at all levels from preschool to grade 8.

Prayer Requests

- For Mr. Thomas Blair, grandfather of Madison (room 16), who is ill. May Christ's healing hand restore him to good health.
- For Mrs. Donna DiDomenico, grandmother of Tyler (room 14) and Nolan Leonhard (room 1), who is ill. May Christ's healing hand comfort her and restore her to good health.
- For Mr. Lido Pinto, great-grandfather of Liam (room 11) and Declan Muldowney (PreK 3/4), who is ill. May Christ's healing hand comfort him and restore him to good health.
- For Mr. Victor Gerace, Sr, father-in-law of Mrs. Gerace (Preschool aide), who is ill. May Christ's healing hand comfort him and restore him to good health.
- For Mrs. Maureen Esslinger, grandmother of Hayley (room 1), Braeden (K1) and Rickie Kirchner (K2), who is ill. May Christ's healing hand restore her to good health.
- For Mr. Phil Gard, grandfather of Savannah Sommer (room 14), who is ill. May Christ's healing hand grant him comfort and peace.
- For Mr. Joe Brumfield, husband of Mrs. Carol Brumfield, (SSJ lunch monitor), who is ill. May Christ's healing hand grant him a complete and speedy recovery.

We are happy to pray for the needs of our school family. If any family has a prayer request please send it to srelinich@simonandjude.org.

January Calendar Items

- Lunch menus are going home on Monday, 1/11 and due back on Thursday, 1/14.
- School Mass is on Friday, 1/15. The December Peacemakers will be awarded.
- Martin Luther King Day is a School Holiday on Monday, 1/18.

New Year's Message from Father Gerlach

Happy New Year 2021

The Dawn has approached and is here.

Dear Parishioners of Saints Simon and Jude, West Chester, Pennsylvania.

"Rejoice in the Lord always, I will say it again, rejoice!"

Everyone ought to see the strength and determination of you the people of God.

We look forward and are grateful for the blessings of this day. Our glass is not only half-full, but in the face of every burden our glass is overflowing in hope.

We mourn all the lives of those who died in 2020;

We mourn the very real difficulties that attempt division; Yet we are confident and constant: our elderly are very, very wise; our adults are not silenced; our youth have vision and with incredible energy the little ones dance with abandon.

We stand strong and willing to make this year yet another opportunity to Give God the glory. We courageously reflect on our beautiful United States of America and move forward as a Constitutional people. We meditate on our Catholic faith that is founded by Christ, rooted in sacred scripture and nurtured by the seven sacraments. We have daily and eternal purpose. We are a 2000 year Eucharistic Community determined and dutifully celebrating beauty and goodness.

We leave 2020 behind as a memory to be healed and lessons learned.

We embrace 2021 as an "adventure, for in the Lord, the voyage never ends".

Have no doubt, in the Lord there is glory and the fullness of redemption.

This is a call to pray at home, safely come to Church, open our society and love our families. May our Parish church be called a house of prayer and a home of forgiveness.

In Jesus, Mary and Saint Joseph,

Fr. Michael J. Gerlach

My brother priests, deacons, Sisters of the IHM and our entire Staff.



November Peacemakers Empathy & Caring

During the month of November, our Saints Simon and Jude family followed the example of Saint Martin de Porres. Saint Martin founded orphanages for abandoned children and slaves. He became known for patiently caring for the sick, even in the most difficult circumstances. St. Martin was praised for his unconditional care of all people, regardless of race or wealth. St. Martin's life reflected his great love for God and all of God's gifts. Our Peacemakers of the Month strived to be caring and empathetic to all students and staff members in the spirit of Saint Martin de Porres. Congratulations to our Peacemakers.

Rm K1 Skylar Blatt
 Rm 2 Glory Kosseh
 Rm 4 Grace McCarthy
 Rm 6 Caroline Norton
 Rm 8 Madeline Metcalf

Rm K2 Stella Tobin
 Rm 12 James McAllister
 Rm 14 Andrew Lammert
 Rm 16 Morgan Palotas

Rm 1 Isabella Rezer
 Rm 3 Bella Murray
 Rm 5 Caroline Hagerty
 Rm 7 Kieran Bonass

Rm 11 Nicholas Biddle
 Rm 13 Joey DePaoli
 Rm 15 Bobby Civitella
 Rm 17 Liam Appaneal