

# ST. JOSEPH PARISH AND SCHOOL – APRIL 18, 2021

## Dear Parishioners and Parents,

Thursday evening the Board of Directors of St. Joseph School met. The Board is led by Mr. Larry Mudd, Chairman, and the Vice-Chair Person is Mrs Judy Knapp. The other members include Mr. Paul Demboski, Senior Vice President and CFO emeritus of Certified Oil Company, Columbus; Mr James Holzapfel, Principal; Mr James Trout, President emeritus ACME Food; and Dr. Tom Acker, S.J., Administrator St. Joseph Parish. This is the ruling body of the school.

St. Joseph School is a vital and integral part of our parish. Much of the vibrancy of the parish comes because of the school. I am deeply appreciative of the parishioners who have supported the school during thick and thin.

The Board of Directors will consider a school with a 19% increase for the 2021-22 school year.. Already 219 students are accepted. The classes K through 4<sup>th</sup> grade have 20 or more students.

Nine years ago the school was on the verge of closing. Since that time, 13 of the Diocesan grade schools have closed. What are the factors that make our school different and growing?

The intangibles are simply God's favor and the spirit of the parishioners and parents. With these two elements St. Joseph School thrives. There are many other factors that are corollaries to God's favor and the parishioners' dedication. Many of these are practical.

St. Joseph School is dedicated to Superior Education Blended with Faith. Without superior education, why would people choose to come to St. Joseph and pay with their hard-earned dollars? The school is blessed with deeply dedicated teachers who have special skill in teaching.

St. Joseph School serves your parish first. Every parishioner is given the opportunity to have their child(ren) come to St. Joseph School when registration begins. We are equally fortunate living in Ohio, a state that supports Education Choice Grants for lower income families. I laud our governor and our legislators. St. Joseph has 56 EdChoice grants this past year for our students.

Our school also intends to remain modest size. This means we will have one class per grade because the current population dynamics of the parish can only ensure that number. Our class sizes are limited to 24. The parish is happy to accept additional students outside the parish to fill classes to that number. We are pleased to have a significant number of students from our neighboring Cleveland parish, St. Matthew.

St. Joseph Parish is also blessed to live in an area that is peaceful and bucolic. While safety is always a concern, destructive activity is a rarity. The campus of St. Joseph School is surrounded by the Grotto of Mary, a cemetery that always brings memories, and excellent neighbors.

Growth is in the wind. The Knights of Columbus, neighbor on our east side, has accepted the Food Shelf endeavor. The Food Shelf is embraced by the parish but their need for growth and our need for growth in the school suggested a new location. In the summer the old Food Shelf building will be removed and this will give more playing space for our children.

We all know that both the church and the school need additional facilities for meeting and for athletics. These are key items of consideration by the Board of Directors. Hopefully and prayerfully we look forward to a breakthrough in these areas.

Finally, thank you to the parish, the parishioners, and all who contributed to the success of the school.