



St. Joseph's Messenger

A BULLETIN FOR INSPIRING SCHOOL FAMILIES

"GROUNDED IN THE TRADITION OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH, ST. JOSEPH'S SCHOOL IS A COMMUNITY DEDICATED TO FORMING DISCIPLES OF JESUS CHRIST THROUGH FAITH, ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE, AND SERVICE TO OTHERS."

FATHER JEREMY'S FILES

At the end of January, we celebrate Catholic Schools week. As a priest working with students, teachers, parents and staff has been one of the greatest blessings. I believe that it is good to highlight Catholic Schools and share one of the many beautiful lessons that I have learned in working at Catholic Schools in my young priesthood. Catholic Schools offer great education and great community life. But more than that, Catholic Schools build up the Body of Christ by offering an opportunity for students to see the truth of who they are, the truth of who God created them to be, both in this world and in eternal life to come. Students live in an environment where they freely speak about God, pray to Him, and encounter His love. I like to say that Catholic schools not only offer a great education and community life, not only help students encounter the truths about God and themselves, but that they are entrusted with an impossible task. The task of teaching the love of God.

Some might say, 'Why is that impossible?' After all many have heard God is love or God loves us... What I mean is this, as a priest, as a teacher, I can teach you about God's great love, I can teach you how to pray, I can lead you to God, but I cannot make you love God. I cannot give you the love of God that I have in my heart, it is a choice that you must choose and experience for yourself.

St. Basil the Great would teach His monks "[that the] Love of God is not something that can be taught." Love of God is not something that can be taught because the Love of God is a gift that

God has already given to us. Love of God is something that God draws out of us. God who has given us the ability to love, strengthens us in our ability to love as we live with God. The more we choose to love God, the easier it is for God to do this. Other ways of saying this are, 'it is in giving of ourselves that we receive,' and 'it is in forgiving that we are forgiven.' In giving of ourselves or forgiving, we encounter God's love as it is drawn out of us, as God pours it out of our hearts like 'rivers of living water,' (Reference to John 7:37-39).

Interestingly, the term 'education' can be broken down to its Latin roots 'E' meaning 'out' and 'ducere' meaning 'to lead', so together meaning to lead out. Thus, education develops the inner abilities of the individual. To draw out the best in a child, developing their abilities. Thus, education manifests, leads out, develops the capacities that already exist in us. Meaning we become who God created us to be.

The best teachers help their students become who they are created to be. Catholic schools introduce students to the best of teachers, God. God created us and knows what is in us and God knows how to bring it out of us. God can help us to be fully alive and to know the love that He has placed within us. May you turn to God to help you learn this impossible task, that you may know Him and Love Him all the more. "May God who has begun the good work in you bring it to fulfillment." (Phil 1:6)

-Fr. Jeremy

January Feast Days and Special Days

- 1 - Mary, Mother of God
- 2 - Sts. Basil & Gregory Nazianzen
- 4 - St. Elizabeth Ann Seton
- 5 - The Epiphany of the Lord
- 12 - The Baptism of the Lord
- 17 - St. Anthony, Abbot

- 21 - St. Agnes
- 22 - Day of Prayer for End to Abortion
- 24 - St. Francis de Sales
- 25 - Conversion of St. Paul
- 28 - St. Thomas Aquinas
- 31 - St. John Bosco

Upcoming Parish/School Events

 <p>Motherhood needs a community. Join us for food, conversation, and fellowship with other moms!</p> <p>January 28th @7:30pm Location TBD</p> <p><i>Monthly meetings on the last Tuesday of each month</i></p>	<p>January 1 Solemnity of Mary Mass times: 9am at St. Augustine's 5:30pm at St. Joseph's</p> <p>January 2 School Resumes</p> <p>January 3 Movie and Pajama Day</p> <p>Wednesday Evenings Family Faith Formation</p> <p>January 26th-February 1st Catholic Schools Week! Kick-off Mass: January 26th at 10:30am St. Joseph's Church <i>Students: wear your uniforms</i></p> <p>Activities all Week! <i>Watch SchoolSpeak for more details</i></p>
<p>Bible Story Time</p>  <p>Join us for songs, children's Bible story and fun craft</p> <p>Saturdays: Jan. 4th, Feb. 1st, Mar. 1st, & Apr. 5th</p> <p>9am-10am St. Joseph's School Library Park & enter at school entrance</p>  <p>Parent/child activity focus on ages 0-5 but all ages are welcome!</p> 	<p>Save the Date!</p> <p>Mother/Son & Father/Daughter Dances</p>  <p>February 7th & 8th 6:00-8:30 pm at CoHaus</p> <p><i>More details to follow</i></p> 



Please follow St. Joseph's Church events by Signing up for Flocknote. www.itascacatholic.org

January Virtue is Fortitude

January Saints



PreK-2 Grade will study:

SAINT BERNADETTE (1842-1879, France) Saint Bernadette was from a poor family with 5 children. She was often absent from school because her asthma made her very sick. The Blessed Virgin Mary appeared to Bernadette, but no one would believe her. They said she was lying and threatened to punish her. One time, Mary asked her to drink water from a stream in the ground. All Bernadette could find was mud. When she tried to drink it, people made fun of her. But later the water came flowing out, and many sick people who drank it or washed in it received miracles of healing. **Her feast day is April 16.**

Grades 3-5 will study:

SAINT JOAN OF ARC (1412-1431, France) Joan of Arc began hearing the voices of Saint Margaret, Saint Catherine of Alexandria, and Saint Michael the Archangel speak to her as a young girl. The voices told her to go to the man born to be King of France and lead the army to re-conquer his kingdom. She demanded that everyone in the army lead lives of purity so that God could work through them, and though she was very afraid she led them into battle with a flag that said "Jesus, Maria." After many battles Joan was wounded but victorious. France was reunited and Charles VII was crowned king. Unfortunately, Joan was captured and accused of heresy, but the king did not defend her. She was put on trial for heresy because she would not deny that the voices that spoke to her were sent by God. She was condemned and burned at the stake. Later, her trial was reinvestigated and she was declared innocent. In 1920 she was canonized a saint. **Her feast day is May 30.**



Grade 6 will study:

SAINT PAUL MIKI and COMPANIONS (1562-1597, Japan)

Saint Paul Miki was a Jesuit Priest. The Jesuits converted many souls to Christ, and at first the government and tradesmen supported them. This changed when a Spanish ship wrecked on the coast of Japan. The Japanese took the goods the ship had carried and the angry captain showed the Japanese how powerful Spain was by showing a map of all the lands Spain conquered. He warned them that the first step to conquering a land was sending in priests to convert the people. This made the Japanese see the Jesuits as a threat. As a demonstration to frighten other Christians into abandoning their faith, St. Paul Miki and 25 of his companions were forced to march 600 miles from Kyoto to Nagasaki, and were tortured along the way. With God as their strength, they overcame their exhaustion and fear, and as they marched they sang the Te Deum, an ancient hymn of praise to God. When they reached Nagasaki, they were crucified. St. Paul Miki is known for giving his last sermon from the cross on which he died. **Their feast day is February 6.**

Sing with Us The Christmas Story

St. Joseph's students, preschool through 6th grade, performed and sang wonderfully in this year's Christmas Program, "Sing with Us The Christmas Story", on December 17th.



Thank you to our students, teachers, staff, and volunteers for putting together this year's beautiful Christmas Program! The evening program was a perfect way to prepare our hearts and minds for the Christmas Season.

