

ST. JOSEPH PARISH AND SCHOOL – JANUARY 28, 2018

Dear Parishioners and Families,

We are beginning Catholic School Week. Last weekend at our services I mentioned that for me “a church without a school would be like a family without children.” Sometimes families find themselves without children and some in these situations adopt. Life is certainly in the hands of God. I feel very fortunate to be assigned to St. Joseph Parish where you have had a school since 1832 because the priests and the parents love children and their challenge.

I recognize how much more difficult it is to bring up children in a Christian and Catholic atmosphere compared to 70 years ago. Then we had no television, no computers, and no cell phones intruding constantly. Less often mothers worked outside the home. The home was a relaxing safe haven.

In this framework it is somewhat easier to understand the development of little communities of the past. I can recall the Little Italy in Cleveland. In West Virginia there was an enclave which was known as St. Joseph Settlement. It still exists. The Frohnäpfel family name came out of that settlement.

We certainly do not want to set up fenced enclaves or communities. On the other hand, it is very necessary that people find a safe haven against an alien culture where they can create families graciously and positively.

Pope Francis in his year-end message to the people of Rome developed a phrase that “the normal people are truly the artisans of the common good.” A positive or changing culture will not take place from the top down. A positive culture must well up in small nodes from our families, in the Church, and in the school. This is not a call to revert to fences but it is a realization that one cannot live constantly in an alien culture unless there is a way of retreating to a positive and religious culture to restore the battery.

St. Joseph School has positioned itself as a **Rural Oasis of Superior Education Blended with Faith**. This is not merely a position but rather an active agenda which commits us to daily and constant improvement. We mean to continue to be a safe and Christian environment that allows parents to be pleased and at ease for their children during our school time. It is equally important that the children can then return to families which are the main schools for life. The work of our church and the work of our school is to support family environment that is peaceful and Christian. The family is also hopefully an oasis of harmony and growth.

We do not intend to build a wall around our church or school, but rather to have a culture where one can learn, grow, worship, and relax. We need to support families so that when a family leaves the church and the school, the same environment pervades. Our goal: The home, the parish, and the school are safe havens in a world that seems so often alien to our hopes and dreams.

Enrollment for St. Joseph Pre-school and School 2018-19

This year we begin with the school enrollment for the next academic year earlier than usual. This is most positive for us. **We have over 100 current applications.**

St. Joseph will have an 8th grade. Indeed, we invite parents who have 7th and 8th graders in public schools and do not see significant growth in their children’s education, to consider a change of venue. We have small classes, individual attention, and a dedication to **Superior Education Blended with Faith**.

We also recognize that the state of Ohio through its EdChoice Program is very helpful to us. The application program opens February 1st. *St. Joseph School will have a session on Tuesday, February 20th, at 6:30 PM in Gaudete Hall to help parents make the application for the EdChoice Program.* You can fill out/complete the application without this help but possibly the help may be valuable to some of you. I would expect to have a tax person available to answer financial questions giving you the best opportunity for an EdChoice Grant. EdChoice is meant for parents who want to send their children to a private school and we are open to students who want to work, learn, and go forward.