

ST. JOSEPH PARISH AND SCHOOL – NOVEMBER 18, 2018

Dear Families and Parishioners,

St. Joseph Parish appears as an oasis of fresh water and growing fruit trees amidst the parched land in so much of the area and world. I do not wish to recount the desert conditions. I wish to promote this entire campus of St. Joseph in the rural Village of St. Joseph. We are a beacon of hope, joy, and positive growth for the Diocese of Youngstown in this 75th year.

Let me note what you, the parishioners and families, have wrought. Our heritage and prayerful church stands as an impressive landmark as you drive out of the cornfields and come upon this 1905 red brick church. Our school, the oldest private school in the area, is growing against the market and advancing with superior education blended with Faith. The inspiring Grotto of Mary looks over us lovingly as a mother does over her children. Our cemetery resembles a halo above our head, a cloud of witnesses, to intercede for us with the Lord.

The Parish grows, our school numbers increase, and more visitors are joining us. The parish has no debt. The parish house of 1887, restored on the inside, is now receiving a new suit of clothes on the outside. Plans are already drawn up and presented to donors for a new construction that will hold a gymnasium, additional classrooms, space for the youth, a new kitchen, and an arcade in which the people can convene after service.

God continues to bless us sacramentally through many Baptisms. Confirmation for our youth is scheduled for this spring and three of our adults are confirmed this Sunday at our Lady of Mt. Carmel. Young people are inspiring us by their desire to return to St. Joseph for their marriage. Our Communal Confession practice has significant crowds coming for the Sacrament of I'm Sorry.

Your pastor continues to probe with the Diocese the best way of giving people the full sign value of the Body and Blood of Christ. The parish as a whole is acting as a facilitator of God's grace. (Joy of the Gospel #47). Amidst the desert environments of today, we are truly an Oasis of God's creative growth, peace and tranquility.

School Alumni Letter Sent Out

The hard work of many people has assembled a mailing list of former students of St. Joseph School who are not currently parishioners at the parish. The list was typed and assembled by Barbara Brown. Missy Campbell twice a year develops a brochure highlighting the advancements of six months. This informational letter with a request at Thanksgiving time was sent out this week. The envelopes were stuffed by the helping hands of Linda and Joe Olenick and Dan and Joan Mencer along with Missy.

We deliberately do not send these reports to those of you who are already part of the parish. You contribute in so many ways including the Sunday collection, participation in the dinner auction, the festival, and the Lenten Fish Fry. However, if you would like to see what was sent out, there are copies on the back table. If you want to make a special contribution, you can use the special white envelopes in the back of your packets for contributions.

Thank you for your continued presence that makes this Oasis of St. Joseph Village so positive. May this fertile oasis of St. Joseph Village be an inspiration to those around us and to the Youngstown Diocese in its 75th Year.

Fr. Tom Acker, S.J.
November 18, 2018