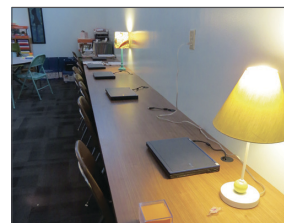




Inside This Issue

From the Principal
Sixth Grade Excitement
Run with the Saints Wrap-up
Saints Fund Update



Enhancing Learning, One Student at a Time

This year, Saint Joseph Catholic School instituted a new Learning Center in an effort to help all students – and our teachers – hone their skills and learn new strategies for continued improvement. We asked Courtney Thompson, Director of Student Success, her thoughts on the new program and the benefits it brings to our school.

What are your goals and expectations for the Learning Center?

I want to make the Learning Center space a positive and welcoming environment, so students feel comfortable. Also, I hope that each year the school can build on the Learning Center's resources, so we can continue to meet the needs of all learners, grade levels, and content areas.

What type of student will be visiting the Learning Center?

All students will visit the Learning Center in some way or another. It is open for students to come in and make up work if need be. If teachers wish to send a group to complete research for an upcoming project, they may do so. I am also pulling in small groups for intervention or enrichment, so the Learning Center sees all sorts of learners.

What can students expect when they visit the Learning Center?

The students can expect to feel welcome and comfortable. I hope the students I am personally working with feel excited and not scared to take risks in their learning process.

What has been the most rewarding part of this endeavor for you, thus far?

The most rewarding part of my job is introducing new strategies to students... strategies they haven't seen before. I hope the students will begin to use these strategies on their own independently. When a student does that, it means they have truly grasped the concept.

What is the main thing you would like for parents to know about the Learning Center?

I hope parents understand that the Learning Center is a place to provide their child or children with extra help and a place where they can be challenged. The Learning Center is a place to motivate and encourage deep thinking, as well as lifelong strategies to store in their child's or children's toolbox.

Mrs. Thompson will also begin professional development sessions with the staff later in the school year, where she hopes to be a good mentor with teaching, modeling, and answering questions the faculty may have about new resources or concepts that will provide differentiated instruction (i.e., teaching methods geared for each student's abilities).

The Learning Center is just one more way Saint Joseph Catholic School is committed to inspiring the minds of our outstanding student body.

Lent Is a Time for Spiritual Renewal

Lent is upon us. During this season, we observe a time of prayer, fasting, and almsgiving as a means of spiritual renewal. Lent is a time for us to reflect on our own shortcomings and pick up our own crosses. As we are told in Luke 9:23, *"Whoever wishes to be my follower must deny his very self, take up his cross each day, and follow in my steps."* Lent is about love of others above love of self and sacrificing in the name of God. Pope Francis said, *"Fasting and sacrificing makes sense if it really chips away at our security and, as a consequence, benefits someone else, if it helps us cultivate the style of the good Samaritan, who bent down to his brother in need and took care of him."* And Thomas à Kempis reminds us that sacrifice and fasting is never in vane if it is done in God's name: *"Nothing, how little so ever it be, if it is suffered for God's sake, can pass without merit in the sight of God."* Within these 40 days, try to pick up a cross, sacrifice for your brother or sister, and embrace spiritual renewal.

We have many things to give thanks for since our last edition. Here are just two:

- I am excited to announce that we will be adding a mobile computer lab comprised of 28 2-in-1 laptops for the 2016-2017 school year. These laptops will enhance the classroom learning environment, allowing students to develop in the four key areas that define a 21st century learner – collaboration, creativity, communication, and critical thinking. These skills will help our students be the next generation of leaders. We as a school will continue to find ways to provide high-quality instruction that grows the whole child.
- We are proud to have several students and grade-level teams who are ranked in the top 10 in the nation within the Catholic Math League standings. This is a new endeavor and one that has been very successful. Great things are happening at Saint Joseph Catholic School!

Please continue to share the good news about Saint Joseph Catholic School with friends or colleagues; you are our best advertisers. Encourage families you know who might be interested in taking a tour of the school or receiving enrollment information to contact us. I truly believe we are one of Columbia's foremost schools and that the gift of a Catholic education pays lifelong dividends.

"Work daily to build up the body of Christ: one Lord, one faith, one baptism; one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all." Ephesians 4:1-6.

Sincerely,



Donavan Yarnall, Ed.S.
Principal





Running with the Saints!

This January, Saint Joseph Catholic School held its first annual Run with the Saints 5K and Kids Fun Run. The race through historic Shandon benefitted the school, as well as the Saint Vincent de Paul food pantry.

On a sunny but crisp winter morning, more than 240 runners laced up their shoes for the 5K, and 50 kids raced their hearts out in the one-mile fun run. Fantastic food, face painting, balloon animals, post-run massages, and an exciting DJ helped to make the event a resounding success.

The event could not have happened without the race committee and volunteers, led by MC Cox, parent of second- and fourth-grade students at Saint Joseph's. Keep those shoes handy because we are already planning for next year!



Upcoming Events

MARCH 18	MAY 6	MAY 16	MAY 23
FEAST OF SAINT JOSEPH	DADDY/DAUGHTER DANCE	MOTHER/SON BOWLING	STATE OF THE SCHOOL
8:30am Mass	6:30pm	5:30pm	6:30pm
			Kamler Hall





Sixth graders attend the leadership pep rally and breakfast to kick off their last year at Saint Joseph.

Sixth Grade - Growth, Opportunity, Preparation

Sixth grade at Saint Joseph Catholic School is an exciting time. Years of hard work, homework, relationship-building and recess have led the students to this pivotal time in their lives.

As the leaders in the school, these students set positive examples for their younger peers, paving the way for the future leaders of our school. Sixth grade students can often be found leading adults on tours of the school, reading during Mass and giving speeches to classmates —experiences that instill a sense of confidence and poise.

For Mike Harmon, sixth grade teacher, the final year at Saint Joseph's is about honing the lifelong lessons that have been instilled in the students during their time at the school — responsibility, organization, friendship and loyalty. "Sixth grade at Saint Joseph is very challenging," says Mr. Harmon. "We have high expectations for the students and work very hard with them to ensure they use their time wisely and prioritize their tasks." An emphasis on writing and critical thinking challenges students and provides them with the academic skills they need to excel in seventh grade.

Throughout their time at Saint Joseph, students are encouraged to help one another, stand up for themselves and serve those in need. These

actions are strengthened in sixth grade, ensuring our students leave the school with a strong moral compass and sense of self.

Sixth grade offers a wonderful balance of work and play. The Barrier Island field trip provides both academic and community-building opportunities for the class. On the trip, the students participate in classes about topics that align with the curriculum, while also taking part in team-building exercises. Quarterly retreats enable the students to create a stronger bond with each other and take part in valuable service projects that benefit various school, parish, or community needs.

Rebecca Seezen, sixth grade parent (two times over), says, "Sixth grade is all about teaching and developing the whole child. Our kids are strong academically, morally, faith-filled and ready to move on at the end of the year. I love that our kids get to be in a nurturing environment for one more year. It's a critical year for their development as young adults, and it's amazing to see how much they mature during this time."

The students will take these skills with them, along with the memories and the friends. Sadly, however, they must bid farewell to recess... It was fun while it lasted.

Saints Fund Update Winter 2016

Thank you to those who have already contributed to the Saints Fund! Your support brings us closer to our goal of 80% participation.

This spring, we will be sending out a Lenten Appeal to grandparents and participating in Midlands' Gives, a 24-hour online giving event. We ask our entire community to come together to support these efforts. Indeed, some of our most loyal supporters are grandparents, alumni, and parishioners!

Please also consider establishing a scholarship in memory of a loved one or including the school in your estate planning. To discuss the opportunity to make a planned gift, please contact Chrissy Dingeldine at (803) 413-4374.

To donate and to find out more about this important fund and the great things it has done for our school, visit the school's website at www.stjosdevine.com and select the Saints Fund icon. *Thank you for your support!*



Giving is Easy

Visit www.stjosdevine.com and click on "Support Us" or submit your pledge card today.

NONPROFIT ORG.
U.S. POSTAGE PAID
COLUMBIA, SC
PERMIT NO. 401

3700 Devine Street
Columbia, South Carolina 29205
(803) 254-6736
www.stjosdevine.com

