

St. Joseph's School Today



ST. JOSEPH'S CATHOLIC SCHOOL | NURTURING EXCELLENCE FOR 116 YEARS!

Fall 2016 Newsletter

St. Joe's Middle School Offers Unique "School within a School" Experience

St. Joseph's Catholic School is home to 138 middle school students – 35% of our entire student population! Comprised of the sixth, seventh and eighth grades, our middle school has evolved into a unique microcosm of the junior high school years that prepares students for success at Bishop Kelly High School.

At St. Joseph's it is the belief that a well-rounded person should possess all five of the traits outlined in the School-wide Learning Expectations (SLEs): Spiritual, Academic, Citizenship, Physical and Social. We are proud to say our middle school students have the opportunity to experience every SLE aspect on a daily basis.

SPIRITUAL While each grade takes turns hosting the school's weekly all school Mass, middle school students also have the opportunity to be trained as altar servers for these and regular Cathedral Masses. In the spring, the 8th grade plans and performs the Living Stations of the Cross, a moving re-enactment of our Lord's final moments. At the May Crowning of Mary 8th graders are paired with our new 2nd grade communicants in a beautiful Mass that's one of our community's favorite traditions.

"I feel St. Joseph's Middle

School is unique in that it is a very safe environment where students are able to do well, be proud of themselves, and be congratulated by their peers for their accomplishments. Students generally are supportive, positive, and uplifting in contrast with our contemporary culture. Christian dignity still survives as St. Joseph's," says Mr. Ricardo Yanci.

ACADEMIC In 2011, the E.L. Wiegand Wing of St. Joseph's School was completed, adding five new classrooms and finalizing the multi-phase, 20-year expansion and renovation project. This update truly solidified the middle school experience at St. Joe's, in a sense creating a "school within a school." The wing includes lockers for each student and separate classroom space from the elementary grades.

Students travel from class to class through an eight-period day. Over the course of three years, they will study math with Mrs. Julianne Russell; social studies with Mr. Kevan Grant; science with Mrs. Mary McClure; English and reading with Mrs. Sara Gamboa and Mr. David Maxwell; religion with Mr. Ricardo Yanci; and health and P.E. with Mrs. Sue Governale. Sixth grade students spend a fall or spring semester in Mr. Frank Aspiri's music



class or Mrs. Chris Miller's art class, while 7th and 8th graders may choose an elective: art, drama (also with Mr. Aspiri), technology with Mr. Grant, effective study habits or creative writing with Mr. Maxwell, or Spanish with Sra. Mercedes Olivares. An added bonus – the Spanish curriculum is the equivalent of Bishop Kelly High School's Spanish I curriculum; students may choose to take a placement exam at BK.

To supplement the curriculum, teachers and students have access to incredible technology. Through a generous grant from the J.A. and Kathryn Albertson Foundation, students use Google Chromebooks daily for Khan Academy and Google Class-

room. Additionally, students can continue using Khan Academy after graduation for high school studies and even SAT prep. St. Joe's has a 5-year technology plan to ensure that we are able to continually provide access to technology to help our students learn and grow.

According to Mr. Grant, "In a school our size, we are truly blessed to each be teaching exclusively in our area of expertise. We are also blessed to have the students for three years within that subject area. We are able to help students progress for three consecu-

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St. Joseph's School Today

Message from the Principal



Dr. Sarah Quilici
Principal

Dear St. Joseph's School Community,

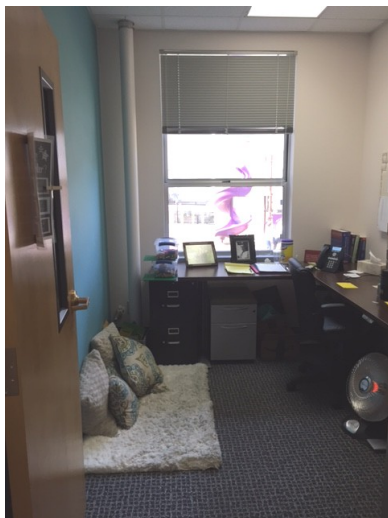
It's the start of a new school year, and there are several exciting things going on at St. Joseph's Catholic School.

- St. Joe's opened the school doors this year to welcome 400 students, which is our maximum capacity. We have a committed teaching staff who continue to choose St. Joseph's Catholic School for their profession/ministry.
- This year, St. Joseph's has a full-time counselor, Christy Porter, and an office space for her to do her work with students, teachers, and families. Over \$46,000 was raised in the "Fund a Need" at the Crab Feed this spring to add a counseling office and to remodel our reading specialists' space to better support students. This project was completed over the summer, and the school has better space to serve students (photos below).
- St. Joseph's School is in Year 3 of a 5-year technology replacement placement. As part of the plan, devices (called Unobooks) were purchased this summer for use in Kindergarten through 2nd grade. The Unobooks have a touchscreen (like a tablet) with a removable keyboard. This will allow our youngest students to begin to learn how to use technology for educational purposes.
- The middle school teachers are continuing to implement strategies to help students be even more successful in middle school and to be able to transition to high school. This year, our middle school students have new planners, and the teachers are working with students to help them use the planners to set themselves up for success.
- St. Joseph's Catholic School earned a six-year accreditation status from the Western Catholic Education Association. An outside team visited the school in February and validated the strengths of our school and our goals for continuous improvement.
- My dream for the future: to open a preschool. A preschool would require an addition to our facility and our staff. It would ensure that we are able to serve the youngest members of our community and build up our school.

Thank you for your support and investment in St. Joseph's Catholic School. As the school continues to work toward its goals, we appreciate your support and encouragement.

Blessings,

Sarah Quilici



The School Counselor's Office is located in the main office area.



The Reading Specialists' rooms were remodeled to better serve our students.



Class of 2016 News and Achievements

St. Joe's eighth grade class of 2016 included 46 young men and women who graduated during an all school Mass on May 23, 2016. Over 90 percent of the students have gone on to attend Bishop Kelly High School! We are extremely proud of our recent graduates; the five young ladies featured below demonstrate what exemplary individuals they all are:



Taelor Anderson received the Annual Mayors Award to Youth, and the Colwell Family Scholarship from the Bishop Kelly Foundation—a four-year, full tuition scholarship.



Meg Parry received the Nick Yursa Memorial Scholarship.



Kate Ryan received the Sterling Humanitarian Award



Elsa Durcan and Avery Hormaechea won the Outstanding Citizen Awards. They exhibit the qualities of spirituality, academics, social skills, citizenship, and physical activity that we hold as our school-wide learning expectations. Their names will be added to the perpetual plaque honoring the Sisters of the Holy Cross, who ran the school until the 1970's.



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five years. We look at their education not as a single year, but as a middle school experience."

CITIZENSHIP St. Joe's has a student council, comprised of a president, vice president, secretary, and community representative. It also includes two representative members from the sixth, seventh and eighth grades. This group is elected in the spring and meets weekly during lunchtime. Student Council activities include planning and managing school fundraising, Catholic Schools Week activities, and the All Schools Mass. During the 2015-16 school year the student council organized a 3-on-3 basketball tournament during recess that was a huge hit!

Interested students may

also apply to be Peace Leaders. Chosen by school counselor Mrs. Christy Porter, these students are representatives of St. Joseph's Program for Peace. These positive role models spend time with younger students throughout the year at recess and lunch, and help with special events such as Kindness Week and "Mix It Up" lunches.

PHYSICAL Extracurricular opportunities abound once students hit 6th grade. They are now eligible to participate in Treasure Valley Catholic Schools – a coalition of five K-8 Catholic schools in the greater Boise area that combine to participate in the Intervalle Athletic League. Sports include cross country, volleyball, football, wrestling, basketball, track and tennis. TVCS enables

students to meet and play with peers from St. Mark's, St. Mary's, Sacred Heart and St. Paul's Schools, many of whom will be classmates at BK. Sixth graders also participate in the spring Holy Spirit Basketball tournament in Pocatello, while 7th and 8th grades compete in the Hallissey Basketball Tournament each February.

SOCIAL Being a middle school student means fun, too! The student council plans a series of Middle School Nights Out throughout the school year, where they may go to a movie, swimming or a park for supervised fun. Seventh and eighth graders are invited to monthly TVCS dances with the other valley Catholic schools. "Our Middle School

is unique in the sense of family and community that we foster," says Mrs. Russell. "We eat lunch together, play



on the playground together, have holiday parties and celebrations together. We have even gone ice skating or skiing for Christmas. Sixth graders can and should be friends with 7th and 8th graders and we encourage and promote that inter-collegiality between grades."

Home and School Association: St. Joe's is a Community



Nicola McIntosh
2016-17 HSA President

Community—com-mu-ni-ty
/noun/ a feeling of fellowship with others, as a result of sharing common attitudes, interests, and goals.

Community. If you asked me to describe St. Joe's in a single word, I'd choose community.

I sensed it from our first introduction to the school six years ago, when we were warmly welcomed by our mentor family, Paula and Travis Dryden, and their four wonderful boys. Little did we know at the time that we would soon count them among our closest friends.

In the ensuing years, I've

been reminded almost daily of why we enrolled our children at St. Joe's, and at the top of the list is our community of teachers, staff, administrators and church leaders, who consistently go above and what's "required," giving of their time at night, on weekends and throughout the summer to ensure academic excellence and provide enrichment outside of regular school curriculum.

If you've had a child compete in Science Olympiad...or basketball...or in a spelling bee...you know what I'm talking about. There will no doubt be teachers and staff among the many people there to support your children.

I've also seen the power of community to come together to meet a common goal, such as the "Fund A Need" item at the Crab Feed every year. In 2016 — in a matter of mere minutes — our families and other supporters raised more

than \$40,000 to build a new counselor's office to further enhance our students' experience.

I believe these things are possible because we are united in our goal at St. Joe's to "provide all children with an opportunity to develop spiritually, academically, morally, emotionally, and physically, in an environment of Christ-centered attitudes and values."

We are committed to "preparing students to take their place in their own community and the world at-large by fostering a love for lifelong learning and a responsibility to others."

And we are united in fellowship with others — whether by attending the all school Mass every Tuesday, visiting with friends at the carnival, or supporting a family confronting grief or loss.

St. Joe's families underscore this commitment by contribut-

ing hundreds, if not thousands, of hours of volunteer service to the school each year, from helping on the playground and in the cafeteria, to creating art masterpieces for the Crab Feed auction, to coaching sports teams or serving on the Home and School Association board.

This community is shaped by a rich, 100-year tradition. It is nurtured by a dedicated, caring and talented host of staff, educators, administrators, church leaders and school board members. And it is enhanced by parents and families who contribute their time, talent and treasure to furthering St. Joe's commitment to excellence.

Whether you are a parent or grandparent of a current or former student, a graduate yourself or simply a supporter of St. Joe's, thank you for all you have done, and continue to do, to build this special community.



Mark Your
Calendar

2016-17 STUDENT-LED MASSES AT ST. JOHN'S CATHEDRAL

- SAT. 10/15/16 - 5 PM
- SUN. 11/8/16 - 8 AM
- TUES. 11/22/16 - 8:30 AM
(GRANDPARENTS AND SPECIAL FRIENDS MASS)
- SUN. 1/29/17 - 11:30 AM (CATHOLIC SCHOOLS WEEK KICKOFF)
- SAT. 2/12/17 - 5 PM (HALLISSEY TEAM MASS)
- SUN. 3/19/17 - 10 AM
- SAT. 4/29/17 - 5 PM (FIRST HOLY COMMUNION)
- SUN. 5/14/17 - 1 PM (SPANISH MASS)
- TUES. DECEMBER 13, 2016 - 7 PM ~ CHRISTMAS CONCERT, CATHEDRAL
- SAT. MARCH 4, 2017 ~ 52ND ANNUAL CRAB FEED DINNER AUCTION, THE GROVE HOTEL
- THURS. APRIL 20, 2017 - 7 PM ~ SPRING CONCERT, ST. JOE'S GYM



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