

# St. Joseph's School Today



ST. JOSEPH'S CATHOLIC SCHOOL | NURTURING EXCELLENCE FOR 117 YEARS!

Fall 2017 Newsletter

## St. Joseph's Leading the Way to Academic, Life Success through Technology

*And the Lord said, "Behold, they are one people, and they have all one language, and this is only the beginning of what they will do. And nothing that they propose to do will now be impossible for them."*

Genesis 11:6

Just four years ago, St. Joseph's Catholic School received a gift that changed the course of our curriculum and education.

In 2013, teachers Julianne Russell (middle school), Kelly Weaver (5th) and develop-

ment director Linda Shirley, wrote, submitted and received a grant for more than \$50,000 for training, technology, technical assistance and assessment – part of a \$1.5 million allotment from the J.A. and Kathryn Albertson Foundation. As "Rebooting Idaho Schools Using Khan Academy" grantees, Mrs. Russell and Mrs. Weaver's classrooms joined 47 schools (173 teachers) across Idaho in the nation's first statewide pilot of Khan Academy – the free, internationally recognized online education leader.



Third grade practice Khan Academy and Spelling City on Chromebooks.

During the 2013-14 academic year, the Albertson Foundation tracked student and teacher performances of the schools who received Khan Academy grants. Data from that year showed that Khan Academy helped improve our 5th grade and middle school students' performances, and proved that combining great teaching with Khan Academy produces astounding results.

Based on that success, only 43 of the original 173 teachers who received funds were chosen as "star teachers." And two of those teachers were our own Mrs. Russell and Mrs. Weaver! As such, they were invited to apply for a \$70,000 mentor grant to bring Khan Academy to two other grades, 3rd and 4th.

The second Albertson Foundation grant provided over 100 new Google Chromebooks and Khan Academy training for the 3rd and 4th grade classrooms. It also allowed students to be able to use Chromebooks not just for math, but for all subjects as well as research purposes. Combined, those grants kick-

started a technological renaissance at St. Joe's. What began as simply a way to access Khan Academy in the classroom has mushroomed, poising our school as a leader in the Catholic grade school community.

"One of the smartest decisions that we ever made was going with Chromebooks," says Kevan Grant, middle school social studies and technology teacher.

Doing so allowed St. Joe's to become part of Google Apps for Education (GAPE – now called G Suite for Education.) In 2014, a team of St. Joseph's faculty attended a Google conference in San Diego, CA. Google Classroom had just launched and the teachers learned about all the possibilities Google could offer to St. Joseph's.

Mr. Grant was looking for a way to make his physical classroom paperless: "I returned from the [Google] conference on Sunday, and by Monday had implemented Google Classroom for my classes. It was so easy and straight-forward. Google seems to have schools in mind. They're



constantly innovating on how to make classrooms more effective and collaborative. It's allowed us to grow the way we have."

The mission of Google is to organize the world's information and make it universally accessible and useful. Ensuring teachers and students everywhere have access to technology to learn and work together fits naturally with that mission.

Enrolling in G-Suite allowed our students to have school-monitored Google emails, access to Google drive, and all the products Google designed for schools – for free! Here's how St. Joe's uses them:

**Google Docs, Sheets and Slides** enable students to collaborate with their peers and teachers in real-time, allowing them to share their work, get feedback, and make ed-

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## Message from the Principal



Principal Tony Quilici

Dear St. Joseph's Catholic School Community,

St. Joseph's Catholic School opened the school doors this year to welcome 394 students, just under our maximum capacity. We have a committed teaching staff who continue to choose St. Joseph's Catholic School for their vocation.

St. Joseph's Catholic School continues to focus on student safety. With money raised from the 2017 Crab Feed, additional security cameras, a keypad at the front door, and a new external door to 8th St. were all installed. Ongoing facility needs will continue to be monitored and upgraded as needed.

St. Joseph's Catholic School is in Year 4 of a 5-year technology replacement program. As part of the plan, 90 new Chromebooks and two classroom carts were purchased this summer. These devices provide every classroom grades 2-8 access to Chromebooks. Kindergarten and first grade have access to desktops, computer lab, Unobooks, and Chromebooks. All of our students have the opportunity 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 easily transition to high school. Middle school students have planners, and the teachers continue to work with students to help the students use the planners to set themselves up for success.

St. Joseph's Catholic School has a six-year accreditation status from the Western Catholic Education Association that was earned in 2016. An outside team visited the school 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. However, it would ensure that we are able to serve the youngest members of our community and provide a consistent base for 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.

God's blessings and **Bravely** act like a **Saint** today,

Tony Quilici, Principal



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its instantaneously. They can be kept private, shared with others (such as a parent, or the entire class), or even made public. Best of all they can be accessed from any computer or tablet, anywhere, anytime.

Teachers can save time and better engage their students by using **Google Classroom** to send assignments and resources digitally. In addition, Classroom allows teachers to ensure their students are submitting their work on time. Students using Classroom can easily see when their assignments are due, and are given clear notifications when their work is late, helping them stay on track and organized.

**Google Sites** allows teachers and students to create their own websites, without needing to code. Teachers can also use Google Sites to cre-

ate quick and easy web pages for their class.

**Google's Admin Console** allow administrators to personalize the G Suite for Education experience for their schools, teachers, and students.

During the winter of 2017, several St. Joe's teachers were able to utilize technology to keep students on track for nine long snow days by posting assignments on the middle school web site. Julianne Russell set Khan Academy goals for her math students; Mr. Grant started dropping assignments and screen casts on Google class-

room: "It enabled our classes to keep moving forward," he says.

Other teachers have embraced the dynamic aspects of G Suite for Education: Mrs. Russell and Mary Seibert are using it for their religion classes. Sara Gamboa and David Maxwell enjoy the collaborative aspects for reading and English.

4th grade students use Google Docs for writing assignments, using comments to edit with teacher and peers, graphic organizers, brainstorming. They're also honing their skills in Google

## Class of 2017 News and Achievements

**St. Joe's eighth grade class of 2017** included 43 young men and women who graduated during an all school Mass on May 22, 2017. Over 93 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:



**Molly Fuller** received the Annual Mayors Award to Youth.



**Claire Little** received the Nick Yursa Memorial Scholarship.



**Marilyn Perez** received the Sterling Humanitarian Award



**Riley McGarry, Gabe Machado and London Montalbano** 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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## Welcome New Faculty and Staff!



**Christine Elwer (K-4th grade PE teacher; middle school aide)** Mrs. Elwer is a UCLA graduate and has seven years' teaching experience as a 2nd and 4th grade teacher in Illinois. Mrs. Elwer has been regularly teaching with the PE department at Bishop Kelly the last four years. She is excited to return to her elementary roots and be a part of a Catholic school as teacher.

**Natasha Eckhardt (kitchen assistant)**

Mrs. Eckhardt has experience serving meals at St. Mark's Catholic School and substituting throughout kitchens in the Boise School District. She is fun and hardworking and will bring positive energy to our cafeteria.



**Katie Patrick (3rd grade)** Mrs. Patrick is a graduate of St. Joseph's and Bishop Kelly High School. She holds a B.A. in Human Development and Family Studies from the University of Utah, and a teaching certification through the American Board of Education. She returned to her St. Joe's roots last year as a full-time teacher's aide.

**Anita Miller (business manager)**

Miss Miller holds a Bachelor of Business Administration from Boise State University. She has an extensive background with customer service, management, finances, and human resources. She recently left Cabela's after a 10-year career in Management; her last leadership position was as the District Operation Manager in the Pacific Northwest, based in Olympia, WA. Miss Miller is very excited that her career has come full circle—she was a 1st grade teacher's aide at St. Joe's while attending BSU.



**Kaylyn Schneider (4th grade)** Mrs. Schneider just completed her ninth year of teaching in public schools. She taught 6th grade for six years in Caldwell and three years at Garfield Elementary in Boise—one year in a 4th/5th class, and two years at 4th. A graduate of both St. Mark's and Bishop Kelly High School, Mrs. Schneider holds a B.A. in Elementary Education from Boise State University and a Masters in Curriculum and Instruction from Northwest Nazarene University.



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Slides for a Beatitudes project in religion. "We absolutely LOVE using Google in 4th grade! It has helped tremendously," exudes Molly Wiebold, 4th grade teacher.

8th grader Daniel R. is a fan of Google: "We can turn in work, see our grades, and not have to worry about keeping track of a hard copy. We still have to keep track of papers sometimes, but because the majority of work is posted on Classroom it makes things a lot easier.

"Using technology at St. Joe's is important because it gives us the proper experience we need to help us later on, and it makes doing our work less messy. The format is made to help us learn and stay organized at the same time."

The first J.A. and Kathryn Albertson Foundation grant put 90 Google Chromebooks in three classrooms for Khan Academy use. Today, we have 12 classrooms with Chromebooks plus travelling carts that enable our counselor, Spanish teacher, and elective teachers to utilize them. Kindergarten, 1st and 2nd grade classrooms share Unobooks for reading and math use. Our teachers utilize G Suite for Education, Kahoot, grade level websites to help students keep track of their daily assignments, Khan Academy, Spelling City, Vocabulary.com, online textbooks, CNN Student News, and so much more! St. Joe's has also implemented a Technology Replacement Plan to enable our school to keep our technology hard-

ware and software up-to-date and relevant.

Mrs. Russell: "We have found ways beyond Khan in which technology could add depth, diversity, and differentiation to the classroom. Students leave St. Joe's with a familiarity with countless applications and enter high school with a comfort level with technology and the ways it is used to enhance learning."

"We are proud to be able to build a foundation and skill set for students entering Bishop Kelly High School – giving them tools that will serve them in college and beyond," says Principal Tony Quilici.



"Having access to technology definitely impacts my learning positively. It has opened lots of doors for me," shares Nicola M., an 8th grade student. "Chromebooks in the classroom are such a wonderful way to introduce students to things like responsibility, but also to the idea that there is so much to learn!"

**Google in Action:** Mrs. Weaver's 5th grade completed a Google Survey to share their thoughts about Technology at St. Joe's! Here are some highlights:

I like having a lot of information at my fingertips!

It shows that we are an updated school.

I like being able to take a break from writing with your hands on paper, and typing is faster.

It triggered a new spark for the idea of positive and fun learning.

I can get my work done fast and not have to bring my math book home to study for test I can do it online.

Making our own blogs was pretty cool.



## Mark Your Calendar

### 2017-18 STUDENT-LED MASSES AT ST. JOHN'S CATHEDRAL

- SUN. NOV. 12 - 8 AM
- TUES. NOV. 21 - 8:30 AM (GRANDPARENTS AND SPECIAL FRIENDS MASS)
- SUN. DEC. 10 - 10 AM
- SUN. JAN. 28 - 11:30 AM (CATHOLIC SCHOOLS WEEK KICKOFF)
- SAT. FEB. 11 - 5 PM (HALLISSEY TEAM MASS)
- SUN. MAR. 11 - 10 AM
- SAT. APR. 28 - 5 PM (FIRST HOLY COMMUNION)
- SUN. MAY 13 - 1 PM (SPANISH MASS)
- TUES. DEC. 19, 2017 - 7 PM ~ CHRISTMAS CONCERT, CATHEDRAL
- SAT. FEB. 10, 2018 ~ 53RD ANNUAL CRAB FEED DINNER AUCTION, THE GROVE HOTEL
- THURS. MAY 10, 2017 - 7 PM ~ SPRING CONCERT, ST. JOE'S GYM



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