

St. Joseph's Academy



Capital Campaign

October, 2023

Volume 10, Issue 1

Dear Friends,

Yet another school year is upon us! I am pleased to see how the investments made in our curricula, our buildings, and our staff in recent years are beginning to bear fruit. With guidance from the SSPX US District Education Department, we have worked to hone our curriculum to meet the needs of our students today while striving to keep our eyes on the high ideals of Catholic educators of the past.

Our Grammar curriculum has undergone refinements which will challenge our students to better spelling and writing skills, while new math textbooks for several of the classes will bring continuity across grade levels. In addition, we have invested in advanced training for several of our teachers this year and have added a teachers' aide.

Classrooms have also been adjusted to optimize our limited space as we welcome five new families to our St. Joseph's Academy community. The new students, mostly in the younger grades, will be distributed across our House

Teams: Kateri, Jogues, and Solanus. This House system has been upgraded this year and we hope to see even better results in school spirit, discipline, and teamwork as the Houses compete in all aspects of life here at the Academy.

We hope you enjoy these pages which bring to life the world of St. Joseph's Academy. We are blessed with many treasures, yet our financial needs are more pressing than ever. Those of you who partner with us by making a monthly donation as a part of the St. Philomena Campaign — THANK YOU! If you have not yet signed up to help our academy on a monthly basis — will you consider doing so now? Several of our faithful benefactors have passed away over the last year, leaving a hole in the ranks of SJA supporters. Will you consider filling the places they have left?

With profound gratitude in the Sacred Heart,
Fr. William Kimball, Principal

A Glimpse at A New Future for St. Joseph's

An interview with Tyler Giannattasio, former student of St. Joseph's Academy, about the exciting plans of the new St. Joseph's Planning Committee.

What is your background and how has your life been impacted by your years at St. Joseph's Academy?

I am a product of St. Joseph's Academy. It is where I spent my formative years of education before the high school moved to Illinois and became LaSalette Boys Academy. The formation that St. Joseph's gave me has been pivotal in my success as a husband, a Catholic father, and an engineer in the US Army's Ground Vehicle Development Command. My wife was also a teacher at St. Joseph's, and today four of my kids attend the Academy. St. Joseph's Church and Academy and the education & formation it provides are a vital part of our family life.

In your opinion, what are the major challenges facing St. Joseph's Academy today?

St. Joseph's is not the same place it was when I went to school. In the beginning, our academy was one of the few well-established SSPX schools in the US. But for years now St. Joseph's has been losing students to other SSPX schools across the country, and I believe the major reason is that St. Joseph's is only a K-8 school. Families are moving away to locations where their children can receive a complete Catholic education at one school.

We need to correct this problem or St. Joseph's will

continue to shrink and ultimately may even cease to exist. This situation is not sustainable. We must expand the infrastructure at St. Joseph's to allow for a full k-12 school with all the required amenities. Ask yourself, if you had a young, growing family, would you move to St. Joseph's when you know it doesn't provide a complete package for your children's education? No. If you had to uproot your family, you would pick a location that checks all the boxes.

After understanding the problem, how did you start working towards a solution?

I approached Fr. Angele with the idea of forming a committee of nine to develop a plan. The committee members consist of wise, experienced gentlemen from the parish who have a long history with St. Joseph's and/or a vested interest in the future of the church and school. Thankfully since we have many men fitting this description, it was not an easy process to whittle down to nine! Out of the nine, several are products of St. Joseph's: myself, Athan Garno, and James Schiltz — and most have kids attending St. Joseph's Academy. All are strongly committed to its future.

Once the committee was in place, what steps did you take to formulate a plan?

From my experience with decision making in the

Alumni Corner

...James Schiltz is following his passion for agriculture!

James Schiltz, CCA, has worked in biological and organic farming systems for over 10 years since graduating from the University of Minnesota with a Bachelor of Science in Agronomy. He specializes in increasing the role of thriving microbiology to create a dynamic soil system for optimal crop performance. As a soil and agriculture consultant he helps clients to make better decisions for human and environmental health. Having grown up on a farm, agriculture is certainly a passion of his. James was a boarding student and graduated from St. Joseph's Academy in 2005.



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Alumni Corner

...Emilia takes baking to a whole new level!

While still a student at St. Joseph's Academy, Emilia Tomaszycycki was already honing her skills in baking and cake decorating. After graduating, Emilia attended culinary school and has spent the last 5 years earning award after award as a chef!

Emilia is now 26 and living in Palm Beach, FL where she works as a pastry sous chef at a private country club. She has been featured on Food Network and has won the award for Pastry Chef of the Year in the Naples area. Most notably, she holds the title for the youngest certified Executive Pastry Chef through the American Culinary Federation.



U.S. Military, I am well versed in a technique called the Military Decision-Making Process (MDMP). This method takes emotion out of the picture and puts a multi-layered voting schema in its place. It is fascinating, and I have seen it work many times even when the parties involved completely disagree. This is a perfect method to help us unite around a solid plan for the future of St. Josephs.

Can you summarize the plan?

The mission statement for the planning committee is: To develop and implement a plan for St. Joseph's Church and Academy to revitalize the spirit of the parish and enable growth of the school and church. Our initial plan consists of four phases:

- 1) Phase 1: Improve Parish Spirit
 - Publicize plans/goals
 - Improve parish wide communication
 - Build Pavilion
 - Hold functions on location again
 - Wednesday Summer functions on location
 - Sunday Doughnuts
 - Summer Sunday BBQs
- 2) Phase 2: Build Third Building
- 3) Phase 3: Expand current church building
- 4) Phase 4: New Church

Everything we do will be assessed based on whether it builds parish/school spirit, fits the timeline, is scalable in the future, fits the functionality required, and fits within budget.

As of this writing, how far has the committee gotten on the first phase?

Fr. Angele has blessed the phase one portion of our plan, and we are now well underway! Already, the summer functions are well attended again (although currently off-site, with the volleyball teens and the younger children gathering at a local park). We are hanging out after Mass enjoying each other's company over doughnuts and coffee. We have had several pot-luck lunches and celebrations at the church location again (using a rented tent). And most exciting — we have cleared an area of land to build a pavilion which will enable us to gather for school and church events more easily.



At the recent St. Joseph's workday, Ty Giannattasio's son works with owners of Turbo Tree (SJA alumni-owned business) to make way for the new pavillion.

Phase One seems to center around the building of a pavilion. Can you explain why this was chosen as the starting point?

This pavilion will be fantastic for the academy students to have outdoor classes, outdoor lunches, and a

dry area for physical education on a rainy day. It will also be beneficial for parish events. Yet, as important as those are, they are not really the point of the pavilion. Yes, the pavilion is a tremendously useful piece of infrastructure that checks all the boxes in the grading criteria the planning committee uses, but the biggest reason is the first check box — it builds academy & parish spirit.

That spirit has already begun as shown at our most recent workday. To make way for the new pavilion and future volleyball courts, over 40 men and women from the parish showed up to assist with a refresh of the parish grounds and clear over twenty trees. There were many St. Joseph's alumni at the workday, a trio of which (Marcel Giannattasio, Andrew Werick and Michael Fisher) donated their time and the heavy equipment from their successful alumni-owned tree removal business, Turbo Tree, based in Sterling Heights, Michigan.

This pavilion project will bring Academy families, parishioners, and even out-of-state donors together with one goal. Together we are going to prove that we can unite, formulate a plan for St. Joseph's, and then make it a reality. We will start small — a pavilion. It is an easy win to demonstrate that we can make things happen. After the pavilion raising party is behind us, we will share a moment of pride in what we accomplished and will begin fine-tuning the steps we need to take for the next phase of the future of St. Joseph's.

You said the pavilion is “starting small”. What big goals do you hope to achieve in the coming years?

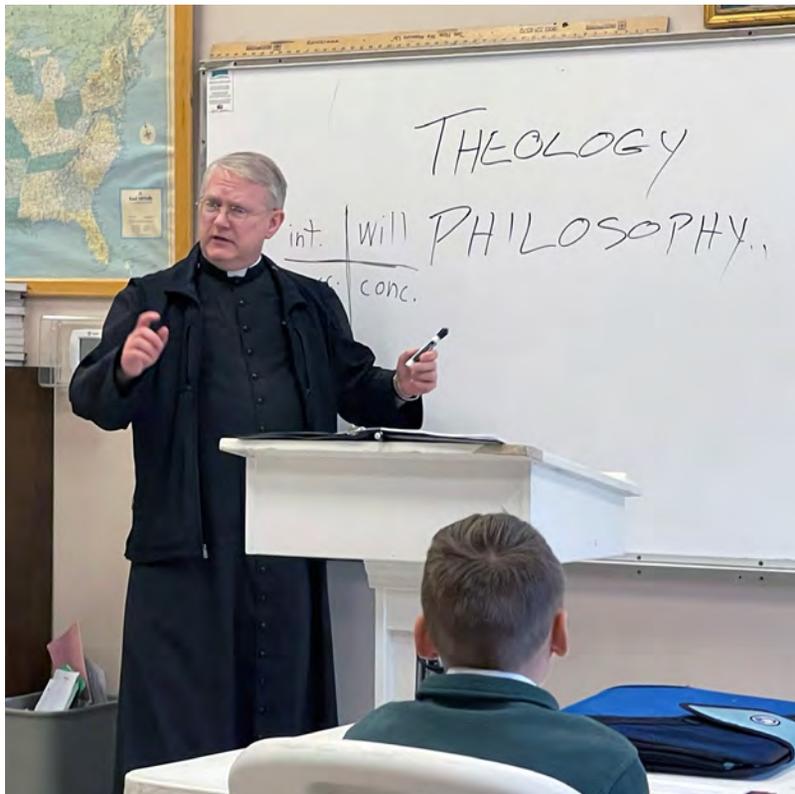
After the pavilion project, we will build a third building on the premises to allow the school to expand. I have profound faith that if we build it, they will come. Before our very eyes we will see new families move to the rich industrial base of Southeast Michigan to obtain for their children the excellent Catholic education provided by a complete K-12 St. Joseph's Academy. We will watch our children grow up with new friends and see our beloved academy grow — perhaps even surpassing the glory days we once had: with a state ranked Eagles rugby team, a St. Mary's Academy crushing basketball team, and a successful girls volleyball team.

God willing, as time goes on, we will complete more phases of our plan. If we are successful, one day it will be one of our children, the next generation of St. Joseph's, talking about the increasing bright future of this Academy. This seemingly insignificant church and academy has played a groundbreaking role in nearly everything in the SSPX US District. St. Joseph's was the first priory in the US, the first US seminary, the first novitiate, and I am sure the first of many other notable undertakings. The spirit that achieved these milestones still lives on at St. Joseph's and, with the help of generous benefactors, will continue the mission of providing an excellent Catholic education for our children.



How can parishioners and friends of St. Joseph's Academy best help these efforts to succeed?

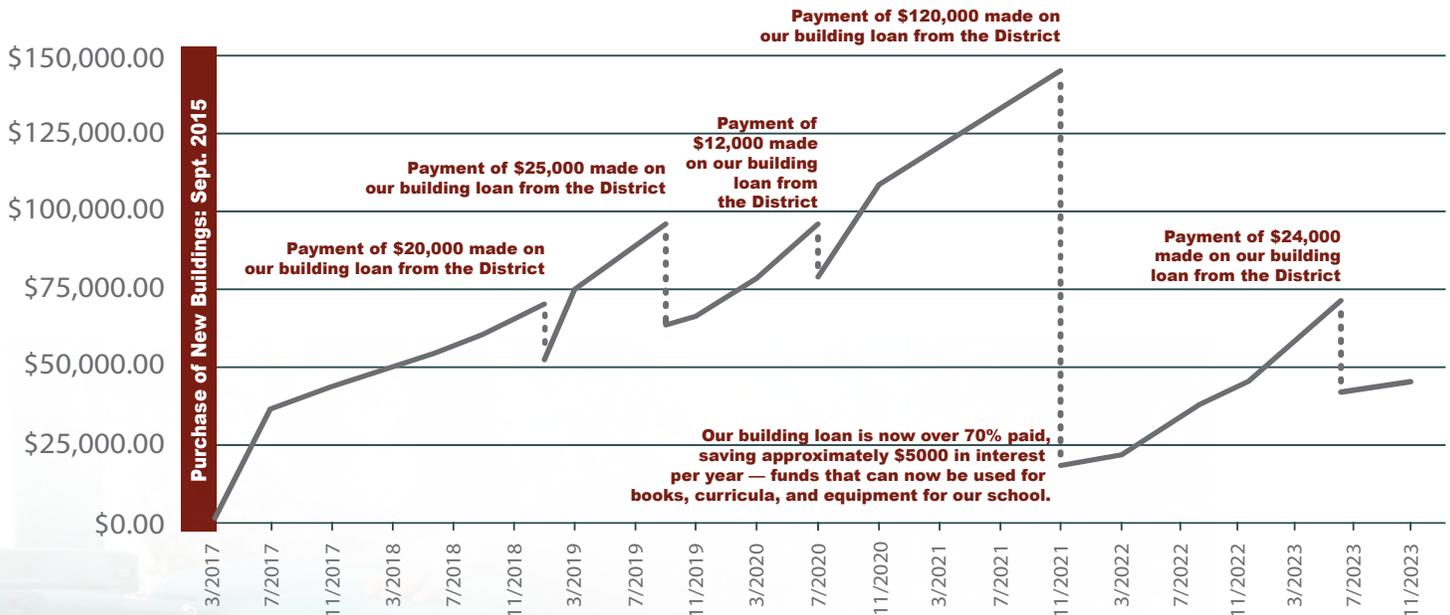
Right now we need both prayers and financial support. If everyone receiving this newsletter signed up to be a regular “Operation Philomena supporter” with an automatic monthly donation of even just \$10, \$20, or \$50, we could easily begin to tackle these projects. Please consider joining us! And pray for the success of this project in your daily Rosary. Surely Our Lady and St. Joseph will hear your prayers and allow our Academy to rise to new heights in the future!



Look How Far We've Come!

Operation Philomena Progress Since March, 2017

Current savings account balance is \$49,000



Look How Far We've Come!

Total donors: 839

Number of donations recorded: 9754

Total monthly donors: 70

Total recurring monthly donations: \$1,814

Largest recurring monthly donation: \$100

Operation Philomena is on track, thanks to you!

Our goal is to raise \$10,000 in monthly donations.

Will you help?



Help SJA Gain New Momentum!

Donor Name: _____ Phone: _____

Address: _____

City/State: _____ ZIP: _____ Email: _____

I would like to make a one-time donation of \$ _____

I am enclosing a check. Please bill my credit card. (fill out option B below)

I would like to pledge a total gift of _____ to be fulfilled by (date): _____

I am interested in donating securities. Please contact me.

My employer has a matching gifts program. Please contact me.

I would like to be a part of Operation Philomena

Amount of recurring transaction: \$10 \$20 \$30 \$40 \$50 Other Amount: _____

OPTION A: AUTOMATIC BANK DEBIT PROGRAM

I (we) hereby authorize Fifth Third Bank, on behalf of St. Joseph's Academy, to initiate monthly debit entries from my (our) bank account as indicated below. (Please attach a voided check to this form.)

Financial Institution Name: _____ Branch: _____

Address: _____

City/State: _____ ZIP: _____

Routing/Transit Number: _____ Account Number: _____

OPTION B: CREDIT CARD PROGRAM

I (we) hereby authorize St. Joseph's Academy to initiate debits from my credit card as indicated below.

One time debit Monthly Debit Mastercard/Visa (circle one)

Credit Card Number: _____ Exp. Date: _____

Account Holder Name: _____ Security Code: _____

Date of Transaction: the first business day after the 1st of the month. This authority is to remain in full force and effect until St. Joseph's Academy has received written notification from me of its termination in such time and manner as to afford St. Joseph's Academy and the financial institution a reasonable opportunity to act on it.

Signature(s): _____ Date: _____

God bless you for your kindness! Questions? Call 586-677-9511 • You may also donate online at www.stjosephs-academy.com.

Return form to: St. Joseph's Academy • 57575 Romeo Plank Rd., Ray Township, MI 48096

Holy Mass is offered for all our benefactors on the First Sunday of each month