



September 8, 2020

Dear Parents and Guardians:

On behalf of St. Joseph Catholic School (SJS) and Church (SJC) we would like to welcome you and your family to another school year.

St. Joseph Catholic School's mission is to work "within a Christ centered, family-oriented community" and endeavors to "offers a quality Catholic education that inspires academic excellence and lifelong learning." Understandably this mission statement works in tandem with the mission of St. Joseph Catholic Church which is to preach "the Gospel through word, sacraments, and service to others in order to build God's Kingdom."

With this in mind, both the Church and School collaborate not only in the Church's mission of fostering Catholic education but also the faith-filled preparation of receiving the sacraments. Those SJS students who are in the 2<sup>nd</sup> grade will be learning in the classrooms how to prepare to receive their First Penance and First Holy Communion. Additionally, the older students in the 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grades are being readied to receive the sacrament of Confirmation by the bishop. While of course all the students in the above grades will be learning the same religious education lessons, only those children who are already baptized Roman Catholics actually will be receiving these sacraments here in our faith community.

However invariably each year we encounter some SJS families whose children are not baptized Roman Catholics, be they Eastern Catholic, Orthodox, Protestant, or not raised in any Christian tradition at all, but are interested in partaking of the sacraments or becoming Catholic. Furthermore, it is not uncommon for the school to have Catholic children who have not received their First Holy Communion during the traditional age of 7 or in the 2<sup>nd</sup> grade for one reason or another yet would still like them to receive.

These special requests and circumstances need to be evaluated on a case-by-case basis in order to ascertain if it is at all possible to offer the sacraments at this time or if there are any further preparations necessary.

Therefore, we ask SJS parents and guardians who are interested in having their child receive the sacraments (i.e. Baptism, Confirmation, Holy Communion, or Penance) here at St. Joseph but are not a baptized Roman Catholic or whose Catholic child did not receive First Holy Communion in the 2<sup>nd</sup> grade to first contact the School Office using the information listed below no later than October 31<sup>st</sup> of this year. This will allow us an adequate amount of time to make preparations. Any special sacramental requests received after October 31<sup>st</sup> will not be processed or handled until the following school year.

We thank you for your cooperation in this matter and joyfully look forward to serving your family here in our faith community.

*Fr. Tom Bourque, T.O.R.*  
Pastor

*Mrs. Denise Rutledge*  
Principal

*Mr. Reyes Ruiz*  
Director of Religious Education