

Parish School Gets Ready for New Academic Year *Helping Youngest Members of Our Community Grow in their Faith*

The school year is beginning, and with that comes the opportunity for continued growth and change. As a parish, we must know and be involved in what is going on at the school, because that is where the youngest members of the parish are being formed.

“Our theme for the upcoming school year is, ‘Gather Us In,’” says Beth Meece, Principal of St. Jude. “We will be looking to emphasize bringing others together through service and most especially through the Mass.”

Teaching at a Catholic school is both a ministry and a sacrifice for the teachers. The teachers must be dedicated to their profession as a teacher, as well as their faith. The school will be doing what it can to help foster both of these aspects of the teacher’s lives.

The school plans to incorporate its theme of

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— **BETH MEECE, PRINCIPAL**



“Gather Us In” in several different ways. First, the school hopes to host Mass for each grade level. These Masses would be followed by a social event to help bring the community together in their faith. The school is also continuing its English as a New Language (ENL) program. This program is a great way to help make sure that everyone feels welcomed and supported as the population continues to become more diverse. In addition, the school aims to place a greater emphasis on helping the students and their

New Academic Year

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families understand and appreciate the Mass.

Teaching at a Catholic school also means that it is important to help the students foster their understanding of the faith while providing the proper formal education. One way our school plans to do this is by repeating its “Catholic Family Challenge.”

“This past year, we did the ‘Catholic Family Challenge’ where each month we sent home a challenge with ways that a family can grow together in their faith,” Mrs. Meece says. “There were 34 families that were able to meet the challenge and grow together in their faith this year. We will be repeating the challenge once again with some new challenges designed to help families create an atmosphere of faith and prayer in their homes.”

The school is always looking for volunteers,

especially for some of the special school events like Cultural Day and Raiders’ Day. If parishioners are interested in supporting the school financially, the SGO program is an Indiana Tax Credit Scholarship, allowing students to receive financial aid in a way that makes them eligible for the School Choice Voucher in future years.

Becoming involved in the school is a wonderful way to live out stewardship and help foster the parish community.

“For a parish to thrive, we need to have vibrant participation from parishioners at all stages in their lives,” Mrs. Meece says. “The school strives to offer support and service to our parish, and the kids love to see that their contribution is appreciated and reciprocated.”



If you have any questions, or if you are interested in getting involved at the school, please contact Principal Beth Meece at bmeece@sjsindy.org.



A LETTER FROM OUR PASTOR

The Mass is a Gift, to God and Our Parish Community

Dear Parishioners,

It is hard to believe that August is upon us! We are now approaching the returns to school, the completion of vacations, and the time when things here at our parish get busier again.

We call them vacations, but the British call them “holidays.” Of course, it’s easy to see that the words “holiday” and “holy day” share the same roots. There was a time when the only “holidays” people experienced were indeed “holy days.” That included Sunday, to be sure, but the reason people had these “holy days” was to celebrate religious times and occasions.

We’re all pretty familiar with the term “Holy Day of Obligation.” In fact, there is one this month — Aug. 15, the Solemnity of the Assumption of Mary. A solemnity is a feast day of the highest rank in the Church — and as we are told in the *Code of Canon Law* (1247), “On Sundays and other holy days of obligation, the faithful are obliged to participate in the Mass.”

Note that what this actually says is that Sunday is, in fact, a Holy Day of Obligation — we should view our weekly Mass attendance this way, as well. Sometimes in our busy modern lives, we may lose sight of how important this is.



Of course, our Mass attendance goes hand in hand with stewardship — how we take and responsibly use the gifts God has given us, then return and share those gifts with the Lord and those around us. Although going to Mass is a gift to the Lord, it is also a gift to our community and to ourselves. We need that time to step back from our daily worries and concerns, and to look deeper into the meaning of living and of the importance of our relationship with God.

This month, and always, let us each consider how important it is to attend Mass. If we are really going to be committed to stewardship, we need to realize the significance of setting aside time each week and on designated holy days — Aug. 15, for example — to be with the Lord and with our parish community at Mass. We must be completely committed to living out our Catholic faith!

In Christ,

Fr. Peter Marshall
Pastor



Questions and Answers About O

Once again, it's time for our Annual Stewardship Renewal. Every year, someone asks, as you may have asked yourself, "Didn't we just have a Stewardship Renewal? Aren't we sufficiently 'renewed' by now?" Yes, we had a Stewardship Renewal last year, and we're going to have one next year, too! This is an annual occurrence — part of the rhythm of parish life at St. Jude. Just as the Church proposes a time of spiritual renewal each Lent, we believe in the importance of a yearly examination of commitment. Is the Lord asking you to give more time, talent, or treasure to our parish this year?

How do I use my Commitment Card?

Your Commitment Card allows you to make commitments to prayer, parish ministries, and offertory giving. It is designed to be used by the whole family.

Time Section: Except for the ill and homebound, everyone should be able to check "Come to Mass on Sundays and Holy Days." Try to check at least a few other items. Daily prayer should be a priority for every person trying to grow closer to God.

Talent Section: You can either sign up for new ministries or re-commit to your current ministries. Be sure to write your first name next to the ministry! This is especially important if the card is being used by more than one person.

Treasure Section: Clearly print how much money you plan to give each week or month to our parish. Try to take a step toward giving five percent of your income to St. Jude.

My age or physical limitations prevent me from being active in the parish. Should I still turn in a Commitment Card?

Yes! The first section of the card — Stewardship of Time — is the most important because it allows you to make commitments to *prayer*. Even if you can't join a ministry or make it to Mass on Sunday, you can still pray for our parish. Your spiritual support has tremendous value in the eyes of God.

One time I turned in a card, but no one ever called me when I signed up for a ministry.

If this happened in the past, please forgive us! And don't give up on filling out your Commitment Card! We have a very good plan to call every person interested in joining a new ministry. If for some reason the ministry leader does not call you within four weeks of turning in your card, let the parish office know.

How much should I give?

Your gift is entirely dependent on how much God has given you. At St. Jude, we ask that you give five percent to our parish, one percent to the archdiocese, and four percent to other charities. Why a percentage of income? First, because the tithe (10 percent) is a scriptural benchmark that the Church has honored for centuries (see Malachi 3:10). Secondly, we give a percentage of income because it is a common-sense standard by which everyone can equitably support the parish. Most of all, we give because we believe God comes first in everything, even finances.

What if I can't fulfill my financial pledge?

While our pledge is not a "contract," we should all make a good-faith effort to fulfill it. Of course, if your financial circumstances change — if you lose your job, for instance — then the amount of money you give the Church will change, too. Likewise if you



ur Annual Stewardship Renewal

*Commitment Weekend is September 24-25.
Don't forget to bring your Commitment Card to Mass!*

get a raise or bonus. The biggest reason many people don't fulfill their pledge is that they attend Mass at another parish when they go on vacation, attend a wedding, etc. If you're out of town, just make up for the missed Sunday when you write your next check to the parish. Using your envelopes is a good way to see which Sundays you missed. You may also utilize our online giving system, Faith Direct, to schedule recurring payments.

I don't even go to Mass very frequently. Why turn in a Commitment Card?

Because this is your chance to turn over a new leaf! Why not make a commitment to God to come to Mass every Sunday, and then write down that commitment? Even if that's the only commitment you make, take a step forward. Jesus Himself is waiting for you!

What happens if I don't return my Commitment Card?

We will mail you a reminder letter that includes an extra Commitment Card (in case you misplaced yours). Make every effort you can to participate. Our Stewardship Renewal is a very important annual event in the life of our parish. You and your family are part of what makes St. Jude a great community! Most importantly, your commitments are actually promises to Christ Himself. All of us are called to give back to God a portion of what He has given us.



Every parish family receives a special "Stewardship Package" in the mail that further explains our parish's vision of stewardship. It includes a booklet that describes every ministry in the parish, as well as your Commitment Card.

Family Formation: *Continuing to Build the Domestic Church Throughout Our Community*



Children enjoy the Family Formation kickoff in 2021.

There is no better place to be formed in the faith than in the domestic church — through daily life in the home with one's family. The family is the primary influence in children's lives and, naturally, learning the faith begins here. At St. Jude, we support families in this mission through Family Formation, a program that just concluded its second year at the parish.

Tammy Stewart, Coordinator of Religious Education, brought this program to our parish when she realized that the old model of dropping kids off for classes on Sunday wasn't working. The parish was losing families and Tammy noticed that the children weren't retaining information from year to year.

"I realized that our format was not working and we needed to change what we were doing," Tammy says. "The statistics show that when parents teach their children and talk about the faith at home, those kids are more likely to stay with the Church."

Families that participate in Family Formation meet on the first Sunday of the month. While the children have a class and are taught a lesson, the parents are prepared to teach three more lessons at home. The lessons have lots of variations for different ages and schedules.

"It's up to each family to choose what works best for

them," Tammy says. "Some families might do an entire lesson in one evening, while others might do parts in the car while they travel or at bedtime. Families can make it fit into their lifestyles."

Each month has a theme, such as the Trinity, Holy Week, or one of the sacraments. The program follows a three-year cycle to allow ample time for topics to be covered. Our parish families have worked hard to learn this new format. In the middle of the first year, Tammy asked for feedback and she learned that many families were having some struggles making the at-home lessons work. The parish continued to provide support for those parents and during the second year, Tammy received a lot more positive feedback.

"I think it's taken a while to shift our mindset from dropping kids off to knowing the parish is going to support us as parents educating our children," Tammy says. "It takes a while to build that culture."

Family Formation is open to all families, but we especially encourage families whose children are not in Catholic school to participate. The benefits of practicing and talking about faith as a family are long-lasting. Parents leave a powerful impression on their children through their words — and even more through their example.

This year, Family Formation will kick off in September and the first class will be Sunday, Oct. 2. Registration information can be found in the bulletin. To learn more about Family Formation, please contact Tammy Stewart in the parish office at 317-786-4371.



Stewardship Committee Builds Lifestyle of Discipleship in Our Parish Community

Small changes lead to transformation over time. If we want to cultivate healthier eating habits, we might change one thing — maybe we'll increase our water intake or cook at home more often.

We can think about stewardship similarly.

“There are times when stewardship feels like a big step and huge commitment, but you can always do small things that make a big difference to your discipleship journey over time,” says Stacy Chaney. “It’s like your personal health in that stewardship isn’t a ‘crash diet.’ It’s a lifestyle change.”

The Stewardship Committee exists to support the faith community in fostering a lifestyle of discipleship for each parishioner, our families, and our parish family. Kris Chaney, Director of Ministry Operations, believes that the faith community has a particular opportunity to renew the concept of stewardship as we emerge from the pandemic.

“The lockdowns and then coming out of that time offers us a fresh start with what stewardship is,” Kris says. “We have an opportunity to redefine the concept of stewardship for ourselves and to build upon that foundation in a renewed way.”

The Stewardship Committee meets monthly and prepares for



The Stewardship Committee — (from left) Stacy Chaney, Mark Pohovey, Betty Lou Rowe and Kurt Kramer (not pictured — Joe Gangstad, Ruth Hurrle)

these gatherings by reading and reflecting on different resources about stewardship. They begin each meeting with prayer before engaging in group discussion.

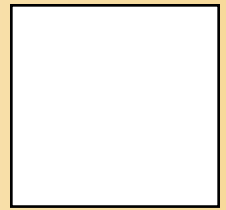
“This focus on our individual formation grounds our conversation as we continue to come back to the Four Pillars of Stewardship — namely Hospitality, Prayer, Formation, and Service,” Stacy says. “Stewardship is not the end, but a means for discipleship. It is not associated with a financial campaign. It’s about getting closer to God and looking out for each other as a parish community.”

The committee focuses on offering opportunities to integrate stew-

ardship throughout the liturgical year and the annual life of St. Jude. For example, at the beginning of summer, members focused on sharing about youth programs, camps, and Vacation Bible School.

“There are opportunities throughout the year to live stewardship and become more engaged,” says Stacy, Stewardship Committee Chair. “We have tables set up that highlight different ministries in action.”

The Stewardship Committee consists of a small group of parishioners who generally meet on the third Wednesday of each month at 6 p.m. The meeting time is somewhat



5353 McFarland Rd.
Indianapolis, IN 46227
(317) 786-4371
www.stjudeindy.org

MASS SCHEDULE

Weekend Mass

Saturday Anticipation — 4:00 p.m.

Sunday — 7:30 a.m., 10:00 a.m.

Weekday Mass

Tuesday/Thursday — 6:00 p.m.

Wednesday/Friday — 8:30 a.m.

Holy Day Mass

See Bulletin

Sacrament of Reconciliation

Tuesday/Thursday — 5:00-5:45 p.m.

Saturday — 3:00-3:45 p.m.

Anytime by appointment

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flexible depending upon everyone's availability.

"Some people hesitate to join a committee because of the time commitment, but we're a small and agile committee that can adjust for its members," Stacy says.

"We take good notes and are active in between meetings through email and over the phone."

For Stacy, a St. Jude's parishioner since 2008, being involved in the Stewardship Committee was an opportunity to rebalance her commitments at a time in her life when she no longer had small kids. She believes the annual Stewardship Renewal offers the parish an opportunity to pause and reconsider our commitments.

"As our lives change, stewardship is going to change for us," Stacy says. "The benefit of the renewal is taking that time to check in with yourself and consider how things have changed in your life and if you can now get involved in different ways."

Any parishioner interested in learning about and living stewardship is welcome to join the Stewardship Committee — simply reach out to Stacy and come take part in the next meeting.

"Incorporating stewardship into our own lives helped us as a family to reevaluate where we are," Kris says. "Stewardship isn't a process that ends, but something that requires ongoing reassessment and examination, and the committee looks at that ongoing process for the parish."

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— **KRIS CHANEY, DIRECTOR OF MINISTRY OPERATIONS**

If you would like more information about St. Jude's Stewardship Committee, please contact Stacy Chaney at schaney219@gmail.com or 317-223-8737.