

# The Mission

Fall 2022 newsletter



St. Joseph  
CATHOLIC SCHOOL

Xavier Catholic Schools

Learning with a higher purpose

## School's enrollment increases



We are pleased to share that we have had an increased enrollment this school year at St. Joseph Catholic School.

We are up 26 students from the end of last school year, which reflects a 15 percent increase in enrollment.

We attribute the growth to more preschool students, families wanting a smaller school setting for their children, and a high emphasis on values.

## Shining a light on St. Joseph staff

St. Joseph Catholic School is fortunate to have a great teaching staff made up of hard working and dedicated individuals. In this issue, we would like to spotlight the newest faces among the St. Joseph Catholic School staff.

**Mrs. Barb Sullivan** is the second-grade teacher at St. Joseph School. She was born and raised in Cedar Rapids, attending St. Matthew School and Regis High School. She brings 21 years of teaching experience to St. Joseph. She taught for 12 years in local Catholic schools and the last eight years at Taft Middle School in Cedar Rapids. She has a master's degree in the art of teaching and achieved National Board Certification in 2019.

When Mrs. Sullivan is not in school she loves playing volleyball, running and spending time with her family — Dave, Genevieve and Veronica. They love to visit local llama farms and play games. When Mrs. Sullivan was teaching at Xavier High School she also was their varsity volleyball coach.

Mrs. Sullivan is most looking forward to helping the second-grade class prepare for first reconciliation and first communion. She believes it is such a special year in the church for these students and feels blessed to share in their preparation.



**Mrs. Micaela Tucker** is the guidance counselor at St. Joseph School. She grew up in Marion and attended Marion High School. She graduated from Iowa State University in 2017 with her bachelor's of science degree in family consumer science education. She has been a family consumer science teacher at Marion High School for the last five years and coached volleyball, basketball and track. In 2020, she started working on her master's in school counseling from the University of Northern Iowa and will graduate with her full counseling license in May.

When Mrs. Tucker is not in school she enjoys spending time with her husband, friends and family and her two dogs. She loves to bake, especially desserts. She enjoys reading and staying active. She also coaches the junior varsity girls basketball team at Marion High School.

In her first year at St. Joseph, Mrs. Tucker is looking forward to getting to know the staff and students and building connections. She hopes to have a positive impact in the school.



# Studying virtues at St. Joseph

What are prudence, justice, fortitude, and temperance? What about faith, hope and charity? These lists of words are the theological and cardinal virtues. Virtues are firm habits achieved by repeating good acts that are elevated by grace, making it easier and more enjoyable to do what is good. The virtues are important because they are in all of us and remind everyone how Jesus wants us to treat ourselves and our neighbors.

For two years, Principal Casey Kettmann and the staff at St. Joseph have made the virtues an important aspect for students to learn and grow in their faith on a daily basis. Teachers and students define the virtue, talk about what the virtue looks like, try to find it in book characters or each other, and discuss what they did or saw someone else do for the virtue. The middle school students self-assess and



decide whether this is a virtue they need to work harder at or whether it already is a strength.

To understand and learn more about each virtue, the school has gone from studying a virtue for one week to studying it for two weeks. "Our hopes are to help all the staff and students be more

aware of the virtues and use them no matter where they are," said Ms. Erin Seymour, 6-8 grade religion teacher.

The virtue we are studying is brought up daily and is announced on a sign in front of the school. In our community, we would love for others to make virtues important in their lives, too.

## Alumni spotlight: Jackie Brock, class of 2013



Jackie Brock (Xavier class of 2017) attended St. Joseph from kindergarten through eighth grade. She graduated from the University of St. Thomas in St. Paul, Minnesota, in 2021 with degrees in communication, journalism and Spanish. She continues to reside in Minnesota, where she works as a regulatory operations specialist for Medtronic.

Jackie says St. Joseph prepared her for high school and higher education both academically and socially. She says the school's smaller class sizes allowed her to receive more one-on-one attention from teachers and fostered an environment where students could comfortably speak up and ask questions. "I am so grateful for all of the teachers I had during my time at St. Joseph," says Brock. "Some of them continue to be my favorite teachers I have had throughout my education." Her teachers challenged her academically, encouraged participation in school activities and kept focus on nurturing spiritual development in the classroom.

Some of her favorite memories from her time at St. Joseph include the middle school ski trip, performing in the school musical and planning and enjoying the middle school lock-in as a part of student council. However, her favorite thing about St. Joseph continues to be how warm and welcoming the school community is, even when she comes back to visit years later.