



Saints Joseph and Francis Xavier Parish

Annual Report Fiscal Year
Ended June 30, 2023

Saints Joseph and Francis Xavier Fiscal Year Annual Report Fiscal Year Ended June 30, 2023

This Annual Report provides you with important information about our current financial status, financial outlook and how your contributions directly support our essential ministries and help to renew our faith community. We invite you to read this report and reflect on your current and future commitment to Saints JFX Parish.

Vital Statistics
2,068 Registered Families
33 Parish Organizations
133 Baptisms
146 First Communions
143 Confirmations
27 Weddings
64 Funerals
703 Saints JFX School Students
420 Youth Faith Formation Students
\$390,000 Parish Contribution to Saints JFX School
\$46,959 Parish Contribution to Youth Faith Formation
\$362,229 Parish Contribution to the Larger Community

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The Parish Finance Council advises Father Watts on various matters impacting the finances of Saints Joseph and Francis Xavier Parish. The Finance Council has prepared this report to provide transparency to parishioners regarding the stewardship of your generous monetary contributions and to provide a summary of activities conducted by our faith community. Please feel free to contact [Joseph D'Arco](#) or [Father Watts](#) if you have questions about this report.

The Parish Finance Council

Father Wayne F. Watts, Pastor	Andrew Housley
Joseph D'Arco, Operations Director	Javier Santacruz
Deacon Robert Kerls (Co-Chair)	Marianne Shahid
Conor Lefevour (Co-Chair)	Scott Soracoe
Michael Ericson	Joe Tippins
William Gano	Steve Whisdosh
Jill Hayes	

Letter from Our Leadership Team

Dear Fellow Parishioners,

Great things are happening at Saints Joseph and Francis Xavier. Our hearts beat with gratitude. We prepare this communication as we enter the third phase of One Plan, the Saints JFX campus master plan. As we present numbers and highlights of the fiscal year, mostly good news, we highlight in our note the future-focused, hope-filled, community-building One Plan. We contracted the consulting company, The Lakota Group, in the middle of FY 2023. The goal of the One Plan is to create a long-term vision for Saints JFX, driven solely by this community, to guide an upcoming capital campaign to allow reinvestment in and improvement of internal and external facilities.

The planning process is a year-long undertaking that spans three phases. Community outreach is a critical component of each phase. The final One Plan will incorporate the input of parishioners into realistically achievable plans, balanced programming, and operational improvements. It will outline a clear timeline for implementation with particular attention given to designing sites and facilities that align with the priorities that advance the Saints JFX mission: building community and bringing others to Christ.

The One Plan will help Saints JFX:

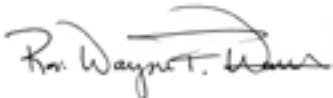
1. Reinvest in the right balance of academic, religious, recreation, and social spaces.
2. Provide facilities that support community building.
3. Enhance the educational experience of the current population of students and their families.
4. Support the teachers, faculty, and staff with their operational and programming needs.
5. Improve operations and functionality of facilities.
6. Provide excellence in evangelization, education, formation, and ministry for all age groups.
7. Address deferred maintenance and continue to maintain facilities.
8. It will NOT:
 1. Change the current school structure.
 2. Expand enrollment.

The first phase was all about building a comprehensive information base from extensive analysis and engagement. We completed that in the spring. Phase two tested ideas and strategies based on what we heard shown through illustrative concept studies. We did that through focus groups and two parish town halls. Moving forward, in the final phase, the team will refine the concepts based on input and integrate all work into a final master plan – the Saints JFX One Plan.

So, as we look with excitement to the future with the One Plan, this report will focus on the accomplishments, strengths, and areas of growth learned from the twelve months ending on June 30, 2023. As we look back, we thank God for the wonders He has worked in this great parish. Our Mass attendance has grown to near pre-Covid numbers. Parents bring their children to church in growing numbers, and many are taking advantage of the Sunday afternoon 4:45 Mass. We continue to reach out to the suffering in our parish and beyond with the recharge of the Ministries of Care and Bereavement. We have supported our sharing parishes, in Haiti and in Uptown Chicago, with our time, talent and treasure. We're especially proud of the fact that in the last school year we raised nearly \$1.1 million dollars in Tax Credit Scholarship money to cover every eligible student in our parish school (about \$60,000) and in Saint Thomas of Canterbury School. Our parish school, which we now call Saints Joseph and Francis Xavier School, Saints JFX for short, excels. From the two-year-olds at Lake and Ridge to the 14-year-olds at Eighth and Linden, we know the kids by name and strive to build a community of disciples of Jesus.

If we could offer some challenges to our readers, we would ask you to consider your financial commitment to the parish and increase your gift. Fiscal 2023 ordinary collections did not meet budget. Too many parishioners and school families, who benefit from the parish's support, do not financially support the parish. This is your parish. We need your allegiance. Lastly, commit to regular reception of the Eucharist at Sunday Mass; the community **and** you will both benefit by doing so.

Yours in Christ,



Rev. Wayne F. Watts
Pastor



Christine Elliott
Principal



Joseph P. D'Arco
Operations Director

Financial Highlights

Parish Leadership's financial goal is to establish a sustainable base which supports the Parish's mission and provides for the maintenance of and investment in parish facilities. Historically, collections alone have not been adequate to meet the Parish's operating costs. Shortfalls in prior years have been covered by bequests, donations, and the drawdown of parish reserves.

To remedy this situation, a Fiscal Sustainability Task Force was formed three years ago. This group, made up of leaders from the Finance Council, School Board, HSO (Home and School Organization), and the Parish Leadership team, formulated a three-year budgetary plan. This plan is intended to achieve the following goals:

- o Strengthening the Parish's Balance Sheet
- o Establishing a plan to achieve consistent positive cash flow
- o Growing liquidity reserves
- o Addressing deferred maintenance
- o Establishing and growing a capital reserve fund for building maintenance

This year's report presents the results of the final year under this plan.

We continue to see success with our Parish commitment to fiscal sustainability. The Parish ended the fiscal year with a cash surplus of more than \$275,000 from ordinary operations. This result was driven by the following key items:

- o Maintained optimal levels of enrollment at the school
- o Realized record levels of fundraising from Parish auxiliary groups
- o Communicated proactively the Parish's financial position leading to an increase in collections
- o Continued efforts to control operating costs

It is important to note that while there were moderate tuition increases in 2022 school year, the full cost of inflation has not been passed to the school families. Of the \$440,000 of additional tuition and fee income, only 20% came from a small increase in enrollment. Tuition does not cover the cost of educating a student. Recognizing the importance of Catholic Education, the parish subsidized \$390,000 of the school's budget.

Parishioners' generosity supported an emergency boiler fund at Christmastime, raising \$247,886 as part of the non-ordinary capital improvements.

A major item of note in this fiscal year is the sale of the Greenleaf rental property. After careful consideration by the Parish Council, the Finance Council and Parish Leadership, it was decided to sell the Greenleaf Avenue home which netted the Parish \$1.125 million.

In light of all this benevolence, there is still a lot of work to do. In fiscal 2023, we did not meet our forecasted ordinary income goal and are asking for an increased Sunday giving.

A Look Ahead to 2024

The budget for Fiscal Year 2024 projects an operating surplus of \$70K. The key assumptions underlying this projection are:

- o Balanced school enrollment
- o Salary increases in line with Archdiocesan guidelines
- o Impact of inflation on operating costs
- o Improved Sunday collections

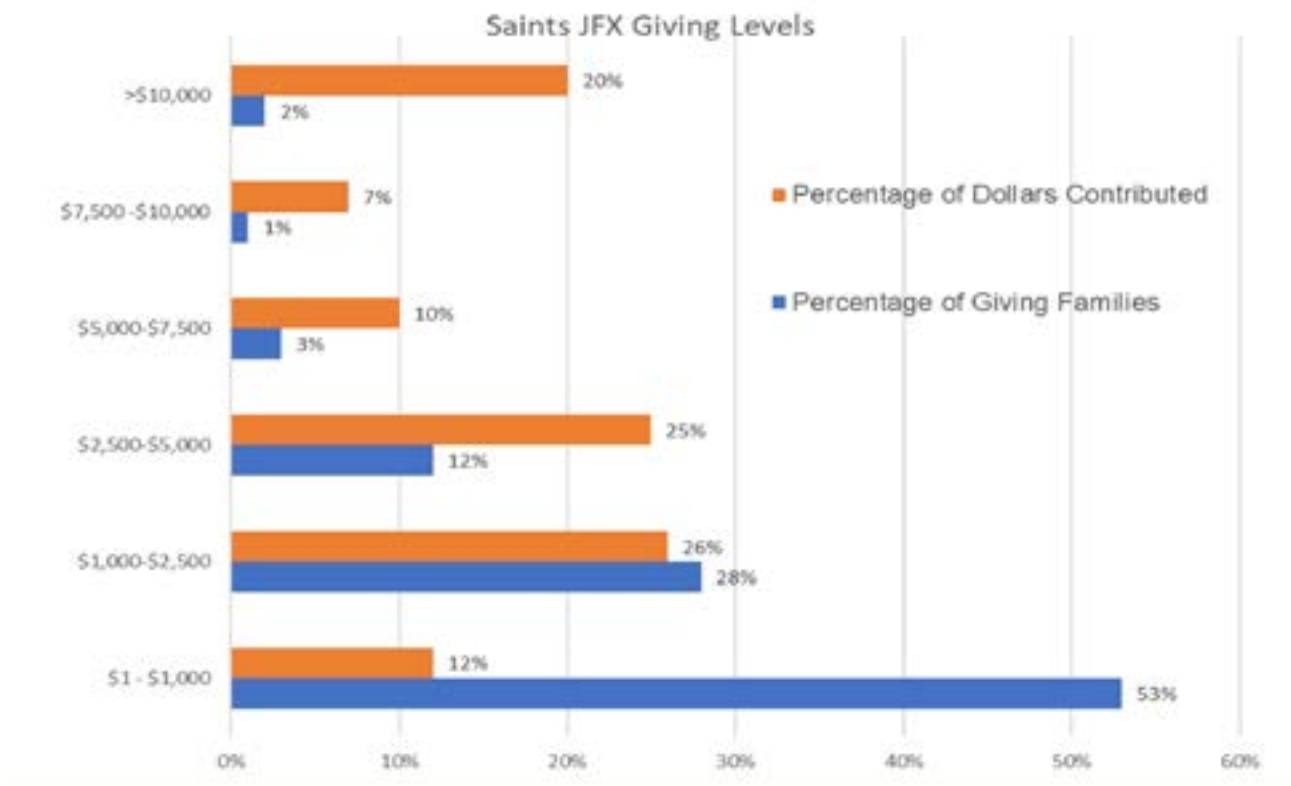
Many of these factors are outside of the direct control of the Parish. Inflation is a reality that affected our Parish budget. Parishioners can have a direct impact by increasing their Sunday giving. To achieve our budget, parishioners can help by increasing their Sunday giving by 5%

Giving Levels

Sunday, Holy Day, Christmas, and Easter collections form the base for Parish Operations. Maintaining and growing the level of participation and giving is fundamental to our goal of achieving financial sustainability. Consider these facts and the following graph.

- o We estimate that 30% of our registered families do not currently give a recordable gift.
- o 6% of contributing families account for over 37% of our collections.

Our goal for this year is to move these statistics in the right direction.



Statement of Activities

Current Year Versus Prior Year Results

Revenue	Actual 2023			Actual 2022			Increase (Decrease)		
	Church	School	Total	Church	School	Total	Church	School	Total
Sunday Collections	\$1,917,935	0	\$1,917,935	\$1,824,125	0	\$1,824,125	\$93,810	0	\$93,810
Christmas Collection	418,705	0	418,705	420,634	0	420,634	(1,929)	0	(1,929)
Easter Collection	170,169	0	170,169	161,567	0	161,567	8,602	0	8,602
Tuition & Fees (1)	128,589	5,768,465	5,897,054	132,018	5,324,246	5,456,264	(3,429)	444,219	440,790
Net Rental Income	17,779	0	17,779	47,351	0	47,351	(29,572)	0	(29,572)
Auxiliary Grps/Fundraising (2)	0	991,573	991,573	32,138	640,800	672,938	(32,138)	350,773	318,635
Miscellaneous Income (3)	124,097	39,894	163,991	91,471	65,051	156,522	32,626	(25,157)	7,469
Total Revenue	\$2,777,274	\$6,799,932	\$9,577,206	\$2,709,304	\$6,030,097	\$8,739,401	\$67,970	\$769,835	\$837,805
Expenses									
Salaries & Benefits (4)	\$1,333,034	5,624,310	\$6,957,344	\$1,368,082	4,928,950	\$6,297,032	(\$35,048)	695,360	\$660,312
Utilities	134,204	115,296	249,500	146,327	134,392	280,719	(12,123)	(19,096)	(31,219)
Administrative Expenses	190,415	311,853	502,268	158,224	320,489	478,713	32,191	(8,636)	23,555
Maintenance & Repairs	167,695	185,812	353,507	161,186	280,832	442,018	6,509	(95,020)	(88,511)
Furnishings & Equipment	15,594	125,470	141,064	17,291	148,267	165,558	(1,697)	(22,797)	(24,494)
Books & Supplies	27,008	192,829	219,837	42,324	192,424	234,748	(15,316)	405	(14,911)
Insurance	107,607	178,140	285,747	100,721	166,917	267,638	6,886	11,223	18,109
Archdiocesan Assessment (5)	330,912	25,620	356,532	325,419	31,281	356,700	5,493	(5,661)	(168)
Miscellaneous Expense (6)	132,546	111,184	243,730	121,663	75,892	197,555	10,883	35,292	46,175
Total Expenses	\$2,439,015	\$6,870,514	\$9,309,529	\$2,441,237	\$6,279,444	\$8,720,681	(\$2,222)	\$591,070	\$588,848
Ordinary Surplus (Deficit)	\$338,259	(\$70,582)	\$267,677	\$268,067	(\$249,347)	\$18,720	\$70,192	\$178,765	\$248,957
Sales of Property (7)	1,125,365	0	1,125,365	0	0	0	0	0	1,125,365
Non-Ordinary Income	490,505	0	490,505	849,017	218,044	1,067,061	(358,512)	(218,044)	(576,556)
Non-Ordinary Expense	(151,174)	0	(151,174)	(194,775)	(246,345)	(441,120)	43,601	246,345	289,946
Net Non-Ordinary	\$1,464,696	\$0	\$1,464,696	\$654,242	(\$28,301)	\$625,941	(\$314,911)	\$28,301	\$838,755
Net Cash Surplus (Deficit)	\$1,802,955	(\$70,582)	\$1,732,373	\$922,309	(\$277,648)	\$644,661	(\$244,719)	\$207,066	\$1,087,712
Unrealized Gains (Losses) (8)	\$190,870	\$61,493	\$252,363	(\$142,166)	(\$50,863)	(\$193,029)	\$333,036	\$112,356	\$445,392
School Subsidy (9)	(\$390,000)	\$390,000	\$0	(\$390,000)	\$390,000	\$0	\$0	0	\$0
Net Change in Assets	\$1,603,825	\$380,911	\$1,984,736	\$390,143	\$61,489	\$451,632	\$88,317	\$319,422	\$1,533,104

(1) The increase in school tuition is primarily the result in increased tuition cost (80%). The remaining increase is due to increased enrollment (20%).

(2) The year-over-year increase in school revenue is due to increases in fundraising activities from the HSO. The HSO is a parent-led fundraising arm that supports the school through a variety of methods such as direct school support, teacher retention activities, campus improvements, etc.

(3) Miscellaneous Income is comprised mainly of stole fees (weddings, funerals, baptisms), Mass intentions, candles, and other miscellaneous donations.

(4) The increase in expenses was budgeted and is primarily due to the filling of previously open teaching positions (64%) and annual cost of living adjustments (36%).

(5) Archdiocesan Assessments are assessed at 18% of Sunday, Holy Day, Christmas, and Easter Collections. These funds support the operation of the Archdiocesan offices and employees.

(6) Miscellaneous Expense is comprised mainly of altar and liturgical supplies, food service, speaker's fees, hospitality, and dues & subscriptions.

(7) This refers to the sale of the rental property on Greenleaf.

(8) Unrealized Gains (Losses) relate to parish and school endowments and other investments.

(9) The parish supports the school with a direct subsidy. The subsidy is currently expected to be between \$350,000 and \$450,000 annually and is used to help offset school operating expenses.

Statement of Financial Position

Assets	As of June 30, 2023	As of June 30, 2022	Increase (Decrease)
<u>Cash & Savings Accounts</u>			
Parish Accounts	\$567,485	\$512,274	\$55,211
Regular & Stock Savings	(1) 1,344,010	89,307	1,254,703
Total	<u>\$1,911,495</u>	<u>\$601,581</u>	<u>\$1,309,914</u>
<u>Designated Use Funds</u>			
Sharing Collections	(2) \$77,590	\$16,982	\$60,608
Auxiliary Accounts	(3) 746,129	346,120	400,009
To Teach Who Christ Is	(4) 950,325	893,121	57,204
Building Fund	(5) 99,303	288,466	(189,163)
Total	<u>\$1,873,347</u>	<u>\$1,544,689</u>	<u>\$328,658</u>
<u>Restricted Funds</u>			
St. Vincent DePaul Society	(6) \$272,893	\$203,839	\$69,054
Immaculée Conception, Haiti	(7) 264,301	209,770	54,531
School Scholarship Fund	232,341	230,983	1,358
School Epic Fund	(8) 583,589	652,495	(68,906)
Total	<u>\$1,353,124</u>	<u>\$1,297,087</u>	<u>\$56,037</u>
<u>Endowments</u>			
Parish Endowment	(9) \$2,985,423	\$2,802,577	\$182,846
School Endowment	(10) 1,076,973	1,015,480	61,493
Total	<u>\$4,062,396</u>	<u>\$3,818,057</u>	<u>\$244,339</u>
Marketable Securities	\$38,437	\$38,437	\$0
Total Assets	<u>\$9,238,799</u>	<u>\$7,299,851</u>	<u>\$1,938,948</u>
<u>Liabilities & Reserves</u>			
Accounts Payable	\$125,992	\$101,921	\$24,071
Prepaid Tuition	34,915	160,821	(125,906)
Archdiocesan Loan	(11) 714,382	714,382	\$0
Reserve for Restricted Funds	1,353,124	1,297,077	\$56,047
Total Liabilities & Reserves	<u>\$2,228,413</u>	<u>\$2,274,201</u>	<u>(\$45,788)</u>
Net Parish Assets	<u>\$7,010,386</u>	<u>\$5,025,650</u>	<u>\$1,984,736</u>
Total Liab/Resrv & Net Assets	<u>\$9,238,799</u>	<u>\$7,299,851</u>	<u>\$1,938,948</u>

(1) The sale of the Greenleaf residence is the primary source of the savings. These funds are restricted for future capital use and are not to be used for operating activities. (See Statement of Activities)

(2) Funds from Archdiocesan-sponsored collections and collections for St. Thomas of Canterbury School which are in the process of being remitted.

(3) Funds raised by the Women's Club, HSO, Faith Alive, and by the Peace & Justice organizations.

(4) Funds raised as part of the legacy St. Joseph and St. Francis Xavier "To Teach Who Christ Is" campaigns.

(5) Consists of funds for SFX Church lighting system and other capital projects.

(6) The St. Vincent de Paul Society manages the investment and use of these funds which are donor-restricted.

(7) This is the total of several funds which are restricted for the support of our sharing parish in Haiti. Funds are administered by a parishioner group.

(8) The School Epic Fund was established to attract, retain, and inspire top educators, to further their development and to enhance the educational experience for all of our students. Funds are administered by the school leadership team.

(9) The Parish Endowment comprises the legacy endowment funds for SJ and SFX. The majority of the funds originated from a bequest from the Morin family for the purpose of enriching the pastoral ministry of the parish. Use of funds is overseen by a Pastor-appointed committee.

(10) The School Endowment was established in 2001 with the twin goals of stabilizing school finances and providing a margin of financial flexibility and security. Use of funds is overseen by a Pastor-appointed committee.

(11) This loan relates to unmet legacy St. Joseph Parish Archdiocesan assessments for the Years 2017, 2018, and 2019.

Non-Ordinary Income and Expenses

<u>Non -Ordinary Income</u>	<u>Total</u>
Estates, Bequests & Memorials	171,295
Capital Improvements (1)	120,837
Annual Catholic Appeal Rebate	60,438
To Teach Who Christ Is (2)	50,198
EPIC Fund	67,547
HSO (3)	12,287
All Other	7,903
Total Non -Ordinary Income	490,505
<u>Non-Ordinary Expense</u>	
School Improvemens	(52,742)
St. Vincent de Paul Society	(40,589)
Sharing Parish Collections	(30,251)
One Plan/Parish Master Plan	(25,423)
Other Miscellaneous Expense	(2,169)
Total Non-Ordinary Expense	(151,174)
Net Non-Ordinary (Surplus/Deficit) (4)	339,331

(1) Funds contributed for various capital needs.

(2) In accord with Archdiocesan procedures the collection of funds from the "To Teach Who Christ Is" campaign is recorded as Non-Ordinary Income when received by the parish.

(3) Fundraising by the Home and School Organization (HSO) net of disbursements.

(4) Archdiocesan procedures require that funds received for special collections and contributions to sharing parishes be recorded as Non-Ordinary Income. Disbursement of funds is recorded as Non-Ordinary Expense. This item represents the difference between receipts and disbursements for the year.

Key Parish Ministry Highlights

Stewardship Committee

The Saints JFX Stewardship Committee is a group of energetic Parishioners from multiple generations and backgrounds. Our mission is to grow engagement within our Parish and encourage Parishioners to connect, worship, and serve together. The Committee works to stimulate Parish life and involvement through a variety of initiatives including coordinating area parties and social events, welcoming new parishioners on a quarterly basis, hosting donut Sundays, spearheading the Ministry Fair, and assisting with additional Parish needs.

Specifically, the monthly area parties hosted by parishioners have been a great opportunity for people to get to know fellow parishioners who might unknowingly live right down the street. These dinners reflect our commitment to rebuild our community even stronger than it was before Covid. The Stewardship Committee also brought back the Oktoberfest Family Fun Fair and German dinner to St. Joseph campus in September 2022.

Furthermore, the Stewardship Committee was the driving force behind the new 4:45 pm family Mass on Sundays. This Mass has been the perfect addition for families with commitments on Sunday mornings and was a direct response to the parish survey. The parish spoke and we listened, and attendance at the new Mass has been very robust.



St. Thomas of Canterbury School and Parish

The St. Thomas of Canterbury (STC) school provides high a quality education for a diverse group of students. Representing the wide range of ethnic groups found in Uptown students are the children of established parish families as well as first-generation immigrants from countries such as Ghana, Nigeria, Ethiopia, Eritrea, and Vietnam. It is estimated that 47 different languages are spoken in the homes of the students.



Over 95% of St. Thomas' students come from families living below the poverty line. This past year Saints JFX launched and completed a campaign to fund \$1.1 million dollars in tax credit scholarships for St. Thomas of Canterbury School.

Parish support for St. Thomas extends beyond the monetary. This past year, dedicated parishioners continued to generously serve as tutors in math, history, and English. Their service and the financial support raised through the monthly collection for St. Thomas are key to the school's continued operation. Parish and school volunteers collected excess Halloween candy and donated to the USO and St. Thomas of Canterbury Food Pantry. At Thanksgiving, five carloads of food items were collected and delivered to the St. Thomas of Canterbury Food Pantry to help those in need.

St. Thomas of Canterbury Church is located in Uptown one mile south of STC School. St. Thomas is now part of the newly combined Mary Mother of God parish. Saints JFX, in conjunction with Saints Faith, Hope, and Charity, contributes food and other items to the STC Parish operation.

Society of St. Vincent de Paul

The Society of St. Vincent de Paul is an organization of lay Catholic men and women dedicated to direct assistance to the those in need. Founded in 1833, its 800,000+ members are active in over 150 countries. The members of the Saints JFX conference continue the Society's mission by providing clients with short-term financial help and working with them to find long-term solutions. Referrals for assistance come from area social service agencies as well as general calls to the parish seeking help, walk-ins, and specific requests from St. Thomas of Canterbury.

Over the past year the Saints JFX conference has directly helped over 100 individuals and families. The primary financial support for this work comes from the annual Thanksgiving collection. In addition to our primary mission providing aid to individual clients, our work includes supplying 120-300 sack lunches per month for Uncle Pete's Sandwich Ministry (using lunch bags decorated by Saints JFX School and YFF students), helping supply released detainees with basic living items, a semi-annual clothing and household goods donation drive, and help for students at St. Thomas. This year, the Saints JFX St. Vincent de Paul conference held a donation drive and collected two U-Haul trailers full of clothing and household items with the help of our 8th grade confirmation students.

Ministry of Care

Illness, disability, or infirmity may prevent members of our parish from attending Mass or parish activities. They may suffer from loneliness, isolation, and a lack of spiritual companionship. Our Ministry of Care serves as a vital link with those members who are homebound, in hospitals, or in senior living facilities, enfolding them within the embrace of the parish. Over 70 men and women of our parish have been trained and mentored to serve as Ministers of Care.

Every week these ministers visit the separated, bringing Holy Communion, excerpts from that day's Mass, and the opportunity to pray together. They offer friendship and spiritual companionship through conversation and attentive listening, sharing news from the parish or simply sitting quietly together. Our Ministers of Care help to ensure that no one in our parish is separated from our faith community.

Volunteers are always needed. To learn more about joining the Ministry of Care, email our Parish Coordinator of Ministry of Care, MaryClare Birmingham, at mbirmingham@ssjfx.org. To request a visit from Ministry of Care, leave a voice-mail with the details on the Ministry of Care Line at 847-256-2273 and MaryClare will return your call.



Our Commitment to Religious Education

Saints JFX School

Saints JFX Parish recognizes Catholic education to be an essential ministry, and that a vibrant and well-supported parish school sustains a pipeline of engaged young Catholics equipped to make a difference in the world. Saints JFX administrators, teachers, and staff cultivate an



academic experience rooted in excellence, while also providing an education that feeds the heart and soul. Curriculum, programs, and services are grounded in sound Catholic values and designed to develop character and compassion, while also building community and confidence.

Faith, academic integrity, and innovative learning experiences serve as guiding principles of a Saints JFX education, where every student is known and honored for their unique gifts. Preschoolers are

nurtured with a loving commitment to Early Childhood education on the St. Joseph Campus, home to 200 students in two- and three-year-old preschool through Jr. Kindergarten. Elementary and Middle School students are engaged through a thoughtful and nuanced curriculum on the St. Francis Xavier Campus housing 500 students in grades K-8. A dedicated faculty celebrates talents and shares perspectives that push every member of our learning community to grow and develop to their fullest.

Saints JFX School is widely recognized for academic excellence and robust programs and services. Students are appropriately challenged and lovingly supported by specialists in areas including occupational therapy, speech and literacy intervention, and math and reading differentiation. Faculty coaching and out-of-the-box development opportunities are prioritized for our teachers. Cultivation of the whole child happens through affirming experiences with athletics, STEM, arts, culture, and service; and through mentor-based relationships with faculty advisors, coaches, specials, and support teachers. A mission-focused leadership team ensures that students are prepared to succeed in high school and beyond as academically-confident and socially-conscious young adults. Saints JFX



students understand that God loves them unconditionally and that they are called to lead their lives in service to God and one another.

There are so many things happening each year at Saints JFX and we wanted to highlight a few of the important achievements from this past year:

- o Saints JFX School resumed full, in-person summer programming for children preschool through eighth grade.
- o Students returned to weekly Mass in SFX Church, an important pillar in their Catholic faith.
- o A Back to School Bash was held in August to welcome parents back to the school year.
- o Back to School Nights were held at both SFX and St. Joseph campuses.
- o 8th grade Confirmation students attended the Holy Fire retreat sponsored by the Archdiocese of Chicago.
- o In-person Parent/Teacher conferences resumed at SFX and St. Joseph school campuses beginning in Fall 2022.
- o The school Thanksgiving Feast returned, with over 620 meals served to our students, faculty, and staff.
- o We Followed the Star to find the living nativity with the largest number of participants ever.
- o A variety of parish and school Christmas events resumed, including Sip & Shop, Women's Holiday Luncheon, Saturday with Santa, Faculty/Staff Christmas Party, Irish Dance Christmas show, Christmas Caroling, and the Women's Club Bake Sale.
- o Eucharistic Adoration was held for Saints JFX School students prior to Catholic Schools Week.
- o Catholic School Week was celebrated with two family Masses and an all-school Mass, as well as a variety of activities throughout the week.
- o Catholic High School acceptances were sent out with 100% acceptance rate for our eighth graders.
- o 137 students received the Sacrament of Confirmation.
- o Saints JFX School hosted the inaugural All Ball community building tournament.
- o Saints JFX Home School Organization hosted a record Showcase fundraising event as well as the largest-ever Progressive Dinner event. Both of these events go a long way to supporting the needs of the school.
- o 138 children received the sacraments of First Reconciliation and First Communion.
- o Saints JFX School 8th grade students traveled to Washington DC on a class trip.
- o Saints JFX School 7th grade students traveled to Springfield IL on a class trip.
- o Saints JFX School graduated its class of 52 eighth grade students.



Family of Faith (FOF)

This year Saints JFX parish has made the transition from the traditional way of providing catechesis to our children and families to a model called the Family of Faith. The Family of Faith is comprised of both instructional sessions for the parents and community meetings for the families. For our first year we are very excited to be offering over 170 families the opportunity to learn more about the Catholic faith and pass the faith on to their children. Family of Faith follows a four-year cycle: one pillar of the Catechism is covered per year. Parents are given a detailed picture of authentic and vibrant Catholic family life, the tools to implement this life in their home, and age-appropriate readings, games, crafts, and other activities to help them deepen among their children a love for Christ and His Church. To further the goals of the transitioning program, Youth Faith Formation held parent meetings to kick off the program year.



Some of the highlights this past year in Youth Faith Formation were:

- o 5th grade students raised \$300 to support a hurricane-affected parish in Florida in December.
- o Youth Faith Formation hosted a Morning of Reflection for our catechists.
- o Youth Faith Formation students assembled 50 Easter baskets for a local food pantry.

Saints JFX Action

ACTION serves as an extension of the Saints JFX community that focuses on our teens having a safe and vibrant place to practice and share their faith. High school students that are part of the Saints JFX parish community come together Sunday evenings for Mass from September to May. This wonderful, dynamic, and thriving program includes an energetic, student-led liturgy and other programming opportunities to deepen and enrich our young members' faith. Through ACTION our young members are able to grow spiritually and learn from one another, building strong friendships and a community bond. What emerges is a strong community of engaged Catholic teens who connect to one another in an intentional faith community. Their faith, passion, and commitment lead to "action" as they engage in service opportunities throughout the year.



ACTION is a staple in strengthening and nurturing our young people's time and talent which results in deepening their faith and sustaining passionate, active disciples who will transform the world. We feel that our young people form lifetime bonds participating in ACTION

and as a demonstration of that, this year our ACTION group assembled and mailed 22 college care packages to ACTION alumni across the country. We are also excited to announce that this year our ACTION group held its inaugural rosary bonfire.

Currently over 80 high school students are registered. To register your teen(s) for ACTION youth group Masses and events, please click on Join ACTION below:

[Register Here](#)

Adult Faith Formation

It is a very exciting time for Saints JFX's adult faith formation programing! Traditionally we have hosted a variety of events, speakers, and classes to help connect people with the parish and with each other. We plan to innovate these initiatives to meet the unique needs and interests of our parish. The main goal of adult faith formation is to deepen the understanding of our parish mission in living out the Gospel message, with the hopes of sharing that message with the greater Wilmette community.

The rite of Christian Initiation for Adults (RCIA) is the Church's process of welcoming individuals to the Catholic way of life. This year we have a robust class of individuals all discerning to be baptized into our Holy Catholic Church. During this course, participants will learn what it means to be Catholic and why it's important to cultivate a relationship with Jesus. The program will come to a head on Easter Vigil where participants who are ready to join the church will receive their specific Sacraments of Initiation.

In partnership with our neighboring parishes, Saints Faith, Hope, and Charity and Divine Mercy, we will sponsor presentations that highlight this year's theme, which is about being a Catholic witness in today's world. These talks will address a variety of topics that are crucial to living out a Christ centered life and will shed light on the issues surrounding life and death through a Catholic lens.

We plan to collaborate closely with our parishioners to develop new opportunities to expand on what we are currently doing. We make it our top priority to focus on serving the needs of our parish adults with our adult faith formation programing. Combined with our desire to deepen the faith of parishioners, we also aim to share the good news with our community to grow our parish!



Parish Organizations and Ministries

Men's Club

We are excited to announce that this year the Parish successfully re-established the Saints JFX Men's Club. The Saints JFX Men's Club provides an outlet for service, spiritual growth, and social engagement for the men of the parish. We participate in the life of the church, providing physical, intellectual, spiritual, and financial resources when needed. Our mission is to become authentic Disciples of Christ. We gather at least once each month for food and drink, camaraderie, and a 360-degree overview of the parish so that we can both contribute and partake in all the parish has to offer.

Women's Club

The Women's club was comprised of 135 members during the prior fiscal year, supporting several important Saints JFX ministries such as "In Service of Others" and Prayer Blankets. In Service of Others' purpose is to help parishioners with temporary needs such as picking up items at grocery stores or pharmacies, running errands, bringing meals, providing rides to doctor's appointments, or Sunday Mass. Since 2008, Prayer Blankets have been bringing comfort to parishioners in need of a healing prayer and a warm blanket.



During the last fiscal year, the Women's club has been extremely active and some of those activities include:

- o Collected Halloween candy for the USO
- o Packed meals for Feed My Starving Children
- o Supported the food pantry at St. Thomas of Canterbury
- o Provided a scholarship program for select high school students
- o Launched a new guild focused on women with school-aged children and
- o Hosted a St. Joseph Table on the Feast of St. Joseph.

Looking back at 2023, we thank God that we...

- o Resumed SPRED (Special Religious Development) program weekly in-person classroom instruction and activities at the St. Joseph campus
- o Held quarterly Taizé prayer services at St. Joseph Church
- o Resumed tri-parish speaking events resumed Saints JFX hosted the first event on the topic of Funeral Liturgy
- o Celebrated a Memorial Mass for Pope Benedict the XVI at St. Joseph Church
- o Conducted the Disciple Maker Index survey coordinated by the Archdiocese of Chicago

- o Participated in Living Stations with Parish children on Good Friday at St. Joseph Church
- o Offered Soup and Stations every Friday evening during Lent
- o Celebrated Fr. Ed Harnett's 65th ordination anniversary
- o Designed and produced 500 worship aids in-house for use at school and family Masses
- o Collaborated with Catholic Charities, to expand our parish Giving Tree program and supplied Christmas gifts to 400 children in the Chicago area
- o Adopted 29 families from Catholic Charities to support for Christmas
- o Hosted an Advent evening of wreath and nativity-making with over 50 people in attendance
- o Rallied to raise donations in excess of \$200k to replace a boiler that failed in the SFX church a week prior to Christmas
- o Installed a new boiler within 15 days of failure due to the generosity of our parishioners
- o Celebrated Christmas Eve Mass with overflowing 3 pm Pageant Masses on both campuses
- o Kicked off a long-range Master Campus plan initiative (Saints JFX OnePlan); established a steering committee; and hosted a number of Master Campus Plan Focus Groups
- o Hosted the second annual Thank You party in appreciation of our dedicated volunteers
- o Started a free classical concert series at SFX Church featuring the Iridescent Zeal quartet
- o Collected 500 coats over a four-day period in October and donated them to asylum seekers in the Chicago area
- o Completed a comprehensive lighting renovation project at St. Francis Xavier Church
- o Hosted the 29th annual Jubilee Jog on Memorial Day with a record number of 477 runners



Looking forward to the new fiscal year, we hope that you will...

- o Commit to attending Mass regularly
- o Engage in one of our wonderful Ministries. You will be glad you did!
- o Prayerfully re-evaluate a meaningful financial commitment to Saints JFX and consider a donation of appreciated securities and the inclusion of Saints JFX in your estate plan
- o Increase your weekly giving via our electronic platform.

Thank you. We greatly appreciate your commitment of time, treasure, and talent to Saints JFX.