



# ST. JOSEPH CATHOLIC SCHOOL

Building Wisdom and Faith Through Service to God

August 2021

Dear St. Joseph Catholic School Families-

Welcome to the 2021-2022 school year!

I am excited to partner with our SJS families to meet the challenges of the new school year, as we prepare all our students to grow in wisdom and faith through service to God.

Along with welcoming you back, I want to update you on the COVID-19 prevention plan that is in effect for this school year. The plan recognizes that COVID-19 remains a threat to our school and our community, however, it is designed to be flexible so that we can respond accordingly. The goal of the prevention plan is to implement best practices as recommended by experts in the field so that individuals are protected and the whole group continues to move forward. The plan can be found on the SJS website. Please read the plan as parents are again asked to sign a waiver, assuming the risk of sending children to school.

Our primary goal is the safe opening of the school year, and in conjunction with that, we want school to stay open all year and everyone to remain healthy. Additionally, the following initiatives have been identified to foster spiritual, academic and social-emotional growth for all our students, and reflect the SJS tradition of meeting the individual faith formation and learning needs of our students.

- Continue strengthening our Catholic identity to ensure and encourage participation by all students in school Mass, Adoration, Stations of the Cross and service projects, particularly through our partnership with Catholic Charities
- Broaden the opportunities for student growth in STEM and STEM-related experiences, incorporating new STEM materials during instruction
- Continue to develop on-going differentiated instruction initiative to meet the diverse learning needs of our students
- Effectively utilize student performance data to drive instruction to ensure growth for all students

As was the case last year, and with the continuing COVID-19 pandemic, volunteers are asked to wait until further notice for opportunities to volunteer inside the school building. However, volunteers are needed for outdoor recess, five days a week. Recess is a critical component of the school day and essential to student and teacher well-being. Please consider volunteering for this important role. Volunteers are required to comply with the requirements of the Office of Child Protection, and all adults who will have substantial contact with youth must be compliant with the Child Protection Program. This involves a background check and a Virtus Seminar attendance. The Diocese now has the background check registration online at [https://secure4.arlingtondiocese.org/OPCYP\\_Application/](https://secure4.arlingtondiocese.org/OPCYP_Application/). To find a Virtus Seminar please go to [virtus.org](https://virtus.org). You may attend any seminar in the Arlington Diocese. If you have any questions, please call Beth Covert at (703)880-4357.

Finally, each year, with the help and guidance of the Holy Spirit, our school community embraces a theme that provides a framework for our school's faith based activities and formation efforts throughout the school year. This year the

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[WWW.SJSCHOOLVA.ORG](http://WWW.SJSCHOOLVA.ORG)

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theme is **"Pray to St. Joseph for all your needs,"** (St. Teresa of Avila) which is a continuation of our theme from last year, and reflects our understanding that in every need we should seek help and protection from St. Joseph. Again, we go to St. Joseph and ask his protection and guidance as we start a school year filled with so many unknowns.

Please let me know if you have any questions, or if I can be of further assistance.

**Pray to St. Joseph for all your needs!** (St. Teresa of Avila)

Denise Rutledge  
Principal- St. Joseph Catholic School