

Catholic Education Planning Group

When the Church of Saint Joseph was established, one of the first priorities was a school. According to our sesquicentennial history book, *Rooted in Christ the Living Stone*:

The settlers... were intent upon having the Catholic faith taught to their children. Already, in September of 1856, a district school was opened in the log church. Father Bruno himself taught until a Catholic male teacher was hired in 1857 and “guaranteed” the school’s “Catholicity” (p. 5).

Nearly 154 years later, teaching the Catholic faith to our children is still a top priority of the parish. Our school’s mission statement is clear...

Saint Joseph Lab School, rooted in Benedictine values, continues a tradition of academic excellence and respect where children learn and live the Catholic faith.

To ensure that Catholic education remains a viable option in this area of the diocese, Bishop Kinney asked that our parish collaborate with Saint Joseph Church in Waite Park, and Saint Michael, Saint Paul and Saint Peter parishes in St. Cloud. In February 2010, a committee was formed with two representatives from each of the five parishes to develop recommendations for the bishop before January 2010. Parishioners Mark Gohmann and Susan Sink represent our parish.

Currently there are three elementary schools and one middle school among the five parishes. Since these schools were founded, demographic and economic conditions have changed dramatically. Operating expenses continue to rise each year, and tuition, which covers approximately half the cost of educating each student, seems out of reach for many families.

The committee will review the facilities and financial resources of the schools, as well as staffing, to come up with their recommendations.

A major goal is to provide an affordable Catholic education to members of all five parishes.

During this process, updates will be published in the weekly church bulletin and posted online at the parish website. Go to www.churchstjoseph.org and click on *Metro Planning – Schools*.

Fr. Joseph, OSB, Pastor