



Saint Joseph
Catholic School

Promise for the Future

Phase 1: Keeping the Light Burning



Throughout its long history, Saint Joseph Catholic School has stood strong—a beacon of hope for 144 years. What has kept its light shining through every storm? Faith.

The Saint Joseph community has never stopped leaning on faith in the

Lord's grace to form new generations of scholars, citizens and disciples.

It's that faith that Saint Joseph was counting on as it prepared for a multiyear \$3.1 million capital campaign, *Promise for the Future*, that aims to dramatically bolster the school's foundation for generations to come.

But in the meantime, a sudden, tragic storm that started across the sea is now also battering Saint Joseph—the coronavirus. To help weather this crisis and successfully transition toward its longer-term goal, Saint Joseph needs help now, more than ever.

The School has seen impressive growth in the last few years—with greater enrollment and excellent retention. Many necessary campus renovations have been completed and others are ongoing, affording students a safer and more technically advanced learning environment.

All this, while Catholic schools across the nation are closing at alarming rates. Recently, Catholic school closures were announced in New York (7), New Jersey (10), and Houston (4). The Diocese of Richmond shared in November that the 140-year-old Holy Cross Regional Catholic School will close at the end of the current academic year due to declining enrollment.

In contrast, Saint Joseph is seeing increasing student numbers and is moving forward with its renovation and capital campaign plans.

During this time of pandemic, the school's teachers continued to teach everyday through virtual connections, and unlike many public schools, students were graded. Families were engaged in activities. Further, new students are being admitted for the coming school year.

The school fills a tremendous need in a geographical area where poverty and substandard public schools have become the norm. In fact, 26 different ZIP codes are represented in Saint Joseph's student body, as are 22 different churches. And the future looks promising as the school continues to serve both Catholics and non-Catholics, the fortunate and the less fortunate.

There is an immediate need to help sustain the school through the beginning of the next school year. As with other private schools, Saint Joseph is dealing with a drop in tuition payments, as many of its families are now experiencing job losses.

We're beginning *Promise for the Future's* \$300,000 first phase now, out of a belief based on Saint Joseph's blessed past experience—that storms bring out something in those of faith that calm seas don't.

The *Promise for the Future* campaign, Phase I, will bolster our beloved school during this pandemic crisis as well as support the school's upgrades, additional teachers, allow for additional financial aid for students in need and to create a sustainability fund for the future, so the School will have the financial foundation to withstand any future storms.

You can have faith that your dollars invested in Saint Joseph will be more than a temporary fix—that yours will be an investment with a lasting legacy and a positive impact that resonates throughout the Tri-Cities area and beyond.

**WILL YOU JOIN US IN KEEPING
ST. JOSEPH'S LEGACY AND ITS PROMISE
FOR THE FUTURE ALIVE?**



Saint Joseph Catholic School

At a glance

**Jr. Kindergarten-
8th grade**

125 students

Average class size: 12
students

17 Teachers

Teachers are VA
certified

Accredited

Both the
curriculum and the
school are fully
accredited



**26 Zip
Codes**

Represented
across the
Tri-Cities

\$337,625

Awarded in financial aid in 19-20

22 Churches

Families represent a diversity
of faith backgrounds



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Phase 1

# of Gifts Needed	Amount of Gift	Total	Cumulative Total
2	\$ 50,000	\$ 100,000	\$ 100,000
1	\$ 25,000	\$ 25,000	\$ 125,000
4	\$ 10,000	\$ 40,000	\$ 165,000
11	\$ 5,000	\$ 55,000	\$ 220,000
20	\$ 2,500	\$ 50,000	\$ 270,000
20	\$ 1,000	\$ 20,000	\$ 290,000
20	\$ 500	\$ 10,000	\$ 300,000
		\$ 300,000	



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Promise for the Future

Campaign Committee

Peter Zedler, *Midlothian*
Chair

Eduardo Alvarez, *Chester*

Dwayne Owens, *Prince George*

John Beall, *Midlothian*

Michael Packer, *Petersburg*

Ruth Bonner, *Colonial Heights*

Samuel Parham, *Petersburg*

Jim Carreras, *Midlothian*

Ronnie Parker, *Hopewell*

Walter Dane, *Colonial Heights*

Theresa Parker, *Hopewell*

John Dane, *Midlothian*

Annette Parsons, *Williamsburg*

Dave Filippi, *White Stone*

Lydia Pettis Patton, *Portsmouth*

Emily Filippi, *White Stone*

Troilen Gainey Seward, *Claremont*

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Richard Taylor, *Petersburg*

Wayne Funk, *South Prince George*

Marianne Yavorsky, *South Prince George*

Rosemary Funk, *Petersburg*

Barbara Zedler, *Midlothian*

Herb Funk, *Petersburg*

Gen. Anthony Zinni, *Williamsburg*

Angela Kelly-Wiecek, *Mechanicsville*

Covid-19 is killing Catholic schools — and hurting the minorities that attend them



Opinion by
Kathleen Parker
Columnist

June 12, 2020 at 4:57 p.m. EDT

Among the many consequences of our covid-19 economy is the likely closing of dozens of Catholic schools that serve minority students in vulnerable, underserved communities.

The National Catholic Educational Association (NCEA) estimates that at least 100 such schools won't reopen in the fall — or probably ever. Their fortunes and those of their students rely heavily upon charitable donations, which have fallen off in the months since stay-at-home orders went into effect. Without those funds, the schools can't offer scholarships to families that otherwise couldn't afford tuition. Twenty percent of students in the nation's 6,000 Catholic schools are minorities, including Hispanics, African Americans and Asians.

The numbers are much higher in what's called the Partnership Schools, a network of nine Catholic schools in Harlem and the South Bronx in New York and in Cleveland. In addition to the coursework usually found in public schools, schools in the partnership stress four core values — integrity, humility, hard work and service.

Enrollees at these nine schools are 67 percent Hispanic and 31 percent African American. Of these students, 85 percent have received scholarships.

The average yearly tuition cost of a Catholic school is \$4,800 for elementary school and \$11,200 for high school, according to the NCEA. Right off, it would seem that only the rich or the very poor can afford a Catholic education these days. The middle class — too rich for financial aid and too strapped for full tuition — is out of luck.

This wasn't always the case. Several decades ago, almost anyone could attend a Catholic school, in part because, at the time, there were many more schools. In 1960, the United States boasted 13,000 Catholic schools compared to just 6,000 or so today. And, in 1965, of elementary-age children

attending private school, 89 percent attended a Catholic school. But, times change, and other private schools emerged virtually everywhere.

Adaptation is key to survival. Catholic schools failed to adapt to the loss of a cheap labor force as the number of young priests and nuns began to fall. In 1960, 74 percent of parochial school staff were members of religious orders or clergy. By 2017, with half of all Catholic schools closed, less than 3 percent of staff were clergy, replaced by lay staff who require a reasonable salary. That meant increasing donations or increasing tuition — and often both. Even when doing God’s work, the cost of doing business is passed on to the consumer.

Perhaps, too, some of the closings in recent years are related to the sexual abuse scandals, though as mentioned, clergy are largely absent from schools.

Nevertheless, the merits of a Catholic education are self-evident. Five of the nine Supreme Court justices attended Catholic schools. House Speaker Nancy Pelosi (D-Calif.) graduated from an all-girls Catholic high school in Baltimore, which is set to close June 30.

Overall achievement in Catholic schools is higher on average than in public schools and the achievement gap between minorities and others is smaller. Moreover, minority students at Catholic schools are more likely to graduate from high school and college than their peers in public school.

Like most collateral damage from the pandemic, private-school closings have a domino effect. As students migrate, public schools are forced to pick up the slack. According to EdChoice.org, a nonprofit organization created to advance school choice, private schools save taxpayers tens of billions of dollars annually. This unseen windfall could gradually become a public burden as private-school tuitions become increasingly out of reach and a new wave of students enters public schools.

[Full coverage of the coronavirus pandemic]

Parents whose children are already in public schools may have little sympathy for others lucky enough, in some cases, to literally draw a winning lottery ticket. One may reasonably argue that a public education ought to be good enough to eliminate the attraction to private schools, especially religion-based institutions. But we know that parents’ real-life choices are rarely this clear-cut and, for many children, public schools offer a less-than-ideal option.

Whatever one’s biases or misgivings, there’s no question that Catholic schools have been bridges of learning to vulnerable communities. St. Anthony High School in Jersey City, N.J., which closed in 2017, was one of those bridges.

In “The Miracle of St. Anthony,” author Adrian Wojnarowski tells the story of famed basketball coach Bob Hurley, whose teams sent more than 150 players to Division I basketball programs, all on full scholarships. One of the school’s graduates, Hank Rivers, is quoted in the book: “If I never met Coach Hurley, I don’t know where I’d be. Actually, I do know: either coming or going to prison. Or I’d be dead.”

As celebrities busy themselves with virtue signaling, making videos of themselves professing to fight racism, now seems an opportune time to consider donating to some of these schools so that minority children can receive a quality education while absorbing values that will contribute more to racial equality and harmony than all the selfies and proclamations social media can record.

Amid pandemic, scores of US Catholic schools face closure



By David Crary, The Associated Press

Posted Jun 11, 2020 at 1:56 PM

Updated Jun 11, 2020 at 1:56 PM

Catholic schools have faced tough times for years, but the pace of closures is accelerating dramatically amid economic fallout from the coronavirus pandemic, sparking heartbreak and anger in scores of affected communities.

‘It’s not a pretty picture right now,’ said Sister Dale McDonald, public policy director of the National Catholic Educational Association, which says about 100 schools have announced in recent weeks that they won’t reopen this fall. McDonald fears that number could more than double in the coming months.

Most of the closures are occurring at the elementary level, but also on the list are a number of venerable and beloved high schools including some that produced some famous alumni.

The Institute of Notre Dame, a girls’ school in Baltimore founded in 1847, is due to close on June 30, to the dismay of alumnae like House Speaker Nancy Pelosi. Immaculate Conception Cathedral School of Memphis, Tennessee, another girls’ institution, is also shutting down after 98 years; it’s where Priscilla Beaulieu finished her senior year while dating husband-to-be Elvis Presley.

Closures in New Jersey include Hammonton’s St. Joseph High School, which has won more than 20 state football championships, and Cristo Rey high school in Newark, which was highly praised for its work helping students from low-income families go to college. Founded in 2007, Cristo Rey says every one of its graduates from the last 10 years had been accepted at colleges.

This year’s closures will reduce the number of Catholic K-12 schools in the United States to about 6,000, down from more than 11,000 in 1970, according to the Catholic education association. Overall enrollment has plummeted from more than 5 million in the 1960s to about 1.7 million now.

‘The loss of Catholic schools is a loss to America,’ said Mary Pat Donoghue, executive director of the Catholic Education office of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops.

She said the impact would be particularly severe in low-income inner city neighborhoods, generally populated mostly by blacks and Hispanics,

'No one in the non-public school sector has done better there than Catholic schools,' she said.

The long-term enrollment decline has resulted from demographic changes, parents' difficulty affording tuition and competition from public and other private schools.

Factors related to the pandemic have only aggravated the problems.

Donoghue said many families have recently lost jobs and feel they can no longer pay tuitions averaging nearly \$5,000 for elementary schools and more than \$11,000 for high schools. Meanwhile, parishes that operate many of the schools lost much of their weekly collections after in-person services were halted.

Another factor: Spring is the prime season for school fundraisers, and many of those events had to be canceled.

McDonald, of the National Catholic Education Association, said uncertainty is now a huge problem. School officials are unsure what social-distancing requirements and financial circumstances they will face in the fall, while parents don't know if their school will still be afloat.

'Superintendents want to know what they're getting into,' McDonald said. 'Parents don't want to commit to what they don't know. It's a huge mess.'

Several of the recent closure announcements sparked community campaigns to try to save the schools.

In Hammonton, where the regional diocese ordered Saint Joseph and the parish's elementary school shuttered, after both suffered large drops in enrollment in recent years, a coalition of alumni and community members stepped in.

They offered to buy the elementary school building and the high school sports fields and operate a private school independently of the diocese, but that was rejected.

In Baltimore, the May 5 announcement about the Institute of Notre Dame came without warning, angering students, parents and alumni, and forcing the 161 freshmen, sophomores and juniors currently enrolled to scramble to find spots elsewhere.

Dubbing itself Saving IND, an alumni-led group obtained hundreds of signatures on an online petition supporting efforts to keep the school open. School officials have discouraged the campaign, saying the closure plans are final to declining enrollment and the need for millions of dollars for building repairs and other costs.

According to the school's official history, it provided shelter to black people escaping slavery along the Underground Railroad and served as a medical facility during the Civil War and the 1918 flu pandemic.

'It taught us what we needed to learn academically, and it taught us values,' said Pelosi, whose mother also attended the school, in an interview with C-SPAN after the closure was announced by the School Sisters of Notre Dame. 'Hot chocolate after Mass, that was a thing I remember with great joy.'

Another casualty is Quigley Catholic High School, which has served the Pittsburgh suburbs of Beaver County since opening in Baden in 1967 with an enrollment of 440. It distinguished itself with a public speaking curriculum that led to seven state titles at an annual mock trial competition.

But the Pittsburgh diocese had projected an enrollment of just 93 students for the next school year, meaning it was time to shut the doors for good.

On Quigley's website, members of the school community were asked to share their memories 'before Quigley Catholic fades into the sunset.'

More than 80 alumni and parents responded, recalling athletic triumphs and favorite teachers. One alumnus told of drinking his first beer in the parking lot.

Quigley's guidance counselor, Sister Bridget Reilly, and her assistant, Marge Berckmiller, were at their office this week working to send the transcripts of students to other high schools they hope to attend in the fall.

Each worked at Quigley for about 35 years, and they made no effort to hide their sadness.

'It's going to leave an empty spot in all of our hearts,' said Berckmiller, who met her husband when they both attended Quigley.

Reilly recalled learning about the closure in a Zoom meeting with school officials.

'We turned our videos off,' she said. 'I'm so happy I did, because I just broke down.'

Associated Press video journalist Jessie Wardarski in Baden, Pennsylvania, contributed to this report.



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Our Students in the news!

7th grade student Amaya Seaborne was selected as one of the winners of the "If I Were Mayor" essay contest, and teacher Ryan Dondero was interviewed about education during the Corona Virus.



Amaya Seaborne
Saint Joseph Catholic School
Petersburg, VA

My name is Amaya Seaborne and if I were mayor of the beautiful city of Petersburg, I would consider it an honor and a privilege. When I started working on my essay, I asked some of my family members, friends, church members, and teachers: "What did they feel like the biggest problem facing our city is and how would they fix it?" Wow! I received some very interesting and insightful thoughts on this topic.

One of my teachers, Mr. McMichael, said that our city has a high level of crime and poor schools. He thought, to help fix these problems we need to increase the overall tax base of the city by seeking out businesses and cutting the tax rate. My Aunt Bartina feels like the lack of jobs and the amount of crime negatively affect the image many have of our city. She said that to solve this problem, we need to bring more business to the city and all citizens need to take a more active role in the governing of the city. My uncle Raymond feels that a lack of strong leadership has had a negative impact and that to solve the problem, we need to have officials that have the best interest of all of the residents of Petersburg in charge and running the city. He also believed that poverty is a big problem for the city and to fix this, we have to improve education and jobs in the city. I also had the opportunity to ask our current mayor: The Honorable Samuel Parham his thoughts on the question and he said: Poverty is the biggest problem

in the city of Petersburg. The city's current poverty rate is 28%. He said that this problem is very complicated to solve, and it will take a mix of workforce development, gentrification, and new industry with huge support from state and federal government.

these were just a few of the responses I gathered but I believe that they all are linked. Petersburg, like other cities in the great Commonwealth of Virginia, has problems big and small. My city has some

very serious issues but there is also hope – there are young people just like myself that want the city we live in to be better for all of its citizens. I do not think, though, that there is just one solution that can fix all the problems the city faces. I believe that it will take time, a lot of work from individuals that have the city's best interest in mind and new fresh ideas. 202015

6th grade student at Saint Joseph School Trenton Townes was recognized this month as the middle school winner of Congressman A. Donald McEachin's first Black History Month Essay Contest. Middle and high school students in Virginia's 4th Congressional District were asked to submit an essay on the prompt- "What Black History Month means to me."

Trenton Townes is one of 9 students who are able to attend Saint Joseph Catholic School through the generosity of Mr. Marcus Weinstein. Mr. Weinstein is a passionate proponent of education opportunities for African American youth of all faith backgrounds, especially young men. He is a generous supporter of Catholic schools across the Richmond area.

Rep. McEachin announces winners of Black History Month essay contest

WASHINGTON, D.C. – Congressman A. Donald McEachin (VA-04) today announced the winners of his first Black History Month Essay Contest. Congressman McEachin selected the essays of Great Bridge High School senior Jy'Mir Starks and St. Joseph Catholic School sixth grader Trenton Townes. The winning essays have been entered into the official Congressional Record and will be presented to the students.

“Selecting only one high school and middle school winner from the essays submitted was difficult,” said Congressman McEachin. “It was clear to me that each student who wrote to my office put a lot of thought and care into crafting these deeply moving essays. I am so inspired by the powerful themes – especially the theme of progress – that these students explored when writing about what Black History Month means to them.”

Dr. Aashir Nasim, Virginia Commonwealth University Vice President of Institutional Equity, Effectiveness and Success, assisted in reading through the more than 50 essays submitted by students.

“It's clear from these essays that today's children have a deep and profound understand of black history. But, perhaps most importantly, these children seem to understand that it's their inherent responsibility to affirm and authenticate this history through their future successes,” said Dr. Nasim. “In this way, black history will continue to define what will eventually become American history, as well as world history,”

Students Jy'Mir Starks and Trenton Townes expressed appreciation for the opportunity to write about what Black History Month means to them.

“I wanted to try something new and our history is important,” said Trenton Townes. “Black History Month is a time where we should be able to come together as a people and uplift one another and celebrate the many achievements of our past and the hope and realization of a rich future.”

“Writing an essay that appreciates Black American culture and history is something I thoroughly enjoyed because it allows for others to be educated about the unique role that Black people have played in the building of America as a whole,” said Jy'Mir Starks.

Full text of the winning essays can be found at www.congress.gov/congressional-record/2020/02/28/extensions-of-remarks-section/article/E237-4.



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Alumni Testimonials



Many people think it's strange that a Rabbi living in Jerusalem went to a Catholic school as a child, but it's not really. Catholic schools are universally known for their sacred dedication to education, without any semblance of discrimination. Saint Joseph School was the best school around for a very far distance. It was the obvious choice for our family. As part of my work in Jerusalem, I come into contact with many young Jewish people who attended Catholic schools all over the world, we all have the same positive experiences. This would surprise some people, but no one who went to Saint Joseph School.

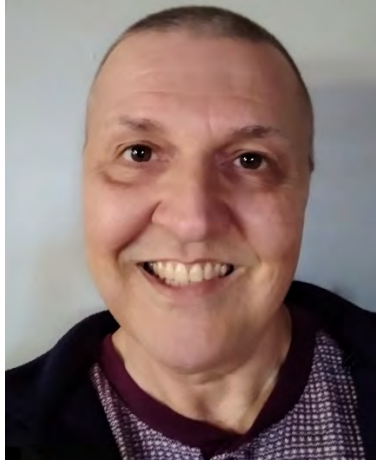
Rabbi Ben Packer

Director

Jerusalem Heritage House, Israel

Attended Saint Joseph, 1984-1991

Graduate, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill



The aspect of my Saint Joseph School education that I treasure the most is the moral/ethical values that I learned from the Daughters of Charity and the lay faculty. These values are strongly rooted in the Golden Rule, the Beatitudes and the Prayer of St. Francis. I also learned the value of diversity. The school has a long history of serving the community. As an alternative to public schools and other private schools, it has developed a reputation for academic achievement, service, and Christian values.

Jeff Blaha
Realtor
Hometown Realty
Attended Saint Joseph, Grades 1-7
Graduate, Occidental College
Peace Corp Volunteer



Saint Joseph School gave me a sense of responsibility to my community and showed me that every action can make a difference. The school's size is its greatest asset because it allows everyone to know each other. It provides a strong sense of community to the Petersburg area, sharing its traditions and adding to the history of the downtown area.

Michael Yavorsky
Chef/Owner
Belmont Food Shop, Richmond, Virginia
Attended Saint Joseph, Grades 1-7
Graduate, Richard Bland College, Virginia Commonwealth University, and the Culinary Institute of America



Saint Joseph
Catholic School

2020 Capital Campaign

123 Franklin Street
Petersburg, VA 23803
(804) 732-3931



Promise for the Future

Ways to Give

You can ensure that Saint Joseph Catholic School will continue to be a place for growth, achievement, and excellence for generations to come by making an investment through one, or several, of the vehicles below

Direct Support

Make a contribution with a check or credit card one time or spread out payments monthly or yearly for the next 3 years.

EISTC

Donate through the Education Improvement Scholarship Tax Credit program and receive 65% of your donation back. You can also donate appreciated stock and IRA distributions through the EISTC program and receive tax credits. To participate contact the development office at SJCS and ask for a letter of intent form.

Stock Donations

Giving appreciated securities provides you with a tax deduction for the appreciated value of the stock without incurring capital gains tax.

Qualified Charitable Distributions from IRAs

Individuals who are age 70 ½ or older can contribute up to \$100,000 from their IRA directly to a charity and avoid paying income taxes on the distribution. This is known as a qualified charitable distribution. It is limited to IRAs, and there are other exclusions and considerations. Please consult a tax advisor for guidance.

Planned Giving

As a non-profit organization, Saint Joseph Catholic School can be named as a full or partial beneficiary in a will, life insurance policy, annuity, or trust fund.

There are many opportunities to make a lasting impact at Saint Joseph Catholic School. Our development office is ready to meet with you and discuss how you can make a difference.

Contact Kathryn McElheny at kmcelheny@saintjosephschool.com or 804-732-3931 to learn more.



Saint Joseph
Catholic School

Promise for the Future

YES! I would like to support Saint Joseph's Catholic School's *Promise for the Future* Campaign with a total gift of

\$ _____ over the next (1-5) _____ years.

Name

Address

City

State/Zip

Phone

Email

Pledge amount \$ _____

Installments of Quarterly/semi-annually (*Please circle*) \$ _____

Single gift \$ _____

Check enclosed (*Payable to St. Joseph's*) \$ _____

Please charge the amount of \$ _____

to my Visa MasterCard AmEX

Account

Exp

Name on card (*if different from above*)

Signature

Mail to: St. Joseph School, 123 Franklin St., Petersburg, VA 23803 For more information, please call (804) 732-3931. Or visit saintjosephschool.com

St. Joseph's School is a tax-exempt nonprofit 501(c)(3) organization. Your contribution is deductible as a charitable contribution to the extent permitted by law.

Promise them Saint Joseph's School
will be here for generations to
come.

