



ALUMNI NEWSLETTER

SUMMER 2020

St. Joan of Arc Parish School

120 Nashotah Road

Nashotah, WI 53058

262-646-5821

school-office@scsjcluster.org

Holly Cervený, Principal

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St. Joan of Arc Parish School is a 3k-8 Catholic school located in beautiful Lake Country of southeast Wisconsin. We are a fully accredited school affiliated with the Archdiocese of Milwaukee and welcome students of all backgrounds.

At St. Joan of Arc, we educate the whole child utilizing a unique combination of the following tools:

- Multiage Classrooms
- Excellent Class Sizes
- K-8 School Building
- Project and Inquiry Based Education
- Strong Community
- Catholic Identity

Our foundation is rooted in **faith**, **fellowship**, and **family**. We believe that through these roots, we are able to nurture each student to develop the compassion and confidence needed to navigate our complex world. Our passion and priority is to provide a balanced moral and academic education which develops our students into future leaders. With this foundation, we strive to mirror the life and legacy of Jesus.

Like us on Facebook to support our school. 

 [HTTPS://WWW.FACEBOOK.COM/SJODASCHOOL](https://www.facebook.com/sjodaschool)

Welcome to our first Alumni Newsletter! As a valuable partner in our ministry, we want to keep you informed of what's going on in our school and parish communities.

The goal of this newsletter is to connect with you and share details of upcoming events, news regarding operations of our school,

and the financial health of our organization. By doing so, we hope to strengthen our connection.

We will send a newsletter quarterly. Please let us know if you have an address change or if we have inadvertently missed a classmate.

Thank you for your support, we would not be able to continue our mission without you.

FROM OUR PRINCIPAL

Greetings, Friends!

It's difficult to put into words how thankful I am for your continued support. The past months have been challenging for all in our local communities and throughout the world. As we begin to open back up, our school year has come to a close, but the work in our organization continues as we learn to navigate the new world and also deal with the uncertainty of what the fall will hold for the new school year.

We want to hear from you and what you're up to. Your stories and successes are our school's living legacy and inspire our current students.



Likewise, I hope you enjoy hearing updates about us, the strategies we're using to deal with

new challenges, how we're preserving our legacy, and the creativity and innovations we use to operate efficiently. There may even be a chance you are able to learn from us just as we learn from you.

Be sure to follow us on Facebook and Instagram for current updates!

Peace and Blessings!

Holly N. Cervený

A Blast From the Past

One of our former teachers just retired at the end of the 2019-2020 school year after teaching for 36 years!

Mrs. Sue Aigner taught at SJOA, Queen of Apostles in Pewaukee, and most recently at St. John Vianney in Brookfield.

Did you have Mrs. Aigner as a teacher? Here is some of the alumni love she received on our Facebook page!



"Loved her as my teacher and now friend. Congrats Mrs. Susan Aigner, you helped me become the person I am today with your passion, commitment, and faith!"

-Jolene Pyka, Class of 1990

What Did Distance Learning Look Like for Our Students?

One thing is certainly clear – that teachers in all schools, St. Joan of Arc included, have done an amazing job of transitioning their lessons to a new platform and setting their students up for success no matter what the age or curriculum. But what does distance learning look like specifically at our school? By using a blend of old and new approaches, we are able to maintain our identity of providing a child-centered education.

Multiage Philosophy

While it may not have been under this name, the roots of multiage learning can be found in our country's one room school houses, older kids helped younger students, who in the process got insights into how the human mind develops. "It's very much a child-centered approach that assesses children's understanding and

chooses curriculum pieces to fit their needs," says Sandra Stone, director of the National Multiage Institute, based at Northern Arizona University in Flagstaff. "The emphasis is on the child rather than on the curriculum."

According to the Metropolitan Omaha Educational Consortium, that means constantly monitoring student growth in multiple subject areas and designing activities that move students through the curriculum at their own rate. Other key elements of multiage teaching include the use of cooperative learning, flexible grouping and integrated, thematic units of study. Students are encouraged to be independent, to make their own decisions and to share what they learn with others. In multiage learning, technology is just one tool to bring the material to the student, not the end all, be all. (continued to next page)

FROM OUR BUSINESS ADMINISTRATOR

Greetings!

It isn't often you hear from the Business Office in an Alumni update, but my function is critical to the success of our school and parish.



Like any non-profit organization, when the economy takes a downturn and money is tight, giving slows down and those of us responsible for the books start to get nervous. We are indeed a non-profit organization, separate from (although tied to) the Archdiocese of Milwaukee.

We are dependent upon the regular weekly donations of our parishioners, tuition payments, as well as proceeds from our fundraising events. You may not realize that tuition does not cover all of the operating costs of our school. The school is a ministry of the parish—to provide world-class education in a Christ-centered environment, therefore regular contributions are critical.

Thank you for your generous support of our ministry!

In gratitude,

Leisha Smith

WHAT'S THE BIG DEAL?



Our Graduates, that's what!

(continued from previous page)

"You see more sharing, more turn taking, more caring for one another [in a multiage classroom]," according to Stone. Stone, who teaches classes in multiage and early childhood education, says a multiage setting provides a richer learning environment. "Children bring multiple perspectives and hear multiple perspectives," she says. That's the way the rest of life is!

So in a way, we have helped prepare our students to be successful in an environment where parents are called to 'homeschool' all their children at one time. This interaction takes over for the inability for students to connect in the classroom in person, and regular video conferences bring the students together with their classmates.

Small Class Sizes

By maintaining small class sizes, teachers are able to connect with each student (and their parents) on a regular basis individually.

Teachers are available to communicate with students via Google Classroom, video conference, email, or telephone. Technology allows our world to become smaller and to reach an audience throughout the world, however in our individualized learning philosophy, nothing takes the place of individual communication.

Efficient staffing

Again, our size has proven to be advantageous, allowing us to pivot and reshape our curriculum so quickly, while maintaining the quality of education. Our principal been able to sit down with each teacher and assist them in preparing their class in this new environment, and how to meet the needs of each student in their class. One of the 'downfalls' of multiage learning in today's world is that it does put additional pressure on the classroom teacher. We are very fortunate to have the amazing staff we do, and Mrs. Cerveny is committed to supporting them as much as

possible. Uniquely, she also has an understanding of what they're dealing with as Mrs. Cerveny is not only the principal, but one of the teaching faculty as well.

Community

Quite possibly the hardest thing to do in this environment when we aren't able to be connected by proximity is to maintain community. As we have seen, in times of uncertainty, anxiety, and stress, this is when we need support from each other the most, and in particular our faith community. What we have seen in our school family is that by having a strong foundation of connectedness, we continue to thrive. Through the use of technology, notably our main Facebook page, a private parent and teacher Facebook group, YouTube, video conferencing, text, email, and phone calls, we remain a united front, there to support each other through this unprecedented situation.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

JUNE 2020

June 4 All Day Last Day of School
June 4 12:00pm End of Year Blessing

JULY 2020

July 24 6:30pm Graduation Mass
July 29 6:30pm Kinder Graduation

AUGUST 2020

August 31 All Day First Day of Class

SEPTEMBER 2020

OCTOBER 2020

NOVEMBER 2020

TBD School Auction Fundraiser

DECEMBER 2020

December 24 TBD Christmas Masses
December 25 TBD Christmas Masses

JANUARY 2021

January 31—February 6 Catholic Schools Week

FEBRUARY 2021

January 31—February 6 Catholic Schools Week

MARCH 2021

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