

September 23rd, 2025

From the Desk of the Pastor

It's hard to believe that I am in my second year as your Pastor. Even though I have been a Pastor or Administrator of eighteen different parishes since my ordination in 2005, I have found that each assignment is different based on the culture, traditions, and geographical location of each parish. As I took on the role of Pastor here at St. Joseph Pillar of Families, I again found that I am also learning anew the rich culture and traditions of Shelby County, as well as many new faces and families, all of which I enjoy.

Over the course of the past fourteen months, I have spent much time meeting with you, the people of our parishes, and with members of our staff, ministry groups, councils, and committees to assess the needs and wants. These encounters, along with lessons learned through twenty years of ordained ministry, assist me in making decisions to ensure our parishes continue to thrive and grow even more vibrant.

One of my recent insights is that every person in our parishes is affected and influenced in the faith journey by two foundational ministries: Faith Formation and Worship. To this end, I have decided to create two new positions that will serve us well in this Family of Parishes. These positions are: Director of Faith Formation and Director of Worship, Liturgy and Music.

The Director of Faith Formation will oversee and lead all aspects of faith formation from childhood through adulthood. He or she will work with the Coordinators of Religious Education (CREs) Catechists, and Youth Ministry leaders, as well as provide opportunities for adults to grow in their faith.

The Director of Worship, Liturgy, and Music will oversee and lead all aspects of how we live out our faith at Mass and other liturgical services. He or she will oversee the formation and training of lay liturgical ministries including, Lectors, Mass Servers, Sacristans, Music Ministers, Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion, etc.

Having the right people in these positions will be of great value to me as we, the people of St. Joseph Pillar of Families, come together to discern the vision of how God is calling us to be Church in this present reality.

I ask for your continued prayers and support going forward as we walk together hand in hand with each other under the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

Fr. John W. Tonkin