



Ss. Peter & Paul

CATHOLIC SCHOOL

alumni newsletter | fall 2022

210 N. Morrison Ave. Collinsville, IL 62234

A message from the Pastor

Dear Ss. Peter & Paul Alumni,

Greetings and blessings to you! I am Fr. Michael Haag, the new pastor of Ss. Peter & Paul. I replaced Fr. John Beveridge who retired this past July after 22 years at Ss. Peter & Paul. Collinsville is my third placement as a pastor and my first placement where I have not only just one parish but a school attached with it as well. I am excited to be part of this new chapter in the life of the parish and the school. As we begin this new chapter, it seemed like the opportune time to restart the alumni newsletter.

The reason for this letter is primarily to keep you informed of all that is happening at the school as well as introduce you to the current staff and events at the school. The secondary reason is to reconnect with you. The final reason is to ask for your help in continuing the mission of the school in handing down the faith to the next generation.

The school has a long history. Starting in 1868 (shortly after the Civil War ended in 1865), for over 150 years the school has impacted the parish, the community, and society through our graduates. The mission then, as now, is to create a Christ-centered, safe, and nourishing environment that helps students develop their full academic, emotional, physical, social, and spiritual potential.

I can attest to the spiritual formation of our children. The sign that greets all the children as they enter the school states, "Be it known to all who enter here that Christ is the reason for this school. He is the unseen but ever-present teacher in its classes. He is the model of its faculty and the inspiration of its students."

The formation happens not only in the classes, the morning and meal prayers, but also in the Masses the children participate in on Tuesdays and Fridays. These are the sacred times and places where the children encounter Christ, grow in their faith, and become witnesses themselves of who Jesus is and what he has done in their lives.

As you read about the school faculty and events, I ask for your support in continuing the mission of the school to pass along the faith to our children.

Yours in Christ,

Fr. Michael B Haag

Fr. Michael B. Haag
Pastor



On the cover:

The Class of 2021 tossing their caps at the conclusion of their Graduation Ceremony, May 20, 2021

Help us update our records! Visit the online Alumni Hub to update your contact information to keep our alumni records current! | sspeter-paulschool.org/alumni



Special moments in recent Ss. Peter & Paul history



The Class of 2020 made SSPP history by adapting their Graduation Ceremony to a COVID-conscious drive-through ceremony in our parish parking lot.



In 2021, Mrs. Debbie Bozzardi retired after 29 years of teaching at Ss. Peter & Paul. She was honored with a special Mass and reception.



Our 7th/8th grade boys basketball team was named champions of the Southern Springfield Catholic Athletic Conference for 2021-22.



The School Faculty and Parish Staff honored Fr. John Beveridge's retirement in 2022 by creating "The Fr. John Beveridge *Living the Scripture Award*" to be given to one graduate each year who exemplifies the values of the Gospel. Lucas Roedl '22 was the inaugural recipient of the award and \$1000 scholarship to Father McGivney Catholic High School.



Mrs. Mary Helen Kossina was recognized for teaching the United States Constitution at Ss. Peter & Paul for 50 years. Framed replicas of the Constitution now hang outside her former classroom. A plaque is included that reads "Mary Helen Kossina 50 years Teaching Faith & Freedom."





Preschool expansion leads to excitement and growth

By Mark Vojas '11, Pastoral Associate

This summer, Ss. Peter & Paul was all abuzz as our team prepared for the expansion of our preschool program. Thanks to a generous donation from an anonymous alum, we were able to make much-needed updates to Manning Hall to dedicate the entire building to early childhood development.

Our preschool has grown and adapted through the years since its beginnings, but we are grateful to now have two large rooms dedicated to separate formation for 3-year-olds and 4-year-olds. This separation allows us to tailor the students' education to an even more nuanced level based on their level of development. Our 3s spend the majority of their time learning through play in designated learning centers while our 4s devote some more time at table work to get their minds ready for kindergarten. But don't worry; they get lots of playtime too!

"Young minds grow in different ways. Kids learn by looking, hearing, and touching because hands-on learning means they learn in their own

little way and at their pace," says Kelley Gaither, Ss. Peter & Paul preschool teacher for 3-year-olds. "All domains of learning are at their exposure each day. Religion, fine arts, math, science, reading, and writing. We sing songs, dance, read books, count, write, draw, and paint. They can pretend, build, and problem-solve, and all of this is learning and doing so by having fun!"

The immediate benefits of this investment in early childhood development are already clear each morning as these young smiling faces walk in the door, but the long-term benefits are still to be seen. We are anxious to see the continued growth of our school through the growth of our preschool. This expansion would not have been possible without a generous alumna remembering her time at Ss. Peter & Paul and desiring to give back— and for that, we thank God!

To learn more about Preschool at Ss. Peter & Paul, visit sspeter-paulschool.org/preschool

A typical day in preschool

Preschool is such a magical, loving place to be at Ss. Peter & Paul. Preschool is different every day and that is what makes it so much fun! The students are greeted every morning at the door with a smile and something fun to talk about. We move into circle time where we say hello to everyone, count the days, and talk about what we are going to do for the day and the fun things we can learn about our theme that week. We work on writing our names, letters, numbers, and other fine motor skills to help prepare us for kindergarten.

Each week we do a different theme to go along with the changing season or something different that interests the students as well! We also do fun little science experiments to help the students try new things and get them thinking about what can happen next through open-ended questions.

Every day we talk about how Jesus is in our classroom and how we can be like Jesus during the day. On Wednesdays, we read a bible story to help us understand the different readings or gospels from the weekend. Sometimes, we even get to go to the All School Mass on Friday.

Our program is a fun and loving environment where we want our students to learn and have fun every day through new and fun ways to explore and grow! Every day is a different fun new experience here in Preschool!

Megan Sax
Preschool Teacher



Connect with us online! Stay up to date by following Ss. Peter & Paul on Facebook and Instagram!
f facebook.com/sspphornets | i instagram.com/sspphornets | #BeGrowMakeDisciples

A message from the Principal

Dear Friends of Ss. Peter & Paul School,

My prayer is that this letter finds you in good health and happiness. My name is Julie Buehler and I have been a teacher at Ss. Peter & Paul for 20 years and the principal for the last two. The bond that is created here lasts a lifetime. My hope is that by reaching out to you, our bond will grow even stronger.

We would love to hear from you. Where do you live and what are you doing? It's important to forge our past with the present in order to give the students today a glimpse into what their future can hold. The accomplishments of our alumni are truly amazing. We would like to celebrate those accomplishments with the parish and the world through social media. Please send any information and pictures to my email listed below or visit our online Alumni Hub at sspeter-paulschool.org/alumni.

The Holy Spirit is continually changing the school and leading us in the way that we should go, and we would like to include you as well. We are experiencing a kind of reverse evangelization. Not only are we educating Catholic students, but we are getting many families with no formal religion who

are attending and eventually coming into the faith. The children are literally leading their families into communion with Christ.

Although we strive to make tuition affordable, there are still many families who find it difficult to pay. I want Ss. Peter & Paul to be a school for everyone and that's where I need your help. Please prayerfully consider helping us to make Catholic education affordable for everyone. There are many ways to give and every little bit helps.

You can donate on our website, mail a donation to us, or through the Empower Illinois program, you can stretch your donation even further. However, the greatest gift you can give us is prayer. Please pray that the Holy Spirit will continue to guide us on the path that leads us where God wants us to go. We fill each school day with prayer and will continue to pray for you to thank God for your generosity.

Blessings to each of you!



Mrs. Julie Buehler

Principal
jbuehler@sspeter-paulschool.org

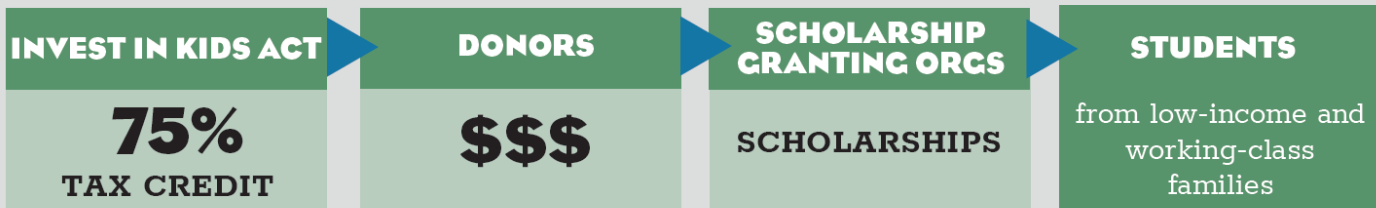


DONATE TO YOUR SCHOOL INCREASE YOUR IMPACT



Read more about how
to donate here!

THE TAX CREDIT SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM: HOW IT WORKS



The Invest in Kids Tax Credit Scholarship Program offers a 75% income tax credit to individuals and businesses that contribute to qualified Scholarship Granting Organizations (SGOs), like Empower Illinois. The SGOs then provide scholarships for students whose families meet the income requirements to attend qualified, non-public schools in Illinois.

Please note, the information provided here is intended to be informative and educational, not to be mistaken as legal, accounting, or tax advice.

After 26 years, I have many fond memories of Ss. Peter & Paul. My favorite thing about our school is how staff and students come together to support someone in their time of need.



Suzanne Wilde
1st grade

My favorite memory is the day I was hired! Teaching at this school was a lifelong dream come true! The privilege of educating the students of Ss. Peter & Paul and helping them to continue building their personal relationship with Jesus is paramount in my life.



Melissa Martin '85
7th grade homeroom
Middle School English/Language Arts

I love being a teacher at Ss. Peter & Paul because I get to share my Christian faith with my students. Not only do I get to enrich their minds and facilitate their education, but I also get to teach them about the love of Christ and how to be disciples of Jesus. I love how SSPP is like a family. It is such a wonderful place to work!

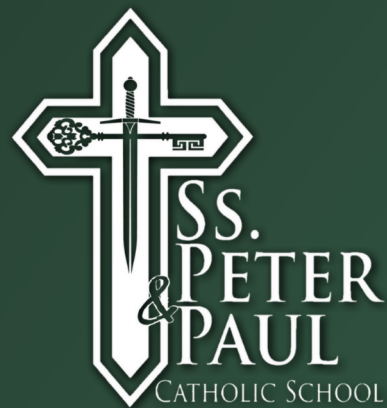


Grace Shortall
6th grade homeroom
Middle School Social Studies

My calling is clearly to teach in a Catholic grade school, where I enjoy sharing my faith with my students and try to bring them along their faith journey to the next level. I feel that math and science are complementary to my faith. Teaching the entire student, not just the rigors of math and science, is rewarding to me. I enjoy seeing them become young men and women as I prepare them for high school and beyond.



Don Cherry
8th grade homeroom
Middle School Math and Science



Faculty & Staff

Rev. Michael B. Haag, Pastor

Rev. John P. Beveridge, Pastor Emeritus

Julie Buehler, Principal

Mark Vojas '11, Pastoral Associate

Jayne Knoebel, Administrative Assistant

Don Cherry, 8th Grade

Melissa Martin '85, 7th Grade

Grace Shortall, 6th Grade

Kim Cruz, 5th Grade

Kimberly Zagorski, 4th Grade

Denise Gurlen, 3rd Grade

Sara Kiefner, 2nd Grade

Suzanne Wilde, 1st Grade

Christine Scott '05, Kindergarten

Megan Sax, Preschool

Kelley Gaither, Preschool

Delfina Kircher, Preschool Aide & Spanish

Mary Campbell, Art

Sharon Laswell '64, Library

Debbie Popovchak-Erickson, Music

Nick Pyles, Band

Rainy Reinhardt '92, PE & Technology

Eileen Yobby, Library

Be. Grow. Make Disciples.



Ss. Peter & Paul CATHOLIC SCHOOL

210 N. Morrison Ave.
Collinsville, IL 62234

Donate online!

Help ensure that another generation of Hornets receives a quality, faith-filled education by donating to your school today!

sspeter-paulschool.org/donate



Contact us!

618.344.5450

For enrollment information or to schedule a school tour, email Principal Julie Buehler.

jbuehler@sspeter-paulschool.org

Pray for us!

God, our Father, bless and protect our school. Guide us on the path that leads us to You. Help our students to become faithful disciples, grow in their love for you, and make disciples of others.

St. Peter and St. Paul, pray for us. Amen.



1: Students enjoy the use of new ViewSonic boards purchased with the proceeds of the School Auction **2:** 5th grade Spanish class honored Hispanic Heritage Month by learning a traditional Mexican dance **3:** 3rd grade brought the saints to life for All Saints Day by dressing like their Confirmation saints and presenting about them after an All School Mass