STUDENT AND FAMILY HANDBOOK

515 W Scott St
Springfield, MO 65802

Phone: 417. 866.0667 **Email**: sjcaoffice@stjosephcatholicacademy.org
Web: sjcaspringfield.org

MISSION AND PHILOSOPHY

PHILOSOPHY

St. Joseph Catholic Academy is part of the teaching ministry of the Roman Catholic Church. Built on the four pillars of Catholic Education (Catholic Identity, Academic Excellence, Accessibility, and, Affordability) our goal is: to prepare each student to proclaim the Good News, to translate it to action, and to transform oneself and society with God's help (*To Teach as Jesus Did,* pg. 29, #105). We integrate religious truth and values with life.

We strive to create a Christian educational environment conducive to spiritual, intellectual, social, emotional, physical, and aesthetic growth of each student committed to the care of St. Joseph Catholic Academy. "Prime responsibility for creating this unique Christian school climate rests with the teachers, as individuals and as a community (*The Religious Dimension of Education in a Catholic School,* pg. 13, #26). As an educational community, our intent is to enable our students, through a challenging curriculum, to reach their full potential as Christian individuals."

MISSION

St. Joseph Catholic Academy is dedicated to excellence in education and to the spiritual development of youth within the framework of the gospel and in the tradition of the Catholic Church.

MOTTO

Passionate about our FAITH, Challenging in our ACADEMICS, Committed to our FAMILIES

ACCREDITATION

St. Joseph Catholic Academy is accredited through the Missouri Chapter of the National Federation of Non-public School State Accrediting Association. This association is composed of non-public schools in the states of Missouri, Minnesota, Michigan, Arkansas, and Georgia, and is recognized by the United States Department of Education, the Missouri State Board of Education, and the Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education. Schools are re-accredited on an annual basis. St. Joseph completed a self-study process in 2008-2009.

ADMISSION/REGISTRATION REQUIREMENTS

In recognition of the important role the parish has in fostering the full development of our youth, our admissions procedures require that our Catholic parents obtain written approval of their Pastor to complete the registration process.

The Catholic Church and St Joseph Catholic Academy recognize parents as the primary educators of their child. The education of students at our school is a partnership between parents, students, teachers, and this school. If, in the opinion of the administration, the

partnership is irretrievably broken, the school reserves the right to require the parent to withdraw his or her student from St. Joseph.

Policy: Age of Admission

"A child is to be three (3) years of age prior to Aug. 1 to be eligible for admission to preschool. In some cases where the third birthday falls closely after Aug. 1, the administrator reserves the right to allow admittance with successful passage of preschool assessments to ensure the readiness of the child.

Per Missouri State Law, all children MUST be five (5) years of age prior to Aug. 1 to be eligible for admission to Kindergarten.

The following must be presented at registration:

(1). Baptismal Certificate (if student is Catholic).
(2). Birth Certificate
(3). Social Security Number
(4). Current Immunization Record "

Policy: Priority for Admission

"Priority for admission into St. Joseph Catholic Academy programs will be given to active Catholic families who are registered in their parish."

Policy: Transfer Students

"All transfer students will be admitted on a probationary basis. Transfer student policy guidelines include the following:

1. The Transfer Student form will be completed prior to registration
2. The administrator, and other appropriate personnel may contact the former school(s) regarding the student's educational history. Only students who are in good standing at their prior school will be considered for enrollment.
3. The administrator will conduct an interview with parents and students.
4. The administrator makes the decision regarding enrollment.
5. Transfer students will be admitted on a probationary status for 90 attendance days starting with the first day of attendance. Anytime during the probationary period the administrator may:
   A. Remove the probationary status of the student,
   B. Extend the probationary status of the student,
   C. Dismiss the student from school."

ARRIVAL – DISMISSAL PROCEDURES

STUDENT DROP-OFF: 7:30 a.m. DISMISSAL IS AT 3:30 p.m.

Students who arrive between 7:30 and 7:50 a.m. report to the auditorium. The tardy bell rings at 8:00 a.m. Anyone arriving after 8:00 a. m., should buzz in at the North door and report to the school office before going to class. Regular dismissal time is 3:30 p.m. for all students. Paid Aftercare is available starting at 3:30 p.m.

DROP OFF AND PICK UP PROCEDURE

The safety of our students is top priority when dropping off and picking up students.

- Pull the vehicle as far forward in the loading zone as possible before stopping.
- All children enter and exit vehicles on the school side.
- If you need extra time to unload, please park so that the car line is not blocked.
- If parking, children must be walked to and from the school.

DISMISSAL DURING THE SCHOOL DAY:
Students may not be released to anyone other than a parent or guardian unless the school has been otherwise notified. Parents are required to report to the office and sign their child out before taking them from school during the school day; school personnel will call your child to the office in order to minimize the interruption of the learning process. Parents will need to notify the office by email, note, or phone if his/her child needs to leave early. Students who return to school should check into the office upon returning.

WEATHER-RELATED SCHOOL CLOSING
St Joseph Catholic Academy closings will be announced on the radio and television. ***If Springfield Catholic Schools are closed, we will be closed.*** We do not usually close early during the day because of weather, but parents/guardians can pick up their children early if they are concerned about transportation safety.

ATTENDANCE
Regular school attendance and punctuality is a condition of enrollment at St. Joseph Catholic Academy. All healthy children are expected to be at school for the full school day. Missouri State Law requires 142 days of school. **More than 5 days unexcused absence in a quarter can be considered neglect, according to the Division of Family Services, and can be reported as such to the Division of Family Services.** "A parent, guardian or other person...having charge control, or custody of child between the ages of seven and sixteen years of age shall cause the child to attend regularly some public, private, parochial, parish, home school or a combination of such schools not less than the entire term of the school which the child attends..." (R.S. MO.167.031) Failure to comply with the Missouri Compulsory Attendance Law is a class C misdemeanor. Such an offense carries a maximum penalty of fifteen days in the Greene County Jail, and a $300.00 fine.

Parents are discouraged from taking students out of school except for family emergencies. Doctor/dentist appointments will be considered an excused tardy if the child returns to the school with a note. Parents can notify the office or homeroom teacher via email.
Students arriving after 8:00 am are to report to the school office for a tardy slip. Students who are gone from the school for less than 1 ½ hours anytime during the day will be counted as tardy. Students gone from school 1 ½ to 3 ½ hours anytime during the day will be counted as ½ day absent. **Please note**: Students who arrive after 10:00 a.m. or leave before 1:30 p.m. will be counted as ½ day absent.

When a child is absent, tardy, or released from school early, he/she is responsible for work assigned and the student should ask teachers about make-up work. Parents are encouraged to pick up their child's schoolwork when their child is ill.

BIRTHDAY CELEBRATIONS/SNACKS
Please consult with your child's teacher about how birthday treats are handled in the classroom. We ask that families do not send balloons, flowers, etc. to school, as it is disruptive to the learning environment. To prevent hurt feelings we request that parents refrain from handing out invitations for a party unless the **ENTIRE CLASS** or **EVERY BOY** or **EVERY GIRL** in the class is being invited.

SNACKS
Preschool and Kindergarten parents will be asked to provide snacks for the class. Parents are asked to send nutritional snacks to school. For safety, glass containers are not permitted. Parents should discuss with the teacher any plans to provide snacks for their class before the date. For

health reasons, snacks that are brought in must be purchased from a store or bakery and come in the original container.

CAFETERIA
St. Joseph Catholic Academy offers a hot lunch program. All students are required to eat lunch (either purchased or brought from home). Menus are published monthly and are available on the website. Except in case of emergency **please do not send/bring** "fast food" lunches. Caffeinated beverages and soft drinks are prohibited for all students during school hours. Cafeteria accounts should maintain a positive balance at all times. If the account falls more than *$30 into the negative*, parents will be called and asked to bring lunch for your child.

METHOD OF PAYMENT
Please send all lunch money to school in a sealed envelope with your child's **NAME**, **GRADE,** and the **AMOUNT OF MONEY** enclosed written on the front of the envelope. When paying for more than one child with one envelope please make sure that all children's names and grades are on the front of the envelope.

COMMUNICATION
Communication and cooperation between the home and the school is an important ingredient in any school program. The teachers strive to make parents aware of student progress and classroom activities primarily through the family folder in students' backpacks and the website. **We recommend that parents check backpacks on a daily basis** so that important information will not be missed. Frequent email communications are sent to all families who submit email addresses.

FAMILY FOLDERS
General notices, news from the school, parish, diocese, or local organizations, and homework are sent home daily in the family folder. Folders should be emptied daily, signed, and returned along with the child's completed homework to school the next school day.

CONFERENCES
When concerns arise, parents are invited to communicate with the classroom teacher who is most closely involved with the situation and can most likely help or answer questions. Teachers can be contacted through the school office and an appropriate time to meet will be arranged. **A REQUIRED Parent-Teacher conference is scheduled for all students following the end of the 1st quarter**. Additional conferences can be arranged at other times during the school year. The principal is also available for conferences. Parents are requested to call ahead for an appointment.

HOME AND SCHOOL ASSOCIATION
All parents are considered members of the Home & School. St. Joseph Home & School Association is a means to develop mutual understanding between parents and the school staff and to assist parents in achieving their mission with the school as co-educators of their children. The Home & School meetings, which are held as needed throughout the school year, provide parents and staff with opportunities to meet and discuss ways to work together for the benefit of the entire school community.

CURRICULUM

ACADEMIC COMPETITIONS
Because we recognize the diversity and excellence found in our students, we encourage student participation in appropriate competitions that are offered locally, statewide, and nationwide.

Students also participated in the Right to Life Contest, Springfield Art Museum Art Show, as well as a variety of writing/essay, and poster contests. The school year culminates with the St Joseph Academy Educational Fair in which every student, PreK – 8th grade, prepares and presents a project in the subject area of his/her choice.

SUBJECTS TAUGHT & GRADING SCALE

The curriculum places emphasis on the development of knowledge, skills, and understanding appropriate to its student body in accordance with its stated goals, purposes, and objectives.

St. Joseph Catholic Academy curriculum includes:

Religion – Service Learning	Math	Reading/Phonics	Grammar/Spelling
Social Studies	Science	Spanish	Vocal Music
Physical Education	Technology	Art	Theology of the Body

Grading Scale: Grades 1– 8					**Grading Scale Kindergarten**	
A	94-100	C	77-83		E	Excellent
A-	93	C-	76		S+	Above Satisfactory
B+	92	D+	75		S	Satisfactory
B	86-91	D	71-74		S-	Below Satisfactory
B-	85	D-	70		P	Progressing, but not yet satisfactory
C+	84	F	Below 70		U	Unsatisfactory. Very little progress demonstrated toward skill

HOMEWORK

Lessons taught during the day need to be reinforced with written work and study. Assignments are based upon work, which has been taught during the day, and should usually be able to be completed independently by the student. If the assigned work takes more than an ordinary amount of time, please consult the teacher. Ordinarily, Primary Grades (1-3) will have 15 – 30 minutes of homework, Intermediate Grades (4-6) might have 30 –45 minutes; Grades 7-8 will have 45 – 75 minutes of work. This could be **study** or written work.

HOMEWORK IN ADVANCE

Teachers are not expected to provide homework assignments in advance for students who will be gone for reasons other than illness, family emergency, or school activities. Students are responsible for obtaining and completing assignments when they return to school after being absent. Parents are to call the school by 9:00 a.m. if they want to pick up a student's homework. Homework may be picked up at the school office at dismissal.

STUDENTS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

Policy

St Joseph Catholic Academy attempts to address the learning needs of all students within the parameters of the school's human and financial resources. Students are considered for enrollment when educational resources and programming are available which can address their specific needs and allow them to be successful.

St Joseph Catholic Academy provides for a normal range of learning differences, but does not provide direct special education instruction. St Joseph serves students whose instructional program requires minimal modifications.

LIBRARY

Our library is stocked with an array of books appropriate for respective grade levels. Students will have the opportunity to visit the library once a week. The books may be read at school or checked out. The student is responsible for the book and will be expected to pay for damage or loss.

REPORT CARDS

Report cards are issued four (4) times a year, once every nine weeks. Make-up work is required to be finished by the end of the quarter. A mid-quarter report will be sent to the 1st-8th grade parents notifying them of the child's progress. On-line access to student grade books is provided to parents who request it.

STANDARDIZED TESTING

iReady diagnostic assessment is given three times per year to students in grades K – 8. Scores will be given to the parents after each assessment. The ARK Assessment of Religion is given to Grades 2rd through 8th annually according to Diocesan Guidelines.

TITLE I PROGRAM

Services from the Federal Government through Title I are offered to students who qualify. Parents are notified if their child qualifies for this program.

DISCIPLINE

The philosophy of discipline at St. Joseph Catholic Academy is based on the life and teachings of Jesus. These principles are the foundation for Christian learning. St. Joseph Catholic Academy will strive to provide an education in a safe, disruption free environment where each person is valued as an individual. Students are to exhibit respect for all individuals. Students at St. Joseph Catholic Academy are expected to act in a way that reflects the strong Christian values as well as the philosophy of the school. Students who engage in conduct, whether inside or outside the school, that is detrimental to the reputation of the school, may be disciplined by school officials. Clearly established rules of conduct for the classroom and school building help students to know and understand what is expected of them while they are under our care and supervision.

When occasions arise in which students do not reflect those high values, teachers will handle those situations appropriately and will communicate with the parents regarding the conduct. If necessary, the principal will become involved to the extent that the teacher and/or parents believe it will be helpful or the administration feels it is necessary.

Students, coaches, parents and participants in or at any extra-curricular event will demonstrate behavior that reflects the strong Christian values of Catholic education. Extra-curricular events include academic and sporting events. Unsportsmanlike conduct will not be tolerated. Anyone, child or adult, displaying unsportsmanlike behavior will be asked to leave the event.

Diocesan guidelines are established that direct the administration in serious cases where

suspension or expulsion might be considered. Removal of student privileges or service work might be a consequence. Cooperation, communication, and a positive approach to the relationship between home and school will always be the key to happy and successful student life.

Diocesan Policy #5500 - Student Behavior & Discipline

"Discipline is not a form of punishment. Its purposes are:

A. To help each student become more responsible to him or herself and to others.
B. To educate and assist students in developing self-control.
C. To promote classroom situations conducive to learning.
D. To create a harmonious school and classroom atmosphere.

Discipline is attained when students in a classroom and school cooperatively work with principal, teachers and companions toward the attainment of the class and school objectives**."**

Diocesan Policy #5600 - Suspension

"Every effort should be made to avoid suspending a student from school. The principal can suspend a student from school for a justifiable reason, but in so doing judges this to be a course of action that will be preventive and corrective. If, however, a suspension is warranted, parents are to be personally notified of the suspension of their child and also be notified by mail by the principal.

Possible causes for suspension include but are not limited to:

A. Open defiance of school authority
B. Striking a teacher, school personnel, or another student
C. Possession or consumption of an alcoholic beverage at school or a school-related function
D. Possession or use of a controlled substance at school or a school related function
E. Possession or use of a weapon or anything that would threaten the welfare of anyone present in the school or at a school related function (immediate suspension)
6F. Any verbal threat, or physical threat of violence"

During the period of suspension, suspended students may not participate in or attend any school related practices, activities or events, including all sports, without the written permission of the school administrator.

GUM

Gum is **not** to be chewed on the school premises.

SEARCH AND SEIZURE

St. Joseph Parish and the School are co-tenants. Administration has the authority to inspect all school or personal property. Items considered a hazard or a nuisance in the school or on the playground are subject to immediate confiscation and disciplinary action may be taken.

TOBACCO USE

St. Joseph Catholic Academy is a smoke/tobacco free building. The use of tobacco in any form is prohibited in any part of the building.

"The principal is the final recourse in all disciplinary situations and may waive any disciplinary rule for just cause at his or her discretion."

Diocesan Policy #5090 - Human Sexuality

In Genesis we find the foundation of a Christian anthropology, an understanding of what it means to be human. "God created mankind in his image; in the image of God he created them; male and female he created them. God blessed them and God said to them: Be fertile and multiply" (Gn 1:27-28).

Gaudium et Spes (24) from the Second Vatican Council explains, "For having been created in the

image of God, Who'from one man has created the whole human race and made them live all over the face of the earth' (Acts 17:26), all men are called to one and the same goal, namely God Himself."

The Catechism of the Catholic Church (CCC) teaches, "By creating the human being man and woman, God gives personal dignity equally to the one and the other. Each of them, man and woman, should acknowledge and accept his sexual identity" (CCC 2393). "Physical, moral, and spiritual differences and complementarity are oriented toward the goods of marriage and the flourishing of family life (Ibid., 2333).

The support of family life, the domestic church, is especially important in a culture that seeks to devalue the importance of family. "There is a need to reaffirm the metaphysical roots of sexual differences, as an anthropological refutation of attempts to negate the male-female duality of human nature, from which the family is generated" (Congregation for Catholic Education, 34). A disregard for an anthropology consistent with the Creator's purpose, results in conflict within the family and society as a whole. "The harmony of the couple and of society depends in part on the way in which the complementarity, needs, and mutual support between the sexes are lived out" (CCC 2333).

Catholic schools do not exist in isolation from the Church or the family. One of the essential marks of a Catholic school is a foundation based upon a Christian anthropology (Miller, p. 22). "Authentic Catholic educators recognize Christ and his understanding of the human person as a measure of a school's catholicity" (Ibid., p.26).

It is with the desire to provide an authentic Catholic education that the following policy on human sexuality is adopted.

<u>Policy</u>

A. All persons have inherent human dignity and are thus deserving of innate respect as a child of God.

B. Catholic schools shall provide for sequential and age-appropriate instruction. Sexuality education provides not only the important biological and scientific information, but also incorporates corresponding religious values and moral formation. Continued parental involvement and support is essential if program goals are to be achieved.

C. Theology of the Body will be incorporated into the religion/theology curriculum in all diocesan schools.

D. All instruction will be guided by Catholic teaching.

E. All persons are called to chastity in accordance with their state in life. For purposes of the school environment, chastity also encompasses modesty in language, appearance, dress, and behavior. Accordingly, romantic or sexual displays of affection are not permitted at school.

F. Students and staff may not advocate, celebrate, or express same-sex attraction in such a way as to cause confusion or distraction in the context of Catholic school classes, activities, or events. When discussing homosexuality or homosexual inclinations, the use of the term "same-sex attraction" is preferred, as it is a more appropriate description in accordance with the truths of Catholic faith and morals.

G. All students are expected to conduct themselves at school in a manner consistent with their biological sex. Schools shall consider the gender of all students as being consistent with their biological sex, including, but not limited to, the following:

   a. Participation in school athletics
   b. School sponsored dances
   c. Dress and uniform policies
   d. The use of changing facilities, showers, locker rooms, and restrooms
   e. Titles, names, and pronouns
   f. Official school documents

H. No person is permitted to have on-site or distribute any medications for the purpose of

gender reassignment.

I. If an issue cannot be resolved to the mutual satisfaction of the parents and the school, whose goal must always be to uphold Catholic truths and principles, the school may decide that it is in the best interest of all parties for the student to seek enrollment in an environment that better reflects the family's views on human anthropology.

References
Catholic Church. (2019). Catechism of the Catholic Church.
Congregation for Catholic Education. (2019). Male and female he created them: Towards a path of dialogue on the question of gender theory in education.
Miller, J. M. (2006). The Holy See's teaching on Catholic schools. Sophia Inst Press.
Paul VI. (1965). Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the modern world: Gaudium et spes.

UNIFORM AND DRESS CODE

Students in grades PreK through 8 are required to wear approved school uniforms. (See "Uniform Code – Appendix A")

Guidelines: Accessories:

- Necklaces and bracelets are not allowed (except for a cross or religious medal on a light weight chain or cord)
- Ankle bracelets and rings are not allowed.
- Hoop earrings are not allowed. Girls may wear one pair of stud earrings.
- No nail polish.
- No tattoos.
- No body piercings.
- No make-up
- No artificial nails (including dipped/acrylic) are not to be worn by any students.
- Hair Styles: No distracting styles, no artificial hair coloring, no hair streaking and no hair jewelry.
- Boys' hair will be cut above the collar and over the ears.

Any issue related to the cleanliness or neatness of the uniform, hairstyles, or general appearance of the students, not specifically addressed in the school dress code, can be judged appropriate or inappropriate by administration. If the administration determines that a student is not in uniform, that their appearance is distracting to the educational process or diminishes the reputation of the school; the administration will request that the student make modifications.

Dress down (Buy-Out) out-of-uniform days are observed throughout the school year. On these days students are expected to be in modest and appropriate attire. Students **are not** to wear clothing that is torn or has holes in it. No tank or spaghetti-strapped tops, no clothing with inappropriate logos, no tops that reveal the wearer's midriff when arms are extended upward, no biker shorts, and no tight athletic shorts. Shorts, skirts, skorts, dresses, jumpers must be no shorter than 3 inches above the knee. Knee length is preferred.

******Parents **accept responsibility for their children's dress at school**. Please assist your child in selecting proper uniform items to prevent hurt feelings and embarrassment.

- If students are dressed inappropriately, they will receive a uniform infraction notice that needs to be signed by parents.
- Upon third uniform infraction notice, students will serve ½ (one half) day of in-school suspension and parents will be notified.
- Upon fourth uniform infraction notice, students will serve one full day of in-school

suspension and participate in a conference with administrator and parent(s).
- Parents may be contacted and asked to bring proper clothing for their child to wear.

All students should wear athletic (rubber)-soled, non-marking, non-slip shoes every day, both PE and non-PE days. Shoes need to provide for comfortable, safe, solid footing every day. NO boots, backless shoes, light-up tennis shoes, sandals, or flip-flop style shoes are allowed. **Students MUST wear athletic shoes (sneakers, tennis shoes) on the days that they have a P.E. class.** Other footwear inhibits the ability to safely participate in physical activities; therefore, students without proper footwear will not be allowed to participate in P.E. activities and will receive a zero (0) for the day. (Note: PLEASE, no black or red soled shoes that leave scuff marks!)
Students grade 5-8 are required to wear the school PE uniform on the day they have PE. Uniforms are to be purchased through school approved vendors.

FIELD TRIPS
Field trips are privileges. Students may be denied participation if they fail to meet academic and/or behavior requirements. All volunteers must have completed Diocesan background check, Code of Conduct, and online Virtus training prior to the event. No student will be allowed to go on a field trip without a signed **Field Trip Permission slip** from a parent/guardian, or adult designee of parent/guardian. All field trips are reserved exclusively for St. Joseph Catholic Academy students.

HEALTH AND SAFETY

ASBESTOS
Asbestos-containing building materials are located within St Joseph Catholic Academy. In their present condition they present no hazard to school occupants. An asbestos management plan has been developed to prevent the asbestos from becoming a hazard and is on file in the school office.This plan is available for inspection upon request and by appointment.

CHILD PROTECTION AND CUSTODY
St. Joseph Catholic Academy abides by the Child Protection and Reformation Act (RSMO 210) that requires school personnel having reasonable cause to believe that a child known to them in their professional capacity might be abused or neglected to report to the Missouri Department of Family Services.
St. Joseph Catholic Academy abides by the provisions of the Buckley Amendment with respect to the right of non-custodial parent with access to academic records and other school information regarding his or her child. If there is a court order specifying that there is to be no information given, it is the custodial parent's responsibility to provide the school with a copy of the court order.

COMMUNICABLE DISEASES
Since children are in close proximity to each other in a classroom, illnesses can spread rapidly. Please be sensitive to the health of the rest of the student body and staff when assessing whether or not your child is in the best condition to return to school even if he/she is fever-free.

- Temperature/Fever **--** Fever must be below 100° F for 24-72* *hours without acetaminophen/Tylenol or ibuprofen/Motrin* to reduce temperature.

  If a child was sent home by the building nurse due to a fever, they should NOT return to school for at least 24 hours. If they return to school the next day, parents will be notified to come and pick up their child.

  **Students may be asked to stay home for 72 hours after being sent home for a fever accompanied by any of the Coronavirus symptoms (*Fever or chills, Cough, Shortness of

breath or difficulty breathing, Fatigue, Muscle or body aches, Headache, New loss of taste or smell, Sore throat, Congestion or runny nose, Nausea or vomiting, Diarrhea)

- Rash--NO symptoms and/or a note from the doctor stating that the student is not contagious or that treatment has been started.
- Vomiting or diarrhea -- Child needs to be eating their normal diet without vomiting or diarrhea for 24-72* hours.
- Eye Drainage -- No drainage **OR** a doctor's note stating they are not contagious. If medication was prescribed and there is no doctor's note, the student may return 24 hours after starting treatment.
- Head Lice -- Must undergo *a lice treatment*. Students will need to check with the nurse's office before going to class each day for 3 days and then every other day for 7 days.Parents are not required to bring their student to the nurse's office for these checks. Students will be allowed to ride the bus to and from school. Anytime that live lice are found, parents will be notified to come and pick up their child at their earliest convenience.
- Strep Throat -- Must be on antibiotics for 24 hours before returning to school or have a doctor's note stating that the student can return before the 24 hours.

DIOCESAN SAFE ENVIRONMENT (*VIRTUS*©)

The Diocese of Springfield-Cape Girardeau is committed to helping children learn and grow in a healthy and safe environment. St. Joseph Catholic Academy complies with diocesan safe environment policies and procedures. In accordance with the U.S. Bishop's Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People, the program Protecting God's Children – Teaching Touching Safety (commonly referred to as "Virtus") is used in the diocese. Students in grades Kindergarten through 8th participate in two different safety lessons each school year; one in the fall and one in the spring. An overview of the children's training is available on the diocesan website. You may also view the child safety curriculum by contacting the school office. Each employee who works in the school building, and volunteers who have regular contact with children, have undergone a background screening process through the diocese. They have also attended the Virtus *Protecting God's Children© for Adults* awareness training. All employees, and volunteers who regularly work with minors, receive training in how to recognize, prevent and report abuse, as well as ongoing training and background screening. They also agree to comply with the Code of Conduct for Clergy, Employees and Adult Volunteers Working with Minors. Go to www.dioscg.org to view the Code of Conduct and for other important information.

If you are unable to access the website or desire printed information, contact the diocesan office at 417-866-0841.

- Any suspected or known abuse of a minor must first be immediately reported to the **Missouri Child Abuse and Neglect Hotline 800-392-3738** or **844-CAN-TELL.**
- **Violations** of the *Code of Conduct for Clergy, Employees and Adult Volunteers Working with Minors* may also be reported to the Diocesan Director of Child and Youth Protection, (417) 866-0841, or childandyouthprotection@dioscg.org or through the TIPS Online Reporting System.

EMERGENCY DRILLS

In order to prepare the children for possible emergencies; fire, storm, and lockdown drills will be conducted at various times during the year.

EMERGENCY FORMS

An Emergency Form is required to be kept on file for each child. It is important that all requested information be given for school use in case of an emergency. **Parents are responsible for keeping this information current**. In the event of an accident or a sudden illness, parents/guardians will be notified as soon as possible **using contact information provided by parents/guardians on**

Emergency Form.

IMMUNIZATIONS

It is the general policy of Saint Joseph Catholic Academy that all students must present documentation of up-to-date immunization status as required by the State of Missouri, including month, day, and year of each immunization, before attending school. A four day grace period from the first day of school, or at the time of enrollment, may be granted to students as needed.

We permit the following exceptions to our general policy:

1. Medical immunization exemption
2. Immunizations in progress (*"in progress" means that a child has begun the vaccine series and has an appointment for the next dose. This appointment must be kept and an updated record provided to the school. If the appointment is not kept, the child is no longer in progress and is noncompliant.*)
3. Religious immunization exemption

To qualify for the above exemptions, it is the parent's responsibility to provide the school with the appropriate completed form or exemption card. Forms may be obtained by contacting a medical provider, local public health agency, or the State of Missouri's Bureau of Immunizations. Students who are unimmunized, regardless of the reason, are subject to exclusion from school when outbreaks of vaccine-preventable diseases occur. The occasion or instance of an exclusion and the term of said will be determined at the discretion of the pastor or high school principal in consultation with public health authorities.

NON-DISCRIMINATORY POLICY

HARASSMENT

Harassment of any nature is unchristian and is in direct opposition to the spirit and mission of St. Joseph Catholic Academy. Disciplinary action will be taken.

Diocesan Policy #3000

All practices of a Catholic school in the Diocese of Springfield-Cape Girardeau related to employment shall be conducted without discrimination on the basis of sex. No school shall, on the basis of sex:

Recruit, advertise, select employees, pay, promote, and classify employees, grant leaves, provide fringe benefits, select for training in special workshops, conferences, restrict employment to a single sex unless the position is such that it can only be performed by a member of that sex.

Diocesan Policy #3002

All practices of a Catholic school in the Diocese of Springfield-Cape Girardeau related to employment shall be conducted without discrimination on the basis of race, color, national ethnic origin or age:

Recruit, advertise, select employees, pay, promote, classify employees, grant leaves, provide fringe benefits, select for training in special workshops or conferences.

Diocesan Policy #5895

No student enrolled in a Catholic elementary or secondary school in the Diocese of Springfield-Cape Girardeau shall, on the basis of sex, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any education program or activity provided by that school.

MEDICATION

The following guidelines should be followed concerning any students with special health conditions/concerns: A "Student Health Inventory" form should be completed by parent/guardian at time of enrollment and updated annually or as needed.

- Parents/guardians should notify the school nurse or principal of any health concern that could require emergency services, interfere with the student's education process or require interventions throughout the school day.
- Students requiring medical accommodations throughout the school day (including, but not limited to: physical education, dietary conditions, physical limitations, and/or medical interventions) must have on file a statement from their licensed medical provider stating such each school year.
- It is strongly encouraged that parents/guardians follow a pattern of having regular medical and dental screenings for their child.

Student medications must be brought to the school office by parent/guardian in original packaging. All medications will be kept in a locked, safe area to be administered by a designated person as per label directions. An authorization form must accompany all medications and must have medication name, dose, and parent/guardian signature. In compliance with policy, non-prescription medications will require the parental authorization form or a written permission from the child's doctor.

RECESS/BREAK PERIODS

All students are expected to take part in activities outdoors unless the weather is bad or the student has been asked to stay inside by a teacher. Students should come properly dressed for outdoor play.

PHONE POLICY

Except for emergencies, teachers and students will not be interrupted during class to use the office phone. The use of phones by students is not permitted during the school day without express permission of the administrator or supervising teacher.

CELL PHONES & ELECTRONIC DEVICES

Missouri State law now prohibits students from using or displaying any personal electronic communication devices during the school day. This includes, but is not limited to, cell phones, smartwatches, headphones, wireless earbuds or any similar device capable of initiating, receiving, storing or viewing communication, information, images or data electronically. At St. Joseph Catholic Academy, students are prohibited from bringing or wearing these devices during school hours. Failure to comply will result in student discipline and/or expulsion. Parents may contact the school office via telephone or email in case of emergency.

PROPERTY AND EQUIPMENT

Students are expected to handle school property/equipment including textbooks with care. A protective cover is to be kept on textbooks at all times. Students and/or parents will be held financially responsible for misuse, damage, or loss of school property/equipment. Students may not use school equipment without proper adult supervision. St. Joseph administration and teachers reserve the right to inspect desks, storage units, backpacks, gym bags, or any items that students bring to school.

SPORTS

St. Joseph Academy students are eligible to participate in Springfield Catholic Schools' organized athletic programs. At the elementary level these programs consist of cheerleading, basketball, cross country, and track for 7th and 8th graders. The program is governed by Missouri

State High School Athletic Association (MSHSAA) guidelines. Each student shall maintain a C average, with no more than one F, during each grading period. Any student, who fails more than one subject, shall be ineligible the following semester. He or she may not participate in practice or in games.

Diocesan Policy #6800 - Extraculicullar Purpose

Catholic education seeks to form the whole person – spirit, mind, and body. Therefore, extracurricular activities are an integral part of the Catholic concept of the human person should inform all activities including athletics. Extracurricular activities should promote not just physical prowess but also growth in character and virtue. These activities should foster Christian values and enrich the curricular offerings of the school. Extracurricular activities should support the mission of Catholic education by reflecting a commitment to faith and family.

TECHNOLOGY USAGE

The use of computers at St. Joseph Catholic Academy is a privilege and carries with it, the responsibility for appropriate use. Students who do not comply with usage rules may lose their usage privileges. **All students/parents in Grades K - 8 must sign a technology usage agreement form before the student will be allowed to use the computers at St. Joseph Catholic Academy.** Completed forms are kept on file for and are in effect for the duration of the student's enrollment at St Joseph.

VISITORS

Visitors are welcome at St. Joseph Catholic Academy. However, as a safety precaution, all parents/visitors are asked to check in at the school office before proceeding anywhere else in the building. To protect our students, surveillance cameras are in operation at all times and during the school day doors are LOCKED. **To avoid unnecessary classroom interruptions, parents who bring forgotten items or who need to leave a communication for a student/teacher should leave them in the school's office to be delivered to classrooms by school personnel.**

WORSHIP/PRAYER

Our faith is at the core of our school day. Students, faculty, and staff participate in frequent daily prayer and are given opportunities for regular Mass attendance, the Sacrament of Reconciliation, special prayer services, Stations of the Cross, devotion to the rosary, and special seasonal practices.

Students in grades K through 8 attend all school Mass twice a week at St. Joseph Catholic Church. Students in preschool will also attend mass as scheduled by the teacher. Unless otherwise noted, all Mass times are 8:30 a.m. Your presence is always welcome at school masses.

Reception of Communion at school masses: While we welcome our non-Catholic students and families at our celebration of the Mass, Catholic Church Guidelines do not allow permission for non-Catholics to receive Holy Communion. Non-Catholic students come forward with their class with their arms crossed over their chests and receive a special blessing instead of Communion. We pray that our common baptism and the action of the Holy Spirit in the Eucharist will draw us closer to one another and begin to dispel the divisions which separate us. We pray that these will lessen and finally disappear, in keeping with Christ's prayer for us "that they may all be one" (John 17: 21).

Because Catholics believe that the celebration of the Eucharist is a sign of the reality of the oneness of faith, life, and worship, members of those churches with whom we are not yet fully united are ordinarily not admitted to Holy Communion. Eucharistic sharing in exceptional

circumstances by other Christians requires permission according to the directives of the diocesan bishop and the provisions of canon law (Canon 844 § 4). Members of the Orthodox Churches, the Assyrian Church of the East, and the Polish National Catholic Church are urged to respect the discipline of their own Churches. According to Roman Catholic discipline, the Code of Canon Law does not object to the reception of communion by Christians of these Churches. (Canon 844 § 3).

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Appendix A

St. Joseph Catholic Academy
Uniform Code

All students in PreK through 8th grade are required to wear the school uniform. Uniforms are to fit comfortably without being excessively loose or overly-tight. Uniforms should be clean, neat, and in good repair at all times. Pants must be worn at the waist with shirts tucked in at all times.

Daily Wear (Tuesday - Thursday)

Shirts

- SJCA burgundy uniform (short or long sleeved) polo shirt
- SJCA white uniform (short or long sleeved) polo shirt
- White uniform (short or long sleeved) dress shirt
    - ❖ All girls in 3rd through 8th grade must wear a solid white undershirt or camisole under their dress shirt.
    - ❖ All undershirts or turtlenecks worn under the uniform shirt must be plain white with absolutely no writing or graphics.

Outerwear

- Burgundy uniform vest
- Burgundy uniform sweater
- SJCA burgundy full-zip hooded sweatshirt
- SJCA burgundy crewneck sweatshirt or hoodie (No longer available for purchase, but still acceptable.)
    - ❖ **Outerwear is optional.**
    - ❖ **ONLY the above uniform outerwear is appropriate for wear INSIDE the school or church.**

Pants/Shorts/Tights, Etc…

- Khaki or Navy pants, shorts, skirts, skorts, and jumpers
- Solid white, navy, or black footed tights and leggings are optional for girls (see "Accessories" on following page for policy regarding tights and leggings)
    - ❖ All shorts, skirts, skorts, and jumpers must be no shorter than 3 inches above the knee

- ❖ All girls need to wear shorts (stretch, pull-on style are best) under skirts/jumpers. Shorts should be shorter than skirt/jumper and will not be visible below the hemline.
- ❖ Pants and shorts should be in a professional style without cargo or patch pockets. No denim or corduroy.

Ties (Optional daily except Fridays and Special Occasions)

- Boys-Burgundy/Navy striped necktie
- Girls-Burgundy/Navy striped criss cross tie

Dress Attire (Fridays and Special Occasions)

ONLY the following pieces are acceptable as dress attire:

- White uniform dress shirt, short sleeved or long sleeved
  - ❖ All girls in 3rd through 8th grade must wear a solid white undershirt or camisole under their dress shirt.
- Burgundy vest
- Burgundy sweater
- SJCA burgundy full-zip hooded sweatshirt
- Khaki or Navy pants, shorts, skirts, skorts, and jumpers
- Solid white, navy, or black footed tights or leggings (see "Accessories" below for policy regarding tights and leggings)
- Burgundy/Navy striped tie
  - ❖ Tie is REQUIRED on Fridays and special occasions
  - ❖ Note: "Out of Uniform" passes are invalid on Fridays and Special Occasions

Accessories

Shoes – Athletic (rubber)-soled, non-marking, non-slip shoes are required every day, both PE and non-PE days. Shoes need to provide for comfortable, safe, solid footing every day. NO boots, backless shoes, light-up tennis shoes, sandals, or flip-flop style shoes are allowed.

Socks – Solid white, navy, or black socks are required. Other colors and patterns are not permitted. Girls may wear solid white, navy, or black knee-length socks.

Tights and Leggings – Girls may also wear solid white, navy, or black footed tights or solid white or navy leggings that are ankle-length or longer. Leggings must match the ankle-sock that must go over the legging. There should not be a gap or uncovered skin between the legging and the sock. Leggings must not contain decorations of any type or sort, including lace, trim, etc…

Belts – Boys and girls in grades 3rd-8th are strongly encouraged to wear a black, brown, navy, or tan solid-colored belt daily with pants, shorts, and any other uniform apparel that is manufactured with belt loops. Belts are strictly optional in Kindergarten through 2nd grades.

Jewelry:
Girls – Girls may wear cross necklaces or religious medals on a lightweight chain or cord. Girls may wear one pair of stud earrings. Girls may wear a lightweight bracelet of religious meaning.
Boys – Boys may wear cross necklaces or religious medals on a lightweight chain or cord. Earrings/piercings are not permitted. Boys may wear a lightweight bracelet of religious meaning.

Personal Appearance:

- Any altering of hair color is not permitted. Hairstyles must be of a traditional fashion and not distracting.
- Male cuts must be above the collar on the polo or dress shirt and over the ears.
- Nail polish is not permitted.
- Any permanent marking of the skin is not acceptable.
- No make-up may be worn during the school day to include; foundation, blush, mascara, eyeliner, eyebrow pencil, lipstick or lip color. Chapstick is allowed, but no lip gloss. No false eyelashes.

Uniform Policy Enforcement:

If a student comes to the classroom out of uniform:

- Teachers will require the student to make necessary adjustments.
- Teachers will notify the administration.
- Teachers will issue a "*Uniform Information Notice*," to be signed by parents, students, and administrators.

Note: Upon third uniform infraction notice, students will serve ½ (one half) day of in-school suspension and parents will be notified. Upon fourth uniform infraction notice, students will serve one full day of in-school suspension and participate in a conference with administrator and parent(s).
Parents may be called to bring appropriate school uniform, as stated in this handbook.

Guidelines for Dress Down (Buy-Out) Out-of-Uniform Days

- Jeans are permitted. Torn jeans are prohibited
- Sweatpants are permitted. No rips or tears are allowed
- School appropriate t-shirts are permitted
- School appropriate jackets, sweatshirts and hoodies are permitted
- Dress shorts, Bermuda shorts and athletic walking shorts are permitted
- Spaghetti straps, backless, halter or sundresses are **not** permitted
- All skirts and dresses must be of appropriate length
- All shoes must be closed-toe with a back

Inquire at the school office on purchasing the uniform for students.

APPENDIX B

STUDENT/FAMILY HANDBOOK
VERIFICATION FORM

Enrollment at St Joseph Catholic Academy presupposes that students and families agree to abide by the policies and guidelines contained in this handbook. Violation of handbook guidelines is grounds for disciplinary action including possible dismissal from St Joseph Catholic Academy. All students/parents must have a Student/Family Handbook Verification Form on file in the school office.

St. Joseph Catholic Academy administration has final recourse and reserves the right to amend this handbook.

I have read, understand and agree to the policies and procedures laid out in the SJCA Student and Family Handbook.

Student signature:_____

Student signature:_____

Student signature:_____

Student signature:_____

Student signature:_____

Parent/Guardian signature:_____

Parent/Guardian signature:_____

Date: _____

APPENDIX C

Diocese of Springfield-Cape Girardeau

WITNESS STATEMENT

For Those Seeking to Enroll Their Child in a Catholic School or a Parish School of Religion

One of the blessings of marriage is bringing forth new life. God entrusts children to parents who have a primary right and duty to educate their child in the practice of the faith. Parents carry out this responsibility by creating a home full of love, forgiveness, respect, and fidelity. The family is the community in which, from childhood, one honors God and learns moral values.

In the rite of the Sacrament of Baptism, parents receive the following call from God to evangelize their children:

> *You have asked to have your child baptized. In doing so you are accepting the responsibility of training her/him in the practice of the faith. It will be your duty to bring her/him up to keep God's commandments as Christ taught us, by loving God and our neighbor…You will be the first teachers of your child in the ways of the faith. May you be also the best of teachers, bearing witness to the faith by what you say or do, in Christ Jesus our Lord.*

It is no wonder that the Church identifies the home as the domestic church. It is in the intimate environment of the family that parents are, by word and example, the first heralds of the faith with respect to their children. This environment is enhanced and deepened through the parish Eucharistic community that is the heart of the spiritual life for Christian families.

Catholic schools and parish schools of religion programs are in partnership with the family in order to proclaim and witness to the life and teachings of Jesus Christ. They assist parents in fulfilling their responsibility as the primary religious educators of their child. This partnership works best when parents respect the beliefs of the Church and live lives in a manner that reflects these beliefs. If parents reject the beliefs of the Church or live lives in conflict with these teachings, catechizing young people becomes very difficult.

Aware, then, of the dignity of this holy parental call, and with a reverent awe for that responsibility which is mine, I commit myself to be, in word and example, the first and best teacher of my child in the faith. Practically, this means I will:

- Understand that the authentic teachings of Jesus as taught by the Catholic Church will be part of my child's education and formation;
- To the best of my ability respect the teachings of the Church and help my children respect the Church and its teachings;
- Regularly participate in the Sunday liturgy with my family (if not Catholic, support my child's participation in their faith tradition), include prayer in my life and form my child in the faith.
- Commit to speak frequently with my child about God and to include prayer in our daily home life;
- Participate in and cooperate with the school or parish school of religion in programs that enable me as a parent to take an active role in the religious education of my children, including sacramental preparation for Catholic children;
- Support the moral and social doctrine of the Catholic Church to ensure consistency between home and school
- Teach my child by word and example to have a love and concern for the needs of others;
- Meet my financial responsibilities in supporting the Catholic school or the parish school of religion.
- Practice stewardship in support of the school and parish

Signature of the Parent(s)/Guardian(s) _____

_____

PRINT NAMES Parent(s)/Guardian(s) _____

_____

Name of the Parish/School St. Joseph Catholic Academy, Springfield

Signature of the Pastor/Administrator _____

Signature of the Pastor/Administrator _____

Date _____

APPENDIX D

“Come and You Will See”

An Invitation to Engagement for Parents, Guardians and Guests

Partnership Guidelines

Catholic Schools in the Diocese of Springfield-Cape Girardeau

“The Educational Community is an ‘Us’”
Pope Leo XIV

These Partnership Guidelines are designed to assist all stakeholders in their dealings with staff, other parents, students, and the wider school community regarding Catholic schools and school-sponsored activities, meetings, and functions within and outside of school hours. All employees and volunteers must be in full compliance with the Diocese of Springfield-Cape Girardeau Safe Environment requirements before they engage in diocesan, parish, and school activities involving minors and vulnerable adults.

The Catholic school is a multifaceted organization comprised of diverse populations that have unique and distinct relationships to one another. Relationships are at the very core of our Catholic Christian belief in our Triune (three persons in one) God. The Holy Trinity is God in relationship! This beautiful doctrine inspires each member of the Catholic school to attempt to be a living Christian community in relationship with God and others. It is a core value in such a community that all members recognize and respect not only their own rights and responsibilities, but also the rights and responsibilities of other members of the community and those of the school itself. “The Educational Alliance requires intentionality, listening, and co-responsibility” (*Drawing New Maps of Hope*, 2025, 5.3 Pope Leo XIV).

The responsibility for promoting and upholding the core values of the school community must fall on all those with the greatest capacity to reason and control their actions. Therefore, it is the expectation of the school that all parents, guardians, and guests always model acceptable behavior within the school setting, at school sponsored activities, or when engaged in any social media involving the school. “It is incumbent upon parents to cooperate closely with the school teachers to whom they entrust their children to be educated; and in fulfilling their duty, teachers are to collaborate closely with parents who are to be willingly heard and for whom associations or meetings are to be inaugurated and held in great esteem” (*The Code of Canon Law*, Canon 796, Para. 2).

As a parent, you play a foundational role in the development of your child's sense of justice, equity, and worth together with all members of the school community. You are one of the most instrumental role models within your child's life. “Since parents have given children their life, they are bound by the most serious obligation to educate their offspring and therefore must be recognized as the primary and principal educators” (*Gravissimum Educationis*, 1965, para. 3).

In living the Gospel values, we strive to create a safe environment for all stakeholders developing:

- Christian attitude and behavior toward all people;
- An ability to appreciate the situation of others;
- Cooperation and civility with and toward others;
- Open, positive, and honest communication;
- Reverence for Creation;
- Respectful and trustworthy relationships and actions.

Expectations for Parents, Guardians, and Guests

As a member of the Catholic school community, we ask that you:

- Support the philosophy and mission of Catholic education in both words and deed.
- Support the school in cultivating virtue in electronic communications and the use of social media.

- Mentor your child in holiness by celebrating the liturgy/service of your faith background.
- Partner with the school to promote the well-being and success of all students.
- Communicate respectfully and constructively with school staff, without disrupting school operations.
- Remember a positive culture begins at home.
- Encourage and support your child's education through praise, engagement, and the modeling of a positive attitude.
- Promote healthy problem-solving and help your child understand the value of doing their best rather than comparing themselves to others.
- Listen to your child's perspective while remaining open to other interpretations of events.
- Foster a respectful and collaborative relationship with teachers; share concerns in a respectful and constructive manner.
- Support school policies as outlined in the handbook and website both in school and at home.
- If your child's behavior does not meet school standards, work cooperatively with staff following proper communication protocols.
- Refrain from gossip, hearsay, and negative commentary, including in electronic engagements and social media.
- Interact respectfully with staff, students, and other community members at all times.
- Uphold the reputation of the school, particularly in electronic communications, including when using social media.
- Refrain from smoking or using profanity on school premises or at school events.

Expectations for the school

You have the right to:

- Be treated with respect, courtesy, and professionalism by staff, students, and other parents.
- Clear communication regarding your child's education and development.
- Have your confidentiality respected.
- Receive a timely, appropriate response to concerns.

Guidelines for Conduct

- Advocate for the school and be mindful of how social media can impact others and the school's reputation.
- Do not use the school as a venue for parental disputes.
- Never approach another student for the purpose of discipline. Refer concerns to staff.
- Respect faculty/staff and their professional time; schedule appointments for discussions.
- Use respectful and civil communication, including in emails, online platforms, and social media.
- Follow the school's outlined procedures and chain of command for resolving concerns or conflicts.
- When volunteering or participating in events, follow the direction of the supervising teacher or staff member.
- Engage respectfully in school liturgies and events, supporting the communal life of the school.

Communication Process for a Parent, Guardian, Caregiver, Volunteer, and Visitor:

Diocesan Catholic schools want to work in partnership with families. If anyone has a **current complaint, criticism,** or **concern*,** it is expected the following steps be followed:

1. Speak to the appropriate school person involved first (e.g., classroom teacher) and try to resolve the concern with mutual respect and clear communication. If possible, make an appointment with the relevant person.
2. If for some reason this is not possible, then make an appointment to meet with an administrator or parish priest, following the specific school's established hierarchy.
3. The Administrator should attempt to mediate and find a resolution in the presence of both parties.
4. If, having followed Steps 1-3 with no satisfaction, you may contact the Diocesan Office of Catholic Schools.

* Any suspected or known abuse of a minor must first be immediately reported to the Missouri Child Abuse and Neglect Hotline 800-392-3738 or 844-CAN-TELL.

By accepting enrollment at a Catholic School in the Diocese of Springfield-Cape Girardeau, parents and guardians agree to abide by these guidelines in full. Deliberate breaches and/or demonstrated inability to comply with these guidelines, may result in exclusion of a parent, guardian, or guest from a school, and/or disenrollment of their child/ren.

Excerpts of this policy have been used by permission of the Diocese of St. Petersburg.

Signature of the Parent(s)/Guardian(s) _____

_____

PRINT NAMES Parent(s)/Guardian(s) _____

_____

Name of the Parish/School St. Joseph Catholic Academy, Springfield

Date _____