

Closure of parish school at St. Joe – Zell



St. Joseph Elementary School
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Ste. Genevieve, MO 63670
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Mrs. Kelsey Bullinger, Principal

Fr. Ryan Weber, Pastor
12-16-24

Dear St. Joseph School Families,

It is with a very heavy heart that I write to you today.

Over the past several weeks, I have had many heartfelt conversations with individual parishioners, large groups of parishioners, and with all of you—our school families. Together, we worked hard to explore every possible option to secure the future of St. Joseph School. I was deeply moved by your passion, dedication, and unwavering love for our school. Your willingness to commit to an ambitious plan to raise the funds needed for the 2024-2025 school year spoke volumes about the strength and resilience of this community.

In the end, however, the challenge we faced was not only financial but enrollment-based. For the school to remain viable, we needed a certain number of families to commit to enrolling their children for the next academic year. Despite everyone's best efforts, we were unable to meet that target. Without that critical level of enrollment, it became clear that the risk of moving forward would jeopardize not only the school but also the stability of our parish.

After much prayer, discernment, and consultation with parish leaders, I made the difficult recommendation to Archbishop Rozanski to close St. Joseph School at the end of this academic year. After carefully reviewing the situation, the archbishop has accepted this recommendation.

This decision was not made lightly, and I want you to know how much I admire the efforts of everyone who worked toward a different outcome. The love and dedication shown by this community will remain a testament to what makes St. Joseph School so special.

As we prepare for this transition, our parish is fully committed to supporting you and your children. We are committed to working with and supporting any of our children who wish to continue in Catholic Education. The Today and Tomorrow Educational Foundation will also assist families in transferring scholarship awards to the Catholic school of your choice. Please know that this decision does not affect our parish preschool, which will continue its important mission.

Please know that I am praying for all of you, and I humbly ask for your prayers as well.

With sadness, gratitude, and faith,

Fr. Ryan Weber

Quotes/Comments we have seen or received regarding this school closure decision

I wish I had better news to share, but it seems that Father Weber went against everyone's wishes and submitted the closure letter last week.

he lied on the pulpet at masses over the weekend and told parishioners nothing has been finalized and an announcement would be made

WOW, that was incredibly fast "acceptance" from the Archbishop!