

**St. John the Baptist Church**  
**Leadership Team Report to Commissions**

March 22, 2022

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**Fr. Andrew Jaspers, Parochial Administrator**

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- **Chapel Renovation.** The enhancement of the beauty and preservation of our worship spaces is the headline for my time with you. The design of our Chapel of the Angels is being completed and will be presented to the parish near the end of April. We hope to have the project finished by the end of the summer. It will be a more beautiful place for Eucharistic adoration and angelic visitations for decades to come.
- **Church Renovation.** Our Church Interior Committee continues to gather plans and proposals for the much bigger renovation of our primary place of worship. This project addresses the church windows, HVAC, acoustics and the ceiling appearance. Due to its greater scope and anticipated costs, it will likely not be completed until 2023.
- **Lent is in full swing!** People ages 14 and older abstain from meat on Fridays out of reverence for the flesh of Our Savior, who was pierced on that day. In objection to his crucifixion, we do not cut into meat on that day. But this year, we celebrate the Solemnity of the Annunciation on Friday, March 25, and can eat meat on that day because we do not fast “while the bridegroom is with us,” i.e., on Feasts. Our Communal Penance service is on Palm Sunday, April 10, at 3:30 pm. It is the biggest service I have seen in the United States. Come back to see old priest friends and be freed from your sins!
- **Thank you.** I have been tremendously blessed to be your shepherd again. Fr. Paul will resume his duties on April 7. But I plan to continue helping on occasion, as there is no flock that I love more than you! Thank you for your epic support and prayers over these months!

Please let me or one of our team members know if you have questions or input in any area of our church and school life together. Thank you!

**Jessica Balzarini, Director of Parish Life**

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- **Local Synod Process.** Our 10 Parish Representatives met on Saturday, March 5 for the Parish Synod Leadership Team Consultation with Fr. Jaspers and Jill Fink. Our Parish Deanery Representatives are: Louie and Socchie Fondevilla, Beth Robertson, Pat Rother, Stephanie Waite, Joe Jensen, Don Grant, Rob Jensen, Jane Heinks and Molly Feiker. Feedback was given on three of the nine focus areas. We discussed Encounter and Life-Long Faith Formation, Liturgy and the Sunday Experience, and Young Adult Ministry. The consultation on these focus areas and draft propositions were used in brainstorming how St. John’s might bring to life one proposition for each area. Please visit the St. John’s website [here](#) for more information.
- **Reach More: A Movement of Evangelization at SJB!** Our Lent Small Groups have been meeting throughout the building at a variety of times and in many spaces. Sometimes you can’t find an open room! What a great problem to have. There is such a hunger and need for connection to others and growth in our relationship with the Lord, and small groups is one of the best ways to accomplish it.

This Lent, we have about 160 people involved in small groups and 27 facilitators prayerfully preparing the groups sessions each week. Three couples groups are meeting in homes and 20 groups are in the building. We have groups have been together faithfully since our first official season of small groups in the fall of 2019. And other groups are more organic with some participants coming and going as their life affords. This season we have six new mission leaders facilitating groups.

RM Training Group #7 is currently underway. This group will finish up in June and Training Group #8 will begin then. God continues to call people into Mission. Being on Mission for laity (non-clergy or religious) means staying connected to Christ, being in relationship with others, and accompanying others into relationship with Christ and his Church. The Training Group material is a great opportunity to focus on personal growth, being more intentional in personal holiness, deepening prayer life, and being equipped with skills to make more disciples. See our website [here](#) for more information on Reach More.

- **Disciple & Mission Summer Events.** March 5/6 was the kick off weekend for our Youth365 fundraiser for our Youth Ministry program. Many envelopes were picked up on the weekend and donations continue to come in. We will give an update on the final numbers in the upcoming weeks. The money raised will be used to expand the youth program. First, we will ensure funding is never a hindrance to teens participating in encounter events at St. John's. Our scholarships are used regularly by families in need. Funds will also continue to go towards updates in the Youth Room as well as program expansion with the NET team transitioning out of the parish this year.

The first weekend March was also our Summer Events Kick-off for all children, youth, and family ministries. All of our summer options such as VBS and Totus Tuus are open for registrations and filling up quickly!

Vacation Bible School for preschool and kindergartners will be held June 14-16. Totus Tuus is scheduled for July 31 to August 4 for grades 7-12 and August 1-5 for grades 1-6.

#### **Mark Dittman, Director of Business Operations**

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- **Year-to-Date Sunday Giving.** Our mission is enabled by so many of our parishioners who live out of a generous spirit by supporting the parish financially. As of Week 37 (March 13) in our fiscal year (July 1, 2021 to June 30, 2022) we are \$26,131, or 1.6%, below our year-to-date actual projected budget in Sunday Giving. However, we are \$48,259, or 3%, above our year-to-date total through the same weekend a year ago. As you all know, Lent is a time for prayer, fasting and almsgiving, and Easter is a time that many people are very generous to the parish. I have seen so much generosity at St. John's, and I am hopeful that we will catch up to our projections through Lent and Easter. Thank you all for your generosity!
- **2022/23 Budget planning process.** At tonight's Finance Commission meeting I plan to present the next version of the 2022/23 church and school budget. Please pray for the staff and volunteer leaders who apply their expertise to sound financial planning and decision making for our church and school as we plan our future together.
- **Catholic Services Appeal.** We are now well into this year's [Catholic Services Appeal](#) (CSA) at St. John's. Our parish goal for 2022 is \$109,052. As of today we are at 47% of our goal pledged and 39% received. 183 parish families have responded thus far. Please respond generously if you have not already done so. St. John's benefits from your generosity to the Appeal because when we meet our goal, as we have consistently done for many years, we earn a parish rebate check. The formula for the rebate has two parts: 50% above our goal is returned to the parish and 25% above the prior year's results is also returned to the parish. Last year we raised over \$164,000 and our goal was \$103,595, so we were \$60,400 over goal. Our rebates from the 2021 Appeal totaled \$32,609. Please be generous to the Appeal this year, as you always have been! Thank you.

#### **Ann Laird, St. John the Baptist School Principal**

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- **Wines to Wishes 2022.** Thank you for all your support and prayers for our annual Wines to Wishes event, held on February 5. It was a great success—our best year to date! We raised over \$110,000 for the school and over \$50,000 for a new school PA system. We appreciate the many

volunteers and supporters who helped make this night a success. A special thank you to Michelle Barsness for her great leadership! We are extremely grateful!

- **Registration for the 2022-2023 school year** is open. Information and a registration link can be found [here](#). Enrollment for next year is strong. We currently have 332 K-8 and 56 in pre-school for a total of 389 PS-8th grade students already enrolled.
- **Bottle filling stations.** Due to the generosity of several parish and school families, we are putting in the last of the upgraded water fountains this month. These water bottle filling stations were part of the Wish List published in December. Thank you!
- **Lenten focus.** During this season of Lent we are focusing on the theme of penance and how we can better listen to God's voice. Here are the ways we are striving to encounter God and turn from sin: 1) weekly Stations of the Cross, 2) offering our students an opportunity to receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation, 3) participating in Families Helping Families, a joint service project of our Parent Teacher Organization and Office of Discipleship & Mission; and an all school Holy Week retreat. For Families Helping Families, students and families can participate by donating items for Birthday Bags for Ralph Reeder Food Shelf or Easter baskets for homebound parishioners. Please contact [Jenny Schmitz](#) for more information on Families Helping Families.

A blessed Lent to all of you and your families.

Thank you all for your reliance on prayer, your willingness to grow, and your generous spirit!

The St. John the Baptist Leadership Team  
Fr. Andrew Jaspers, Jessica Balzarini, Mark Dittman, Ann Laird

**Bearing witness to Jesus Christ who is the Way, the Truth, and the Life:  
GO. MAKE. TEACH.**