

St. Joseph School Closure

We are very sad to confirm the closure of St. Joseph Catholic School at the end of the current school year. We want to share with you the decision making process that the parish went through in arriving at this unavoidable decision.

On January 13th the Parish Finance Committee met. They had thoroughly reviewed the parish budget and reported the following results. They noted that we had falling weekly collections and an accumulating parish debt. They further indicated that the original budget for the 09-10 year did not match up well with the summary report of receipts and expenses submitted to the Diocese last year. Parish financial stability was one of the criteria in the Diocese Parish Planning process. In the previous year, we were able to pay our obligations with a three month lag. This year, we have averaged six months behind in these bills. The large items in our diocesan bills are for Health Care Insurance, Buildings and Grounds Insurance and the Diocesan Assessment which supports the Bishop and all of the Central Office Services. Currently this comes to slightly more than \$20,000 per month. At present we owe the Diocese \$120,000 for these services, the same as in January. Finance further noted a weak economy, falling Bingo income (it's gone now), increasing expenses and decreasing enrollment. Two key concluding observations were made. The first was we don't expect key trend to turn around anytime soon, if ever. Second, even with a tuition increase of \$200 or \$300, we would still need a number of new students above the current 89 for the school to be financially stable. The Finance Council gave us four recommended steps. Here they are with the results.

- Seek enrollment commitment for '10-'11 year in February~ results 59 students
- Hire an accountant to do budget~ Pat Finn was hired, familiar with diocese reports. His 10-11 school budget showed a deficit of \$156,000 with 66 students
- Review results of Diocesan meeting on schools~will not be completed this year
- Share our concerns with the Diocese & seek advice and help~Father met personally with Bishop Murry & the Vicar General; Father & Beth met with Vicar General, Superintendent of schools & Diocesan treasurer. At this meeting on March 18 we recommended school closure. The recommendation was reviewed by Parish Council, the Finance Council & Diocesan School Study Committee on March 24 and was affirmed.

This is a very distressing report to present to you. St. Joseph School has been an important part of the Catholic communities of northern Portage County for almost 50 years. It has remained an outstanding school to this day. It seems to have been overcome by the economics & the demographics of this time. We want to reassure you that currently St. Joseph Parish is on a sound financial footing. Our School Trust Fund has been used with the permission of Parish & Finance Councils to pay some school bills. It will be closed out by the end of June to pay school obligations. We thank all of those who contributed so generously in the past. We have savings available to cover our current obligations without dipping into our Capital Improvement Funds. We truly wish the results were different, but this is the only responsible course of action. May the peace of Christ be with us!

Rev. Michael P. Darvey

**Diocese of Youngstown
Office of Catholic Schools
12 Year Enrollment Comparison**

PORTAGE SCHOOL	COUNTY K	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	TOTAL
MANTUA										
St. Joseph										
2009-2010	5	9	9	9	13	13	10	8	13	89
2008-2009	10	11	9	15	15	12	10	14	14	110
2007-2008	12	11	15	17	12	11	16	13	8	115
2006-2007	13	19	20	12	12	18	12	8	10	124
2005-2006	24	18	17	14	20	15	12	10	8	138
2004-2005	19	14	19	21	15	12	14	19	11	135
2003-2004	21	26	28	17	20	21	14	17	16	180
2002-2003	30	31	20	23	23	17	25	19	6	194
2001-2002	30	24	27	29	21	28	19	5	13	196
2000-2001	29	26	27	24	30	21	10	17	14	198
1999-2000	26	30	24	31	24	14	20	15	18	202
1998-1999	30	30	33	22	17	22	24	18	7	203

St. Joseph Mantua, 2010/2011

Number of students by Grade Level - Re-registered for 2010-2011

KDG.	6
1 st	4
2 nd	8
3 rd	5
4 th	7
5 th	10
6 th	5
7 th	9
8 th	4
Total	58

Number of Students Registered From All Parishes for 2010-2011

St. Ambrose	5
OLPH	6
St. Michael	4
IC	1
St. Pius X	2
St. Joseph	40
Total	58