

Back to school night St. James Academy

First I wish to offer a warm welcome to all the parents and especially to the families that are joining us for the first time. I am confident that you will soon discover that St James is a welcoming and caring community. Undoubtedly, St James Academy is an integral part of this parish. It is a place for your family to grow both academically and spiritually, especially as you begin to share in the life of this faith community.

We are blessed with a wonderful teaching and support staff. Their efforts and dedication are noteworthy. I am particularly thankful to God for helping us find a competent new principal. Mrs. Kathy Dunn. She has not been on the job for very long but has already accomplished a great deal. I am sure you have already experienced her wise leadership. The Advisory Board, the staff and the clergy are with her all the way!

At Mrs. Dunn's request I will now address three topics which are of interest to Academy parents: The future legal status of the parish, the last capital campaign and Activity Center and the Saint James Academy Foundation.

Legal Status of the Parish

- 1) As a result of the legal ramifications of the past few years most Catholic dioceses in the United States have opted to change the legal status of their parishes. Although Church law specifically states that each parish is a legal entity in itself, the Judicial system in this country finds that all the assets of the parishes and diocese were under the name of the bishop as corporation sole. This creates a liability for school and parish assets in case of a lawsuit against a diocese. As of the end of this fiscal year the plan is to make each parish of the San Diego Diocese a corporation sole, each having their own Federal tax identification number.

Past Capital Campaign and Activity Center

- 2) In August of 2005 a Capital Campaign was launched in our parish to cover our share of the Secondary Education Initiative (Cathedral Catholic High School), maintenance and improvements at St. James and St. Leo, parking lot and a Parish Activity Center. The goal was \$3,500.00 of which \$1,788,561.65 was collected. Our million dollar debt to the SEI was paid, most of the maintenance and improvements to our campus were done except for the parking lot. This due to a permit problem at this time with the city. An accounting of what was collected and how it was used will be posted to the website.

The Academy parents were particularly interested in the Activity Center. I was not the pastor at that time, but I know that a design was agreed upon and the permit process was initiated. Just as we were ready to put the story poles the diocese was forced into Chapter 11 and all construction projects had to be suspended. Next a world wide recession hit. Yes, the project has been stalled but

it is not dead! The parish Finances Council has been working on a revised design with the school and other parish groups, and the process of securing the necessary permits has begun. Since the first Capital Campaign did not reach its projected goal and, as it is often the case, expenses were higher than planners had projected a new Capital Campaign will be initiated to complete the project when the time comes. We will proceed with that as soon as the city approves our plans. We will keep you informed on our progress.

The Saint James Academy Foundation

3) During the period when our diocese was in Chapter 11 Bankruptcy a group of Academy parents decided to establish a non-profit foundation to protect monies raised for the Academy so that they would be out of reach of any lawsuit against the diocese. The Saint James Academy Foundation was established two years ago. Since then the lawsuit has been settled and thankfully no parish or school money was ever used in the settlement of this lawsuit or for any other purpose.

Consistent with diocesan policy, we are working with the Board of the foundation and the diocesan office for civil affairs to dissolve the non-profit foundation and to ensure that all of the money raised by the foundation will be used for the purposes for which they were donated. Our diocesan counsel has requested copies of the by-laws and will be advising us on how best to proceed toward dissolution.

This means, like all other parishes in the diocese, we can resume what we were doing prior to the set-up of the foundation. All donations to the school should be made to Saint James Academy. Any earmarked gift can only be used for that purpose.