

School Profile – St. Joseph Catholic Schools / Greenville, Mississippi

St. Joseph Catholic School is a coeducational Roman Catholic middle/senior high school that is operated under the auspices of the Diocese of Jackson. St. Joseph is accredited by AdvancED through Southern Association of Colleges and Schools, the Mississippi Association of Independent Schools, and by the Mississippi Department of Education. The school welcomes students of all racial, ethnic, and religious backgrounds. The administration, faculty, and staff are composed of lay professionals dedicated to Catholic education.

Catholic education has been a tradition of excellence in Greenville since 1888. This tradition is reflected in our Mission Statement: *The mission of the St. Joseph Catholic School is to provide a Catholic faith-based education offered in a safe, academically challenging, and creative environment.* St. Joseph Catholic School prides itself on the family and faith-based spirit that permeates its academic, cultural, extra-curricular, spiritual, and athletic programs.

The history of St. Joseph Catholic School begins with St. Rose of Lima Academy, founded by the Sisters of Mercy. Located next to the St. Joseph Parish Church, St. Rose was the standard for Catholic education in the Delta for sixty-two years. By 1949 the enrollment had exceeded the space of the building, and St. Joseph Elementary and High School was opened in 1950. In 1964, once again the enrollment and needs of the school family called for another facility. A new elementary school, Our Lady of Lourdes, was constructed on Reed Road. St. Joseph became the combined middle school and high school. St. Joseph High School continued to meet the needs of students by adding six classrooms for the Middle School in 1965 and an additional four classrooms in 1994.

Responding to the mandates of our mission statement and the needs of our diverse community, St. Joseph Catholic High School embarked on an ambitious building project in 2005 with the construction of a new 61,000 square foot St. Joseph Middle/Senior High School located on VFW Road. A unified campus housing both Our Lady of Lourdes Elementary School and St. Joseph Catholic Middle and High School was accomplished in 2016. Two new academic buildings were added to accomplish this philosophical and physical move. Our present facility is equipped with the following:

- 11 elementary classrooms
- 9 secondary classrooms
- 2 science labs
- Computer / business lab
- Resource room
- Art room
- Music room
- Media/library center
- Chapel
- Gymnasium
- Cafeteria/auditorium
- Football / soccer, baseball, and softball fields
- Athletic practice fields

- St. Dominic Field House
- Up-to-date computers in each classroom with internet access
- 115 laptop computers, with internet access, for classroom use
- Interactive Mimio and Smart Boards in classrooms
- Ceiling-mounted projectors for multimedia presentations in classrooms

Initially, the Greenville Catholic School followed the established mission of other Catholic schools in the eighteen-hundred blossoming era of immigrant-dominated America. The concept was to train children of Catholic immigrants in the nurturing confines of the parochial school. Backed by the dedicated teaching and dogged discipline of the Sisters of Mercy, the school's reputation spread through the community. With this came students from Protestant and Jewish faith traditions. Consequently the mission and scope of the institution grew.

Into the early nineteen-sixties, St. Joseph was first to extend educational opportunities to the African-American population. Thus, a new avenue of diversity was introduced in the school and to the community as well. With the advent of Greenville's aggressive and somewhat voluntary public school desegregation, a new wave of patrons discovered Catholic education. Conversely, three private schools were established in the Greenville area strictly as an alternative to the change witnessed within the public schools.

The administration is well-versed in the moral and ethical considerations in the management of a parochial facility very much in the public arena. These principles guide every business decision. The administration is committed to the creation of collaborative community networks including the hosting of community leadership at the school, active work within the Economic Development Alliance, the Education Committee of Greenville, and the Greenville Higher Education Center, as well as active outreach into the community. All work supports the mission of student service and learning.

The St. Joseph learning environment includes exemplary technology, outstanding student guidance and support services, and a rigorous curriculum grounded in critical thought. Course offerings range from resource to an honors program and traditional coursework to advanced placement curriculum. The school bases its testing standards on nationally normed instruments. Each grade level is administered a standardized test battery annually. The average ACT for the school is 20.1 inclusive of the entire range of student capability.

St. Joseph Catholic Schools encourage citizenship with the Community Service Program in which all students are required to participate. The guidance department also facilitates small group activities that focus on character education. St. Joseph Catholic Schools are active members in the University of Notre Dame Play Like a Champion Today character development program. Instructors promote decision-making skills through varied programs, projects and classroom curriculum. The administration and staff select and encourage students to participate in co-curricular activities such as Student Government, Governor's School, youth leadership programs, and Mayor's Youth Council. The school offers leadership, responsibility, and character-building opportunities with the above activities as well as a variety of sports and clubs. Students are required to complete 100 community service hours in order to meet graduation

requirements. Also, students attend Mass/Prayer Service weekly and participate in class retreats. Each class is responsible for a major school function or project.

St. Joseph's community accolades include the Economic Center's "Clean & Green" Award, a district-wide Sportsmanship Award, and the Mississippi Governor's Award for the Outstanding School-Community Partnership. This award was earned for the community's Reading Buddies Program where St. Joseph students serve as mentors for public school elementary children. The school independently earned the Niche Ranking as the Number Four Private School in the State.