

# THE COMPANION

**SPECIAL ST. TIMOTHY SCHOOL EDITION**



September 2013

## How Will We Build A New School?

By Fr. Rick Bolte

There's only one answer – with enthusiasm! The word “enthusiasm” comes from two Greek words, *en theos*, which means “in God.” Matthew 19:26 “Jesus looked at them and said, “For human beings this is impossible, but for God all things are possible.”

As human beings and especially as individuals we look at projects in terms of what we are capable of doing particularly without too much risk or suffering; we give what we “can afford.” While in this safe mode, it is hard to believe something can be accomplished that entails raising money, overcoming challenges, or facing opposition.

But God invites us to see with new eyes; His. Enthusiasm, to be in God, is to dare to see possibilities that go beyond our place of safety and inertia. The energy of the enthusiasm comes from the excitement of the Gospel – the Good News. The touch of God's presence excites us. God's presence cannot be contained but bubbles over. Instead of looking at out limits and desire to stay in our comfort zone, we ask, “How can I share the Good News!” With enthusiasm we see beyond the obstacles and pursue in God the possibilities.

The word “miracle” comes from a Latin word meaning “the object of wonder.” If we let go of the expectation that a miracle be supernatural, we see many miracles from God in our lives and those around us. In prayer we can just wonder at the

good and special things that are of God. The things others do for us and for others that touch us so deeply. The humble praise that comes when we make a difference in the life of another and we know that power didn't originate with us. God has touched us and we touch God!

It will be a miracle if we build a school and in God miracles happen. When we are moved beyond complacency to an enthusiasm to share the Good News, we begin to look at what we are stewards of and how best to use it. The possibility of sharing what we have known through the touch of God excites us. A Catholic school is more than just a place to learn about God. It is a place where children learn to celebrate that God really touches their lives generating in them the same enthusiasm that we have. It is a place where through service learning they too become good stewards of their time to give of themselves for the good of others in the community.

A special gift of faith for the people of St. Timothy has been the enthusiasm that comes from our service in outreach ministry. The idea of sharing that enthusiasm with our children is Good News that can't be contained. Through the service learning already started in our preschool and kindergarten as well as the ongoing teaching of our Catholic faith, we will enable these students to know, love, and serve God. They will be Living, Learning, Serving in the Light of Christ.



The Companion is the newsletter of

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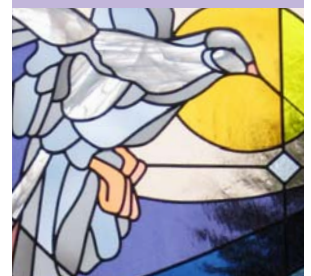
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# To School or Not to School

*By Dr. Tony Riegling, Principal, St. Paul Catholic School*

“To school or not to school, that is the question.” If you will pardon my borrowing from Shakespeare, that is a question I am asked frequently these days. As the Principal and educational leader of St. Paul School, I am called upon to use my training experience and talents to help ensure the best possible formative and educational experience for our students each and every day. It is natural people ask me what I think of the proposal that St Timothy Parish build an elementary school. I am happy to express my thoughts on the subject.

First, I should point out that I believe I am called to serve both St. Tim and St. Paul parishes as the leader of their parish school. St Paul School has served the people of St. Paul Parish for over 125 years. In 1989, we added St. Timothy Parish to our role as a Catholic school. While we have served two parishes in recent times, since its founding, our school has done an excellent job of meeting the needs of St. Paul Parish. I believe we will continue to do so for the foreseeable future.

In 1989, amidst high growth in the Catholic population in and around the Union-Florence area, St. Timothy Parish was born. St. Timothy parishioners tended to live in the Union area and may even have formerly been members at St. Paul. I make this point because it parallels the current discussions about a new school. While the opening of St. Tim undoubtedly had an impact on the number of parishioners attending St. Paul, it did not do irreparable damage to St. Paul Parish. So, I believe it will be if St. Timothy Parish decides to open a school of its own.

I am grateful to Fr. Bolte and the lay leaders of St. Tim for making sure I am part of the conversation about a school. We have had frank and important conversations about all the factors in favor of building a

school and the challenges that will be faced. A very thorough study and sound decision process have preceded our current circumstance. And so, here we are, ready for the St. Timothy Parish family to decide what they believe is in their best long-term interest.

When people ask me if I believe St. Tim should build a school, I answer that it is not up to me. Only the people of St. Tim should answer that question. Would a new school at St. Tim cause St. Paul School to close? Absolutely not! Even if every St. Tim student chose another place to go to school, St. Paul Parish would still need a school, and would continue to operate St. Paul School. Would the school be different? Almost certainly. For instance, we might be a school with only one section of each grade level as opposed to two. We might remain a two-section school, but with a population coming from a larger geographic area or a different population base.

As I consider a school at St. Tim, I believe there is one overarching factor that must be considered. That is to maximize the number of children attending Catholic school. We know that our schools are an essential element in the future of the Catholic Church in the United States. We know there is a strong correlation between the number of years a person spends in Catholic school and their commitment and activities within the Church. They tend to be more generous with their time, talent and treasure. They tend to be more active as adults—serving on various parish or diocesan committees. They tend to be more regular attendees at Mass and to be more involved in the continued formation of their faith as adults. They tend to be more active in their own cities and towns where they help apply our Catholic social teachings to the larger social issues. There are some for whom our school

is just too far away, but for whom a school on the St. Tim campus would not be. One can only imagine the good that just one person who seizes that opportunity might be able to accomplish.

The point is, we might be different, but we will still be here; doing what we have done for over 125 years—providing the best in Catholic faith formation and academic preparation for our students. The most important consideration is not whether we will change, but that we change smartly. We must take on our future with faith and gusto! We must use our strengths to help us build toward a future we believe is bright with promise. Our mission is not to be a school of “X” size, but, rather, to make sure the students we serve—however many they are and from wherever they come—receive the finest Catholic education available anywhere on the planet. To do that, we must be adaptive and resilient. If you take a close look at our building you cannot help but notice all the changes and additions. Change has been a part of our story since we began. It is likely to remain a part of our story.

And so, my answer to the question about a school really boils down to this. If the people of St. Timothy Parish believe their long-term interests are best served by having a school on their campus, I support their decision to do so and hope they find great success. If they decide it is not yet time, we will continue to do everything we can to serve both of our parishes for as long as they need us. I can only say we will continue to do our best to help every student, regardless of his or her parish, grow in faith and knowledge every single day. There is much to be done before a school might open. I am sure we will travel that path together as brothers and sisters in faith.

# St. Timothy Catholic School Feasibility Study

*By School Feasibility Study Committee*

Recognizing the central nature of religious education to the mission of the Catholic Church, St. Timothy Church established a School Feasibility Study Committee to explore the feasibility of opening a parish grade school (K-8). In order to fulfill its mission, this Committee had to consider the spiritual needs of the Parish community, the financial ability of the Parish, the long-term viability of such a school, and the impact that the school would have on other Catholic schools in the Diocese. The Committee worked together with the Parish and the Diocese to determine whether opening a parish grade school at St. Timothy Church would best serve the interests of the Catholic Church.

## Committee Findings

- The establishment of a parochial school at St. Timothy would **serve the spiritual needs of the Parish community** both by improving the quality of the religious education program for enrolled children and by providing the opportunity for increased integration of many parishioners into the parish community.
- **St. Timothy is financially capable** of constructing a parochial school facility. However, in order to raise the money needed for construction, a successful capital campaign will be necessary.
- There is a strong demand for a parochial school at St. Timothy, **ensuring the long-term viability** of a school.
- The establishment of a parochial school at St. Timothy **would not be devastating to the other Catholic schools in the area.**

## Committee Recommendations

- That a parish grade school be established at St. Timothy as soon as possible.
- That the school start with a full campus, K-8, with two classes per grade, with an ideal of 25 students per class; that the campus be designed for growth if and when the enrollment numbers indicate the need; and that the current Preschool program which would serve as a feeder into the grade school remain unchanged.
- That a parochial school, including gymnasium/cafetorium, be built, with the capability of further expansion.
- That the existing Parish Center be utilized accordingly to accommodate the growing needs of our parish community.
- That the school be focused on providing a religious education in a faith-filled environment for the spiritual development of our children.
- That every effort be made to integrate the school into the Parish community so that it becomes complimentary to, rather than competitive with, other ministries; and that it be kept ever at the service of the Parish's spiritual needs.
- That the school provide a quality academic education; that class sizes be kept as small as possible, ideally limited to 22-25 students per class; and that the school be adequately funded in order to provide state-of-the-art resources for students and faculty.
- That the Parish initiate a capital campaign to raise funds to build the grade school; and that it hire professionals to assist with the campaign.
- That the school be as self-sufficient as possible; that any Parish subsidy be focused primarily on need-based scholarships; and that other sources of funding be pursued.

## School Feasibility Study Committee Members

Fr. Rick Bolte  
Dave Theus  
Jennifer Casson

Jason Welch  
Sean Fagin

Deb Thomas (Administrative advisor)  
Joseph Hayes (Architectural advisor)  
Michael Vilardo (Capital Campaign advisor)

## **Spiritual Needs:**

Perhaps the most important aspect of building a school here at the Parish is the impact on the spiritual growth and development of the children and their families. Catholic education is a critical component of that spiritual growth.

- The Church and Diocese emphasizes the needs for Catholic education.
- Catholic education is central to our call to the new evangelization. To spread the Gospel message, we must be informed on what it means to be Catholic in the world today.
- While the quality of the PSR / CCD program is without question, there is a limitation to how much of the faith can be taught in one hour a week. Daily instruction in the Catholic faith is paramount to the spiritual growth of our children.
- We are currently restricted in our ability to expand our programs not only for children but adult faith formation due to the limited facilities currently in place. The addition of the school will allow us to greatly increase our programming to bring quality adult faith formation to the Parish.
- Bishop Foy addressed the issue of Catholic education in this way “I am a strong proponent of Catholic schools and fully support St. Timothy Parish in their pursuit”.
- Michael Clines, Superintendent of Catholic schools for the Diocese commented that St. Timothy Parish and Union, Kentucky are the perfect regional location for expansion of the Diocese of Covington.

## **Financial Ability:**

One of the common questions and concerns of the Parishioners at St. Timothy is the ability of the Parish to support a school. The answer is yes, without question this Parish can support the building and maintaining of a school without stressing Parish finances.

- The current fiscal condition of the Parish is strong. Since 2010, the cash assets of the Parish have grown to around \$400,000 per year.
- Currently, the Parish has assets of \$2.1 million in cash reserves.
- We have excellent Parish income despite the lack of a direct need. The Parishioners support the Parish now and will in the future.
- The demographics for the City of Union and the surrounding area are ideal for a capital campaign to support the school. The median income in this area is one of the largest in the entire state of Kentucky. The financial foundation is in place for the school.
- The timing is right. The cost of funds right now continue to stay near historic lows meaning it's hard to find a better time to build than the current market conditions.

## **Long-Term Viability of the School:**

The long-term viability and success of the school depends on several factors all of which favor the building of the school.

- Boone County is the fastest growing county in Northern Kentucky in both the growth of total population and school age children.
- The Parish itself continues to experience significant growth. It has doubled in size since 1998 and in this short period has become the 5<sup>th</sup> largest in the Diocese and the 2<sup>nd</sup> largest in Boone County.
- Catholic education is significantly under-represented in Boone County as compared to other counties in the Diocese.
- On average, 200 St. Timothy children per year enroll at St. Paul's. Our Parish PSR program has over 600 children which is a very large program. We have 400 registered children under the age of 6 years old. All this means that we have a tremendous base of children who could be part of the school.
- The Parish is young. The median age is 32 years old meaning that we will continue to see significant growth in school age children.
- The Pre-school and Kindergarten program has seen an 80% growth since it has been established. There is no more room to expand the program despite the significant waiting list every year to enroll children.

## **Impact on Other Schools:**

The children of St. Timothy who are enrolled in other Catholic schools have been greatly served by those institutions. Just as St. Timothy Parish grew out of St. Paul Parish, we are now in the position and need for our own school.

- Currently, only 25% of our children attend Catholic schools. That means that we have a significant opportunity to bring Catholic education to our own children in the Parish.
- Only 11% of our registered parishioners send their children to St. Paul. We are missing a significant opportunity to provide Catholic education to the children of our Parish.
- Some are concerned about the impact that building a school will have on St. Paul and that is understandable. St. Paul has been a great school for our children. However, even with the departure of the St. Timothy children, St. Paul will continue to be an average size school in the Diocese and have the opportunity to grow their enrollment under the excellent leadership of Dr. Riegling.
- The growth of the area presents a need that is not being met. St. Timothy has the land that is necessary to build a state of the art facility. Times change and the need for our own school is now to further Catholic education for our children.

# Impact of a School on the Other Ministries of St. Timothy

*By Fr. Rick Bolte*

Having a school at St. Timothy will have significant effects on the ministries and life of the parish.

## **OUTREACH MINISTRY**

1. With additional space, classrooms in the new building, space for a pantry with supplies for emergency assistance for those in need becomes possible.
2. Special collections as space to sort those items collected will not need to be limited to just those weekends when PSR is not meeting.
3. With Service Learning in the mission statement and a major focus of the curriculum, the value of ministry to those in need will be incorporated from the beginning with the students. The children with their parents will learn that outreach ministry isn't optional but a part of living our faith.

## **PARISH SCHOOL OF RELIGION**

1. The number of students enrolled in the PSR program will likely decrease as more students now in public schools enroll in our school. The program will adjust as it does now setting up classes as needed by the numbers of students.
2. The students and teachers will be able to take advantage of classrooms set up for a learning environment with up-to-date technology to enhance the teaching efforts of the volunteer teachers.
3. The sacramental preparation for First Reconciliation, First Communion, and Confirmation will remain with the Director of Religious Education and the PSR program. They will work with all the students of the parish.

## **RITE OF CHRISTIAN INITIATION FOR ADULTS**

1. The RCIA program has already benefited by the preschool and kindergarten as about a third of those considering becoming Catholic are the parents of the children in our school. Expanding our school would likely increase parents exposure to our faith and the opportunities to learn more about it and consider joining.

## **YOUTH MINISTRY**

1. About 75% of those who attend our youth ministry program attend a Catholic high school. Almost all of those previously attended a Catholic elementary school. Increasing the number of students in Catholic elementary school by having a school here at St. Timothy would likely increase the number of teens in our youth group.
2. Having our own school would allow greater connection/recruiting with the eighth grade students encouraging a greater percentage of those who would join the youth group.

## **PARISH COMMUNITY**

1. Our community would grow. Some families join other parishes because they have a school and only membership there guarantees their child can attend their school. We would also pick up numbers from people who, in choosing the Catholic school over a public school, would get involved in this parish.
2. Our community is divided as parents who have their children at St. Paul or another school are torn between events at their school at the same time as at our parish. Our own school would do much to mend this split.
3. Similar to #2, families are drawn away from the parish by the various sports and activities that take place at the school. Being able to have the school events here brings a fuller sense of family and church being united.

## **WORSHIP**

1. Part of the job of a school is to help parents in their responsibility to share our faith with their children. Having more children in our school means more children who experience celebrating the Eucharist together and knowing how to participate.
2. Children at a school located at the parish more easily are encouraged to be servers, have opportunity to serve here, and to be accountable for the times they are assigned.
3. We would be able to get the older servers to be available to serve at special events (such as holy Days) and particularly at funerals.





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## Join us for one of the following School Information Presentations

Sunday Oct. 6	12:45 pm in church sanctuary
Monday Oct. 7	5:30 pm in Brodnick Hall (during PSR)
Monday Oct. 7	7:00 pm in Brodnick Hall (during PSR)
Wednesday Oct. 9	6:00 pm in Brodnick Hall (during PSR)
Friday Oct. 11	10:45 am in Brodnick Hall

**More Information can be found at:**

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