



SAINTS JOACHIM & ANNE AND SHAKOPEE AREA CATHOLIC SCHOOL SANTOS JOAQUÍN Y ANA

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Dear parishioners of Saints Joachim and Anne, my friends in Christ and fellow Faithful,

The Blessed Virgin Mary, the cause of our joy and the beloved daughter of our parish patrons is born! Alleluia! This past week, Tuesday, September 8, the Church celebrated the Feast of the Nativity of Mary. As a spiritual family, our parish is under the special care of Saint Joachim and Saint Anne. Furthermore, I believe we ought to celebrate Our Blessed Mother with greater attention, especially when her memorials relate to the lives of our parish patrons and thus their honored place in salvation history as the *Avi Christi*, the grandparents of the Lord. There are many ways we could live this out practically, but my purpose now is to offer an SJA Parish update in the form of a “Pastoral Bull” as I like to call it.

These CoViDian Days...

Wow, what an unbelievable last six months! And life remains a bit surreal – no matter how things have or have not changed for us. Back in March, everything changed instantly. One day, we were still worshipping together at Sunday Masses, we could visit Our Lord at the Adoration Chapel, we looked forward to a summer of festivals and fun; the next day, our Parish family was reduced to quiet prayer, with some hopeful imagination and creative spirit. Well, thanks be to God, the Spirit indeed has kept us going. I am so appreciative of all those who have tuned in, driven-thru, parked-for-procession, you name it! In a little less than 24 hours, we figured out how to livestream Mass from our phones in the SJA Rectory chapel – I have to admit, I am pretty proud of our imperfect but practical debut those first weeks! Archbishop Hebda offered Mass, live from 333 4th Ave. W., on Palm Sunday. Bishop Cozzens offered a special SJA - SACS school Mass on a Wednesday morning. We started to settle into a new normal until we were permitted to gather for limited but public in-person Masses again. Alleluia! Our SJA staff has worked so hard - and continues so - to keep us safe and strong as we worship in a strange new world. Whether for getting Masses going back in church or the stunning success of our first virtual (& second annual) JACS JAM Festival, there are more thanks to be shared than I can possibly record owed to the dedicated volunteers and *especially* the employees of SJA. Please just say an extra *Ave* (Hail Mary) for them and maybe even write a little note of gratitude to an SJA Church and School staff member this week - they deserve it! Spring came, summer followed, the new normal.

“Matthean” Good News followed a “Pauline” farewell...

After three years of faithful service and fraternal fun, our dear Fr. Paul Haverstock headed to Hopkins. His transition made me so proud, but I truly want our whole parish to share in this sense of accomplishment. Thank you for helping to form a great pastor for the people of St. Gabriel (a two-parish merger with a consolidated elementary school, a Catholic high school tenant, and a multi-lingual community) and our wider local Church! As I have said at Mass a few times, working three years with Fr. Paul and then welcoming Fr. Matthew has been like paying into a great phone plan until and then getting an awesome free phone upgrade! We have truly been blessed with your new Parochial Vicar, Fr. Matthew Quail. He’s a hard-working priest with three years under his belt, he’s a man of prayer who loves the Lord, and I think he just might have the sharpest wit of any priest I’ve lived with! At the same time, I have lost count of how many times I have been moved by his sincere longing to get to know more of you despite the pandemic current limitations. Come to think of it, though, maybe that’s just his way of subtly saying he’s already had enough Fr. Erik in the season of quasi-quarantine! ;-)

Seriously, though, life is good at “333” largely thanks to Fr. Matthew’s positive attitude and easy-going nature. Since literally the first minute he arrived, there has been some sort of restoration-related commotion in or around the house. Our best-ever JACS JAM chicken plop was in our front yard. Over the last several months, you may have seen piles of discarded carpet from the 70s & 80s in the yard, construction/repair materials, workmen of various trades or, this past week, a large three-story lift used to remove and replace rotting wood of the attic so we can keep our uninvited flying friends out in the fresh air where they belong. Besides ensuring the livability of the rectory, a generous friend of our parish has felt moved to restore its beauty as well. Thanks to this commitment, the cost of these improvements has not had to impact our parish budget. Truly humbling – a reflection of God’s Providence and Love. I plan to create a video tour once renovations are complete. The beautiful original hardwood floors, now revealed and re-finished, are truly remarkable. While it has meant a loud summer for this 125-year-old house, the beautiful restoration work has been worth the wait. Really, all three rectories owned by SJA speak to one beautiful legacy: the spiritual family of Catholic Shakopee is a holy house of the Lord!

There has been so much more “holy house-keeping” going on in our parish that I must settle for...

A Summary Finale: [raise your hand if you’re still listening!]

- After an epic re-opening of our amazing parish school, we have about 75 new students and five new teachers at SJA - SACS this fall! WOW!!
- Dominic Miller, an impressive young man whose family recently moved to Shakopee, has begun studies at the Saint Paul Seminary. That’s right folks, WE HAVE AN SJA SEMINARIAN! Deo gratias. Alleluia. Please keep him in your prayers.
- Prep work has officially begun on the asbestos removal and progress toward the demolition of our old St. Mark school.
- After amazing upgrades to our audiovisual ability at SJA - St. Mark, a lightning strike has created some temporary setbacks. We are prayerfully keeping fingers crossed and hands folded... but I think we’ll be back to best working order this week!
- Please continue to pray for our ability – soon but safely - to resume Mass, Adoration, and other regular activity at our churches of SJA - St. Mary and SJA - St. Mary of the Purification churches. I know this has been a painful reality for so many. The host of challenges and complexities presented by the pandemic has truly been a time for us all to fight the good fight; an unprecedented test to us in the virtues of patience and charity.
- Lastly, our strategic planning steering committee has resumed meeting, thus, our Parish Pastoral Committee has at least been able to review the new SJA Mission and Vision Statements. These are fruit of our parish townhall meetings from last summer, so while it feels overdue, I am still most eager to share...



The MISSION of Saints Joachim and Anne:
Passionately lead people to Jesus Christ and sacramental life in the Catholic Church.

Our VISION:
A holy house of the Lord standing faithful and strong for Shakopee.

ALLELUIA!
Fr. Erik Lundgren