

A Great Team Helps Make a Great Parish

When you look at all that happens at Saint Joseph's, it really is a hub of activity. From faith formation to parish events to our incredible school and amazing music ministry to keeping the building maintained and clean all while the books are balanced takes an incredible amount of dedication. As such, whenever someone asks me about Saint Joseph's and what we do here, if they say "wow that sounds like a lot," I'm always quick to remind them that I'm able to carry out my ministry as a priest because of an amazing team. It really is a team effort here with each person on our staff working so hard. I thank God every day for the great people who surround me because together, we love our parish.

One of the first people I met when I arrived at Saint Joe's in the summer of 2015 was Bridget Samson. Bridget has been with the parish for 18 years, starting in faith formation, and then eventually transitioning over to her work with parish life. This is a huge task; it entails recruiting volunteers, helping them through the training process and getting up to speed on the archdiocesan requirements of volunteers for safe environment training, going to meetings, and being involved with a plethora of different ministries at the parish. If you've ever been to our "ministry fair," you've been able to see some of the many parish ministries at Saint Joseph's that Bridget plays a key role in. Bridget also has helped to make our parish festival take off; when I first arrived we had a small event, but over the years with her working with a Harvest Festival committee, we've grown this to include a raffle, games, a polka band, a chicken dinner and many other events for the parish to come together. Even this year, when the Covid pandemic derailed our plans for the festival, Bridget worked very hard to help give our parish an event to look forward to. As such, we were able to have a raffle, pork chops on a stick, and bingo where people played in their cars. The event was a great success and a wonderful way for folks to come together in what has been a very difficult year.

There's also the positivity with Bridget. Over the years, I've worked with many people in parishes. Some people aren't happy in their jobs. Others just get frustrated with things in a parish, and can be very negative all the time about parishioners or their coworkers. I'm so blessed that the staff here isn't like that; as I said they really care. But I can honestly say in the 5 1/2 years I've known her, Bridget has never complained; she's never spoke poorly of another parishioner; she's brought such joy to the office environment, and she's also always served from the heart, meaning there is no asterisk next to her service. She's put in many long hours during "crunch times" and she's the type of person that makes you look forward to coming into the parish both as a member of the staff and a parishioner. She makes you a better person through her work ethic, her attitude, and her heart dedicated to love and service.

A couple of weeks ago, Bridget let me know that she has decided to accept another position with the city of Apple Valley. It was a position she had before coming to Saint Joe's, and she said she was not actively looking for a job, she just happened to be online one night and saw that it was open. After giving it a lot of thought and prayer, she let me know (and the daily Mass goes as she spoke after a Monday Mass) about her

decision. She'll be coordinating senior activities. As it's what she did before and really enjoyed it and studied parks and recreation in college, it'll be a perfect fit for her. She'll continue to be active too here at Saint Joe's as a parishioner. And I'm sure I can convince her to volunteer too.

While we'll have her position listed and I have no doubt the Holy Spirit will send us the right candidate, it goes without saying we'll miss Bridget from our staff. But she will be doing great things for people in her new position that God has called her to.

As I said, as a parish we are so blessed with a dedicated group of people who truly love Saint Joe's. What a joy it is to work with such great people. Truly together with staff and so many loving, dedicated parishioners, we are Saint Joe's.

Thank you, Bridget, and God bless,

Fr. Paul