ANNUAL REPORT

St. Joseph Educational Ministries

6400 Minnesota Ave.
Saint Louis, MO 63111 USA

Annual Report to the Dicastery for Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life
June 2026

Decree: Saint Joseph Educational Ministries (SJEM), established by the Sisters of St. Joseph of Carondelet (CSJ) to succeed and carry on the educational ministry conducted by Sisters of St. Joseph of Carondelet, St. Louis Province, (Province) upon the petition of the Sisters of St. Joseph of Carondelet, has been granted pontifical public juridic personality by decree of the Congregation for Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life dated January 20, 2020 (prot. no. S. 158^{-1}/2018).

Mission: To provide quality Catholic education in an environment that challenges the students to grow in faith, knowledge, and respect for self and others in service of the dear neighbor without distinction.

Purpose: Members are charged with applying Catholic theological tradition, the CSSJ heritage, and Catholic social teaching; identifying and implementing organizational activities at the schools; and taking a leading role in discourse with church leaders.

Objective: *The Ministries* has the objective of providing a thorough and common foundation on which future generations of leadership, faculty, staff and volunteers can further develop the educational ministry of the Institutions and the charism of the Sisters of St. Joseph of Carondelet of which they are a part and for which they have responsibility.



MSMU Student Group



St. Joseph Hearing + Speech Alum Celebrating the school's 188th birthday.



St. Mary's Academy Students

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Members:

	Appointed:
Marcia Niedringhaus	2021
Cheryl Broeklemann	2021
Marie Joan Harris, CSJ	2021
Barbara McCormick, CSJA	2021
Rita Schmitz, CSJ	2021
Susan Lenihan, CSJA	2021
Santa Cuddihee, CSJA*	2021
Cathy Hart, CSJA	2023
Craig Hannick, CSJA	2023
Gary Smith	2023
Laura Gruber, CSJ	2023
Richard Schul	2023
Linda Straub, CSJ, Leadership Liaison	2023
Mary Ann Martin, CSJ, Liaisonfor the International Province	2025
Kathy Brazda, CSJ, Liaison for the Congregation of the Sisters of St. Joseph	2026
Theresa Denton	2026
Clem Martin	2026
Brandi Odom Lucas	2026
Kathryn Purcell	2026
Adam Weyhaupt, CSJA	2026

*Membership conclusion.

SJEM membership was increased in June 2026 with the addition of a Sister of St. Joseph of Carondelet who represents the historic sponsor of SJEM's newly sponsored institutions as well as five new members from across the country.

One founding, long-term serving member of SJEM, Santa Cuddihee, stepped down from her service as a steward of sponsorship in the pursuit of new ministry and professional life. We give thanks to God for her faithful stewardship and pray God's blessing on her new ministry.



SJEM Members

SJEM continues to pursue creative, practical approaches to supporting the sponsored ministries in strengthening their Catholic identity and mission integration, while

ongoing efforts to develop and refine procedures ensure its sponsorship responsibilities are carried out effectively.



Rosati-Kain Academy Chalkfest

SJEM successfully transitioned three educational institutions of the Sisters of St. Joseph from the Congregation of the Sisters of St. Joseph. The three schools that will officially join SJEM in July 2026 are St. Joseph's Academy in Baton Rouge, Louisiana, Saint Joseph Academy in Cleveland, Ohio, and Nazareth Academy in La Grange Park, Illinois. The fourth institution from the Los Angeles Province that was expected to transition in November 2025 did not transition and continues to be sponsored by the Sisters of St. Joseph. Congregational Leadership is working with them to find a new sponsor. The governance committee of SJEM has affirmed, in collaboration with our institutions, various new board members to serve our Catholic learning communities as well as affirming two new presidents. SJEM continues to work on a variety of documents to assist our sponsored communities in deepening their understanding of their Catholicity and the hallmarks of a Catholic education in the Sisters of St. Josph (CSSJ) tradition.

What makes our institutions uniquely Catholic is not only the values we share with all people of good will, but the faith from which those values flow. Our schools are centered on Jesus Christ and nourished by the sacramental life of the Church, above all the Eucharist. Like the first Sisters of St. Joseph, who went out to serve the dear neighbor in the spirit of the Gospel, our schools form students in the teachings of Jesus, from the Beatitudes to the great commandment to love God and neighbor and send them out to live those teachings in the world. They teach in communion with the Church and her Magisterium. They hold that faith and reason, as St. John Paul II wrote, are "like two wings on which the human spirit rises to the contemplation of truth." And they look to Mary, St. Joseph, and the communion of saints as companions in the work of education.

Formation:

2025-26 Formation Sessions: Hope

In light of the Church's theme for the Jubilee Year, Pilgrims of Hope, SJEM took a close look at the theme of hope. Our theme was drawn from St. Paul's words, "hope does not disappoint, because the love of God has been poured out into our hearths through the Holy Spirit" (Rom 5:5), which Pope Francis placed at the heart of the Jubilee Year. Our hope is not optimism but a person: "Christ Jesus our hope" (1Tim 1:1). We began our examination at our annual member retreat in June 2025 and continued to explore *Catholic Education as a Hopeful Endeavor* during our Annual Sponsorship Day and in our Member Formation Sessions.

Ongoing Member Formation:

SJEM continues the pursuit, practice, and leadership of the inclusive CSSJ charism of unifying love and Church teaching. SJEM has spent the last year in careful formation and reflection to support and accompany the Catholicity in the CSSJ charism of our sponsored schools and centered our formation around hope. Formation dates and content included the following, as well as an abundance of readings:

September 15, 2025 – *"Hope Does Not Disappoint"*
Directed by Mary Flick, CSJ, SJEM Formation Coordinator

February 9, 2026 – *The Faces and Places of Hope in the Hebrew Scriptures*
Directed by Mary Flick, CSJ, SJEM Formation Coordinator

April 13, 2026 – *Hope in the Moment We Are In*
Directed by Cathy Schroy, CSJA, SJEM Assistant Director

New Leaders Formation:

Mary Flick, CSJ led leaders from our three new institutions as well as Mary Ann Martin, CSJ, the former sponsor's representative, in formation over four sessions.

The sessions explored:

- Vocation and call
- History, mission and charism of the Sisters of St. Joseph
- Catholic identity and Catholic Social Teaching
- The Church, Vatican II and Sponsorship



Tour of the Motherhouse during Sponsorship Day

Annual Member Retreat:

This year's SJEM Annual Retreat took place on June 19 and 20, 2026, at the Carondelet Motherhouse in St. Louis, Missouri. The retreat featured a day of formation on "What is an MPJP?", directed by Amy Hereford, CSJ, a canon lawyer and former SJEM member. Members explored how we, as lay leaders, sponsor our institutions in the charism of the Sisters of St. Joseph of Carondelet, and what it means to be a ministerial public juridic person. As a public juridic person, SJEM carries out its mission in the name of the Church (c. 116 §1), so that our sponsored ministries remain in visible communion with the universal Church.

Board members, Leaders, Faculty and Staff of Sponsored Institutions Formation:

Sponsorship Day:

On October 14, 2025, approximately 56 administrators, faculty and staff from the nine SJEM schools attended a Sponsorship Day at St. Joseph's Academy in St. Louis, Missouri. This was SJEM's third sponsored event, and it was a very successful formation opportunity with leaders from across all the sponsored learning communities. The day featured Dr. Claire Noonan, Vice President for Mission Integration at Loyola University Chicago. Dr. Noonan is a mission-centered leader and strategic thinker serving as the chief mission officer at Loyola University Chicago. The day featured:

- An organizational update and overview of future strategic plans for St. Joseph Educational Ministries presented by Cara McMahon, Executive Director
- Presentation and discussion of "Catholic Education as a Hopeful Endeavor" by Dr. Noonan
- Dedicated time throughout the day for representatives from various institutions to exchange ideas and engage in professional networking
- A tour of the Carondelet Motherhouse
- Mass and blessing of SJEM Schools
- Welcoming of the three new schools

Presidents Meetings:

Presidents of each sponsored institution meet via Zoom with SJEM's executive director and one to two SJEM members four times during the academic year. These meetings provide the presidents a time to communicate directly with their Catholic sponsor, but also time to share among one another about matters of Catholic leadership and Catholic identity in educational institutions. These meetings have provided many challenges for the leaders in Catholic education and has provided leaders the arena to share helpful, supportive, and strategic ideas with one another in response to challenges and in promotion of the Catholicity of their institution. Presidents include:

St. Joseph's Academy, Marcia Niedringhaus
St. Teresa's Academy, Siabhan May-Washington
Fontbonne University, Nancy Blattner
Avila University, Andy Jett (Interim)
St. Joseph's Hearing + Speech, Patrick Johnson (Interim)
Rosati-Kain Academy, Stephanie Boyd
Mount Saint Mary's University, Ann McElaney-Johnson
Carondelet High School, Jessica Mix
St. Mary's Academy, Brandi Odom Lucas



Blessing of Schools during Sponsorship Day



Group Photo of Participants in Sponsorship Day

SJEM Newsletter:

In September 2025 SJEM expanded our weekly email sent to board members, administrators, and staff of the member schools to a newsletter. "A word from our sponsor" continues to feature an inspirational and informational quote on Catholic education, found in current Catholic publications. We also include news from the Catholic Church and in Catholic education as well as updates from our sponsored schools. Anyone can subscribe to this newsletter. Our current subscribers number over 350. We have begun to also include the newsletter information on our website with a subscribe now button.


St. Joseph Educational Ministries

SJEM Weekly May 19, 2026
Continuing Legacy ... Building the Future

St. Joseph Educational Ministries (SJEM) continues the inspiring ministry of the Sisters of St. Joseph, ensuring Catholic identity and the Sisters of St. Joseph's mission *that all may be one*. SJEM's weekly communication provides our educational charism community with inspiration, news, school spotlights, and resources for formation and reflection.

Subscribe to Our Mailing List

A Word from our Sponsor

Hope, Both Gift and Choice

Christian spirituality recognizes hope to be a powerful resource, something that is both gift and choice. As the gift of a generous God, hope stirs within the human to be received and tended. As a choice made in the context of human freedom, hope remains something ultimately to be embodied and practiced.
Colleen Griffith, Boston College theologian

News & Spotlights

From Hope to Action: Laudato Si' Week 2026 and the Mission of the Sisters of St. Joseph

SJEM Weekly Newsletter

Board Members:

SJEM's Governance committee developed new prompts and protocol for the affirmation process of new board members of SJEM sponsored institutions. The new reflection prompts asks board members to cultivate a discerning spirit grounded in prayer and the Gospel in their responsibilities, to become better acquainted and intentional about the legacy of the Sisters of St. Joseph through the charism, and to remain clear regarding their primary charge of the Catholicity of each institution. Reflections have proved more meaningful. Also, SJEM members will work with board chairs more directly in the development of other formative opportunities and content for board members.

Faculty and Staff:

SJEM members have presented at multiple faculty/staff and board development days and retreat days on Catholicity and the CSSJ charism. SJEM responds to all formational opportunities, pertaining to Catholic identity and the CSSJ heritage, at the sponsored institutions.


St. Teresa's Academy faculty

This past year, SJEM was able to provide funding to representatives who serve in ministerial roles to attend Spirits on Fire, a year-long formational commitment that begins with a week-long series of presentations and discussions related to the mission and charism of the Sisters of St. Joseph. Two representatives from Avila University and Rosati-Kain Academy will complete their year in July 2026 while the new assistant director of SJEM, Cathy Schroy, began her year in May 2026.

Mission Representatives Program

SJEM Mission Representatives program empowers mission and Catholic identity professionals at each of our sponsored institutions as leaders who facilitate communication between SJEM and their institutions. Mission representatives met during the third week of each month during the academic year, which provided the opportunity to share ideas of mission integration, review documents coming out of the Vatican (e.g., *Dilexi te* and *Drawing New Maps of Hope*), and concluded in May with an end of the year reflection.

Our 2025-2026 Mission Representatives included:

St. Joseph's Academy, Michael Finucane
St. Teresa's Academy, Renee Schultz
Avila University, Shawn Summe and Andrew Curiel
St. Joseph Hearing + Speech, Katie Griffin
Rosati-Kain Academy, Erin Simmons
Carondelet High School, Jennifer Reinwald
St. Mary's Academy, Karen Chambers
Mount Saint Mary's University, Shannon Green



Cara McMahon presenting to Avila faculty and staff

We look forward to working with our returning and our new mission representatives in the 2026-27 academic year.

SJEM Sponsored Institutions

Though diverse in setting, each institution is united in the foundation of Jesus Christ, whom we serve in every student and family through the charism of the Sisters of St. Joseph. Whether a high school, a university, or a ministry to children with hearing loss, each SJEM institution shares in the Church's mission to proclaim the Gospel through education.

St. Teresa's Academy

Mission: *St. Teresa's Academy educates young women to think critically, encourages them through Catholic values to love the dear neighbor without distinction, and empowers them to change the world.*

St. Joseph's Academy

Mission: *St. Joseph's Academy, sponsored by St. Joseph Educational Ministries, is a Catholic, private college preparatory high school founded and inspired by the charism of the Sisters of St. Joseph of Carondelet.*

Our mission is to provide quality Catholic education for young women in an environment that challenges them to grow in faith, knowledge, and respect for self and others.

Our community expects these young women to make a profound impact in the world.

St. Joseph Hearing + Speech

Mission: *St. Joseph Hearing + Speech delivers exceptional listening and spoken language solutions for children with hearing loss, reflecting the charism of the Sisters of St Joseph of Carondelet.*

Avila University

Mission: *Avila University, a Catholic University founded and inspired by the Sisters of St. Joseph of Carondelet, provides undergraduate and graduate education in the liberal arts and professional studies, preparing lifelong learners who make meaningful contributions to the global community.*

Rosati-Kain Academy

Mission: *Through a vibrant and innovative Catholic education, we cultivate the individuality, faith, talent, and aspirations of diverse young women who aspire to lead and serve the world.*

Fontbonne University (closed August 2026)

Mission: *Fontbonne University, a Catholic institution founded by the Sisters of St. Joseph of Carondelet, provides transformative education committed to the common good, inspiring students to become global citizens who think critically and act ethically to create a more just world.*



Fontbonne University Final Commencement

St. Mary's Academy

Mission: *St. Mary's Academy, a Catholic, private, college, preparatory high school for young women, founded by the Sisters of St. Joseph of Carondelet, shapes women of distinction who are committed to lifelong learning and service to the "dear neighbor".*

Carondelet High School

Mission: *Carondelet High School inspires excellence by preparing young women to live with heart, faith, and courage in the Catholic tradition and spirit of the Sisters of St. Joseph.*

Mount Saint Mary's University

Mission: *Mount Saint Mary's University offers a dynamic learning experience in the liberal arts and sciences to a diverse student body.*

As a Catholic university primarily for women, we are dedicated to providing a superior education enhanced by an emphasis on building leadership skills and fostering a spirit to serve others.



CSSJ High School Conference Attendees

Our measure of success is graduates who are committed to using their knowledge and skills to better themselves, their environments, and the world.

Annual Sponsorship Reports: Living the Legacy

St. Joseph Educational Ministries (SJEM) exists to sponsor and strengthen Catholic ministries rooted in the charism of the Sisters of St. Joseph: love of God and love of the dear neighbor without distinction. Founded in Le Puy, France, in 1650, the Sisters' charism has always been lived within and for the Church. Across diverse educational settings (secondary schools, higher education, and special-needs ministries) SJEM-sponsored institutions give living witness to Catholic identity through formation, service, community, and unifying love. This annual report reflects how that shared mission is embodied across SJEM-sponsored ministries from 2025 to 2026.



St. Joseph's Academy Students Praying Stations of the Cross

As part of the 2026 Annual Sponsorship Report, SJEM invited each of our sponsored ministries to reflect on how their campus community is attentive to the needs of the suffering in our world. This invitation flowed from our conviction that the CSSJ charism of unifying love, or loving unity, is intimately bound up with the justice teachings of our Church, teachings that sharpen our sense of call to serve the poor and our dear neighbors all around us. To ground this year's reflection, we asked our schools to consider their practice through the lens of the seven primary principles of Catholic Social Teaching, as articulated by the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB). In their responses, our sponsored ministries shared how their campus communities practice and preach this social conscience, and how they continue to grow as institutions of Catholic education emboldened to live out justice, mercy, and unifying love in the world.

Catholic Social Teaching in Action

This year's reports invited five authors from each campus community to contribute a response through the lens of one of the Catholic Social Teaching principles. Catholic Social Teaching is the Church's reflection on the Gospel applied to the life of society. Authors included one faculty member in a non-theology discipline, one fourth-year student or alum/parent, the campus minister or mission officer, the president of the educational ministry and a board member of the institution. Each author chose a different Catholic Social Teaching for integration and explored how their SJEM-sponsored institution goes about weaving both Catholic identity and CSSJ charism into the fabric of their community and work.



St. Teresa's Academy Students working with young students on literacy.

Life and Dignity of the Human Person

Across our ministry, schools translated "Life and Dignity of the Human Person" not as an abstract principle, but as daily practice, in how students are welcomed, how struggling students are supported, how differences are celebrated, and how communities reach beyond their own walls. The schools revealed a shared conviction: every person's inherent worth must be seen, protected, and actively cultivated.



St. Joseph's Academy students visiting elderly residents at a nursing home.

Several schools have concrete practices that ensure each person feels known rather than anonymous. Rosati-Kain Academy's morning "shout outs" and Unity Lab create consistent opportunities for students to be celebrated as whole people. Avila University built its "Dignity Model," drawn from Dr. Donna Hicks' research, directly into faculty hiring, orientation, and campus-wide training. St. Mary's Academy frames this commitment as *cura personalis*, care for the whole person, woven into the fabric of institutional life.

Dignity is protected through accompaniment rather than mere accommodation at our schools. St. Joseph Hearing + Speech treats parents and caregivers as partners in their children's care, empowering rather than simply serving them. St. Mary's Academy described replacing zero-tolerance discipline with comprehensive, wraparound family support. Rosati-Kain's SOAR team coordinates counselors, an academic interventionist, and spiritual support around the whole student, ensuring early intervention for ongoing or sudden challenges.



Carondelet High School presenting on CST during professional development day.

Carondelet High School's Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Council and St. Teresa's Academy's language and cultural studies both reflect a conviction that encountering different identities, traditions, and languages builds community rather than dividing it. A graduate of the class of 2026 said, "My work on Carondelet's Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Council has shown me that appreciating the beauty in our differences can build a flourishing community."

Mount Saint Mary's University is applying Catholic Social Teaching directly to the rise of artificial intelligence, insisting that human conscience and

relationship must guide any use of the technology so that people are never reduced to data or rendered invisible by algorithmic bias. A faculty member stated, "As sophisticated as AI may become, it will not have our eyes to look with, our hearts to lead with, our consciousness to discern with, or our lives to live with."

St. Teresa's Academy students partnered with Lead to Read KC to address the local literacy crisis and traveled to advocate directly with state legislators — encountering an STA alumna doing the very same work as a college student. St. Joseph Hearing + Speech frames its advocacy for equitable hearing healthcare access as a direct extension of Catholic Social Teaching's call to protect and uplift the vulnerable.



St. Mary's Academy Grandparents' Day

Call to Family, Community, and Participation

The human person is not only sacred but social: we realize our dignity and rights in relationship with others, in family, and in community. Across our schools, this theme showed up as belonging deliberately built by design, as financial and structural barriers are actively lowered so no family is priced out of community, as families treated as active partners rather than passive recipients, and as students formed for leadership and participation rather than mere attendance. Together, these reflections describe institutions working intentionally to become families themselves.

Several schools described structures created specifically to ensure no student falls through the cracks of a large community. St. Joseph's Academy's advisory program organizes students into small, multi-year "families" led by faculty mentors, building relationships across grade levels. St. Mary's Academy welcomes incoming freshmen through its two-week summer Belle Academy, staffed by current students serving as mentors and teaching assistants. Avila University fosters both internal and external community through shared events, including a fully revitalized on-campus food pantry.



St. Joseph Hearing + Speech Family Session

Several schools described concrete efforts to make sure financial pressure doesn't quietly push a family to the margins. Carondelet High School builds retreats, books, and technology into tuition for cost clarity, and its Sisterhood Fund covers everything from uniforms and spirit wear to Campus Ministry immersions. Rosati-Kain Academy is broadening its applicant pool and launching merit-based scholarships alongside academic and social-emotional supports, so more students can thrive in the community regardless of background.

St. Joseph Hearing + Speech places families at the very center of its work, treating them as active, empowered contributors to their child's success rather than passive recipients of services, building connection and shared learning that reduce isolation and build collective strength across the wider community. One parent shared, "This approach reflects a commitment to justice by ensuring that families are not passive recipients of services, but active and empowered contributors to their child's success."

Community and faith were repeatedly described as inseparable. St. Joseph's Academy's Angels in Prayer Masses and Community Rosary are open to the whole St. Joseph's Academy community, while Avila's Eagles for Christ works to ensure the university's beliefs are shared and celebrated throughout the year, forming students to become advocates, not simply followers.



Avila University - TEDx Event

Several schools emphasized that true participation means students taking on real responsibility, not simply showing up. St. Mary's Academy offers leadership pathways through several pathways, alongside a Service Fair and an annual Day of Service placing the whole school community with local organizations. St. Teresa's Academy pairs a reflective curriculum with direct service experience and mentorship from alumnae, forming students who can translate classroom lessons into lived difference-making. Rosati-Kain Academy is deepening strategic partnerships with organizations like the St. Louis Science Center and Saint Louis University to enrich student learning and extracurricular life. Avila held a TEDx event which was themed "Rooted in Values, Reaching the World" and included two Avila students among its six speakers.

Rights and Responsibilities

Every person has a fundamental right to life and to what is needed for a decent life, and each of us carries a responsibility to one another, to our families, and to the wider society. Across our schools, this theme showed up in governance structures built to protect every community member's dignity, in restorative approaches that hold rights and responsibilities together rather than in tension, in direct advocacy for those most at risk of being overlooked, and in formation drawn from lived examples of Catholic social action. Together, these reflections show rights and responsibilities not as competing claims, but as two sides of the same call to unifying love.


MSMU Students on Pilgrimage to Le Puy, France

Mount Saint Mary's forms its Board of Trustees deliberately in the CSSJ charism, through ongoing education, prayer, the yearly pilgrimage to France, and processes that allow any community

member to appeal to the Board as a final arbiter, ensuring the institution lives its founders' call to serve "all persons without distinction." St. Mary's Academy's Board likewise works to align institutional policy with both legal standards and Catholic values, ensuring every member is treated with respect, compassion, and justice.



Rosati-Kain Academy Students

Rosati-Kain Academy's philosophy of "responsible freedom" is expressed through twelve community agreements that empower student choice while requiring behavior that protects the common good. When those agreements are tested, the school responds not with shame but with honest conversation, natural consequences that preserve dignity, and a path toward amends and reconciliation, a restorative balance of rights with responsibility.

St. Joseph Hearing + Speech affirms every deaf/hard of hearing child's right to communication, education, and full participation in society, working to remove barriers through public funding advocacy and stakeholder education, holding society itself responsible for supporting its most vulnerable members.

St. Joseph's Academy grounds its Catholic Social Teaching course in the example of Dorothy Day, whose personalism helped found the Catholic Worker Movement, and this year reinvigorated its Pax Christi club, originally started under Day's tutelage in 1972, as a space for students to discern Christian nonviolence through regular meetings and peacemaking events. Avila University sends students directly into communities to witness firsthand how policy and power shape the lived experience of their fellow citizens, supported by the student-led, campus-wide Student Social Work Association.

Options for the Poor and Vulnerable

A moral test of any society is how its most vulnerable members are faring, and the Gospel calls us to put the needs of the poor and marginalized first. Across our schools, this theme showed up as measurable, sustained institutional investment in access; as immediate material needs met with dignity rather than judgment; as direct encounter that dismantles misconceptions about poverty; as structured, multi-year accompaniment for students of the highest need; and as curriculum that turns critical understanding of injustice into action. Together, these



Avila's university-sponsored Food Pantry

reflections describe a preferential option lived out in policy, in practice, and in the classroom.

Both Avila University and Mount Saint Mary's described their commitment to serving low-income and first-generation students in concrete, quantified terms. In 2026, 57% of Avila students were Pell Grant–eligible, and the full proceeds of Avila's Steer Dinner, its major annual fundraiser, go directly to scholarships and tuition aid. At Mount Saint Mary's, 68% of students are first-generation and 65% are Pell-eligible; nearly all receive institutional aid, and 32% of the university's operating budget goes toward financial aid, a proud legacy as a Hispanic-Serving and Asian American, Native American, and Pacific Islander-Serving Institution.

Avila University's food pantry, offered discreetly and without judgment, served 894 people this year. The school frames this ministry as honoring the biblical call to set aside a portion of the harvest for the poor and the stranger while protecting the dignity of each person served.



Carondelet High School students on Ven-a-Ver Service Immersion Trip

Carondelet High School's Ven-a-Ver immersion program sends students on three trips each year to learn directly from marginalized communities, including its newest trip to Chicago addressing homelessness, education inequity, and food insecurity. Students return with their assumptions about poverty overturned, and this year, a can drive inspired by a prior immersion trip drew 1,769 donations from the school community.

St. Joseph's Academy's Magis Scholars Program identifies students of highest financial need and supports them throughout their time at the Academy, helping them visit, meet with, and apply to the same caliber of colleges as their peers. In the four years since its founding, every student who completed the program has matriculated to a four-year college or university. Rosati-Kain Academy frames its operations around Pope Leo XIV's apostolic exhortation, *Dilexi Te*, prioritizing financial accessibility, merit and need-based support, and community service programs that directly elevate vulnerable populations.

St. Mary's Academy's Social Justice course guides students through issues like disproportionate incarceration and the lasting effects of redlining, asking them to identify which Catholic Social Teaching themes are being violated and what action they can take. One student described this formation this way: "I do not passively learn about these issues, but engage with them outside the classroom and collaborate with my classmates to make an even larger impact."

Dignity of Work and Workers

Work is more than a means of earning a living; it is a way individuals participate in God's ongoing creation and grow in their own humanity. Across our schools, this theme showed up in how colleagues collaborate across hierarchy, in institutional commitments to treat employees as persons

rather than resources, in the deliberate practice of naming and honoring every role in a school community, and in curriculum that equips students to ask hard questions about who work serves. Together, these reflections describe communities working to ensure that dignity extends fully into the workplace.



Rosati-Kain Academy Students during Catholic Schools Week

At Rosati-Kain Academy, faculty and staff are united less by hierarchy than by shared passion, knowledge, and a desire to share what each person brings. Colleagues are drawn into new projects and conversations based on ability and interest rather than seniority, and the guiding question is never simply "can you do this," but "how would you do this" — an invitation to genuine collaboration. A member of the faculty said, "An administrative hierarchy exists within the school, but when a project or conversation begins, more attention is paid to passion and ability than to title or seniority."

St. Joseph Hearing + Speech grounds its employment practices directly in Catholic Social Teaching, affirming that work is a source of personal dignity and building a culture of transparency and trust on the premise that justice within an institution begins with how it treats its own people. St. Teresa's Academy extends this into concrete policy, holistic compensation, a confidential Employee Assistance Program offering mental health, legal, and financial support, and clearly defined schedules that protect work-life balance.



Avila University Student Group

St. Joseph's Academy makes it a deliberate practice to name, acknowledge, and express gratitude for every role in the school community, from the facilities staff who maintain the building, to the cafeteria workers who nourish students daily, to the administrative professionals who keep the school running. Weekly all-school Community Time celebrates achievements and extraordinary effort across every part of the community, not only in the classroom.

St. Teresa's Academy invests directly in its educators' formation, including participation in the Ignatian Family Teach-In for Justice, which equips staff with tools in Catholic Social Teaching, advocacy, and justice-oriented leadership. A 2025 survey found that 96% of STA teachers agreed that growth opportunities are accessible to all educators regardless of race, ethnicity, culture, or other aspects of identity, evidence that professional development is both offered and equitably reachable.

St. Joseph's Academy equips students to examine work critically through a dual-credit Voices of Human Rights seminar, a Global Studies class, and theology coursework on economic justice, alongside more than 160 seniors who complete three weeks of full-time community service each May before graduation. St. Joseph's Academy's president reports that "whether students are exploring issues of economic justice or in a theology class," they are formed "to ask hard questions: Who benefits from this work? Who is left out? What does justice demand?"

Solidarity



Carondelet High School Cultural Festival

Solidarity asks us to recognize that we belong to one human family, whatever our national, racial, economic, or ideological differences, and to work actively for justice and peace as one people. Across our schools, this theme took shape as quiet, unpublicized service; as a deliberate lowering of barriers to access; as generations carrying forward a shared mission; and as students stepping directly into the work of peace and justice. Together, the reflections below show solidarity as something learned, practiced, and handed down.

Several schools pointed to solidarity practiced without fanfare, a habit of responsibility to others that asks for no recognition. Avila University highlighted its men's basketball team's "High Five Friday" visits to a local elementary school, noting that most of the campus community isn't even aware the visits happen. Rosati-Kain Academy described how everyday opportunities to serve, lead, and connect quietly strengthen both the community and the student herself.



Mount Saint Mary's University Graduates

Solidarity also showed up as a concrete commitment to access. Carondelet High School keeps tuition costs down and grows scholarships so that more than half of its students receive financial assistance, and its Sisterhood Fund quietly covers the smaller costs such as a class t-shirt or a retreat fee, that might otherwise exclude a student. St. Joseph Hearing + Speech extends the same principle into

the wider community through free playgroups, free parent education, and its Little HEARoes parent-and-me class.

At Mount Saint Mary's, a graduating class marking the university's 100th commencement described itself not merely as recipients of an education but as the living continuation of the Sisters' founding vision, a reminder that solidarity spans generations, binding those who came before those who carry the mission ahead.

St. Mary's Academy described a community united under one God despite its diversity, where students hold one another in prayer and the whole community adjusts around a classmate's need, a lived peacemaking amid a world marked by conflict. St. Teresa's Academy fosters the same unity through affinity groups spanning racial, ethnic, and interest-based communities, bringing students together rather than apart.



St. Teresa's Academy students on Kairos Retreat

Several schools moved solidarity from reflection into public action. Carondelet's students have marked twelve years of the "Break the Chain" dance in solidarity with women globally facing dating violence and sexual assault. St. Teresa's Academy students have organized anti-gun-violence rallies and marched for immigrant rights, extending classroom lessons on the dignity of the "dear neighbor" into direct civic engagement.

Care for Creation

Care for God's Creation calls us to recognize the earth as a gift held in common, and to see ecological responsibility as inseparable from justice for the human family. Across our schools, this theme ranged from curriculum that names sustainability as a moral imperative, to institution-wide infrastructure investment, to a single student turning environmental care into action for the vulnerable, to campus-wide habits that quietly reshape how a community relates to waste. Together, these reflections show that caring for creation and caring for one another are, in the CSSJ charism, the same unifying love.



St. Mary's Academy students service project

Carondelet High School's AP Environmental Science curriculum grounds ecological study directly in the CSSJ charism of unifying love, teaching students that human well-being is bound up with the health of the ecosystems we inhabit. "Sustainability is not only an ecological goal, but also a moral

imperative rooted in justice, solidarity, and respect for human dignity...This awareness reflects the call of unifying love, challenging students to respond not only with knowledge, but with compassion and a commitment to right relationship with all people and the world around them," reported a science faculty member.

Mount Saint Mary's has pursued measurable, institution-wide change since 2020, solar panels and electric vehicle charging stations on both campuses, a full energy audit, native-plant landscaping, a community garden, and a new interdisciplinary Environmental Studies major. Their audit found that eleven academic departments now offer at least one sustainability course, and that seven student organizations beyond the Eco Club advance ecological justice, evidence that stewardship has become embedded across the institution rather than confined to a single program.

At St. Joseph's Academy, one student's care for creation took the shape of direct action for girls facing period poverty in Ethiopia, facilitating a product drive for Dignity Period, an organization producing reusable, sustainable pads. Her reflection ties ecological responsibility and care for the vulnerable together under the school's shared mission, "Not I but we."



St. Teresa's Academy students plant a tree

St. Teresa's Academy introduced composting across the entire campus this year, compost bins in classrooms and the lunchroom, along with compostable plates and utensils, changing how students understand waste in their daily routine. What began as a practical shift became, for students, a moral and faith-driven responsibility. A 2026 graduate of St. Teresa's academy said, "By caring for the earth, we are also caring for the people who depend on it. This perspective has helped me see environmental responsibility not just as a personal choice, but as a moral and faith-driven responsibility."



St. Joseph Hearing + Speech student with therapy dog

Conclusion

Above all, the 2026 Annual Sponsorship Reports powerfully affirm that Catholic identity and the Sisters of St. Joseph (CSSJ) charism of unifying love remain vibrantly alive across all SJEM-sponsored ministries. Rather than remaining abstract ideals, this shared Catholic identity and charism permeate the everyday fabric of institutional life. Across each community, unifying love is animated through intentional culture-building, holistic care for every member of the educational family, and a steadfast dedication to justice and reconciliation. Broadly, this identity is expressed through inclusive policies that safeguard individual worth, collaborative governance

structures that honor all workers, dynamic spiritual and liturgical practices, and strategic commitments that dismantle social and economic barriers.

Furthermore, this synthesis demonstrates that the seven principles of Catholic Social Teaching do not function in isolation; rather, they serve as an interconnected framework deeply woven into institutional mission. A prominent area of overlap occurs at the intersection of Human Dignity, Solidarity, and the Option for the Poor—where initiatives establishing financial accessibility, wraparound student care, and experiential learning simultaneously uphold human worth, dismantle systemic inequities, and foster authentic communal relationships. Similarly, Care for Creation deeply intersects with global human rights and worker dignity through academic and operational models that connect environmental stewardship to justice for vulnerable communities. Ultimately, these reports illustrate a cohesive, living tradition: one where Catholic identity and the CSSJ charism continually inspire educational communities to serve the "dear neighbor" without distinction.



Mount Saint Mary University's 100th Anniversary

Commitment to Catholic Education Excellence

SJEM's sponsored ministries continue to pursue methods, experiences, and relationships that enhance the Catholic identity of their institutions, and the lived Catholic culture remains alive and well across our campuses. Our institutions not only provide evidence of their faith-filled communities through annual reports and submissions to SJEM's weekly newsletter, but SJEM members and the Sisters of St. Joseph also remain engaged with these communities, both supporting the campuses and contributing to the formation of their members.

SJEM is proud of its sponsored educational ministries and continues to grow in the ways it provides formational opportunities and communicates its Catholic identity, rooted in CSSJ spirituality.


St. Mary's Academy celebrates Ash Wednesday Mass

New Developments:

SJEM and the Congregation of the Sisters of St. Joseph Future Transition of Sponsorship:

In collaboration with the Congregation of the Sisters of St. Joseph, SJEM has begun a relationship with the three schools sponsored by the Congregation of the Sisters of St. Joseph through CSJ Ministries working toward formal transition of sponsorship on July 1, 2026.

Kathy Brazda, CSJ, has been designated to represent the Congregation of the Sisters of St. Joseph in relationship with the St. Louis Province Leadership Team and Mary Ann Martin, CSJ, the liaison for the International Community. The institutions include three secondary institutions. The institutions and their mission statements are as follows:

Nazareth Academy Mission:

Nazareth Academy is a Catholic, Coed, College Prep High School inspired by the mission and spirituality of the Congregation of Saint Joseph. We are committed to academic excellence, educating the whole person and fostering a community of inclusivity rooted in Gospel values. Above all we value Scholarship, Service, Spirit and Unity.



Rosati-Kain Academy students visiting with the Sisters at the Carondelet Motherhouse

St. Joseph's Academy (Baton Rouge) Mission & Vision:

The mission of St. Joseph's Academy is to educate young women as responsible and unifying members of the world community. In the spirit and charism of the Sisters of St. Joseph, St. Joseph's Academy offers opportunities for faith development in the Catholic tradition, academic excellence and personal growth.

Saint Joseph Academy (Cleveland) Mission:

Saint Joseph Academy, rooted in the spirituality of the Congregation of the Sisters of St. Joseph, fosters unifying relationships with God and all creation, empowers each young woman to achieve academic excellence, and inspires a life of compassionate leadership and service in a global society.

Fontbonne University Closes

As reported in last year's report from SJEM sponsored ministries, in March 2024, Fontbonne University in St. Louis, Missouri announced they would be graduating their last class in August 2025. Founded in 1923, Fontbonne University served as a respected Catholic institution in the St. Louis area for over one hundred years. SJEM joins the entire Fontbonne community in a real sadness in its closure but celebrates decades of tremendous educational ministry and thousands of graduates who serve our world in faith, justice, and goodness because of their Fontbonne education. Fontbonne University held their final commencement in August 2025 and is in the process of completing the necessary steps for closure and dissolution in the business office. SJEM will continue to be Fontbonne's Catholic sponsor until this work is completed.



The Founding Spirit Statue was moved from Fontbonne University to St. Joseph's Academy upon the university's closure.

SJEM's Statement of Catholic Identity:

SJEM member and treasurer, Sr. Marie Joan Harris, CSJ led a formation orientation for Avila University's new board member candidates to acquaint them with the institution's Catholic identity. Sr. Marie Joan's seminar more deeply explores the Catholic Intellectual Tradition in collaboration with SJEM executive director. It has also prompted SJEM to embark on the very important task of developing an explicit statement on Catholic identity for all SJEM-sponsored institutions. The approach to the statement will be that which is comprehensive of Catholic education in the tradition of the Sisters of St. Joseph of Carondelet and includes:



St. Joseph Hearing + Speech class celebrating St. Joseph's Feast Day

Based in the Catholic-Christian Tradition and founded to bring about unity through love and service of God and neighbor without distinction, SJEM institutions of learning…

- *Practice a sacramentality that finds God in all things and deepens faith development*
- *Pursue academic excellence that pursues truth, encourages collaboration and avoids dualism*
- *Address issues of social justice inspired by the common good and the worth of each person with special consideration of the marginalized and unjust systems/processes*
- *Build community that unites neighbor with neighbor, and neighbor with God, rooted in acts of service*
- *Promote freedom of conscience that encourages questioning and fosters authentic human and spiritual growth.*

SJEM also hopes to host programs and develop resources for various constituents of the schools in the upcoming year that can promote and support more formation in creative and imaginative ways.



Carondelet High School Mass for Peace with Bishop Barber

SJEM Hires an Assistant Director:

SJEM began the process of hiring an assistant director in November 2025, and Dr. Cathy Schroy was hired to begin in February 2026. Dr. Schroy brings a background in deaf education and higher education, along with a longstanding connection to SJEM's sponsored ministries, having been affiliated as a student and/or teacher at St. Joseph's Academy, St. Joseph Hearing + Speech, and Fontbonne University. She is also an Associate of the Sisters of St. Joseph of Carondelet. This new position has allowed SJEM to broaden its offerings to schools and continue strengthening its mission.

Diocesan Relationships

SJEM continues to strengthen relationships with local Church leadership and colleagues. This year, SJEM began building relationships with Bishop Michael Duca of the Diocese of Baton Rouge, Cardinal Blase Cupich of the Archdiocese of Chicago, and Bishop Edward Malesic of the Diocese of Cleveland, as part of the process of seeking their approval for the transfer of sponsorship.

It has been a blessing to serve the Church in our capacity as Catholic sponsor. SJEM is grateful for the support of local Church leadership and the relationships we continue to foster.

Relationship with the CSSJs

SJEM maintains four Sisters of St. Joseph of Carondelet as members and two Sisters of St. Joseph as liaisons from the International Community of Carondelet and the Congregation of the Sisters of St. Joseph. SJEM also ensures a strong, consistent, and supportive relationship with the Province leaders who play a significant role in our ministry as stewards of sponsorship.

Finances

The Finance Committee of St. Joseph Educational Ministries (SJEM) oversees the finances of The Ministries [Statutes, Article 8, Section 8.3]. Contemporaneously with the implementation of SJEM, the Sisters of St. Joseph of Carondelet alienated the ownership of the assets pertaining to the sponsored Educational Institutions in accordance with canonical norms (Statutes, Article 1, Section 11.1). As a consequence, each sponsored Educational Institution is financially independent of SJEM.



St. Joseph's Academy "Sipping with the Sisters"

St. Joseph Educational Ministries has been accepted for inclusion in the USCCB group tax exemption as an IRC Section 509(a)(2) organization. SJEM, each of the sponsored Educational Institutions and the Sisters of St. Joseph of Carondelet St. Louis Province are listed in The Official Catholic Directory and as such are not taxable for activities directly related to their missions. None of these entities receive direct support from the government. Students at sponsored Universities may receive government loans and grants and the Universities may compete for government grants. However, none of these funds are shared with SJEM.

The assets of SJEM include donations from the Sisters of St. Joseph of Carondelet, St. Louis Province and the International Province, and sponsorship fees collected from sponsored institutions. The finance committee developed a formula for calculating sponsorship fees, designed to ensure equitable assessment across institutions based on student enrollment and institutional size. Donations from the Sisters of St. Joseph were also adjusted based on the number of institutions the

province previously sponsored. The international province was asked to donate $5,000 per institution while the St. Louis Province donated $3,000 per institution as the founding province. This will continue as more provinces outside of Carondelet are added.

To ensure accountability, SJEM annually submits a budget to the leadership of the Sisters of St. Joseph of Carondelet for approval. The Finance Office of the Sisters provides accounting and auditing services for SJEM and sends the SJEM Finance Committee quarterly financial reports for review.

The final financial reports for July 1, 2025 through June 30, 2026 are shown below. The revenue reflects the funds from the Sisters of St. Joseph and the sponsorship fees for this period. There were no grants. Future reports will reflect decreased support from the Sisters of St. Joseph and increased revenue from sponsorship fees.

SJEM continues dialogue about the long-term sustainability of its ministry. We expect that implementation of financial opportunities will take several years.



Sisters at Avila University's Fundraiser



Carondelet High School Freshman Retreat



MSMU students in Le Puy, France



Rosati-Kain Academy Students during Catholic School Week



St. Joseph Hearing + Speech Newborn Outreach Program



St. Joseph's Academy Penny Queen



St. Mary's Academy Service Day



St. Teresa's Academy STEAM Program



St. Joseph
Educational
Ministries