



## OUR ST. PAUL SCHOOL STORY

We want to share with you and the Parish why we chose to send our children to St. Paul School. When we went to visit St. Paul, we were warmly welcomed and informed about the family/community atmosphere that St. Paul provides to its students and parents. As parents, we have instilled to our children the virtues of love, kindness, caring, and forgiveness that all human being should maintain. We feel that these values are key to raising responsible, respectful, and productive children; and we thoroughly believe that St. Paul has accomplished this goal. Also, we are enjoying meeting other wonderful families that make this family/community environment a wholesome experience. We always find the doors wide open with the staff and administration making us feel special and knowing that our children are well-cared and loved. The educational standards and quality that St. Paul provides is another asset that we enjoy. Our children have a sense of spiritualism that we believe in and we like that encouragement that has been provided. Overall, we enjoy the warmth and the unity that the school and staff offer all the time and it is nice to know that our children are safe and well loved. We will always have St. Paul's in our hearts!!

Kelley and Vajo Quinn Necak



# OUR ST. PAUL SCHOOL STORY

## The Potter Family

St. Paul School has been THE BEST educational choice for our children and family. We have three children currently attending St. Paul School. I often tell others that our St. Paul tuition payment is the most important bill we pay each month. I am truly grateful our path led us to such an exceptional educational program and community.

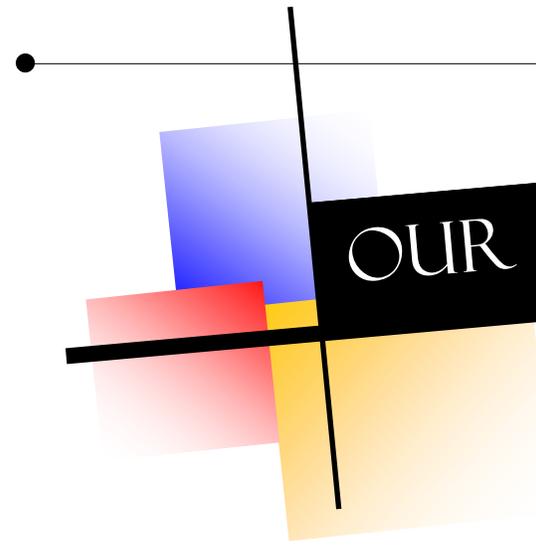
Our oldest daughter, Alix, is currently in Sixth grade; our second daughter, Drew, is in Fourth grade; and our son, Samuel, attends the four year old Pre-K class at the preschool. We have been actively attending St. Paul School for seven years. Little did I know, this educational choice has had such an incredible impact beyond our educational goals. St. Paul has not only been the best choice for Pre-K through Sixth education; it has been the best life decision for raising our family.

When we started Alix at St. Paul in Kindergarten and Drew in preschool, we were welcomed with open arms by the teachers, staff, principal, and parents. St. Paul was completely new to us. We were not members of the church and never felt pressured to join the parish to be accepted or to attend. However, after seeing the educational outcomes of teaching our children through academics and religion on a daily basis, plus getting to know and appreciate the practices and priorities of the school, church, and families, I eagerly wanted to become a member of the parish. All three of my children and I were baptized together at St. Paul and it is a moment I will never forget. Joining this community has absolutely, without a doubt, enriched our life, and the lessons go far beyond the classroom walls.

Both of our girls absolutely loved the Kindergarten classroom and especially loved all the active learning centers. (I can't wait for Sam to get there.) I remember the first time I walked into the Kindergarten classroom and was thrilled to see how the classroom was arranged with one large rug, two tables with a few chairs at each, and then numerous learning areas. In each grade I feel like the teachers have truly looked specifically for the individual strengths of each of my children and have met them at their learning levels. My children have been loved and encouraged by each of their teachers unconditionally.

Just recently I experienced one of the most prideful moments I have ever had as a mother. I know that the pride I felt and the confidence my children proudly presented was primarily a result of the experiences they have had through the St. Paul religious education program. The way they presented themselves and spoke from the heart with sincere and honest grace completely astonished us. Yes, St. Paul has an exceptional educational curriculum, however, I truly believe the combination of that top notch curriculum and the life skills reinforced at school is what absolutely amazes us and makes us incredibly proud that we chose St. Paul. These children really learn so much more about life, beyond their educational achievements. Throughout their daily routines and years at St. Paul, the children are taught to love and serve the Lord, to open their hearts to mentoring younger peers, to actively give to their community through activities such as volunteering, recycling, and visit the nursing homes, to share and encourage everyone, to be respectful and take personal responsibility, as well as, to confess and learn from their mistakes. The unconditional love that fills the hallways at St. Paul School is an absolute gift to any child.

I am grateful we have such an exceptional program locally. I appreciate the life path that has been set in motion for our children and family by attending; we love St. Paul! Our community will flourish if we continue to give and grow this extraordinary school and parish where all are welcome.



# OUR ST. PAUL SCHOOL STORY

## The Perron Vana Family

St. Paul's Catholic School has changed my son's life for the better. William's first experience with school was horrible. He did not like it. When he went to St. Paul's, William's attitude towards school changed immediately. Suddenly, he loved school and made friends very quickly. I also started to feel much better. I did not have to worry about him when he was at school anymore. We are so glad to have found a school where people share our values. We are extremely grateful for Mrs. Breheny and Mrs. Shrode. Thank you St. Paul for offering such an amazing program to the Macomb community!



# OUR ST. PAUL SCHOOL STORY

My husband and I are what many term to be cradle Catholics. Both of us were born into Catholic families and attended Catholic school. Chris, as well as his father, aunt, uncles, sisters, nephew and now son, all attended St. Paul's. I attended not only a Catholic grade school, but also an all-girls Catholic high school. My grandparents, parents, aunts, uncles and cousins also attend Catholic grade school and high school.

Our son Collin is in Mrs. Lowderman's first grade class, making him the third generation to attend St. Paul's. When the time came for us to sign up Collin for pre-school, there was never a choice to be made. It was not even discussed. He was going to St. Paul's. I was so glad to even have that option here in Macomb, it never crossed my mind to send him anywhere else. Against all stereotypical odds, we had Collin start Kindergarten in August of 2013. He was the youngest boy in his class, with an August 25<sup>th</sup> birthday. In fact, he was still four when he started Kindergarten and turned 5 a week later. However, after talking with his Preschool teachers, both at St. Paul's and the WIU Infant and Preschool Center, they assured me he was ready. Putting our faith in Mrs. Carlson and her years of experience, we sent him on. A year and a half later, he can just about count to 100, he is on the cusp of being able to read, has a growing vocabulary, and has made wonderful friends. I am pretty sure he has more friends than I do. He is greeted by kids of all ages, every morning, when he walks through the doors of St. Paul's. What else could a parent ask for?

One day, I was stopped in a parking lot, while I was trying to convince another parent why they should send their child to St. Paul's, asked why I would decide to spend so much to send my child to St. Paul's when we have such a wonderful public school system. After getting over the shock of someone I didn't even know interrupting me to ask me such a nosy question, I simply said that my husband and I went to Catholic school and wanted our son to do the same. But as I drove home that evening I thought about how she questioned the amount of money I was spending. My high school cost just \$4,000 less per year than it cost my parents to send me to Western Illinois University. However, they saw it as an investment. An investment that they felt was vital to my education. I feel very fortunate to be able to carry on that investment for Collin and so should everyone else who chooses to send their children to St. Paul's.

Our investment goes beyond the classroom our son sits in. Collin will love to sing along with Mrs. Cooper in the new music classroom, Natalie will love to be able to see her older brother walking the same halls as her once she gets to preschool, and Chris and I will love attending events in the parish center. But most importantly we will all love seeing our parish and school grow together in all the new opportunities the new addition will have to offer. It definitely has something for everyone and will benefit all members of both the school and parish. So, figure out what you love about the new parish addition, and give what you can. A huge thank you to the teachers and community that is St. Paul's, and for allowing us to be a part of it.

Chris and Sally Adams



# OUR ST. PAUL SCHOOL STORY

## My St. Paul Story

My name is Terri Burnham. Some of you know me as Mrs. Burnham, teacher of the 4th grade at St. Paul School. Some of you knew me as Miss John, principal at St. Paul School from 1984-93.

My involvement with St. Paul Church began in December of 1983, when I joined the church. I was 28 yrs old and teaching in the Southeastern School District. I was looking for God and found him at St. Paul Church. The following fall, Sister Maureen Becker was leaving her position of principal at St. Paul School. I had gotten to know her through the church and she encouraged me to apply for her position. Long story short, I became the first lay principal of St. Paul School.

I was a bit apprehensive at first, because I was 29 yrs old and had never been a principal. I remember talking to Sr. Maria Zieman, and she told me 50 percent of any job is being there for those you serve. During my time as principal I soon realized that the staff, parents and children were truly wonderful. We were one big happy faith family. It was easy being there for them. Catholic education is about teaching the whole child, academically, spiritually and morally. Our mission is and has always been, to teach children, that they can make a difference in this world by sharing their faith. The women I worked with were faith filled people with a passion for teaching and educating the whole child.

Today, 35 years later, St. Paul School is still about teaching the whole child. We have grown in those 35 yrs and have added a preschool and have provided special reading and math classes to help educate all students. Our space at school is limited, it is hard to find a place to go with a small group of students that isn't occupied. We are making do, as we have in many areas of our church community. The time seems right to expand and grow! Not only will the school and church benefit from more room, but the Macomb community will as well.

When we expanded the existing church, there were those in doubt, with lots of valid reasons not to expand, but the majority persevered and we have this beautiful church today. I think we all need to look deep in our hearts and ask ourselves to have faith in the committee, Monsignor Pricco and God.

Mrs. Terri Burnham