

Dear Parents,

*“Be it known to all who enter here that CHRIST is the reason for this school. He is the unseen but ever present teacher in its classes. He is the model of its faculty and the inspiration of its students.”*

When I entered the main office on my first day as interim principal, I was glad to see the familiar quotation displayed on the wall. It is what sets us clearly apart from our public school counterparts. In my 10 years as a Catholic School principal, I have tried to embody the virtues of Christ in how I treat faculty, students and parents. Believe me when I say there is goodness and virtue in the hallways of St. Christopher School; it is obvious to me the “unseen but ever present teacher- Christ” is in this building. To start my first day with the All Saints Mass last Friday was an ideal way to begin my journey back into education. The students were friendly and welcoming and made me feel that accepting the interim position was the correct decision. I knew right away I was in a Catholic school that lives by the example of Christ. Sure we will have our pitfalls and sometimes not live up to the Christian ideals, but I am convinced there is a strong foundation of believers who live the Gospel message at St. Chris.

Being a longtime member of St. Chris (back to 1986) a clear message from all the pastors has been to build the “Kingdom of God” and to “Save Souls.” I know Fr. John continually states this as his mission, and as a Catholic school this should be our number one priority.

I am reminded of a poem that I have utilized many a time when addressing faculty, parents and students. It is called, “Am I a Builder or a Wrecker”.

*I watched them tearing a building down,  
A gang of men in a busy town.  
With a ho-heave-ho and lusty yell,  
They swung a beam and a sidewalk fell.*

*I asked the foreman, “Are these men skilled,  
The men you’d hire if you had to build?”*

*He gave me a laugh and said, “No indeed!  
Just common labor is all I need.  
I can easily wreck in a day or two  
What builders have taken a year to do.”*

*And I thought to myself as I went my way,  
Which of these two roles have I tried to play?*

*Am I a builder who works with care,  
Measuring life by the rule and square?  
Am I shaping my deeds by a well-made plan,  
Patiently doing the best I can?*

*Or am I a wrecker who walks the town,  
Content with the labor of tearing down?*

Let's work together to build God's kingdom here at St. Chris school and parish. Trying to educate, elevate, enlighten and energize our students to becoming the best person they can become is essential. It is a task that takes parents and teachers, and most importantly, Christ himself.

Background:

40 year career in education as teacher, coach and principal.

- 25 years at Vandalia Morton School
- 5 years at Esther Dennis Middle School in Northridge
- 1 year at Queen of Martyrs
- 9 years at Bishop Leibold School – named National Blue Ribbon School of Excellence in 2008.
- currently head men's cross-country coach and track assistant at Chaminade- Julianne HS
- retired in 2015

Personal

- 3 grown children who all attended St. Chris school ( two of them are teachers)
- 4 grandchildren
- Remarried in 2018 after the death of my first wife in 2010. I now have an additional four grandchildren
- Parish member since 1986 and current Parish Council member
- 40 year career as football official, 25 years as a Division I college official
- Bicyclist and backpacker, and former runner ( arthritic knees finally got the best of me)
- Lived in Vandalia for 42 years.