

## One Family's Story: A Tribute to St. Joseph School

We would just like to say Thank You to all of the teachers, staff and even the other families of St. Joseph School.

Mary has been blessed by the St. Joseph community, literally from the day she was born. When Mary was born, her older brother and sister were attending St. Joseph. Because Mary was born two months early, she had to stay in the hospital for a month and we had to split our time between our school aged children and our infant in the hospital. One of the other parents at St. Joseph started a dinner schedule for us and other St Joseph parents, some who we barely knew, signed up to bring us dinners so that we wouldn't have to worry about cooking when Mary was in the hospital.

The first person who took care of Mary for us was a mother we had met because her children went to St. Joseph. During that time, Mary frequently would be seen on campus in a stroller being wheeled between various classrooms, while this mother volunteered at the school. Mary's first Vacation Bible School was when she was only about 3 months old. By the time Mary went to kindergarten, she already felt quite at home at St. Joseph, and had already been blessed in so many ways by the St. Joseph Community.

Once she started kindergarten, Mary continued to be blessed by the wonderful teachers and staff at the school! She learned how to read, write, spell and do math equations from all of the teachers she had throughout her 9 years of schooling here. She was able to learn Spanish and Art and have PE classes where she got to learn a variety of different sports, all of which she enjoyed. She also learned to sing, play trumpet and to perform on stage from the amazing Mrs. Summers.

Most importantly, Mary learned how to treat others with love and kindness and that to work hard to help others was a blessing for her too. She learned to be honest and fair and to care about others. She learned to watch out for the younger students and help them if they were in trouble or needed anything. She learned that winning wasn't the most important thing, but that you should always try your best no matter what you were doing. She learned to treat adults, and her peers, with respect. Mary was shown examples of integrity, hard work and kindness, by all the staff at St. Joseph.

The fundamental lesson she learned at St. Joseph, that she could not have been taught in any public school, was the value and strength of prayer, and that God's standards are the only ones that really matter. Learning to trust in God and to turn to him in times of trouble, need, sorrow or confusion is an incredible life lesson that so many children are missing today, but all of the students at St. Joseph are lucky enough to hear and see it in action every day. For this we are so grateful and would like to give a heartfelt THANK YOU to all of our St. Joseph School Community!

Never doubt that what you do is noticed. Never doubt that what you do is important. And never doubt that what you do really does make a difference!

Thank you so much for all you do!

Dave and Teresa Smith

