



Saint Jerome Regional School History

2021 marks the 100th Anniversary of Saint Jerome's School. Since our first year in 1921, we have provided a traditional Catholic education to the growing youth of our community.

St. Jerome School became an integral part of the Tamaqua community in the 1920's. Reverend Henry W. Baker was named Pastor of St. Jerome Church in February, 1912. He served the parish during World War I, and as the country emerged into a new era, ground was broken for St. Jerome School on July 23rd, 1919. Father Baker's goal was to renew the parish spirit and enlist the aid of parishioners to establish a reserve fund for the building and renovation purposes. The building was completed in 1920 at the cost of \$150,000 and was dedicated by His Eminence Denis Cardinal Dougherty on May 30, 1921. This day was described as one of the greatest in St. Jerome history. St. Jerome became a regional school in the 1990's. It served the parishes of St. Jerome and SS. Peter and Paul, Tamaqua, St. Bertha, Tuscarora and St. Bartholomew, Brockton.

In July of 2018, after 97 years at its 250 W. Broad St., Tamaqua location, Saint Jerome Regional School moved to our new home at 50 Meadow Ave., Tamaqua. The Diocese of Allentown purchased the building to house the fast-growing Saint Jerome Regional School. On Sept. 6, 2018 the Most Rev. Alfred Schlert, bishop of the Diocese of Allentown, was the main celebrant for a dedication Mass and school blessing. In his homily, Bishop Schlert reflected on his more than 10 years of teaching and told the students that the new school year is "a fresh start." "Not only is this a new year with a fresh start, but so is your school. We are so proud that this school has come into being. The primary goal of Catholic education is to reveal God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit. That's why this school exists. Above all it is a Catholic community in which everyone is welcome, but it is a Catholic community where the identity of the school is Catholic, where the reason we exist is Catholic, where Jesus is present in every school and in every classroom, and not just in the school chapel. That is the Catholic Church at its best – when we come together to be the light of Christ to all people. It is a beautiful thing to see," he said. Principal Amy Hannis-Miskar welcomed the students, staff, families, friends and the community to the celebration at the new learning facility and spoke about the many upgrades from the school's original building. "It is my hope that this new elementary school makes everyone feel welcome and comfortable where all children can learn. This project took a lot of resources and involved many people, and through it all, the students were the focus. In the end, we believe our new school is truly a blessing. We are especially thankful to Bishop Schlert for making this all happen. Thank you for your tremendous support of Catholic Education in Carbon and Schuylkill county. Thank you for coming today and for blessing our school," she said.

This move brought much excitement among the faculty, staff, students and families. Aside from the new school building itself, there were also many other exciting additions and changes to the staff and the programs offered. The new school now included: Air Conditioning, Playgrounds, Fields, Parking Lot, 13 Regular Classrooms (Prek-8th), Art Room, Chapel/Music Room, Small group instruction room, STEM Lab/Computer Room, Conference Room,

Gymnasium/Cafeteria/Auditorium, Faculty Room, Offices (Main, Administrative, Nurse, Finance), HSA room, Maintenance Room, Kitchen/Serving Area and Separate Washing Area. Building upgrades that were completed before the new school opened were: classrooms offices and hallways were painted, all new flooring was installed in the classrooms and the hallways, new security system was installed, re-keying of the building, IT services and rewiring was complete. Upgrades to the student restrooms and installation of the STEM Lab. New signage was installed on the front of the building and lockers were painted and installed in the middle school grades. Cement work was also completed. It was also decided that since Christ is at the center of our school, we felt that it was important to continually have the Blessed Sacrament present. We also added a school Chapel, Sacred Heart Chapel that has allowed us to continue to serve the spiritual needs of our students and to grow the Catholic identity of our school.

As part of the administration's effort to continually enhance education at Saint Jerome Regional School, a space was designated in the new school building for a STEM lab where students can solve problems and create solutions. The decision was made in order to have the students to be prepared to be resourceful problem-solvers and so during the 2018-19 school year, SJRS began to transition from the traditional computer class to a STEM class. Students still learned computer skills, however they would now be able to develop their skills in a more integrated setting. They will be learning to problem-solve, communicate, collaborate and critically think in a space designed for activity and supplied with the resources they need to discover, apply and create.

At one time, our area once had as many as fifteen parish schools, now, Saint Jerome Regional School is home to students from Schuylkill, Carbon and Luzerne counties. Currently, St. Jerome Regional School serves the parishes of St. John XXIII, Tamaqua, All Saints, McAdoo, SS. Peter and Paul, Leighton, St. Richard's, Barnesville, St. Peter the Fisherman, Lake Harmony, St. Joseph of the Panther Valley, Summit Hill and The Immaculate Conception Parish in Jim Thorpe.

All of you (our students, staff, families, parishioners, community members) have played a crucial role in the history of our school and we encourage you to participate in the story telling and celebrations this coming school year. We wholeheartedly believe that, as our mission statement reflects: Our base is family, our mission is faith, and our future rests in the courage to leave behind a legacy. It is truly a privilege to be part of a school family where parents, teachers, and students care for each other and help each other to live fearlessly through faith.

Due to the generosity of people like you, we can provide the best learning experience possible for all our students. St. Jerome Regional School, for a century, has relied on the kindness of those who truly believe in the value of Catholic education.

Another great year is underway and we are eager to continue improving and growing our beloved school! This past year, our school has seen many changes and advancements to guarantee sustainability for years to come. We are looking forward to a great 100th year at SJRS! And now, it is time to celebrate!