

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

# Director of Schools named for Joplin Area Catholic Schools

**Contact:** Fr. J. Friedel – 417-291-1888

JOPLIN, MO (May 15, 2020) – Joplin Area Catholic Schools has hired School Sister of Notre Dame (Sr.) Julie Brandt, SSND, as its new Director of Schools. Her hire is effective July 1, 2020. The Joplin Area Catholic Schools System (JACSS) is made up of St. Mary Catholic Elementary School, serving 2-year olds through grade five; St. Peter Middle School, serving grades six through eight; and McAuley Catholic High School, for a total system enrollment of 313 students.

“Sister Julie has the years of experience in education as well as the faith commitment as a consecrated religious to oversee the formation of our youth in Joplin’s three Catholic schools,” said Fr. J. Friedel, pastor of St. Peter the Apostle Parish, Joplin; St. Ann Parish, Carthage; and Sacred Heart Parish, Webb City.

“We are eager to welcome her as she will foster Catholic identity within our school system as she promotes awareness of the gifts of Catholic education in southwest Missouri,” said Fr. Friedel. “Sister Julie will strengthen educational ties with our school families and the local parishes, while she inspires the growth of JACSS within the region.”

A Minnesota native, Sr. Brandt most recently served four years as Associate Superintendent in the neighboring Diocese of Jefferson City. During that time, she assisted in overseeing and guiding the principals of its 37 Catholic elementary schools and three Catholic high schools. As a trained spiritual director, Sr. Brandt is no stranger to the compassionate accompaniment of a person’s journey toward God, and she has served in many roles in administration, professional development, community experience, as well as been a member of several professional committees and boards. Sister Brandt is a doctoral candidate, pursuing a degree in Catholic School Leadership through the Institute for Catholic Education at St. Louis University.

“Sr. Julie has shown great leadership in her position with the Diocese of Jefferson City, even when she came under fire for trying to figure out how the Church responds to non-traditional family units,” Fr. Friedel said. “After being tasked by the bishop with a group of leaders from the diocese to create a template for how to deal with unique pastoral challenges, the group developed a measured response that upholds Church teachings, while at the same time, led pastors and families through a process that drew those families on the margins into a deeper, fuller life in the Church!”

“That’s the kind of leadership I think we need to engage the Gospel in a complicated world,” Fr. Friedel said. “In this way, as a life-long educator with experience at both the parish and diocesan levels, I have no doubt that Sr. Julie will engage our Catholic community to grow stronger in raising up disciples for the next generation!”



930 Pearl Avenue  
Joplin, MO 64801

# JOPLIN AREA CATHOLIC S C H O O L S

Ph: 417-624-5003  
[www.jacss.org](http://www.jacss.org)

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## **About Joplin Area Catholic Schools**

Founded in 1885 by the Sisters of Mercy of St. Catherine McAuley, the Joplin Area Catholic Schools serves the greater Joplin community to educate Catholic and non-Catholic children from Preschool through grade 12. The goal of JACSS is to teach young people to integrate Christian values into all aspects of their lives, thus graduating young adults who are effective witnesses to the presence of Christ in the world. For more information or to inquire about enrollment, visit [www.JACSS.org](http://www.JACSS.org).

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St. Mary's Elementary School  
3025 South Central City Road  
Joplin, MO 64804



St. Peter's Middle School  
931 South Byers Avenue  
Joplin, MO 64801



McAuley Catholic High School  
930 South Pearl Avenue  
Joplin, MO 64801