



January 8, 2019

Dear STM Community,

I hope the Christmas season allowed you an opportunity to celebrate the gift of our Savior in your lives. Amid all the hustle and bustle, I'm always struck by moments of God's presence. Our God is truly amazing, and I hope you were able to celebrate Him with family and friends. A big thank you to everyone who made our Christmas masses beautiful celebrations of our faith and community.

Back in July, the parish purchased a new rectory, off-site, allowing us to better use the space on our limited property. I was able to move into the new home in October, and we finished the renovation on Christmas Eve. It's wonderful to be living among our community in the Sherwood Forest neighborhood, although I am taking trash to the curb for the first time since I lived at home with my parents. There are some benefits of living on the property and having access to a dumpster!

The New Year has begun and great things are planned for our STM community in 2019! While we had hoped that our new Early Learning Center would be open by now, continued delays in the planning and permitting process have not allowed this to occur. Our team continues to work daily to resolve these issues and we hope to move forward with the renovation of the old rectory and begin serving the youngest members of our STM community better. Currently, twenty babies and toddlers have been sharing space in our preschool buildings. We look forward to welcoming more of God's precious babies once our new facility is open.

After careful consultation and discernment, STM has hired MESH, a marketing and branding agency to help move us through a process of rebranding. Through this process, we hope to create greater awareness and recognition in the larger community of all that STM is and has to offer. Our team has already begun working with the MESH team and soon they will begin work with our stakeholders to help discern our visible presence on campus and in the greater Baton Rouge community.

In addition to our new marketing and branding work, as mentioned, we will select a master planning firm to assist us with a long term vision for our campus. By the end of January, a firm will be selected and planning work will begin. Members of the parish council and maintenance committee will assist our team with selecting the best firm to serve our community. Please pray for us as we discern the best fit for STM.

Great things are happening with the formation of our children through our school and preschool. We are blessed with an amazing faculty and administrative team who work hard every day to bring Christ to our children while giving them one of the best educations in the city. For anyone looking for a place to educate your children, call the school office and come by for a personal tour. We would love to share all the great things that happen daily at our school and in our parish.

Our *One Book, One Parish* read will begin shortly. Constantly, I hear that people want to delve deeper into their faith and get to know more people in our community. The *One Book, One Parish* read gives you an opportunity for both. It's not too late to signup; call the office for more information! Don't miss this great opportunity to grow your spiritual life and learn how to pray during the busyness of life!

I can't tell you how blessed I am to serve as your pastor. Our God and Catholic faith are enormous gifts to our world. I look forward to continuing the good work He has begun in all of us in 2019.

In Christ,

Father Michael J. Alello