

My Story

When I was asked to tell my story I thought back to just a year ago and how different my story would have been than where it is now. Most families who have had children that have gone through St Joseph School understand the struggles of maintaining a strong family faith life, and to be honest, if there even is a family faith life. Constant running from gym to gym or field to field appears to have become our new Church; and after missing that first mass, you make excuses for missing the next, and the next, and the next. You then become one of those two-timer families who only attend at Christmas and Easter.

For me, COVID started me thinking more about my faith and how it was my responsibility to be the spiritual leader in my family. Believe me, it didn't start that way. I have been married to my wonderful wife of almost 25 years, Pam, and we have 3 children: Trey, Torri and Luci, all of whom have gone through St Joe's and then onto a Catholic High School. What was missing from this picture was a husband and a father who followed his own faith and provided a role model for them to follow.

I decided on January 1st, 2021, that was going to change, and I was going to take responsibility for my lack of action. I was going to work to bring my family back into their faith. But I must start on myself first.

I was all in. I joined our Men's fellowship group, and I started doing Fr Mike Schmitz's Bible in a Year, reading and learning as much as I could. On Good Friday my life changed completely. I went to confession after almost 30 years. I think I was more nervous to do that than sitting through a job interview. I received the best advice I've ever received that day, and I needed to hear it: "JJ go slow, don't push". While the fire was burning inside of me I needed to understand that the rest of my family may not feel the same way and needed to move at their own pace. I needed to hear that.

I completed the Consecration to St. Joseph through our parish. I learned there that St. Joseph was the role model I was looking for, the one who sacrificed everything to protect his wife and child, all without putting the attention on himself. I knew I needed to change my own life and live the way of St Joseph. It was suggested that I attend a Cursillo weekend. Having never done something like that before, I was initially skeptical. That weekend helped me focus on my own relationship with God, learn what is important in my own life, and explore how to take action.

Through everything I have experienced, I can proudly say that my marriage has gotten 10,000 times stronger. My children, I feel now, can see how a strong faith-centered marriage is to be. I've provided my son the role model of a husband and father that I had hoped to provide, and shown how a marriage should be: not one that consisted of constant bickering or blown out arguments, but one that is focused on parents who pray together, show constant love to one another, and say sorry when it was needed. That last part I'm continuing to work on. 😊

I hope that my story can touch one person – show one person that things can change. You don't have to live your life doing the same ole same ole. By putting your faith in God, all things get better.

JJ Wurtz