



# St Ambrose Parish

**Mr. Robert Baird**

**Principal - St. Ambrose Catholic School**

March 1, 2026

Greetings To All Friends And Family of St. Ambrose,

As we are in the midst of this Jubilee Year of St. Francis in 2026, we continue with the second semester of this academic year, and prepare for registration for the 2026-27 school year, it is important to highlight the many blessings of St. Ambrose Catholic Church and School and to say thank you to all of you for choosing St. Ambrose and for those that continue to support the mission of Catholic education at St. Ambrose.

With the tuition for the 2026-2027 school year, you will notice a necessary minor increase. This was needed due to continued increases in the expense to operate our school. Following the direction of the Diocese of Springfield, neighboring schools are to work together in setting tuition. After a three year process, the 2026-2027 tuition is identical to our closest neighbor, St. Mary's in Alton. Even with this increase, it does not cover the expense to operate our school and educate our students. St. Ambrose Parish assumes costs of approximately \$8,300 to educate each student. You will notice that our tuition is well short of this actual cost to educate each student. The remaining significant expense between tuition and the actual cost to educate is subsidized by St. Ambrose Parish. One can also note that our close to \$8,300 cost to educate is only half the national average of \$16,000+ to educate each public school student in Illinois and most states. The disparity in these numbers illustrates our success in doing so much more with less.

For the last several years, our focus at St. Ambrose has been on improvements within the fundamental and most important aspects of our school. These efforts have focused on fostering our Catholic identity and providing students numerous opportunities to grow in their faith, strengthening and updating our academics and instruction, providing for continued improvements in safety and security, and on building and grounds updates to enhance our students' experiences at school. In addition to the positives from our focus on these improvements and updates, it is also important to reflect on other opportunities and advantages we have at St. Ambrose, including the location and size of our campus, the leadership of our Pastor and Deacons, and the support of St. Ambrose Parishioners. The members of St. Ambrose Parish continue to generously and intentionally support the needs of our school.

In focusing on Catholic identity, our goal is to bring our students into a closer relationship with God and to provide them many opportunities to develop and grow this relationship. These opportunities for growth include regular participation in the Sacraments and multiple opportunities for prayer every day. As people of faith, St. Ambrose students complete service ministry within the parish or in the local community. This service is one way to live our faith, by teaching them the importance of helping others and to live like Jesus by serving others. In addition to Scripture and Gospel messages, we strive to reinforce the message of Jesus through our Character Counts program. Students attend Character Counts once a week and are instructed on the importance of practicing and displaying good character traits, especially by showing RESPECT, RESPONSIBILITY, TRUSTWORTHINESS, CARING, FAIRNESS, CITIZENSHIP, and INTEGRITY.

In addition to providing an environment full of opportunities for spiritual growth, our other primary mission is to provide the strongest academic programs possible. In the last several years we have updated our curriculum, especially emphasizing Math, English/Language Arts, Science, and Religion. One area of particular focus has been in Mathematics. In the 2026-2027 school year, we successfully implemented accelerated Math and Science to middle school students that are ready for the challenge. With this focus on strengthening academics, our standardized test scores have improved significantly. In the last five standardized test cycles (Fall '23, Spring '24, Fall '24, Spring '25, and Fall '25), St. Ambrose was one of the highest performing schools in the Diocese of Springfield in Illinois! Another important indicator of academic success is the continued accomplishments of our graduates at our local high schools, especially at Marquette Catholic HS and Alton HS. St. Ambrose graduates continue to be at the top of their classes and be recognized for their achievements as high school students. Some of the most impressive of the achievements of St. Ambrose graduates in high school include; National Honor Society Membership, Silver Medallion Awards, Illinois State Scholars, High Honor & Honor Roll membership, Rotary Club Students of the Month, tens of thousands of dollars in college scholarships offered, and more.

In today's world, it is essential for schools to continue to enhance and improve upon safety and security. In the area of safety and security in the last several years, St. Ambrose Catholic School has led the way in the Diocese of Springfield. Several years ago, St. Ambrose developed a Safety and Security Committee consisting of current and former members of law enforcement, along with others with applicable experience or skills. The focus of this group is to advise the Pastor and Principal on improvements to our physical facility and to the processes of our school. This group continues to meet regularly and continues to support the mission of St. Ambrose Catholic School.

As you can see from the information highlighted above, St. Ambrose has much for which to be grateful and proud. Moving forward, St. Ambrose will continue to focus on growth and improvement in all these areas. This continued focus strives to provide the best for the students and families of St. Ambrose Catholic School. We thank you for choosing St. Ambrose and we look forward to a tremendous 2026-2027 school year.

Thank You,

Robert Baird  
Principal  
St. Ambrose Catholic School