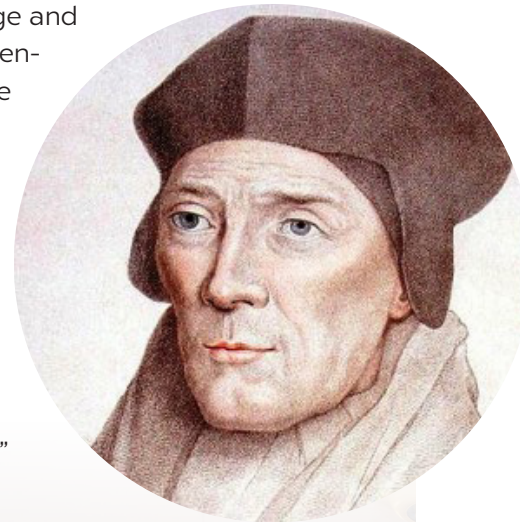


St. John Fisher, the Person

John Fisher was an English Catholic theologian who came to prominence in the early 16th century. Fisher was born in the town of Beverley, Yorkshire. He was a lifelong academic who served as tutor to members of the English royal family and Chancellor of the University of Cambridge as well as a bishop and cardinal of the Church.

Fisher's stature in the Church grew out of his defense of marriage and of supreme papal authority over the Church and king. When King Henry VIII, whom Fisher had supposedly tutored as a prince, broke the Church of England away from the Roman Catholic Church, Fisher refused to take the oath of succession and actively preached and campaigned against the king's acts. He was ultimately imprisoned for treason and beheaded. He is honored as a martyr and saint by the Church and has June 22nd as his feast day.

Erasmus, one of the great scholars of the Renaissance whom Fisher brought to Cambridge as a Professor of Divinity and Greek, said of John Fisher: "He is the one man at this time who is incomparable for uprightness of life, for learning and for greatness of soul."



Source: Catholic Online (www.catholic.org)



St. John Fisher Parish & School

Whether it was his ties as a native son of a far away and differently-spelled Beverley, his defense of the Catholic Church against English royalty that may have excited the Irish blood prevalent in our neighborhood, the personal characteristics described by Erasmus as noble pillars on which to erect the foundation of a fledgling parish, or something else altogether that had our founders dedicate a parish in John Fisher's name, we were not able to find out, but reflecting on his life, writings, and legacy, we certainly can all proudly look at the example of John Fisher as one to live by and be associated with.

Similarly, since our parish founding in 1948 and school opening in 1950, the growth and success of our community is also one we should proudly look to carry on. After taking parts of Sts. Barnabas, Cajetan, and Christina to establish boundaries all our own and celebrating our first mass in the basement of the Heddleston family home at 10324 S. Talman Ave., we quickly grew from 371 initial families with no school or church to nearly 600 families with temporary worship space and 300 students enrolled in a 12-classroom school directed by the Sisters of St. Joseph from La Grange only two years later. School enrollment reached its maximum of 1,565 students in 1962 right around the time Fr. Kane began a large rebuilding phase which added a gymnasium, auditorium, science room, and additional classrooms to the school and the iconic bell tower and stained-glass windows to the church.

The physical plant of our campus has largely remained the same since that time, having been maintained and updated over the years under the the strong and vibrant leadership of the long tenures of Msgr. McElligott and Fr. Purtell as pastors and Sr. Jean McGrath as school principal and the regular support and generosity of our parish and school communities. The lives and legacies of St. John Fisher and our forebearers live in all of us who continue to drive the success of our mission today. We continue to be one of the largest and most vital parishes in the Archdiocese of Chicago, with nearly 2,000 registered parishioner households and over 600 students enrolled in our school, and we look forward to many more years of continued success together in the future under the leadership of Fr. Ken and Mrs. Nash.

