Saint Peter Claver Catholic Church community recently announced the appointment of Dr. Josie R. Johnson as principal for the 2009-2010 academic year.

“Dr. Johnson embodies everything we are about at Saint Peter Claver,” said the Rev. Kevin McDonough, Pastor of Saint Peter Claver Church. “She herself was educated in a Catholic school like ours. She has dedicated her whole life to the advancement, and especially the educational advancement, of African-American young people.”

Johnson has played an active role in the civil rights movement since the early 1960 when she lobbied for passage of bills concerning such issues as fair housing and employment opportunities. She served on the University of Minnesota's Board of Regents from 1971 to 1973. The University of Minnesota offered her a senior fellowship in 1987 and subsequently she Johnson directed its All-University Forum as diversity director from 1990 to 1992. She then became responsible for minority affairs and diversity at the college as the associate vice president for academic affairs in 1992. The University of Minnesota established the annual Josie Robinson Johnson Human Rights and Social Justice Award in her honor.

Recently retired principal Teresa Mardenborough preceded Johnson as the principal of the K – 8th grade school located in The Rondo community, near downtown Saint Paul. She considers her successor to be “a dedicated, talented, and caring educator. I am confident that Dr. Johnson and our fine teachers will continue to mature and sustain our students in our shared mission to be a school of excellence for Twin Cities urban children.”