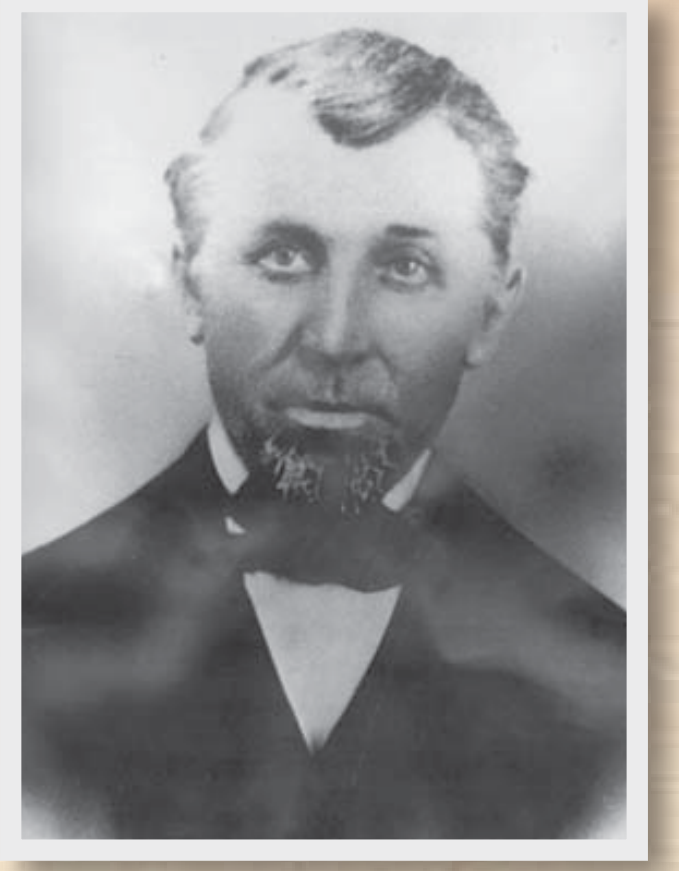


History of St. Joseph & Gehlen Catholic School

The first Catholic Mass in Le Mars was held on April 24, 1870, in the home of Mr. Peter Gehlen, a pioneer Catholic citizen-benefactor of LeMars. Mr. Gehlen was a devout Catholic who believed in serving the community. Mr. Gehlen led the movement to establish Catholic parishes in Le Mars and donated the land on which the school and St. Joseph Parish stand. Mr. Gehlen started several commercial enterprises but was known mostly for his flour mill located next to his home near the Floyd River.



Peter Gehlen



Old St. Joseph School

Catholic education began with the establishment of St. Joseph Parish in 1875. Father Herman Meis, the first pastor, organized the first Catholic school. With the help of a parishioner, Mr. Manning, he conducted classes in the fall of 1876. In May of 1879, the Sisters of Christian Charity came to staff the school.

Father J.P. Barron organized St. James Parish in 1883. For a time, a small parochial school was conducted in the basement of the Church, first by the Sisters of Charity and then by the Dubuque Franciscans. Since that time, St. James Parishioners have attended St. Joseph School and Gehlen Catholic.



St. Anthony - Hospers

In 1901, Msgr. F.X. Feuerstein directed the construction of the St. Joseph School, located on 6th Street N.W.

A joint committee of both parishes began plans for a new central Catholic school in 1950, which was named after Mr. Gehlen. A groundbreaking ceremony was held May 29, 1952. On May 2, 1954, commencement exercises were held for the first graduating class from Gehlen Catholic School.

The Sisters of Humility joined the high school staff and two convents were built, one at Gehlen Catholic and the other at St. James. In 1961, the Sisters of St. Francis joined the staff.

In the same year, the parishes of St. Joseph's-Struble, with its mission of St. Mary's-Maurice; Our Lady of Assumption-Merrill, with its mission of St. Joseph's-Ellendale; and St. Joseph's-Neptune; became members of the Gehlen Catholic Corporation.

In 1961, a successful fund drive resulted in the construction of a new multi-purpose room and a complete remodeling of the high school building.



St. James - Le Mars

On August 31, 1995, St. Mary's Parish-Maurice was closed after a Decree of Suppression was issued by Bishop Lawrence Soens.

A 1996 capital campaign resulted in the completion of a facility joining the elementary and high school building in 1998. That fall, the St. Joseph building was closed.

In July 2008, the old St. Joseph School was razed. A memorial was designed using the bricks from the old school to create a lasting tribute to St. Joseph School between the new church and school.



St. Mary's - Alton

In February 2, 2011, the ribbon cutting was held for the Linda Freking ('79)-Bouma Wellness Center, new concession stand and restrooms.

On June 5, 2011, St. Joseph Parish-Neptune was closed after a Decree of Suppression was issued by Bishop R. Walker Nickless.



St. Joseph - Ellendale

On August 5, 2012, the Gehlen and Spalding Catholic Boards of Education simultaneously announced to both communities the discernment process for the unification of Gehlen and Spalding Catholic High Schools. The meeting came about through the schools' Long Range Strategic Plan. On January 2, 2013, both boards voted to approve the unification of Spalding and Gehlen Catholic High School beginning with the 2013-2014 school year. The unified high school is called Gehlen Catholic High School and is located in LeMars. The parishes of St. Anthony's-Hospers, St. Joseph's-Granville, and St. Mary's-Alton joined the Gehlen Catholic High School Corporation on July 1, 2013. The first day of classes for the unified high school was August 22, 2013.

Effective Nov. 1, 2014 Bishop R. Walker Nickless decreed the establishment of All Saints Parish - Le Mars consisting of all the territory formerly incorporated into the former Saint Joseph Parish and Saint James Parish-Le Mars.



Gehlen Catholic School

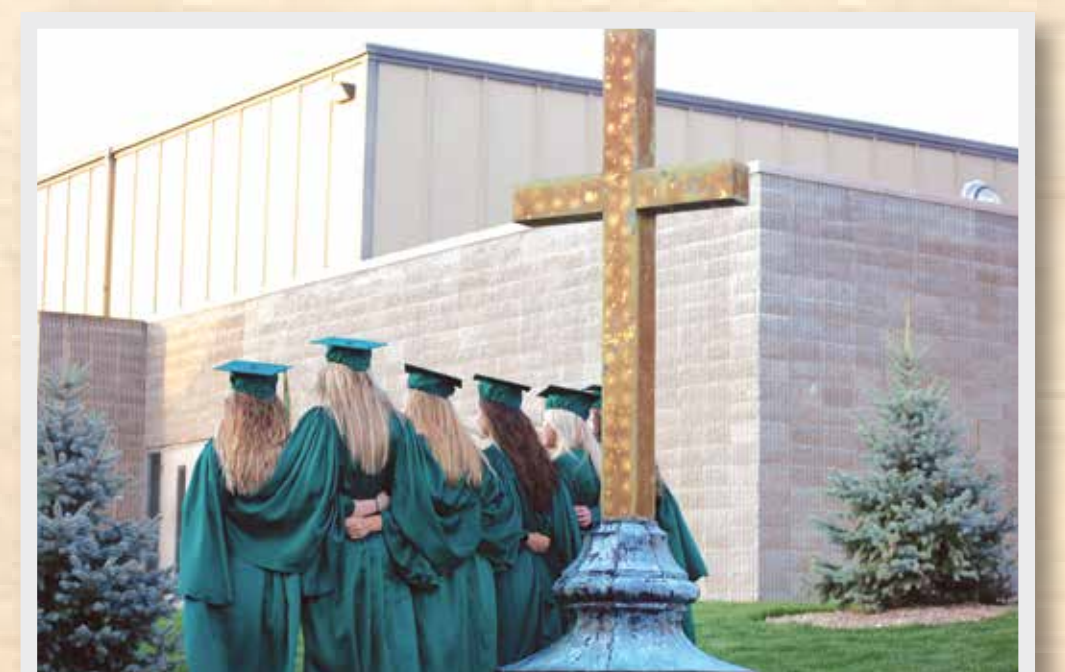
On June 30, 2015, Our Lady of Assumption Parish-Merrill was closed after a Decree of Suppression was issued by Bishop R. Walker Nickless. St. Joseph's-Ellendale became a mission of St. Michael's Parish in Sioux City and remains a member of the Gehlen Catholic corporation.

As of July 13, 2015, St. Joseph Parish-Struble was closed after a Decree was issued by Bishop R. Walker Nickless. St. Joseph's-Struble was designated as a Worship site, allowing the church to be used for occasional Sunday Masses, funerals, weddings, and special gatherings.

A proud part of the tradition and growth of the Le Mars, Alton, Granville, and Hospers areas, plus the Sioux City Diocese, Gehlen Catholic continues to serve the Lord and His People by providing an outstanding Catholic education.



St. Joseph - Granville



"For wherever two or more are gathered in my name, there I am in the midst of them." Matthew 18:20