

# JAYTalk

2021-2022 Newsletter-St. Joseph Gehlen Catholic School



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Naming the Jaybird

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## Dear Alumni and Friends,

As I write this in late May, teachers wrap up the 2021-2022 school year today, but for students, summer vacation began yesterday. And don't we all have warm memories of that joyful feeling that goes with 3 months of freedom lying open before us? After nine months of school routine, everyone is ready for a break!

I want to thank our faculty and staff for their diligent and hard work this past year. We did not have the burden of covid protocols complicating things as we did the previous year, but in any year, teaching is a demanding profession, (perhaps evidenced by the fact that there is a nation-wide teacher shortage) and we are grateful to have so many committed to the profession, and to serving here at Gehlen Catholic.

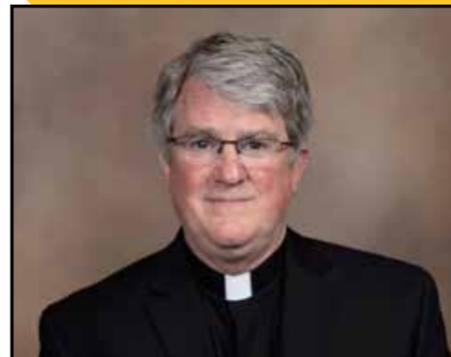
In all, it has been a good year.

- Thanks to the efforts of our dedicated faculty and staff, our students had the opportunity to grow in numerous subject disciplines taught in every school. But even more, they had the opportunity to grow in their Catholic Faith, the reason why Gehlen Catholic exists. In our secular and secularized world, the strong Faith-based education of Gehlen Catholic is more necessary than ever.
- After a 2-year Covid hiatus which forced us on-line, we had a very successful "in-person" Gehlen Ball this Spring, - and "a good time was had by all." Besides being a great social event for Gehlen supporters, not only did this year's Ball generate funds for our general operating budget, but also raised funds earmarked for replacement of the main entrance doors and upgraded security cameras. (With the school shooting in Uvalde, Texas still in the news as I write this, building security is more important than ever, and we are grateful to those whose generosity made these upgrades possible.)
- This project, coupled with the in-process kitchen remodel and cafeteria expansion which should be completed by August makes it an exciting time for our school as we continue to look to the future: Catholic Education in Le Mars approaches its 150th anniversary, having begun first through the parish schools at St. James and St. Joseph, and since the early '50s at Gehlen Catholic.

As our students revel in summer freedom, may these months be relaxing and refreshing for all of you as well. But please remember, there is no "vacation from vocation," and our fundamental vocation, whether as clergy, religious or laity, is the regular practice of our Faith. Don't forget, when weekendng at the lake or campground or travelling to find a Catholic Church where you can give God proper worship by attending Mass, thank him for your many blessings, and offer God the gift of your life, as we do each week at the preparation of the gifts when the collection is taken up and brought forward with the bread and wine

God's blessings!

Fr. Bruce Lawler  
President, Gehlen Catholic School  
Pastor, All Saints Parish Le Mars and St. Joseph Parish Ellendale



## Cafeteria and Kitchen Remodel and Expansion led by Gehlen Catholic Alumni

The Heart of the School \$2.5 million campaign has been in full swing as the kitchen and cafeteria go through an expansion and major remodel.

This area of the building has not seen major improvements since the opening of the school in 1953.

Not only will this project allow for more space for students, families and guests, but it will also include air conditioning for the kitchen and cafeteria, designated concession stand room, allergen room for food safety, reliable kitchen equipment, and a redesigned trophy and awards case.

Many Gehlen Catholic alumni whom once dined in this space, now find themselves working on the project for their alma mater.

Two of these individuals include Brittney (Schlichte, '09) Ruba and Ryan Wiltgen ('89). Hear how this project has excited and pushed them in their job roles.

**Q: Official title and number of years in the role.**

**Ruba:** Principal at FEH Design for 8 years

**Wiltgen:** President of Wiltgen Brothers Inc. for 16 years

**Q: Why is it neat to come back and work on a space that you once ate lunch in?**

**Ruba:** Having been a 'dish washer' when I was in school, it is really a joy to reinvent the kitchen and cafeteria space and make it better for all who use it. My profession is to be a problem solver and I really strived to improve and expand the daily use of the Cafeteria for Gehlen Catholic.



Ryan Wiltgen ('89) and Brittney (Schlichte, '09) Ruba

**Wiltgen:** Anytime you can take something you have been a part of and make it better is exciting. Thinking how lucky I am to be part of something that will improve the daily routines of so many people I know for years to come.

**Q: How does this project stand out from others you have worked on?**

**Ruba:** With my other school projects, I get to only hear how the project helps the school from the members that I talk with once the project is complete. With my children going to Gehlen, I will be able to see and experience the improvements to the school for years to come.

**Wiltgen:** Most of our cafeterias we have worked on have been new or small upgrades. This is the first full scale remodel with an addition on a cafeteria we have done. Going to work each day seeing all the kids and family wave through the window or holler at us from the playground. Discussing progress with the basketball team during practice or answering questions at the dinner table.

**Q: What final result do you hope to get from this particular project?**

**Ruba:** This is an exciting project for Gehlen Catholic and I hope people are delighted with the changes and how it helps improve the function of the school. Not only for lunch, but also concessions, an alternative location for meetings, and anything else the cafeteria will be used for.



Student "supervisors" watch the big trucks at work.



Left to right: Drew Kellen ('10), Todd Ellensohn ('05), Alex Kellen ('15), Doug Langel ('81), Brandy (Nohava) Sanchez ('05), Bruce Kellen ('84), Rik Wiltgen ('96), Ryan Wiltgen ('89), Brock Nohava ('15), Corey Sitzman ('14), Blake Wiltgen ('14), Jeremy Sitzmann ('94), Jim Shrader ('90), Dave Schipper ('90), Brittany Ruba ('09), Robb Wiltgen ('92), Paul Freking ('76)



**VISIT**

**donate.onecause.com/heartoftheschool**  
to donate, see renderings  
and progress photos.

**Wiltgen:** A bright new spacious area which that will WOW the staff, students, alumni, and visitors. Of course, a more economical, efficient, and comfortable working environment for the kitchen staff to prepare meals.

**Q: What is something exciting you think students, families, and our community should look forward to after the completion of this project?**

**Ruba:** I am excited for all the students, families, and community members to use the modernized space. This space will have multiple areas of faith and school pride featured, an efficient flow for people in the space, large windows, air conditioning, and updated technology.

**Wiltgen:** Symbols of our Catholic faith with the graphic of last supper by the condiment station and prayer before meals on the north serving wall.

**Q: Explain how it feels to work on a project with a large number of Gehlen Catholic alumni.**

**Ruba:** Everyone on the project has a deeper connection and passion for the project. They want everything to be perfect and be proud of it for years to come.

**Wiltgen:** It's great, we are all tied together with a common goal, providing a new exciting environment for our kids, grandkids, friends and family can be proud of for years to come.

In gratitude for God's blessings, I/we pledge a total of \$\_\_\_\_\_ in support of Gehlen Catholic's Cafeteria Renovation.

We/I have enclosed an initial gift of \$\_\_\_\_\_

TIMING OF MY/OUR GIFT - METHOD OF PAYMENT

\$\_\_\_\_\_ Monthly \_\_\_\_\_ Cash/Checking \_\_\_\_\_ Automatically deduct from checking/savings

\$\_\_\_\_\_ Quarterly \_\_\_\_\_ Commodities

\$\_\_\_\_\_ Annually \_\_\_\_\_ Mutual Fund/Stock Please describe\_\_\_\_\_

\$\_\_\_\_\_ Other \_\_\_\_\_ IRA/Annuity Please describe\_\_\_\_\_

Print Name \_\_\_\_\_ Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Please remit payment to:  
Gehlen Catholic Schools • Attn: Development Office  
709 Plymouth St NE • Le Mars, IA 51031

## Longtime PreK-6 Principal Retired



Mrs. Lorie Nussbaum retired from the PreK-6 Principal position after the 2020-2021 school year. Over the years, she has worked alongside so many staff and students in her different teaching and leadership capacities.

**What year did you start at Gehlen Catholic?**

I started in August 1978 in a 1-year position to cover for a sister who was taking a sabbatical to work at her motherhouse. (She never returned.)

**When you started, what class did you teach and how did you work your way to Principal?**

I taught Home Arts (now known as Family and Consumer Sciences). I also taught 8th-grade religion for a few years as well as developed and taught exploratory classes for junior high students. I have always had a love for curriculum and began to explore opportunities to do more of that type of work. I moved into studying administration as curriculum work is part of that role. I completed a master's degree in secondary administration and added to that to include elementary and

middle school. After 19 years in the classroom, I moved into the elementary principal position, serving there for 23 years.

**Tell us about one of your funniest memories.**

During a foods class, there was some commotion in one of the kitchen areas. I walked over to check out what was happening. As I moved closer, the students parted (like the Red Sea) and a student with his back to the sink, turned thinking he was going to be facing his friends. He held the water sprayer in his hand and as he turned, he hit it full force and sprayed me instead of his friends. I was soaked from head to toe. My hair was dripping and my clothes were wet and sticking to my skin. Silence took over the group. The student was mortified. I quietly said, "I think we need to sit." (It took everything not to burst out laughing.)

**Why do you believe Gehlen Catholic was a special place to work?**

Gehlen Catholic is such a special place to work for several reasons. First, it is special because of the fact that faith is part of everything we do. The late Tom Skram and I chatted about this and we concluded it is because the Holy Spirit is alive within the school. Secondly, it is because of the people - the students, faculty, staff, families, priests and sisters who serve and have served, the parishes who support the school, and the many, many generous benefactors who continue to share their talents and treasures to allow Gehlen Catholic to continue to grow in service to others.

**What do you miss most?**

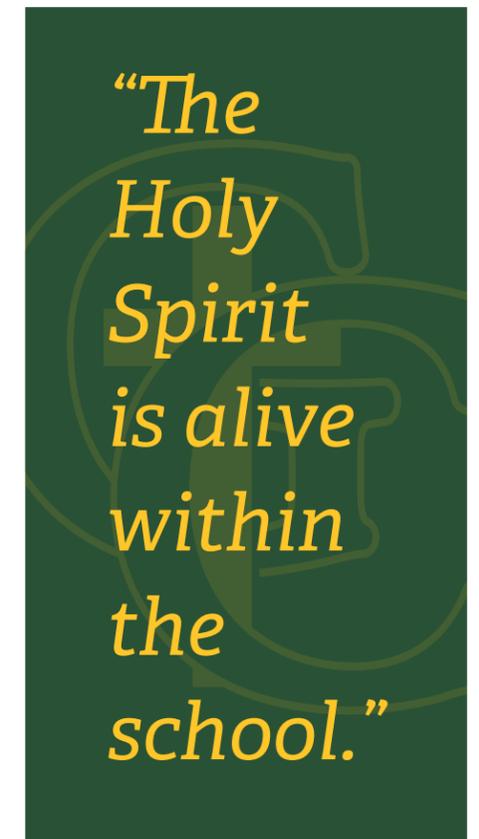
I most miss the people and the daily shared faith experiences.

**What are you most excited about in retirement?**

I am most excited to spend time with my husband as well as my children, grandchildren, and siblings. I look forward to enjoying my hobbies - cooking, quilting, and reading.

**What message would you like to tell all of your former students?**

I would tell them to hold onto their faith, cherish it, live it, and share it with others. Listen to God's voice as He has a plan for you that only you can do. Find joy in every situation. It is there. Seek it!



## Gehlen Catholic Mission Honduras Leader, Carolyn Bickford, Steps Down

Gehlen Catholic's Mission Honduras (GCMH) leader, Carolyn Bickford, has decided to step down after many years of dedication and leadership to the program.

Bickford has been an integral part of Gehlen Catholic since 1979 when she started teaching at the school as a Junior High Language Arts teacher. With a passion for teaching and a love of guiding students, Bickford was naturally curious about the Gehlen Catholic Mission Honduras (GCMH) program that began in 2001 under the direction of a fellow coworker, Richard Sievert. Her son, Drew Bickford, went on the second ever GCMH team trip in 2002 which deepened the interest of Bickford herself.

"When Drew came back home from his trip, he was pumped and talked very highly of the experience," said Bickford.

Only a couple of years after her son returned from his first mission trip, Bickford decided that in 2004, she wanted to enter Honduras for the first time. Unfortunately, her trip never came to conception. Bickford's husband of 28 years, Daniel, lost his battle to cancer only a couple of weeks prior to when the team was supposed to leave for Honduras.

The following year, in 2005, Bickford still felt called to chaperone a trip to Honduras and assumed it would be her one and only. Little did she know that after meeting the Honduran people in 2005 and experiencing a mission trip first hand, her future was about to change.

"My change took place early in my mission trips. Of course, I'd expected to chaperone my one mission trip and be done. But being around those in poverty really changed my view of the way I thought of certain people. I am more open to understanding that we are so lucky to have been born in the U.S. with almost limitless opportunities if we choose to take advantage of them," Bickford explains.

After returning to the school building from her first trip, Bickford requested that she be allowed to take time off during the school year to go on every mission trip from here on out as she felt the need to go back to Honduras. Bickford did not understand the impact of her first trip until she was asked to speak at a retreat and talk about mission work. It was during her actual talk where she realized what her first trip had done to her.



"Honduras healed my heart after a year of grieving," explained Bickford. "During my time there, I was able to focus on others and not be so invested in myself. It was also impactful because we dedicated the medical clinic annex in Dan's name. It ensured that our family will always have a special connection with Honduras and its people."

After many years of chaperoning, Bickford officially took over GCMH in 2014 where she oversaw trip organization prior to takeoff and the entire operation once missionaries stepped foot in Honduras. It is on these trips where many young adults learned lessons they wouldn't forget through water projects, building homes, gardens, bunk beds and so much more.

"Although this has been an extremely difficult decision, I feel it is the right time in my life to let someone else have the wonderful mission work opportunity that I've had. I hope to guide my replacement as they take over. I also want to be more involved with Then Feed Just One and Mission Honduras Le Mars," explained Bickford.

*"Jesus told us to LOVE each other. Our purpose is to serve the poor - whether those people are in Le Mars, or in the U.S., or in Honduras. If we can teach them skills to help keep them out of poverty, then we should, if possible, but in the meantime, we can't ignore those who have very little to nothing right now," Bickford said.*

## Gehlen Catholic Volleyball Coach Mike Meyer Steps Down After 16 Years



Head Volleyball Coach Mike Meyer has decided to retire after his 16th season at Gehlen Catholic.

"It was not a decision that came easily for me, but it is one that I have been considering the last few years," explained Meyer.

Meyer established a winning program that was highly respected on the court. He coached a total of 104 athletes, made 11 state tournament

appearances, and had 18 players make the Iowa Girls Coaches Association All-State Team.

"I am really grateful that I had the chance to rediscover my love for coaching and volleyball while at Gehlen Catholic," said Meyer.

This past season, Meyer also celebrated his 1,000th win in his collegiate and high school career, plus being selected as the 2020-21 Iowa Girls Volleyball Coach of the Year.

"I have been doing this for 42 years and it begins to wear you out. As I got older, I got wiser in some things. I may not have had as much energy,

but sometimes that was good," said Meyer.

Although Meyer has entered retirement in his coaching career, he still plans to teach at Gehlen Catholic School for the '22-'23 school year where he will continue to make an impact in the classroom.



## Schlesser Received the Good Shepherd Award

Gehlen Catholic's Director of Maintenance & Transportation, Mark Schlesser, has been selected to receive the Good Shepherd Award from the Diocese of Sioux City Catholic Schools.

The award is eligible for any diocesan school employee who is admired, respected and held in high regard by fellow peers, students and parents. They routinely go above and beyond the call of duty enthusiastically promoting the mission of the school.

When asked about the award, Schlesser said, "I was very surprised and humbled when I was notified about the award. I am very thankful

to be able to show up for work and do my job duties to my abilities and also to work with a lot of grateful people."

Schlesser was nominated for the Good Shepherd Award by fellow colleagues. One nominator described Schlesser as, "Selfless, hardworking and kind. He always treats his staff with respect and kindness and spends countless unnoticed hours at our school."

Schlesser has served Gehlen Catholic for a total of 13 years and continues to demonstrate a true passion for his job and those he works with.



Mark Schlesser with wife, Shelly on left and Superintendent, Patty Lansink on right.

# Get to know our principals!

## Mr. Pete Haefs, 7-12 Principal

**Q: Where is your hometown?**

A: Hinton, Iowa

**Q: What are your hobbies?**

A: Reading, hiking, working with my hands (repairs, renovation, working on vehicles)

**Q: Tell us about your schooling.**

A: Graduate from Hinton, BA in Education and History from Briar Cliff, Master's from Wayne State, Dissertation phase of EdD from Creighton.

**Q: Explain your prior work experience.**

A: I worked a variety of manual labor jobs before entering education as a history teacher in Hinton at the age of 30. My first principalship was at Remsen St. Mary's as a PK-12 administrator. I then moved to Kuemper in Carroll as the 9-12 principal and am now happily the 7-12 principal here at Gehlen.

**Q: Tell us about your family.**

A: My wife Mendy is also an educator and we have been married for 25 wonderful years. Our oldest Daughter Bre is 24 and works in retail and as a dietary aide at a nursing home. Our son Draven is 22 and just graduated with a degree from NYU. Our youngest Aislinn is working here locally and engaged to be married.

**Q: Why did you feel led to Gehlen Catholic?**

A: I have always tried to remain open to God's whispers in my life to follow His path. I attribute the amount of times I have moved to that. I felt a tug as soon as I heard of the need here. Then my practical side stepped in and said "what are you thinking?". I turned that over to prayer and let God gently lead me towards the journey here.

**Q: What do you hope to achieve while at Gehlen?**

A: I hope to be able to not only grown in my own faith or professionally, but act as a facilitator of those same things for my staff and students.

**Q: What has been the best part of your job so far?**

A: The wonderful people in such a deeply faithful community.

**Q: Tell us a fun fact about you.**

A: Mr. Haefs's motorcycle 1, Deer o

*" I am deeply blessed to be here and am so excited to spend a full academic year with my new Gehlen Family next year! "*



## Mrs. Andrea Loutsch, PreK-6 Principal

**Q: Where is your hometown?**

A: Le Mars, Iowa

**Q: What are your hobbies?**

A: Reading, attending sporting events, spending time with family & friends

**Q: Tell us about your schooling.**

A: I graduated from LCHS, received my BA and 1st Masters degree from Morningside University, received my 2nd Masters in Educational Administration from the University of Northern Iowa and will finish my Doctoral degree in Educational Leadership from UNI next May!

**Q: Explain your prior work experience.**

A: I have been a principal for 4 years. I also was a professor at Northwestern College in early childhood and literacy. I taught 1st, 3rd and Title I Reading in Sioux City.

**Q: Tell us about your family.**

A: My husband, Joe, and I have been married for 10 years. We have 2 boys, Carson (8) and Brighton (7) and twin girls, Nora & Gabriela (4).

**Q: Why did you feel led to Gehlen Catholic?**

A: When I became a principal, I knew I wanted to spend my time working in Educational Leadership, but also working towards the Kingdom. When my own children began at Gehlen, I felt like this is where God was calling me. Little did I know that in three short years, this would become a reality!

**Q: What do you hope to achieve while at Gehlen?**

A: Our main mission is to help raise children in the ways of Christ. To me, this means working towards teaching the "whole" child and making sure we have nurtured and sewn seeds into each part of their lives. We want our students to grow spiritually, academically, socially, emotionally and remember that they are all created in the image and likeness of God.

**Q: What has been the best part of your job so far?**

A: Professionally, it's the amazing dedication and worth ethic of our teachers. To be on this journey with them has been a tremendous blessing! Personally, to see my own children every day and the ability to spend more time with them...nothing has been better! I work even harder knowing that the long hours and late nights are going to have a direct impact on them.

**Q: Tell us a fun fact about you.**

A: I am bilingual in Spanish! I minored in Spanish in college and spent time in Puerto Rico when I was an undergrad.

*I am so grateful to the Gehlen community for giving me the opportunity to help lead our school. Being an administrator is an exceptionally difficult position, and one that I do not take lightly or for granted. I could not feel more blessed than to be here with you all!*



## A Roarin' Success at Friends of Gehlen Catholic Ball

The Friends of Gehlen Catholic Ball was a roarin' success with a grand total of \$330,731 raised for the school.

"We have been fundraising for this event since last summer, and in the past few months our committee and volunteers have worked extremely hard to continue selling tickets and bring in donations. Their hard work has paid off," said Amy Jungers, Development Director.

During the program, General Chairs, Mark & Shelly Kallsen, along with Shawn & Jenni Vacura addressed the crowd and thanked them for their support and dedication to the 35th annual fundraiser.

Seniors, Logan Dreckman and Emma Bogen, were student speakers at the event and shared how benefactors are making a huge impact on each student and the entire school. Their speech ended with a special shout out of gratitude to their parents.

Keeping in tradition, the Spirit of Peter and Catherine Gehlen Award was presented for the 25th year in a row. This prestigious award brings recognition to person(s) who exemplify the gospel ideals taught at Gehlen Catholic School. This year, the award was presented In Memory of Larry Ruhland.

Brock Auction Company brought a new element to the program with leading a live auction for 8 items which brought in \$30,175 to the grand total.



Dustan Kneip ('14) smiles with his grandmother, Ruth Kneip and wife, Sadie (Freking, '14) Kneip



Mark Kallsen ('94), Shelly Kallsen, Jenni (Ruhland, '94) Vacura, Shawn Vacura, Tim Langel ('03), Julie Langel, Liz McDougall, Devon McDougall

The Fund-A-Cause to raise money for 4 new outside front doors, an enhanced security system and front door decals raised over \$64,000.

"It was a spectacular evening all around! Our school and committee are truly humbled by the entire experience and the generosity our community and Gehlen Catholic family exhibited," explained Jungers.



Seniors, Emma Bogen and Logan Dreckman, talk about how Gehlen has prepared them for their future

**MARK YOUR CALENDAR!**

**36<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL FRIENDS OF GEHLEN CATHOLIC BALL**

**15 APRIL 2023**

## Jaywalk-a-thon Returns to Gehlen Catholic and Raises over \$46,000

Jaywalk-a-thon returned to Gehlen Catholic on Friday, October 1st at the Gehlen Catholic football field and track.

Students walked the track with friends and family members for a half hour beginning with reflection with Chaplain, Fr. Travis Crotty, and then moved into prayer for special intentions. The last part of the half hour consisted of fun, upbeat music while walking with classmates, friends and family.

"This fundraiser was a wonderful opportunity to not only raise money for our school to promote the good works of evangelization and catechesis, but also to bring our community together in prayer. All of us have many intentions on our hearts, and to be able to share those with one another and lift one another up in prayer is what we are about at Gehlen Catholic," shared Fr. Crotty.

Every student decorated a prayer rock showing the specific intention they walked for during Jaywalk-a-thon Day. The track was surrounded in prayer rocks for walkers to read throughout the day.

"The day consisted of faith, family, friends, fun and fitness. With this combination, it was our goal to make it a day to remember for all who were involved," explained Jungers.



Students painted rocks with intentions to place around the walking track during Jaywalk-a-thon.



Family and community members were invited to come walk. Lisa (Dreckman, '74) Puetz, Kari Puetz, and Landri Puetz.



Students prayed over intentions during a lap of silence and then dropped them in acrylic cross.



A special appearance was made by the Jaybird and retired teacher, Mrs. Mary Hartman who sits next to 5th grade teacher, Kathy Neary.



Evie Schipper with brother, Devan Schipper ('11).



Fr. Crotty led students and walkers in prayer and celebration.

## Helping Hands Serve 4 Million People Since 2005

The hands of Gehlen Catholic students, Spalding Catholic students and local community members have fed the mouths of 4 million people.

A Then Feed Just One Packing event took place at Gehlen Catholic on Friday, May 6 where the 4 millionth meal was packaged since 2005 that will help feed hungry and malnourished children.

“When you begin to use the word ‘million’ in terms of anything it seems like it takes on more significance, and 4 million definitely increases that feeling of more importance. But, no matter the number, the most important thing about 4 million is the children who have benefited from this effort,” said Dick Seivert, the director of Then Feed Just One.

These 4 million meals were packed over the years by Spalding Catholic and Gehlen Catholic combined, plus with the help of their families, community members and local businesses.

“The other equally important thing with a number like 4 million are those children and adults from Gehlen, Spalding, and the surrounding area that actually made this happen through their combined efforts, those from the past and those in the present. Each and everyone of them has made a difference in this world,” Seivert added.



The hands of Gehlen Catholic students, Spalding Catholic students and local community members have fed the mouths of 4 million people since 2005. This year alone, 181,872 meals were packaged.



## FALL SERVICE DAY



Students went around the community of Le Mars to rake and clean up lawns.



## ADVENT GIFT BAGS



Elementary students created artwork to use as decorations for a local community fundraiser, sent letters to seminarians and assisted in the Advent Gift Bag project for special friends in the nursing homes, assisted living homes, and for some of the elderly in our parish.

## Gehlen Catholic Mission Honduras Send Off

On Tuesday, March 15, Gehlen Catholic School sent off 37 missionaries to Honduras made up of Gehlen Catholic students, Remsen St. Mary's students and adults.

A mission trip has not been conducted by the school since March 2019 due to the pandemic.

During the send-off, students joined in prayer, viewed a slideshow of the previous mission trip, and heard about projects the missionaries would help with. In addition, each missionary wrote a statement explaining why they were going on the trip and whom they dedicated their trip to.

Ryan Livermore, a Gehlen Catholic senior, shared why he planned to go on the mission trip, “I have had a number of cousins and siblings go on this trip, and I have always wanted to go. I want to understand why they said it was a life changing experience.”

One of the most powerful portions of the send-off was the blessing over the missionaries and their bags that they would carry into Honduras. The missionaries then bid farewell to their families.

As the missionaries walked to the bus, their peers lined the hallways and laid a hand on each missionary's bag as they passed. This symbolized that the school would be praying for them and for the Honduran people.



## Students For Life Makes Impact



The Students for Life organization held a Pro-Life Mass, set up a crosses for life memorial in our courtyard and made an outreach video this year.



Cheerleaders, Fr. Crotty and Christian Leadership Team students greeted students on the first day of school



Mrs. Ali Freking's 2nd grade class celebrated a once in a lifetime date - 2/22/22!



Teachers, Kathleen Kessenich, Ashley Jaspers, Ali Freking and Sue Shoup, celebrate Catholic Schools Week.



Junior Cheerleaders, Marissa Koch and Caydence Scheitler, joined the football cheerleaders during a home game.

Dads helped in the cafeteria serving hamburgers with big smiles during Dads and Dining. Dads include Fred Hagen, Cory Puetz ('01), Drew Bickford ('02) and Richard Madsen.



Carver Ruhland competed at the State Cross Country Meet.



4th grader, Kinley Bonderson made her very own ugly Christmas sweater.



Carter Kellen and Carson Sitzmann smile on National Ag Day when students filled the parking lot with tractors.



Gage Anthony learns all about bones and X-Rays in TK.



Gentlemen preparing to march in the band.



Student, Ethan Nuebel, holds candle along with his classmates at an all school Mass



Two groups were selected for All-State Speech. The Reader's Theatre performed while the One Act was nominated as non-performing. Photo includes Reader's Theatre students.

Vivian Geha celebrates the 100th day of school in Kindergarten.



Alumni and community members gathered for the school's annual Chamber Coffee. Pictured are Rachael Heuertz-Nelson ('11), Mitch Christoffel ('11), Peggy Sitzmann and Chamber Member.



Scott Tillman ('03) and wife Krista enjoy making Christmas cookies with son, Sullivan.



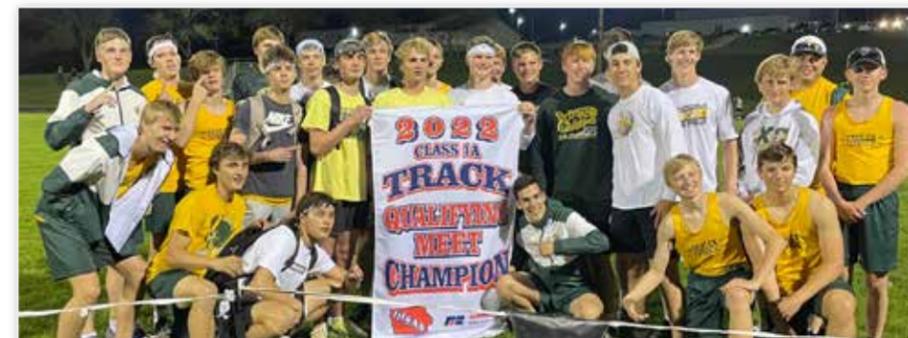
2nd grader, Blake Langel, raises the cup during the traditional Last Supper Play.



Elementary students and teachers joined together each week of Advent for a prayer service in the gym.



Students parade from the church to St. Mary statue for May Crowning Ceremony.



Boys Track Team celebrates being 2022 District Champs.



All students attended an Advent prayer service before Christmas break.



### Future Plans

**Mitchell Augustine**

The University of Northern Iowa  
Major: Finance

**Emma Bogen**

The University of Iowa  
Major: Elementary Education with an endorsement in early childhood education

**Ryan Budden**

Western Iowa Tech Community College  
Major: Computer Support Technician

**Olivia Bunkers**

Iowa State University  
Major: Accounting

**Ludo Colina**

Ludo will continue his education in Italy.

**Carter DeRocher**

Iowa State University  
Major: Business

**Logan Dreckman**

Ellsworth Community College  
Majors: Agribusiness and Farm Management

**Raine Foreman**

The University of Iowa  
Major: Psychology

**Virginia Freking**

Western Iowa Tech Community College  
Major: Early Childhood Education; Minor: Communications

**Abraham (AB) Galvan**

Northwest Iowa Community College  
Major: Automotive & Light Duty Diesel Technology

**Hunter Gloden**

South Dakota State University  
Major: Wildlife and Fisheries Sciences

**Hannah Gries**

The University of Iowa  
Major: Marketing

**Ethan Herbst**

Iowa State University  
Major: Civil Engineering

**Lauren Heying**

Des Moines Area Community College  
Major: Marketing

**Leo Ho**

Indiana University Bloomington  
Major: Business

**Evan Johnson**

Northwest Iowa Community College  
Major: Powerline Technology

**Alyssa Kolbeck**

The University of Iowa  
Major: Nursing

**Ian Lammers**

Northwest Iowa Community College  
Major: Advanced Welding Technology

**McKenzie Larson**

South Dakota State University  
Major: Biology

**Dylan Lehmann**

Iowa Air National Guard  
Will attend basic training in August in San Antonio

**The University of Iowa**

Major: Business

**Ryan Livermore**

The University of Northern Iowa  
Major: Accounting

**Benedetta Magnani**

Benedetta will continue her education in Italy

**Madison Mousel**

Iowa State University  
Major: Marketing

**Jacqueline Munoz**

The University of South Dakota  
Major: Dental Hygiene

**Carver Ruhland**

Iowa State University  
Major: Accounting

**Brian Schmit**

Iowa State University  
Major: Animal ecology

**Rylee Schnepf**

The University of South Dakota  
Major: Marketing

**Pablo Sevilla Carro**

The University of Santiago de Compostela  
Major: Criminology

**John Sheldon**

Western Iowa Tech Community College  
Major: Broadcasting and Multimedia Journalism

**Justus Shrader**

Western Iowa Tech Community College  
Major: General Studies

**Carson Sitzmann**

Ellsworth Community College  
Major: Agribusiness

**Elias Sitzmann**

The University of Arizona  
Major: Physiology on the pre-medicine track

**Kailey Sitzmann**

Des Moines Area Community College  
Major: Culinary Arts

**Larissa Sitzmann**

South Dakota State University  
Major: Animal Science

**Emily Steffes**

Western Iowa Tech Community College  
Major: General Studies

**Harlie Tesch**

Faust Institute of Cosmetology  
Major: Cosmetology

**Linh Tran**

The University of Charleston  
Major: Biochemistry

**Yahir Vanegas-Beltran**

The University of Iowa  
Major: Business

**Lydia Vaske**

Wayne State College  
Major: Elementary Education

**Hannah Zubrod**

Iowa State University  
Major: Animal Science; Minor: Biology, on the pre-veterinary medicine track



Lauren Heying



Brian Schmit and Hunter Gloden



Brent ('94) & Mindy Ruhland place cap on son, Carver



Virginia Freking, Madi Mousel, Emma Bogen, Elias Sitzmann, Hannah Gries, Rylee Schnepf and John Sheldon



Benedetta Magnani and Jacqueline Munoz

## ARE YOU AFRAID OF THE DARK?

Gehlen students took part in the spring play called, *Afraid of the Dark*, on May 5 and 7 in the Tim Dreckman Memorial Gym. There were 20 students involved, 13 of them being cast members led by Director, Mark Morehead. Leading the play were Cadence Goebel, junior, and Mitchell Augustine, senior.



Cast members of "Afraid of the Dark" are, front from left, Cadence Goebel, Zoe Vacura, Mitchell Augustine, and Aspen Mosher. Back row, Josie Scheitler, Leah Langel, Addison Arens, Nolan Nilles, Raine Foreman, Will Harpenau, Kyron Zhang, Braden Bollin, Ellen Hunt; Crew: Abraham Galvan and Aurora Goebel.



2022  
GEHLEN CATHOLIC SPRING PLAY  
MAY 5<sup>TH</sup> AND 7<sup>TH</sup> | 7 PM  
TIM DRECKMAN MEMORIAL GYM



## Naming the Jaybird

The Gehlen Catholic Cheer Squad decided it was time to officially name the Jaybird! All students were asked to submit ONE name they'd like to give the Jaybird. A selection committee narrowed down the suggestions to 5 and the student body then voted on their favorite. The name was announced during Homecoming week.

The name selected for the Jaybird was... Drumroll, please...Jay-B! This name was entered by two students, Aubreah Bohnenkamp (3<sup>rd</sup> grade) and Kendall Haage (4<sup>th</sup> grade).



## Gym Facelift

Thanks to generous donations from the Ruhland family, the gym has received a facelift on a couple of items. New gym mats were donated in Memory of Dorothy Ruhland (1-21-21) and a new scorers table was donated in Memory of Larry Ruhland (9-26-21). Over the years, Larry served on the Gehlen Catholic School Board and created multiple projects for the school and Friends of Gehlen Ball auction.



## News

- Jim & Barb (Frerichs) Sitzmann ('70 graduates) became Great Grandparents in 2020! Their granddaughter Ashley (Ellensohn) Englin blessed them with her daughter, Collins.
- Dave Schipper ('90) celebrated 10 years as Le Mars Fire Chief in 2020. He also currently serves on the Buildings and Grounds Committee at Gehlen Catholic School.
- Paris Schroeder ('16), Krayton Schnepf ('16) and Catalina Uribe ('17) received white coats at the University of Iowa in May of 2021.
- Dr. Jared Langel ('07) started True Health Chiropractic, LLC in Le Mars, IA.
- Dr. Conor Kneip ('12) joined Meylor Chiropractic & Acupuncture in Le Mars, IA in 2022.



If you'd like to share your news with Gehlen Catholic, please contact [ajungers@gehlen catholic.org](mailto:ajungers@gehlen catholic.org)

# ALUMNI UPDATES

## Deaths

- Peter Vander Meer Jr. ('53) entered into eternal life on January 2, 2020.
- Carol Ann (Puetz, '64) Janes entered into eternal life on October 16, 2020.
- John (Jack) Hoffman ('59) entered into eternal life on July 26, 2020.
- Shirley (Groves, '40) Sullivan entered into eternal life on November 14, 2020.
- Thomas "Tom" Langel ('69) entered into eternal life on November 28, 2020.
- Michael Miller ('82) entered into eternal life on November 28, 2020.
- William "Bill" Feldhacker ('66) entered into eternal life on December 1, 2020.
- Rosemarry (Erdmann, '43) Robinette entered into eternal life on December 9, 2020.
- Marjorie 'Marge' (Puetz, '51) Black entered into eternal life on December 12, 2020.
- Margaret "Margie" (Hall, '55) Moir entered into eternal life on December 15, 2020.
- Larry "Buzz" Gotto ('65) entered into eternal life on December 27, 2020.
- Elizabeth Ann "Betty" (Peters, '59) Plueger entered into eternal life on January 29, 2021.
- Ruth (West, '72) Kral entered into eternal life on January 21, 2021.
- Jane (Tentinger, '69) Schmidt entered into eternal life on February 24, 2021.
- Judith (Wolf, '68) Holmberg entered into eternal life on March 1, 2021.
- Margaret (Kellen, '53) Alesch entered into eternal life on May 22, 2021.

- Michael A. Dreckman ('74) entered into eternal life on September 18, 2021.
- Leon Holzman ('56) entered into eternal life on October 14, 2021.
- Agatha "Aggie" (Nuebel, '41) Sitzmann entered into eternal life on October 19, 2021.
- Michael Schafer ('60) entered into eternal life on October 24, 2021.
- Robert P. "Bob" Miller ('74) entered into eternal life on November 1, 2021.
- Elizabeth (Kohout, '47) Hermes entered into eternal life on December 14, 2021.
- Marilyn (Baadte, '60) Laughton entered into eternal life on December 18, 2021.
- James Sheehan ('55) entered into eternal life on December 26, 2021.
- Rita (Delperdang, '47) Wiederholt entered into eternal life on January 10, 2022.
- Dr. Danny Kurth ('73) entered into eternal life on February 10, 2022.
- Phillip Sitzman ('69) entered into eternal life on February 16, 2022.
- Arlene (Allison, '51) Erdmann entered into eternal life on February 19, 2022.
- **Births:**
- Gerardo Beltran ('17) & Vanessa welcomed a child, Julian on July 18, 2020.
- Emily (Tentinger, '09) Berkhoudt & Nate welcomed a child, Brynn Rose in August 2020.
- Kristin (DeRocher, '99) Teel & Mitch welcomed a child, Jackson on August 24, 2020.

- Melissa (Langel, '05) Galles & Jeremy welcomed a child, Owen on September 8, 2020.
- Derek Christoffel ('05) & Gina welcomed a child, Olivia on September 18, 2020.
- Drew Hoffman ('03) & Kayla welcomed a child, Brantlee on December 2, 2020.
- Megan (McCarty, '16) Meendering & Eric welcomed a child, Owen on December 24, 2020.
- Austin Sitzmann ('09) & Carlee welcomed a child, Calvin on January 28, 2021.
- Eric Loutsch ('11) & Joshalyn welcomed a child, Cooper on February 2, 2021.
- Brandon Langel ('05) & Rachel welcomed a child, Navya on March 10, 2021.
- Sara (Mayer, '10) Westhoff & Travis welcomed a child, Emma on April 13, 2021.
- Brittney (Schlichte, '09) Ruba & Michael welcomed a child, Rexton on May 24, 2021.
- Alison (Schnepf, '14) Snyder & Colby welcomed a child, Miles on July 7, 2021.
- Josh Schreiner ('10) & Kristin welcomed a child, Nora on August 31, 2021.
- Aaron ('05) & Kara (Krienert, '05) Bouma welcomed a child Jack, on October 25, 2021.
- Ashley (Sitzmann, '07) Powell & Trenton welcomed a child, Molly on November 7, 2021.
- Cole Heissel ('10) & Jacquelyn welcomed a child, Elena on December 10, 2021.
- Tyler Meyer ('10) & Sterling welcomed a child, Tessa on February 2, 2022.

# Wish LIST

### PK-12

- Twelve Apostles 8x10 Plaque Icon set for the Chapel. (\$330.00)
- Replace older desks
- Seated risers & chairs for K-12 choir (\$15,000)
- Indoor/Outdoor 3 in 1 Chair Set - 4 chairs (\$239.00)

### Elementary

- SEL (Social/Emotional Learning) Curriculum & Positive Behavior for Elementary Students State Supported Curriculum (\$3,000.00)
- 10 Merriam-Webster's Intermediate Dictionary, Hardcover - Mrs. Hatting's class \$21.97/ea. (\$219.70)
- Junior High-High School
- Go Direct Radiation Monitor for college chemistry class (\$179)
- 12 - 250 mL Polypropylene bottles with cap (Item #: AP8434) \$3.70/ea. (\$44.40)
- Radioactive Sources (\$175)
- 4 Sphygomomanometers (\$185/ea)
- Replace student desks (\$160 each)
- 40-45 hardcover Holt McDougal 9<sup>th</sup> grade English textbooks (\$50-\$100/book)
- 20 copies of "Altaration: The Mystery of Mass Revealed" student workbooks for 9th Grade Religion \$22.33/ea.
- 48 egg count Incubator for Hatching in Microbiology (\$95.99)
- Environmental Science Lab resources: \$3,388.00 (see below)
- Assorted beakers (\$60)
  - Chemicals (\$50)
  - Lead test swabs (\$30)

- 4 Thermometers (\$12/ea.)
- 4 Ring stands (\$60)
- 4 Mineral collections: \$140

### Technology

- Whiteboards for Science classrooms
- 40 Manhasset 48 Black Standard Music Stands \$47.50/ea. (\$1398)
- 2 Manhasset 1910 Music Stand Storage Carts \$444.25/ea. (\$888.50)
- 5 Acoustic Shells \$3,000/ea.
- Canon EF 70-300mm f/4-5.6 II USM Lens with Altura Photo Essential Accessory Bundle for Journalism class -(\$500)
- Security Camera System (\$70,000)
- Door Access System (\$50,000)
- Backlit Keyboards for Keyboarding (\$50/board; need 25)
- 65" SMART Board Displays (\$3,750/board; need 9 total)
- Laptops for Displays/Smrboards (\$800/laptop; need 16)
- Chromebook Carts - 30 Bay (\$800/cart; need one for Mrs. Hatting & Mrs. Herbst)
- Dell Docking Station Mrs. Kellen (\$230)
- Chromebooks (\$280/Chromebook)
  - Mrs. Clymer - 20 (\$5,600)
  - Mrs. Jodi Sitzmann - 6 (\$1,680)
  - Mrs. Kellen - 10 (\$2,800)
  - Mrs. Neary - 6 (\$1,680)
  - Mrs. Schmitt - 19 (\$5,320)
  - Mrs. Herbst - 18 (\$5,040)
  - New 3rd Grade Teacher - 18 (\$5,040)
  - Mrs. Hatting - 15 (\$4,200)

### Building & Grounds

- Kitchen/Cafeteria Remodel & Expansion (approximately \$1 million remaining);
- New Fine Arts facility;
- Garage for school bus & vans;
- Repaint the main gym (\$13,000-\$15,000)
- Track repairs (\$7,000-\$75,000)
- Gym floor - cost unknown at this time
- Memory Lane Lights (\$50,000)
- A/C in remaining High School rooms (unknown)
- Replace Elementary Boiler \$20,000
- I-pads (\$300 each)
- HUDL - extra options (\$250-\$1,000 per sport)
- Wellness center equipment
  - Treadmill (\$400-\$1,500)
  - Stationary bikes (\$150-\$300 each)
  - Weight balls (\$20-\$100 each)
  - Hip/Sled Press for weight room (\$)
- Uniform/warm-ups (\$2,000-\$4,000 per sport)
- Record boards (all sports shown in unison)
- J-Club table cloth (\$200)
- Softball Sound System (?)
- Back-stops for softball and baseball (\$6,000 per field)
- Softball field conditioner (\$4,000)
- Backboard light option to shot clock(\$2,000)
- Range finders - 12(\$150-\$300)

### J-Club

- I-pads (\$300 each)
- HUDL - extra options (\$250-\$1,000 per sport)
- Wellness center equipment
  - Treadmill (\$400-\$1,500)
  - Stationary bikes (\$150-\$300 each)
  - Weight balls (\$20-\$100 each)
  - Hip/Sled Press for weight room (\$)
- Uniform/warm-ups (\$2,000-\$4,000 per sport)
- Record boards (all sports shown in unison)
- J-Club table cloth (\$200)
- Softball Sound System (?)
- Back-stops for softball and baseball (\$6,000 per field)
- Softball field conditioner (\$4,000)
- Backboard light option to shot clock(\$2,000)
- Range finders - 12(\$150-\$300)



Gehlen Schools Corporation  
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# Pause for **POSITIVITY!**



During the month of November, student videos were created where they explained what they loved about school, things they were thankful for and topics they were learning in the classroom. The students reminded us of some pretty great things...

- It's okay to show your true self. It's the one God gave you and the one that he loves.
- Taco Bell starts with "T".
- Just one small act of kindness can change someone's whole day.
- Recess is pretty awesome too.

It isn't easy opening up in front of a camera, but the students did a great job of authentically sharing their story of being a part of Gehlen Catholic.

If you missed the Pause for Positivity videos, check out the Gehlen Catholic YouTube page!