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COVID Camaraderie
Fr. Crotty Profile
Estate Gift

Pictured: Kennedy Ruhland
Dear Alumni
and Friends,

Catholics of an earlier era remember “limbo” in its theological context (a topic for discussion at another time, if needed), but it has come into common usage as a place “betwixt and between.” Which is precisely where we find ourselves in early August as I write this letter for Jay Talk. Covid-19 places our and other nations betwixt and between shutting down to control the virus and opening up to allow people to work and earn a living. Our churches similarly struggle with protocols that allow Sunday worship limited in quality and numbers. And of course, our schools face the challenge of opening – but being prepared to return to on-line teaching should the virus spread. Betwixt and between is a difficult place to live, a place of discomfort, stress and the suffering that goes with that.

Our administrators and teachers deserve a word of thanks for the great job they have done in these past several months, and as they face the months to come. Gehlen Catholic anticipates beginning the school year normally on August 25 – that is, with on-site instruction, - and observing all the necessary protocols that will help prevent the spread of the virus. We pray that the school year will proceed in this way, even as we are prepared to adjust as needed for the safety of our students and faculty.

The challenges of the last 6 months and the months to come invite us to ask, “What is the value of a Catholic education?” Or to put it in more pragmatic terms, “Why am I paying to send my child to Gehlen Catholic if they can’t actually be in the building?” That remind us of the two dimensions of Church that shape our lives: the wider Church – the parish community that can
• gather for Sunday worship,
• garner resources to fund a Catholic School,
• and provide guidance and values to help us live meaningful, purposeful lives in a sometimes confusing world, and the domestic Church, the family where the Faith is taught, lived and practiced on a day to day basis. Both are needed, and both must work together, but since the corona virus has limited our ability to gather as a wider Church, it has put pressure on parents to be “priests” in their home, leading their children in prayer and reinforcing the Catholic education provided by Gehlen Catholic. I am grateful for their efforts these past months.

Let us pray for a successful school year, a year not only of physical health, but a year in which we can continue our mission to provide an excellent education and formation of our children in the Catholic Faith.

Thank you for your support!

Rev. Bruce Lawler
President, Gehlen Catholic School
Pastor, All Saints Parish Le Mars & St. Joseph Parish Ellendale
Mr. Fox Retires but Impact Remains

Mr. Rick Fox announced his retirement from Gehlen Catholic after 43 years of teaching and coaching. Mr. Fox was the junior high science teacher and coached multiple sports throughout his time at the school with a particular passion for junior high track.

After students, alumni, parents, colleagues and friends found out that Mr. Fox was retiring, a swarm of messages of congratulations and thanks came through. The comments made apparent that this quote is true: “A teacher affects eternity; he can never tell where his influence stops.” – Henry Adams

“You taught many the values of discipline, hard work, and respect.”

“I always enjoyed you as a teacher and your tough coaching taught me many valuable life lessons. Hopefully there is lots of good fishing in your future!”

“Thanks for making a difference in my life and many others!”

Hats off to Mr. Kurth

Mr. Marty Kurth was selected as a recipient of the Excellence in Education Award on behalf of the Diocese of Sioux City!

It was made apparent Kurth was more than deserving of this award as many wonderful things were said about him from colleagues, past students and family members.

“You have an amazing ability and passion to meet kids where they are.” Teri & Keith Bretey Family

“You’ve inspired me with your leadership as a baseball and basketball coach.” Denny Callahan

“It was more than just the education we got and more than just the athletics we were able to play in, but you taught us to become a person of character.” Mitch Christoffel (’11)

“He is also that person our students trust and are able to talk to and that is so valuable.” Kelly Dreckman

“He makes sure that he touches everyone’s heart.” Amber Schilmoeller (Timmins ’12)

“You let us be ourselves, you encouraged us, and you believed in us.” Marty Bohnenkamp (’94)
9:37 pm on Sunday, March 15, a Textcaster was sent saying, “Based on the recommendation from Governor Reynolds, Gehlen will be closed until further notice.”

No one could have expected what would happen in the following months as everyone found themselves amidst the global COVID-19 pandemic. State recommendations on returning to school continued to change and it was soon apparent students and teachers would not meet face to face again during the 2019-2020 school year.

Camaraderie During COVID-19 Pandemic

Technology and social media made it possible to stay connected during times of quarantine and uncertainty.

Morning prayer, petitions and The Pledge of Allegiance were filmed by Gehlen Catholic families and posted every weekday on Facebook.

Books were read by Mrs. Brady, Elementary Guidance Counselor for students to enjoy. She started by saying, “I am missing you guys and thinking about you every day. I pray that you and your families are staying healthy and doing well.”

By using videos, teachers prayed for students, parents and the community by saying the Our Father, Glory Be and Hail Mary.

Teachers from PreK-12 embraced Zoom to stay connected to students.
Mrs. Herbst’s 4th grade students spent time at home creating helping hands posters and shape poems.

An at home Spirit Day was held on March 26th. Families & teachers shared their fun pictures to Facebook.

This photo collage was created by Mrs. Alison Schilling to give students a virtual "HELLO!"

Mrs. Schipper and her daughter, Evie, paid a special visit to Mrs. Mary Hartman during quarantine!

Students were encouraged to go outside and “Chalk Your Walk” and show their Catholic School pride.
The Easter season was a time the Gehlen Catholic family was unable to celebrate together. That didn't stop “mini-lessons” from happening about Palm Sunday.

Teacher Appreciation Day did not go unnoticed. Students put together a wonderful video to show their gratitude for the hard work their teachers put in throughout the year.

Preschool Open House was held virtually for new Gehlen Jays and their parents to enjoy. They were able to meet the teachers and see all the fun toys and activities that would be awaiting them this fall.

The elementary end of year prayer service is one of the most powerful times of the year for young students. The elementary teachers and staff made sure students could still participate and grow their faith with this opportunity.
Gehlen Catholic Celebrates A Successful Online Ball

The 33rd Annual Friends of Gehlen Catholic Ball online format proved to be a huge success as the school took in $238,130.33. The funds go directly toward the Gehlen Catholic general budget and help the everyday operation of the school.

“A community’s colors show true in tough times. Amid this isolation, fear and doubt, the Gehlen Ball showed the generosity, ingenuity and faith of the Gehlen community. When we look back on this moment decades from now, we hope people never forget how brightly our true color shone,” said Chris and Jay Sitzmann, General Chairs of the Ball.

Before COVID-19 hit and Gehlen Catholic School closed its doors, many businesses and supporters had already donated or purchased their Ball ticket to attend the event that would have included dinner from the Iowa BBQ Company and entertainment by the Patrick Lentz KC Flo Band.

“It speaks volumes about our local businesses and the Gehlen Catholic family that almost all of those who had donated or purchased a ticket, kept their money with the school. This goes to show people are not donating to go to a fun event, they are donating to Gehlen Catholic School and the strong Catholic education it brings our children and young adults,” said Amy Jungers, Development Director.

In addition to the online auction, there was a program posted for Gehlen Catholic families, alumni and supporters to enjoy in the comfort of their own homes. The program can be found on Gehlen’s YouTube channel.

“We worried about how we were going to continue the success of the Ball, God answered our prayers with the support of the Gehlen Catholic family,” said Gary & Elaine Tillman, General Chairs of the Ball.

AUCTION GRAND TOTAL
$36,430

RAISED DURING THE 2020 FRIENDS OF GEHLEN CATHOLIC BALL $238,130.33

SAVE the DATE APRIL 17 BALL 2021
**Father Travis Crotty**  
**Chaplain**

**Q:** Where is your hometown?  
**A:** Varina, IA (middle of nowhere between Newell and Fonda). Population – 65.

**Q:** Tell us about some of your hobbies.  
**A:** Cooking and hosting, disc golf and playing racquetball with Father Bruce. I also like to travel around the Midwest to see friends from the Seminary.

**Q:** Who wins racquetball when you play against Father Bruce?  
**A:** I am way quicker than him...but he still beats me. He is good!!

**Q:** What High School did you attend?  
**A:** Newell-Fonda. We frequently beat Gehlen Catholic, by the way.

**Q:** Did you always want to be a priest?  
**A:** My uncle and grandpa were both the Mayor of Varina, so I had a dream to be the Mayor too, but that was gone after joining the Priesthood.

**Q:** What is your vocation story?  
**A:** I was a sophomore in high school when I started to feel called to the Priesthood. I started to recognize the call during a few experiences. First, my parents were going through a divorce, I was attending Confirmation classes and I made a friend who was Baptist. My Baptist friend invited me to his church and that helped challenge my faith and encouraged me to focus more on the Catholic faith. I also had the chance through Confirmation class to attend a meal with multiple priests. That is the first time I had been in a room with so many priests and they truly had full lives of joy. There was also an occasion where my High School Guidance Counselor mentioned that money meant success, and to me, that is not how I felt.

**Q:** Where did you go to college and to Seminary?  
**A:** I received my undergrad at Conception Seminary College in Philosophy. I was then sent to St. John Vianney Theological Seminary in Denver and then to Kenrick-Glennon Seminary in St. Louis for 4 years to get a whole bunch of different degrees.

**Q:** What was the Seminary like?  
**A:** Seminary was incredible gift of growth. One major highlight was doing a poverty immersion at a homeless shelter in Omaha, NE. I also experienced a 30-day silent retreat which was super challenging and rewarding.

**Q:** What is your first big idea at Gehlen Catholic?  
**A:** Rage against the Catholic school machine! When I was in St. Louis, there were 30 Catholic schools and the most frequent thing I heard from students was that religion was shoved down their throats. Catholic school there then became nothing more than a fancy prep school with faith as a component on the side. But truly, the reason for a Catholic school is to build and foster a relationship with Jesus. I want to make everything we do here at Gehlen Catholic about having a relationship with Jesus and His church.

**Q:** What makes you excited about being at Gehlen Catholic?  
**A:** The daily long game at a high school. I am ready to develop relationships and friendships with students. I am totally available for the students. I am not too busy, I am not just here on the side. My assignment as Chaplain is to be here for the students!

**Q:** What makes you most nervous about this school year?  
**A:** I’m nervous about the limitations from COVID-19 and that it could put a damper on relationship building.

**Q:** What do you want to achieve at Gehlen Catholic?  
**A:** I hope to grow in relationships with students and help them find their relationship with Jesus Christ AND beat Fr. Bruce at racquetball.

**Q:** What is your favorite holiday?  
**A:** Christmas for the party and Easter for the glory!

**Q:** Any fun facts we should know about you?  
**A:** I am a coffee enthusiast and my favorite coffee shop is the Hardline in Sioux City. Did I mention I have 5 or 6 ways of making coffee?
Q: Where is your hometown?  
A: I grew up in Granville, IA and now currently live in Alton, IA.  

Q: Tell us about some of your hobbies.  
A: My family and I recently got a camper and we absolutely love going camping and being outside! I also enjoy exercising and playing with my kiddos.  

Q: What High School did you attend?  
A: I went to Spalding Catholic. Gehlen was always one of my internal rivals while playing sports 😊 Glad I can play on the same team now!  

Q: What did you want to be when growing up?  
A: I always wanted to be a teacher. That dream dissolved when I was placed in a kindergarten classroom my sophomore year of college. I loved kids, but after that, I knew I needed more adult interaction in my future job!  

Q: Where did you go to college?  
A: I went to the University of Northern Iowa and studied Communications, Public Relations and Family Studies.  

Q: What prior work experience have you had?  
A: After graduation, I worked at Mid-Sioux Opportunity as the Statewide Communications Specialist for Child Care Resource and Referral and then worked in the Marketing Department at the Pizza Ranch Corporate office for 4 ½ years before making the move to Gehlen Catholic.  

Q: Do you have a family?  
A: My husband’s name is Alex and a fun fact about him is that he went to Gehlen through 3rd grade and then went to Spalding after his family moved to Hospers. We have two daughters, Natalie (3) and Josie (1) and they like to keep us busy!  

Q: When was your first day on the job?  
A: I started at Gehlen on Monday, January 6th.  

Q: Why did you choose to apply for the Development Director position?  
A: I was looking for a place to grow and feel fulfilled. I loved attending a Catholic school growing up, and I prayed working at one would be no different. I enjoy meeting new people and relationship building. So far, I have met so many wonderful and generous people. I look forward to the day when I can get out and meet those who I haven’t had the chance to fully connect with yet.  

Q: Where your first 7 months what you expected?  
A: Absolutely not! I told people I was up for the challenge, but I wasn’t quite expecting a pandemic challenge! But even during the trying times, I have been reminded time and time again how blessed I am to be here. There is nothing better than coming to work and knowing that all my decisions and conversations can be based on prayer and Jesus.  

Q: What do you hope to achieve at Gehlen?  
A: I want to reignite the flame and excitement for the school. There are already so many people passionate about it, but I want to make sure our students continue to love the school and ultimately would choose to send their kids back here someday. Also, as a fresh school year starts, I look forward to finding new ideas to connect what is going on within the school walls with those who don’t get to see the day to day operation. There are great things happening in our school on a daily basis and they are meant to be shared and celebrated!  

Q: What has been the best part of your job so far?  
A: The people, over and over again! From seeing the preschoolers in the hallway those first couple of months to meeting an alumni who is so passionate about our school. Each person I meet comes with their own story, and it is apparent that I will learn something from everyone I meet.  

Q: What is a fun fact about you?  
A: I love coffee, but maybe not as much as Father Crotty! I also love going to Okoboji with my family and spending time on the lake.
Congrats to students who tried out and were selected for NW ICDA Honor Choir.

Back row-Domonic Doremus, Ty Linden, Carson Tesch
Front Row- Kaylee Linden, Madeline Begnoche, Josie Scheitler, Harlie Tesch

First grade students giving thumbs up to new technology!

Preschool parents visited to help their preschooler problem solve math activities.
Pictured: Jimena Munoz and her Dad, Jose Munoz

Dance team performance at halftime of a basketball game. Pictured: Sydney Logan

The Gehlen Catholic Speech Team had the opportunity to attend the Broadway production Jesus Christ Superstar in Des Moines. The students also enjoyed an exclusive meet and greet with six cast members!

March For Life rally in Washington this past January.
Back row: Isabelle Ellensohn, (Alissa Schipper), Sydney Logan, Allison Ruden, Harley Foreman, (Tina Begnoche-Madeline’s Mom)
Front Row: Josie Kolbeck, Chloe Bunkers, Sydney Livermore, Madeline Begnoche

The boys basketball team served as ushers, Eucharistic ministers, and altar servers one Sunday morning.

The girls basketball team qualified for State after an exciting regular season.
Mrs. Kellie Bollin’s kindergarten class wrote a thank you letter to their parents as part of Catholic Schools Week. The note tells parents why they love going to Gehlen Catholic and thanks them for choosing to send them to Gehlen.

Pictured: Bryce Thoms

Valentine’s Day Celebration
Pictured: Ilyson Vanegas-Beltran, Livia Bouma, Zayda Freking, Adelyn Blair, Brody Jaspers

Playing baseball was a highlight for many players as they were thrilled to get on the field. The season took a slight pause due to COVID-19 but resumed with a record ending 3-6 and conference 1-2.

Pictured: Jeff Augustine

Mrs. Laurie Kellen’s Religion Class smiles with their Chromebooks that were graciously donated in memory of David Kessenich (‘85) on behalf of the Mark and Susy Kessenich Family.

There was much excitement when softball season kicked off after a canceled track season. The team was 11-9 overall and 6-3 in conference.

Pictured: Caden Conger

The second grade class enjoyed a day with clay.
Pictured: Caden Conger

During the pro-life mass, teachers, students and alumni walk at the beginning of Mass to represent all expectant parents, parents waiting to adopt, for all babies-born and unborn and for families with special needs children.

Pictured: Dr. Ashley (Sitzmann) Powell

4 generations at the all school family picnic during Catholic Schools Week
Pictured: Great Grandma-Joyce Langel, Grandma-Lisa Sitzmann, Mom-Tonya LaBahn, Student-Taylor LaBahn

High school girls gather for a photo during their annual retreat.
“Perhaps my favorite thing is that we are Catholic and proud, we enforce our faith in the classroom and on the field, and love we get the opportunity to adore the blessed sacrament and celebrate mass in our own school. I am truly grateful for everything this school has given me.” – Christopher Holzman

“Awards Day is usually a celebration that all students get to attend, but this year a specific awards video was made just for the seniors. It highlighted where they plan to attend college, their scholarships and awards. The video was created by 7-12 Counselor, Mrs. Kristin Hausmann.

“Our seniors have really made an impact on our school and community, and they have accomplished so much across their four years in high school. They deserve to be honored for their service to others, their academic excellence, and their outstanding achievements,” said Hausmann.

“I have loved being in Mrs. Harpenau’s math classes for three of my four years of high school, learning Algebra II, Pre-Calc and Calculus. Not only did I learn some math, I also learned a lot about myself, in my study habits and in the way I think.” – Allison Ruden

“The faith-filled atmosphere is what I enjoy the most, and our teachers and staff who make it possible for us to learn.” – Carson Tesch

I also love that the teachers are so flexible, genuinely care about all of us, and helpful. – Josie Kolbeck

“Senior Memories Video

A senior memory video was created under the direction of Gehlen Catholic English teacher, Mrs. Alison Schilling. The video included candid and senior photos from the class of 2020 as well as a song recorded by the 7-12 Choir instructor (Mrs. Terra Falkena). Teacher advice, inspiration, and congratulations were interspersed throughout.

Valeria Uribe

Major: Communication Sciences and Disorders
UNL Ruth Leverton Scholarship $15,000
UNL Housing Scholarship $3,000
YARD SIGNS
Seniors were surprised with a personal yard sign outside of Gehlen Catholic High School. The community came together as Primebank, Northwest Bank, Iowa State Bank and American Bank sponsored the Senior Sidewalk.

O U T D O O R G R A D U A T I O N
After some restrictions and recommendations were lifted, an outdoor graduation ceremony was planned and held on Sunday, June 14.

C L A S S O F 2 0 2 0

Brady Alesch
Western Iowa Tech Community College
Major: General Studies

Madeline Begnoche
Western Iowa Tech Community College
Major: Early Childhood Education

Alexander Buman
Benedictine College
Major: Mechanical Engineering

Chloe Bunkers
Iowa State University
Major: Undecided-Human Sciences

Domenic Doremus
Drake University
Majors: Engineering and Physics

Isaac Ellensohn
Des Moines Area Community College
Major: Heating, Ventilation and Air Conditioning Technology

Isabelle Ellensohn
Western Iowa Tech Community College
Major: Animal Science

Harley Foreman
The University of Iowa
Major: Psychology

Caleb Gerloff
Des Moines Area Community College
Major: Biology

Kate Hill
Iowa State University
Major: Kinesiology

Christopher Holkman
Benedictine College
Major: Engineering

Aydan Johnson
Northwest Iowa Community College
Major: Industrial Instrumentation and Control

Paul Kim
Paul will complete military service in South Korea and then attend college in Germany.

Michael Kirby
Des Moines Area Community College
Major: Pre-Physical Therapy

Annissa Kleich
Texas A&M Corpus Christi
Major: Biology

Josie Kolbeck
Iowa State University
Major: Kinesiology; Pre-Occupational Therapy track

Isia Lammers
Northwest Iowa Community College
Major: Industrial and Commercial Wiring

Ty Linden
Morningide College
Major: Psychology; Minor: Music

Sydney Livermore
The University of Iowa
Major: Biology; Pre-Medical track

Sydney Logan
Iowa State University
Major: Undecided-Human Sciences

Sam McCallan
Sam plans to travel after graduation.

Jacob Nemmers
Des Moines Area Community College
Major: Architectural Design

Ethan Peters
The University of Northern Iowa
Major: Exercise Science

Peyton Rockford
Des Moines Area Community College
Major: Undecided

Will Roder
The University of Mary
Major: Criminal Justice

Allison Ruden
Wayne State College
Major: Elementary and Early Childhood Education

Kennedy Ruhland
The University of Iowa
Major: Biology; Pre-Medical track

Whitney Shrader
Grand Canyon University
Major: Nursing

Carson Tesch
Army National Guard

Wyatt Tesch
Northeast Community College
Major: Building Construction

Valeria Uribe
The University of Nebraska - Lincoln
Major: Communication Sciences and Disorders

Bergen Vacura
Hawkeye Community College
Major: Sports Statistics

Isaac Vaske
The University of Northern Iowa
Major: Biology; Pre-Chiropractic track

Anthony Vera
Immaculate Heart of Mary Seminary
Major: Philosophy

Cade Walgenbach
Iowa Lakes Community College
Major: Agriculture Production Technology

Addison Weber
Buena Vista University
Major: Kinesiology and Exercise Science
Estate Gift Blessing

Gehlen Catholic School was one of five beneficiaries recently named in a sizeable estate of a Gehlen Catholic alumni.

Dennis Groetken graduated from Gehlen Catholic in 1961 and was a resident of Le Mars for most of his life. He passed away on Aug. 6, 2019 at the age of 77. In addition to Gehlen Catholic, he named All Saints Parish, Floyd Valley Healthcare, Le Mars Public Library and Divine Word College of Epworth in his will.

Gehlen Catholic is one of four beneficiaries that each received about $950,000 from the estate valued at $6.8 million.

It was decided to place the majority of Gehlen’s gift toward the capital campaign, directing it to the endowment fund project,” said Amy Jungers Development Director.

“We see this as a wonderful way to honor Dennis and his generosity as his gift will be beneficial for many, many years,” said Jungers, who noted as the endowment fund grows, it lessens the financial burden on the parishes and school parents.

Estate gifts of this nature, noted Jungers, bless the school and its families in countless ways, especially during times of economic struggle and hardship. She hopes that in hearing about Groetken’s generosity it may inspire others to make estate gifts.

“Gifts of this nature allow us to build the strongest Catholic education we can, and ultimately, continue to glorify our God,” she said.

Father Lawler pointed out the parishes and school greatly appreciate estate gifts and “in some ways we rely on it more and more.”

Portions of this story originally appeared in The Lumen.

2020 Gehlen Catholic Graduate Joining Seminary

Congratulations to 2020 graduate Anthony Vera on being one of the two new seminarians accepted in the Diocese! May God guide and bless Anthony on his journey at Immaculate Heart of Mary Seminary. Please continue to keep Anthony in your prayers as he continues to answer God’s call.
Deaths
Dr. Dan Murphy entered into eternal life on April 14, 2020.
Lois (Sitzmann, ’43) Hardy entered into eternal life on June 2, 2020.
Raymond Langel (honorary HS diploma on 80th birthday) entered into eternal life on June 8, 2020.

Births
Ashley (Sitzmann) & Trent Powell welcomed a child, Madison Ann on January 1, 2020.
Ashley (Langel) & Daniel Swalve welcomed a child, Hannah Grace on March 4, 2020.
Jacqueline (Beitelspacher) & Kevin Breuer welcomed a child, Josephine Renae on April 16, 2020.

Wish LIST
Our teachers are always in need of new or updated supplies for their classrooms. Take a look at our wish list of items.

PK-12:
- Embroidery for altar & other liturgical cloths for school chapel (balance is approximately $300)
- Replace older desks
- Seated risers & chairs for K-12 choir ($15,000)
- Replace chalice for school chapel (approximately $260)
- 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. or $219.70 total)

Junior High-High School:
- Replace student desks ($160 each)
- 40-45 hardcover Holt McDougal 9th grade English textbooks ($50-$100/book)
- 20 copies of “Altaration: The Mystery of Mass Revealed” student workbooks for 9th Grade Religion ($22.33/each)
- 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 each)
  - 4 Ring stands ($60)
  - 4 Mineral collections ($140)
  - Whiteboards for Science classrooms

Technology:
- UltraKey Keyboarding program - accessible “in the cloud” ($500)
- Google Chromebooks ($249 each)
  - 6 - Mrs. Neary’s 5th & 6th grade classes ($1,494)
  - 12 - Mrs. Chris Sitzmann’s 5th & 6th grade classes ($2,988)
  - 16 - Mrs. Laurie Kellen’s Religion class ($4,731)
- Chromebook Carts:
  - 16-bay - Mrs. Hatting’s 4th grade class ($620)
  - 16-bay - Mrs. Herbst’s 4th grade class ($620)
  - 30-bay - 5th & 6th grade classrooms ($935)
  - 25-by - Mrs. Kellen’s Religion class ($835)
- Replace the Windows 7 student laptops with either Chromebooks or laptops:
  - 4 - Mrs. Lehmann’s 1st grade

Building & Grounds:
- Replace Door “H” with a fob (back entrance to the school, gyms, etc.) to enhance security ($6,575.00)
- Kitchen/Cafeteria renovations (approximately $400,000+)
- New fine arts facility
- Garage for school bus & vans
- Repaint the main gym ($13,000-$15,000)
- New Zero Turn large area mower for school grounds (approximately $15,000)

High School Choir:
- 40 Manhasset 48 Black Standard Music Stands @47.50 each ($1998)
- 2 Manhasset 1910 Music Stand Storage Carts @444.25 ($888.50)

Journalism:
- Canon EF 70-300mm f/4-5.6 is II USM Lens with Altura Photo Essential Accessory Bundle ($500)
Roles Reversed for Four Teachers

Teachers chose to reverse their roles to ensure students can take college credit classes at Gehlen Catholic before heading off to college. Alison Schilling, Jacque Schmitt, Jill Harpenau and Terra Falkena became students again as they went back to school to receive their Master’s Degrees.

When asked why she chose to go back to school, Schmitt said, “I wanted students to have an opportunity to get college credit in high school and to learn more ways to teach science.”

The college credit classes that will be offered this coming school year include College English, College Calculus and College Chemistry.

“I had always wanted to pursue a higher degree, but never knew what it would be. Once I started teaching again 4 years ago after being a stay at home mom, writing and literature became my passions so being able to teach college level classes turned into a goal for me. I’ll be teaching College English. The class will consist of writing in the digital age, a literature study, and college level composition,” explained Schilling.

Having their own homework while giving out homework helped these teachers relate more to their students throughout the 2019-2020 school year.

“Well we could certainly commiserate on having a big homework load, and I had plenty of conversations with students about balancing work, school and social life,” said Falkena while Schilling added, “I’ve always told them that taking care of our mental health is top priority.”

Going back to school to ensure students receive a quality education is a true testament of the passion these teachers have for their jobs and students.

“It was quite challenging balancing my time between all of my roles and responsibilities at school and at home. My reward along the way has always been and always will be the faces of my students when they truly get it. I look forward to getting back to class with the newest group of seniors to share my talents with them,” said Harpenau.

Can You Hear Me Now?

You will be able to hear loud and clear in the Vi Kellen Gymnasium after the installation of a new sound system this summer. The sound system was made possible by a very generous donation from the Marie Singer Estate. It was installed by Ryan (LeBahn Class of ’99) Installation.
Then Feed Just One Reinvents Packing

Gehlen Catholic was set to host a Then Feed Just One packing event on Friday, May 1st. Due to school not being in session, students and staff were unable to pack meals. Because of the restrictions due to COVID-19, many packing events for Then Feed Just One were canceled that would have made LIFE SAVING meals-850,000 meals to be exact.

Once school resumes regularly, Then Feed Just One hopes to get sessions back on the calendar. In the meantime, you and your family can reserve a time to help pack at the Then Feed Just One warehouse. Each meal is 0.16 cents and by donating time and money, you can help.

Contact Mr. Seivert at 712-540-3062 for more info or to reserve a spot.

2020 Gehlen Catholic Mission Honduras Event Postponed

Gehlen Catholic Mission Honduras missioners received sad news on Friday, March 13th when they were told their trip would be postponed due to COVID-19. They were originally supposed to be in Honduras from Tuesday, March 18, to Friday, March 27. Their goal was to complete 3 homes, 20 bunk beds, 3 vertical gardens and 5 picnic tables.

Director of Gehlen Catholic Mission Honduras, Carolyn Bickford, explained that the group first tried to reschedule the trip to July 2020, but it soon became apparent that timeframe would too not work. Currently, the trip is rescheduled for June 2021 and is being labeled as a “young adult group,” which will be for the young adults who are now graduated from Gehlen Catholic School.

In March 2021, it is still planned for a group of senior and juniors from Gehlen Catholic to visit Honduras.
This summer, preparations for the cafeteria renovations began by doing asbestos removal. The project started on May 18th, 2020 and was completed around June 10th, 2020. School maintenance staff then went to work and refinished the concrete floor and replaced the vinyl cove base to prepare for the upcoming school year. Due to the complexity of the total project, it was necessary to get asbestos out this summer to help prepare for the main project starting summer 2021.

“I am excited about this project because it is something Gehlen has needed for a long time, and I am looking forward to seeing this completed,” said Mark Schlesser, Director of Maintenance.

There have been three blueprints presented to the Building and Ground Committee for review. Once the blueprint is finalized, it will be shared so everyone can get excited! If you are interested in helping us make this project come to life, please contact Amy Jungers at ajungers@gehlencatholic.org.

The outside of Gehlen Catholic School has never looked more welcoming! The landscaping around the school was mostly replaced last year, with the final touches being added this past July. Thank you to the generous donations from the Jason Puetz Memorial Fund and Gary & Elaine Tillman for making sure the outside of the school is just as Gehlen Green as the inside of the school.

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**Committed to Cafeteria Renovations**

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
Fall-ing Back Into School: 2020-2021
Return to Learn Plan

Gehlen Catholic students returned back to the school building on Tuesday, August 25. Throughout the summer, Administration and Leadership Teams worked diligently to create a return-to-learn plan and re-opening guidance to ensure families continue to receive safe and sound Catholic education. There are three modes of delivery prepared for the school year and each of them focus directly on faith, social, emotional and the intellectual needs of each child. Faith will stay at the forefront as religion classes and prayer opportunities will be held daily, masses will be celebrated and Catholic beliefs and teachings will continue to be embedded in daily instruction. Please keep the students, parents and staff in your prayers during the school year.

Father Bruce Lawler, President of Gehlen Catholic School, celebrated his 40th anniversary in the Priesthood on July 5th. He has been at Gehlen Catholic since July 2017. A congratulatory note or card can still be sent to Father Bruce.

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Rev. Bruce Lawler
All Saints Parish
605 Plymouth St. NE
Le Mars, IA 51031

Thank you, Father Bruce, for your support of Gehlen Catholic School. Gehlen Catholic cherishes your guidance and servant heart.
Gospel Theme

The overall Gospel Value theme that Gehlen Catholic students and staff will focus on is Evangelization. Learn more about the 2020-2021 Gospel Theme in the next Jay Talk!

Go and Live the Good News!
Matthew 28:16-20

Connect with the Jays in any of these ways!

@gehlencatholicschool
gehlencatholic.org
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