

REPORT TO THE COMMUNITY ON CATHOLIC EDUCATION AT GRAND TRAVERSE AREA CATHOLIC SCHOOLS



Religious Sisters have been part of our schools for most of our 144-year history. Holy Angels Academy, which eventually became St. Francis Elementary & High School, was established by a priest and six Dominican sisters in 1877.

The Dominican Sisters' habit is comprised of a simple white tunic (representing innocence), black veil (representing humility), and a rosary worn at the belt (representing prayer).

DOMINICAN SISTERS RETURN

When Grand Traverse Area Catholic Schools Superintendent, Michael Buell, and St. Francis High School Principal, Erick Chittle, met Dominican Sister Mary Agnes Greiffendorf, OP, and Sister John Mary Fleming, OP, "We were struck by their holiness, strength, and joy," says Dr. Chittle, "and we realized how important their charism would be to our students and our families, and we began to pray and hope" (for their return to our schools.)

Sister John Mary was invited to speak at our schools where she encountered a vibrant Catholic community and a vision that aligned with that of the Dominican Sisters. After plentiful prayer, further site visits, and approval by the Congregation's Prioress General, Mother Anna Grace Neenan, O.P., plus Bishop Steven J. Raica, and pastors at the five supporting parishes, the decision was made: GTACS would once again have Dominican teachers.

Spokesperson for the Nashville Dominicans, Sister Anne Catherine Burleigh, said, "Traverse City was the only new mission the Dominican Sisters of St. Cecilia launched this year, so it is very special."

When asked why Traverse City made it to the top of the long list of possible schools, Sister Anne Catherine said, "We are drawn to schools where there is the possibility for a genuine partnership and complementarity of vocations, with both the lay faculty and staff and the religious sisters working towards the same goal of making Christ known and loved in that school. The GTACS schools are quite blessed in so many respects. You have outstanding leadership that articulates a clear and compelling vision of authentic Catholic education for students and their families. You have been intentional in taking time to form great faculty and staff who understand why they are there and their role as Catholic educators. Because

of this, GTACS schools can make such a lasting impact on their students, with teachers not only teaching them skills and subjects, but also showing students what an integration of faith and life looks like on a daily basis."

"The Nashville Dominicans have the reputation of being among the best teachers in the world," says Superintendent Michael Buell. "There are hundreds of schools vying to have even one sister come and teach, and we are blessed beyond measure to be able to have four of them become part of our school family."

The Sisters arrived in August and took up residence in a home now designated as the Our Lady of the Lake Convent. Although the property was extensively remodeled prior to the Sisters' move-in, new windows are still needed. To donate to the window fund, visit <https://gtacs.org/dominican-sisters-of-saint-cecilia/>.

WELCOME BISHOP JEFFREY WALSH

CELEBRATING THE SIXTH BISHOP OF GAYLORD



As the papal decree is presented to Bishop Walsh; senior Gabe Maday, served as emcee. Immaculate Conception 1st grader, Kolette Walsh, presented a spiritual bouquet.

"The Church has what the world needs," said Most Reverend Jeffrey J. Walsh on the day of his ordination and installation as our Sixth Bishop.

More than 900 people gathered at Saint Mary, Our Lady of Mount Carmel Cathedral on March 4, 2022, including 16 bishops and archbishops, 60 priests, and 19 deacons. The principal celebrant was the Most Reverend Allen Vigneron with co-consecrating bishops Most Reverend Walter Hurley and Most Reverend Joseph Bambera.

It was a most beautiful day!



A JOYFUL WELCOME

Bishop Walsh was born on November 29, 1965. A native of Scranton, Pa., and graduate of Scranton Central High School, he is one of three children. He graduated from the University of Scranton in 1987 with a bachelor's degree in Health and Human Resources then went on to complete his priestly studies at Mount St. Mary's Seminary, Emmitsburg, Md., earning a Master of Divinity Degree. Bishop Walsh received a Master of Arts in Christian Spirituality from Creighton University in 1999 and a Master of Social Work from Marywood University in 2010.

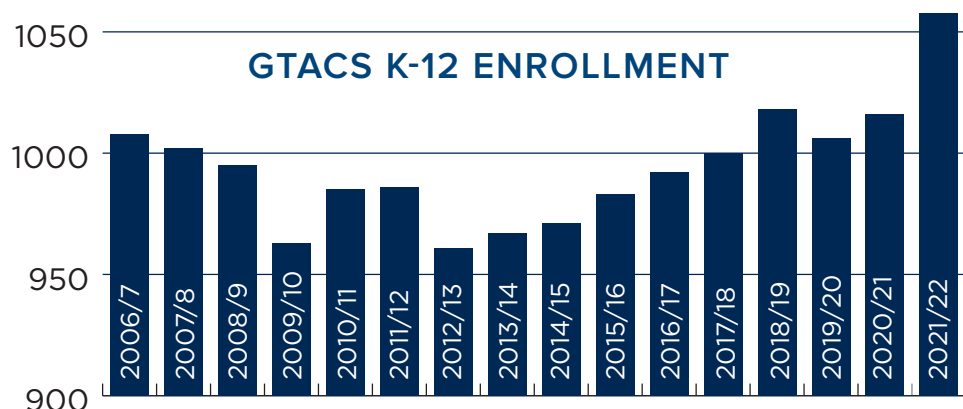
Bishop Walsh was ordained a priest of the Diocese of Scranton by Bishop James C. Timlin at the Cathedral of Saint Peter, Scranton, Pa., on June 25, 1994.

ENROLLMENT STRONG

Nationwide, Catholic schools experienced a "bump" in enrollment during the COVID-19 pandemic, and our schools are no exception. Interest is particularly strong among young families, with preschool and several early elementary grade levels expected to be at or near capacity for the 2022/23 school year.

"We are grateful that so many new families are considering Catholic schools for their children's education," says Immaculate Conception principal Jessica Lesinski. "Our robust enrollment is a tribute to our outstanding faculty and staff who work tirelessly for their students and imbue the Catholic faith into all aspects of the school day."

Our one-hour Experience the Difference "tour" has proven very popular with prospective families. To learn more or to schedule a visit, contact Admissions at (231) 995-8425.



OUR PATRON PARISHES

Christ the King
Immaculate Conception
St. Francis of Assisi
St. Joseph
St. Patrick

"In a cultural climate in which moral norms are often thought to be matters of personal preference, Catholic schools have a crucial role to play in leading the younger generation to realize that freedom consists above all in being able to respond to the demands of the truth."

— Saint Pope John Paul II

HISTORIC OUTDOOR MASS

THOUSANDS GATHER AT THIRLBY FIELD

The COVID-19 pandemic prevented our traditional, back-to-school All Schools Mass. Fortunately, we were able to move our celebration to nearby Thirlby Field where thousands gathered to celebrate the Eucharist!



GLADHANDER MARKS ITS 40TH

OCTOBER 29, 2022: "CELEBRATE THE MUSIC" WITH US

Coming off two very unique years of Gladhander – the virtual year of 2020, and the hybrid year of 2021 – we are very excited about Gladhander 2022, which is our 40th anniversary event.

Event planners have chosen the theme, "Celebrate The Music: 40 Years of Red Carpet Events." We will celebrate decades of great music and decades of extraordinary circumstances that have made Gladhander the area's premier gala and fundraiser.

Despite the challenges, Gladhander 2021 was highly successful with more than 450 guests in attendance. Thanks to the online bidding platform implemented during the pandemic, many more bidders were able to engage with the auction from home.

Net proceeds for this year were \$424,068.



GLADHANDER 2021 "OFF TO THE RACES"

\$500 Cash Prize

Mitch Pasinski, Traverse City
MaryLou Middleton, Traverse City
Danielle Ehardt, Traverse City
Sisters of Life, Suffern, NY
John Lyman, Traverse City
Michelle Brockie, Traverse City
Linda Smyka, Traverse City

\$1000 Cash Prize

Michelle Cronin, Traverse City
Jeff Pasche, Suttons Bay
Bill and Jaimie Kern, Suttons Bay
Ryan Kennedy, Traverse City

Grand Prize Winner

Michael Evans, Frankfort, MI –
Chose \$35,000



CELEBRATE THE
MUSIC
40 YEARS OF RED CARPET EVENTS

GLADHANDER 2022

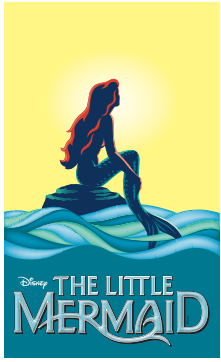
GLADHANDER 2022

October 29, 2022

To donate a unique item or service, contact Wayne Mueller at (231) 995-8428 or kbritten@gtacs.org.

To volunteer, contact Kathy Britten at (231) 941-GLAD or kbritten@gtacs.org.

One of best ways to support Gladhander is to sell or buy raffle tickets! Ask us how!



HIGH SCHOOL MUSICAL

DISNEY'S "THE LITTLE MERMAID" A DELIGHT FOR ALL AGES

Disney productions are notoriously "ambitious", but the cast and crew of The Little Mermaid were rightfully undeterred. The deep bench of talent, combined with an experienced team behind-the-scenes, made this year's production of the musical extremely rewarding and successful. Cast and crew performed for four sell-out crowds, two near-sell-outs, and one special preview night for faculty and staff. A huge hit was the use of "roller-shoes" to simulate swimming "under the sea." Bravo!

SOUND PERFORMERS

MARCHING BAND
SYMPHONIC BAND
JAZZ BAND

Our schools band program continues to thrive under the direction of Charles Taylor. Mr. Taylor inspires students to engage all of their God-given skills and abilities. He has also assembled a team of specialized instructors to help students learn specific instrument categories (e.g., brass or woodwinds).

As a result, our bands not only sound incredible, but they foster leadership, critical thinking, problem-solving, and more.

Marching band performed at half-time during the fall, and wowed audiences with both the quality of the music and the marching.

The symphonic band's Advent and spring Festival of the Arts concerts showcased the musicians' great progress in proficiency and love for their art.

St. Francis faculty member Will Jurkiewicz mentored a jazz band group that performed for the staff Advent party and the "spunch," a special lunch for students.



SONG WORTHY

This year select ensemble was an all-female auditioned choir. Both ensembles performed a beautiful winter/Advent concert in December. Nine singers participated in solo and ensemble festival, which resulted in an invitation for all of them to move ahead to the state festival. Five singers took advantage of that opportunity, and all received "first division" ratings, which is the highest possible. They continue to prepare for the Festival of Arts, the All Schools Mass, and Baccalaureate/Graduation.

FESTIVAL OF THE ARTS

BAND | CHOIR | VISUAL ARTS DISPLAYS - MAY 19, 2022



The 2022 Homecoming Court was recognized – and the King and Queen were crowned – during halftime of the October 16 football game.

MAYA PADISAK
JOHN STUDZINSKI

MARTINA OVIEDO LAGO
BRADY VOLLMER

CORA GARREY
CLARE CAMPILLO
ETHAN MORGAN
TY MARTINCHEK

ANTONIO BONANNI
JAGGER SMITH
GABE MADAY
SOFIA CALL
MEGAN ARNTZ
SOPHIA STILES

GWYNETH PASSINAULT
HUNTER ALPERS

ALWAYS WITH CHARACTER, COMPASSION, COMMITMENT

As Christians, we are called to never give up. When we fall, we pick ourselves up and keep going. Our athletes embody this ethos, and our dedicated coaches and volunteers “leave it all on the field” to help each athlete achieve their potential according to their God-given ability. Thank you, Gladiators, for representing our schools so well.



Gladiator Boys Tennis made history in 2021 by bringing home our Schools' first State Championship title. Five players also earned State Champion awards. Well done, all!

Boys Tennis, 4th in State
Boys/Girls XC, Regional Champs
Boys XC, 3rd in State
Girls XC, 13th in State
Zealand Tarrant, XC All-State
Volleyball, Regional Finalists
Sabres Soccer, District Finalists
Triton Swim, 2nd at Conference
Football, State Champ Runners Up

Boys Basketball, Conference Finalist
Girls Basketball, Conference Champs
Hockey, Regional Finalists
Gavin Wilmoth, Wrestling State Champ
Boys Downhill Skiing, State Runners Up

Baseball, State Runners Up
Softball, Conference/District Champs
Track, 3200 relay State Champs:
Zealand Tarrant, Jacob Heeringa,
Bryson Ellalasingham, Thomas Richards

Girls Tennis, State Runners Up
Girls Tennis State Champs, Alexi Lewis
and Jillian Sodini; Lily Bobrowski,
Runner Up
Lacrosse, Regional Champs

Boys Tennis, State Champs
Jack Britten/Anthony Spranger,
No. 2 Doubles State Champs
Charlie King/Derek Berta,
No. 3 Doubles State Champs
Tristan Bonanni,
No. 2 Singles State Champ
Boys/Girls XC, Regional Champs
Volleyball, Regional Finalists
Sabres Soccer, District Finalists
Triton Swim, 2nd at Conference
Football, State Semi-Finalists
Girls Golf, State Finalists
Gabe Maday, Sailing Silver Medalist



One of the great aspects of athletics is its unique ability to form the character of young people. At GTACS, we have chosen to partner with SportsLeader (sportsleader.org) to help student athletes develop important virtues such as Authenticity, Bravery, Cooperation, Determination, Dignity, Generosity, Gratitude, Honesty, Patience, and Wisdom.



Candlemas



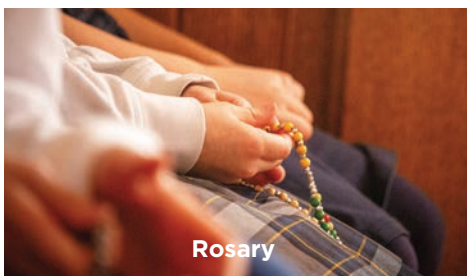
All Saints Day



Ash Wednesday



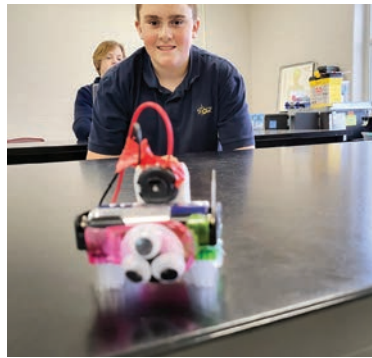
Advent Pageant



Rosary



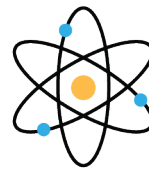
Blessing of the Throats



ROBOTICS

GTACS PARTNERS WITH QUARKMINE

Through a new partnership with Quarkmine – local experts in robotics and other science, technology, engineering, arts, and math (STEM) skills and knowledge development, – we offer extra-curricular programs, camps, and robotics competitions for students in nearly every grade.



QUARKMINE

The program grew by leaps and bounds this year, with one middle school team qualifying for the World competition in Texas!

- ♦ In grades 3-5, students become comfortable with robotics and computer science through hands-on experiences and an introduction to programming.
- ♦ In grades 6-8, students begin to learn more advanced skills and use creativity and technology to solve more complex problems.
- ♦ High schoolers can pursue their love of robotics as an extracurricular “sport for the mind” with many opportunities available.

The STEM class at St. Elizabeth Ann Seton took part in a drone workshop using equipment from Northwestern Michigan College’s Unmanned Aerial Systems (UAS) Training program. Students studied for and passed the FAA’s TRUST examination so they can legally fly larger UAVs outside.



SEAS CHAPEL DEDICATION

In April 2022, chaplain Father Michael Class blessed the new chapel location inside St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Middle School. The expanded sacred space is located off the library.

HALL OF FAME

Nominations are being accepted
at www.gtacs.org/about/hall-of-fame/.



MARCH FOR LIFE

St. Francis High School juniors and seniors attended the 2022 March for Life in Washington, DC – a trip many students consider the highlight of their high school experience. A local march – from St. Francis Church to the Tomb of the Un-born at Oakwood Cemetery – was also offered.

CAMPUS PLANS

GTACS recently surveyed constituents about the possibility of renovating our high school. Overall, those surveyed were complimentary of the new Immaculate Conception Elementary school project, and expressed strong support for major improvements at St. Francis.

Constituents also were in support of the possible relocation of St. Elizabeth Ann Seton to the in-town campus – a concept made possible now that Holy Angels Elementary is now part of Immaculate Conception Elementary.

To learn more, contact Wayne Mueller at (231) 995-8428 or wmueller@gtacs.org.



GLAD MEALS

Glad Meals, the schools' community meals program founded by St. Francis students in 2003, has continued its mission throughout the pandemic.

Since March 14, 2020, volunteers have provided outdoor "meals to go" every Saturday to help those in need in our community. We are grateful to the many families who have kept this important mission going during the past two years. Glad Meals is funded completely through donations.



EVERY GIFT COUNTS

To make a donation to our schools, scan the QR code.



TRADITIONS OF GIVING

Two our favorite traditions are the Catholic Schools Week food drive and the collection of toys for Santa and TC Fire Department. The tradition of "jean days" or "dress down days" also continues, with the third Friday of each month being a day that students, for a donation of a dollar or more, may wear casual, non-uniform attire. This year, in addition to the charitable causes below, we held a special Jean Day to provide support to the citizens of Ukraine.

St. Vincent de Paul | GladMeals | Boots for Kids
TC Fire Department Christmas Toys | K Club| Vocations
High School Mission Trips | Armed Forces Retirement Home
5th Grade Service Trip | Grand Traverse Area Right to Life
Kathy and Mike McNulty Academy, Kenya



GRAND TRAVERSE AREA CATHOLIC SCHOOLS

123 East Eleventh Street, Traverse City, MI 49684

PRSRT STD
Non-Profit Org
U.S. Postage
PAID
Permit 246
Traverse City MI
49684

SAVE THE DATES

May 19, 2022

Faith in our Future
Fundraising Breakfast
plus Festival of the Arts

May 20, 2022

All Schools Mass
Grandparents Day

May 27, 2022

Baccalaureate Mass
Graduation

June 3, 2022

Golf Classic

September 9, 2022

All Schools Mass

October 3-7, 2022

Homecoming Week

October 29, 2022

Gladhander

To learn more about
our schools, please call
(231) 946-8100 or visit
www.gtacs.org.



INDIVIDUALIZED

Catholic schools
provide a personalized
learning experience
that fosters success



CHRIST-CENTERED

Catholic schools
educate the whole child
for a life of encounter
with Jesus Christ.



WELCOMING

At Catholic schools,
students feel safe,
honored, and
celebrated.



JOYFUL

Our school environment
is filled with Christ's
beauty, goodness,
and truth.

