



Standing for those who can't

Life-changing experience for GACC kids attending annual March for Life event

Marching for those who can't is the reason Guardian Angels Central Catholic senior Andrew Franzluebbbers continually felt the need to attend March for Life in Washington, D.C.

This marked the fourth consecutive year he has attended the Pro-Life event. Each year, his desire to make a difference in hope of ending abortion grows stronger and stronger.

"After going that many times, I really felt compelled to continue going," Franzluebbbers said. "I felt that push to stand up for those who can't stand up for themselves."

Franzluebbbers was one of 18 students from GACC High School that attended the March for Life this month. Their group included five chaperones as well.

The March for Life event is the annual Pro-Life rally, which commemorates Roe v. Wade. Similar to years past, people flooded the streets of D.C. to pledge their support.

For first-time goer, senior Jack Baumert, this march really opened his eyes.

"I've always been Pro-Life, but this really rooted me deeper in my stance against abortion," he said.

Fellow classmate Xavier Steffensmeier has now attended three March for Life events. Each has been special, but this year was even more impactful, he said.

"This year just felt different. I felt more of a call to the Pro-Life movement," Steffensmeier said. "It felt good to be there and defend those who can't defend them-





Eighteen students and five chaperones from GACC attended the March for Life in Washington, D.C. Attending the annual event were, from left, front: Isabelle Kaup, Paige Rolf, Gabi Goeden, Josie Dvorak, Brooke Meister, Meghan Brunsing, Elizabeth Karnopp, Anna Wooldrik, Sr. Elizabeth Ann Miller; back: Hannah Schwer, Jack Baumert, Connor Kreikemeier, Ethan Wooldrik, Andrew Franzluebbbers, Tobias Steffensmeier, Xavier Steffensmeier, Noah Hass, April Kreikemeier, Macey Wooldrik, Brian Kreikemeier, Carol Franzluebbbers, Trent Kaup and Ryan Steffensmeier.

MARCH FOR LIFE: GACC attends Pro-Life event in D.C.

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selves.”

Praying in front of the Planned Parenthood center was the most impactful moment for GACC senior Josie Dvorak.

“When you’re in West Point, you hear of abortion. You know about it, but you don’t actually see it happen,” Dvorak said.

“Here, you see a baby inside a woman when she walks in, and then she walks out by herself. That hit me really hard. It made this issue really real to me. It made me want to march even more. It also made me regret only going my senior year. I wish I would have gone more times.”

For GACC senior Gabi Goeden, one of her favorite parts of the march was how joyful and happy it was.

“I loved that part of it. You’re all together for one cause. You’re marching for others, not yourself,” Goeden said.

It’s a happy time not because of the issue being challenged, but because thousands of people from all over the country gather together in hope of one day ending abortion. It’s that hope that creates such a joyful atmosphere.



GACC’s Tobias Steffensmeier, Noah Hass and Xavier Steffensmeier take time for a photo-op with Zahira Lopez (holding the sign) at March for Life. Lopez is a GACC graduate and currently attends UNK. She flew in and joined up with the GACC group.

GACC students who attended the March for Life were: Jack Baumert, Meghan Brunsing, Josie Dvorak, Andrew Franzluebbbers, Gabi Goeden, Noah Hass, Elizabeth Karnopp, Isabelle Kaup,

April Kreikemeier, Connor Kreikemeier, Brooke Meister, Paige Rolf, Hannah Schwer, Tobias Steffensmeier, Xavier Steffensmeier, Anna Wooldrik, Ethan Wooldrik and Macey Wooldrik.



GACC's English Composition class visited the Lincoln People's Mission homeless shelter.

Beyond the classroom, into the community

During the first semester, the English Composition class at Guardian Angels Central Catholic read the book "The Glass Castle," a memoir of a woman whose parents forced an unconventional life of poverty on her and her siblings.

"I really enjoyed reading this book because it brought me through a rollercoaster of emotions. I felt joy, sadness, humor, and even anger while reading it," GACC senior Gabi Goeden said.

"One thing I couldn't believe was how some people live in this world. Jeannette, the author and main character in the book, explains how her parents chose to live homeless for a time in New York. I couldn't understand why they would want to put their kids through that."

After students read the book, teacher Leslie Kreikemeier took the English class to Lincoln to see the Lincoln People's Mission homeless shelter.

"This experience was eye-opening," Goeden added.

Classmate Dylan Duhsmann said, "It was a very humbling moment when I walked into the Lincoln People's Mission and saw

a mother leaving with her young daughter.

"They were not prepared for the cold, winter day. The experience of getting to help the homeless people that are in need was a very satisfying feeling. It's the kind of feeling that makes your heart happy."

Ally Plagge said, "Going into the mission I always considered myself as being a very grateful person in regards to everything that I have been given in this life of mine. I understand the concept of hard work and all the good that comes out of it."

"From walking through the front doors smelling the aromas of different types of people to wrapping presents for people who won't be receiving gifts from their family members made it hard to completely wrap my head around everything that I do have."

For fellow senior Angela Jansen, visiting a shelter was a shocking experience.

"Everyone goes in there with some sort of preconceived idea of what they're walking into. Most people's experiences with homeless shelters are just seeing them on TV," Jansen said. "Actually

visiting one in real life was an experience that I will most likely never forget."

The students got to see how differently some people, even in our state of Nebraska, live.

Another classmate, Jack Baumert was surprised to learn that the average age of homeless people is 7-years-old.

"I thought that was wild because at that age, for me, all I was worried about was watching SpongeBob and trying to not chew with my mouth open," Baumert said.

"It was encouraging to see the programs that help the homeless get back on their feet. I had no idea there were so many ways even a college and high school student could help out," Goeden said.

"I hope to take the experience of the homeless shelter and the memory of the book with me my whole life to remind me how thankful I am and to remind me to reach out in my community."

Plagge added, "After going on our excursion to the mission, I now have a great deal of gratitude for all the blessings the town of West Point and Guardian Angels Central Catholic have given me."

Flood of 2019



Lending a helping hand in a time of need!

In a time of need, hundreds of volunteers showed up to help fill sand bags when flood waters threatened West Point last month (March). Among those helping hands was GACC student Reece Snodgrass. It was those volunteers who played a part in keeping West Point safe.



GACC faculty honored for their service to the school

Guardian Angels Central Catholic recently held its 22nd Annual Development Dinner. At the dinner, GACC faculty members were honored for their service. Those being honored, and their years of service were, from left: Janelle Brester, 5 years; Brooke Meister, 5 years; Kate Hagemann, 5 years; Gene French, 5 years; Carol McAuliffe, 15 years; Cindy Stratman, 30 years; and Denise Baumert, 10 years. Not pictured are Chris Frisbie, 5 years; and Tami Bracht, 15 years.



GACC speech sends 12 to state, two capture medals

Twelve members of the Guardian Angels Central Catholic speech team qualified for the Class C2 state speech meet. State qualifiers are, from left, front: Macey Wooldrik, Elizabeth Karnopp, Ani Acone, Alisen Niewohner, MaKenna Rolf, Brooke Meister; back: Anna Wooldrik, Tobias Steffensmeier, Xavier Steffensmeier, Noah Hass, Andrew Franzluebbbers, Gabi Goeden and head coach Brooke Meister. As a team, GACC finished as the C2-2 District runners-up. In the Class C2 state speech meet, Elizabeth Karnopp placed 4th and Brooke Meister 6th, both in Informative.

BIRTHS

John '99 & Jill Kelly: daughter Juliet Catherine born 8/24/18

Katie (Ridder) '08 & Jacob Neujahr: daughter Ellie Jo born 11/13/18

Jared '03 & Nikki Schmader: son Haeden Gabriel born 12/2/18

Greg '06 & Aliza Brunsing: daughter Rosie Mae born 12/19/18

Luke '05 & Ashley Strehle: daughter Brynn Marie born 12/21/18

Brandt '09 & Katie Wimer: daughter Kalla Suzanne born 12/29/18

Nick '97 & Katie Hugo: daughter Claire Rose born 1/2/19

Kate (Reeson) '00 & Bill Hagemann: daughter Eisley Susan born 1/8/19

Reggie '03 & Brooke Franzluebers: daughter Eliza Jean born 1/31/19

Anthony '11 & Justine (Goeden) '11: daughter Rori Elizabeth born 3/15/19

Bryan '05 & Angela Mendlik: son Skylar Lee born 3/13/19

Matt & Tarah Jansen: son Edward Patrick born 3/27/19

DEATHS

ETERNAL REST GRANT UNTO THEM O LORD

Richard Wortman '54: Date of death 12/29/18

Br. Bernard Stratman '65: Date of death 1/10/19

Ron Lemke '60: Date of death 1/11/19

Dorothy (Wordekemper) Knobbe '46: Date of death 1/20/19

Thomas Reimers '63: Date of death 1/23/19

Mary Ellen (Thiele) Mahlberg '49: Date of death 1/25/19

Gerald Engelmeyer '67: Date of death 2/1/19

Bernard Hunke '84: Date of death 2/9/19

Phyllis (Linnemann) Carrig '48: Date of death 3/9/19

Jessica (Ritter) Petersen '03: Date of death 3/12/19



Jadyn Smeal



Cash Meier

GACC wrestling sends two to state

GACC had two qualifiers for the 2019 state wrestling meet in Omaha. Senior Jadyn Smeal (152) and sophomore Cash Meier. Both wrestlers finished 0-2 at state.

Pro-Life supporters pray in Omaha April 5-6

By Delores Meister

You may be seeing many Bluejay fans wearing new blue t-shirts that read "Jer. 1:5 liferunners.org" with a white cross and tennis shoes, as 75 attendees at the talk received or ordered t-shirts on April 3.

Wearers joined Dr. Pat Castle's Life Runners Apostolate to promote the message of pro-life.

Castle's message at his talk was "FACE It," promoting Life through Faith, Activism, Courts and Education.

A total of 110 people attended the talk, which included the YDisciple groups of St. Mary's, the CCD classes from Clarkson-Leigh, and many people from West Point and surrounding towns.

Nebraska has three abortion clinics: a Planned Parenthood in Omaha, Planned Parenthood in Lincoln, and Dr. Carhart's clinic in Bellevue.

Castle encouraged another local pro-life effort – West Point Pro-Lifers prayed in front of the Omaha Planned Parenthood on April 5-6 as part of the 40 Days for Life, a worldwide effort to pray and stand witness at abortion clinics taking place for 40 days during the spring and fall each year.



Pro-Life talk held in West Point.

Twenty-four individuals signed up to pray at Planned Parenthood on these dates.

Dr. Pat Castle also encouraged attendees to go to the newly released movie, *UnPlanned*, which addresses a former Planned Parenthood Clinic Director's (Abby Johnson) conversion to becoming pro-life.

The movie depicts no sex, no violence, or bad language but does portray an ultra-sound guided abortion.

Remembering Brother Leonard

Family and friends of Brother Leonard Reeson were deeply saddened by his untimely death in an accident this past September. He will be remembered for his warm smile, love of all sports, and his endless stories of his life as a Brother of the Holy Cross.

He was physically fit for a man of his age, probably because he walked miles every day – to and from school or church or anywhere he lived since he moved to Brazil 54 years ago. (His last driver's license was issued in 1972!)

Leonard was born February 4, 1932, the fifth child of John and Mary Reeson. His siblings included Anna, Art, Leona, Loretta and Arlene. He was raised on the family farm north of West Point and began his education at District 28 before going to Guardian Angels at a young age.

He knew early on that he didn't want to farm and was thinking about teaching school.

The late Fr. Leo Wolpert is credited for introducing Leonard to the idea of becoming a religious brother. Fr. Wolpert was an assistant pastor at St. Mary's from 1949-1954 and during this time taught high school religion.

As a 1950 graduate, Leonard was undecided about his future but was guided to a decision during a class party at the river where he experienced a near-drowning. Before being pulled to safety, he promised God to pursue a call to the religious life. Soon after that he applied to the Brothers of the Holy

Cross.

Late in the summer of 1950, Leonard's family took him to Watertown, WI, where he spent six months before going to the novitiate at Rolling Prairie, IN. In February, 1952, he took his first vows of poverty, chastity and obedience.

He spent one semester of study at Notre Dame University after profession, then moved to St. Edward's University in Austin, TX, in 1953. He pronounced his final vows at Sacred Heart Church in 1955.

His studies were interrupted by a series of apostolic services, starting at Gibault Boys' Home in Terre Haute, IN, then at Rancho San Antonio, Chatsworth, CA, St. Francis High School in Mountain View, Holy Cross of San Antonio and Notre Dame of Sherman Oaks. His work involved prefecting and teaching.

Brother Reeson's study for a college degree was mainly in summer sessions. He gained his bachelor's degree in education from St. Edward's in Austin, in 1964.

He was sent to Brazil and taught at Colegio Dom Amando in Santarem over a 19-year stretch, except for a pair of short breaks in the U.S. During his early years in Santarem, Leonard lived part of the time away from the Brother's school residence. He lived in the house of formation with younger Brazilians or on the Brothers' farm on the edge of the Amazon jungle.

Other assignments in Brazil sent Leonard to teach in high

schools and to Sao Paulo where he lived in the Holy Cross formation residence in the Jaguare District. There he directed the candidate program for prospective seminarians and brothers.

He served and taught school in several other locations in Brazil. He was to return to Santarem on September 20.

Brother Leonard was able to return to the United States every three years – every other year recently. His visits to family in Nebraska, Colorado, and California during those breaks were often interrupted by teaching duties in California, Texas, or New York.

His family looked forward to his visits home and felt they were never long enough.

The living members of the Guardian Angels Class of 1950 held a reunion every time he returned from Brazil.

They gathered this past summer during his visit and again for a final tribute at Brother Leonard's funeral Mass, Saturday, September 15.

His younger sister, Arlene, summed up Brother Leonard's life with the following:

"Leonard never wanted to be a priest. He lived a simple life. He respected others. He talked to everyone. By his example he loved God. He never preached or told others what to do. He walked away from gossip. He was a lifetime teacher. He was an example of a humble, holy, happy man loving and serving God."



MARK YOUR CALENDAR

JayFest May 31, 2019

JayFest June 5, 2020

Alumni Banquet June 1, 2019

Alumni Banquet June 6, 2020

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