



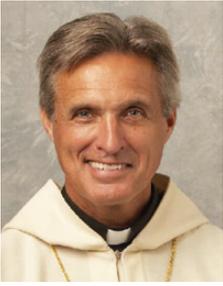
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WINTER 2020



Letter from the Abbot

In 2020, a contagious and deadly coronavirus reshaped our lives. It curtailed social interaction, reduced travel, and left some stranded. During holidays, the dearth of connection to friends and family felt especially acute. We hope that the introduction of vaccines will soon allow us to abandon such confining behavior.

For monks, the restrictions imposed by the virus are likely less onerous than for most. Monks elect to sequester themselves from the world. The separation is intended as no condemnation, but instead as a signpost to God's coming kingdom. We choose this way of life. It ought to be in our wheelhouse. Still the virus has had an impact. Changes have been made to insulate and protect the monastic community, and especially its older members, from the virus. We have no visitors to the abbey. We celebrate the divine office and the Eucharist in the abbey oratory without guests. The monastic staff has been teaching in the school remotely. Br. Jerome has not hosted guests at the farmhouse. When entering buildings other than the abbey itself, we wear masks, sanitize our hands, and practice social distancing. We have all learned more about electronic communication than any of us likely cared to know. But as a friend noted in a Christmas greeting, if God gives us a challenge, it also represents an opportunity.

We are not the first generation forced to deal with a deadly contagion. The Algerian born French novelist Albert Camus published his novel *The Plague* in 1947. I ran across this story about Camus in a homily of Fr. Michael Dibble from 2002. It is a story of a city in North Africa quarantined because of an outbreak of bubonic plague. Characters in the story are driven by their fear both of being imprisoned in a city they cannot leave and by their fear of contracting the deadly disease. That should sound familiar. As research work in preparation for the novel, Camus traveled to North Africa to study leper colonies. He came across a leper colony cared for by Dominican nuns. He recognized one of the nuns - her name was Solange. She had been a debutante in Paris. She was wrapping the sores of a leper when Camus suddenly realized who she was. Reacting with some shock, Camus leaned over, and said to her, "Solange, I wouldn't do what you're doing for a hundred million francs." And the young Dominican nun looked up at Camus, and said, "Albert, neither would I."

After Camus returned to Paris, and he ran into a colleague – the writer John Paul Sartre. Sartre was an atheist famous for his play, *No Exit*. If the title of the play does not provide insight into Sartre's personality, its most notable line probably will. "Hell is other people." Sartre was intimidating and even Camus was wary of him. They were sitting at a café on a street in Paris discussing his travel to the leper

colony. He recounted the story of unexpectedly meeting Solange and telling her that he wouldn't do what she was doing for a hundred million francs. Sartre said, "Well, what did she mean when she said, 'Neither would I?'" And Camus said, "I think the nun meant that she wouldn't do it for any amount of money, that she was doing it for Christ." And Sartre put down his drink, and he said, "She must have been insane!" That was too much even for agnostic Camus. Camus got up disgustedly and said, "Jean Paul, avec tois, je suis fatigued," which roughly translated means, "John Paul, you make me tired."

I suspect many people are tired. Not because of a dismissive attitude towards altruistic behavior. But tired of the self-imposed restrictions to protect ourselves and others from the coronavirus. It is a challenge,

but it is also an opportunity. It is an opportunity to be a manifestation of Christ to others. We do not have to put ourselves or others at risk like Solange in caring for lepers. But we can be creative in finding means to support one another. Friends, family members, even acquaintances can benefit from our support and concern. Reach out to those who are isolated and alone. Let them know that they are not forgotten. Let them know that they are appreciated and beloved. We won't get a hundred million francs for doing it. But will get something more valuable.

Fr. Michael Liebl, OSB





Mrs Christine Kneifl with students in the 1963 yearbook, Le Curé

CHRISTINE KNEIFL

Inspirational teachers never fully know the impact of their legacy. In early December our head of school, Dr. Peters, received a brief note from Sylvester Schieber, a 1964 alumnus of St. John Seminary (predecessor to Mount Michael). He wanted to make a contribution to the school in memory of Christine Kneifl, who died in 1991.



MRS. P. R. KNEIFEL

Mrs. Christine Kneifl was an English teacher and debate coach at St. John Seminary from 1962 to 1966. Mrs. Kneifl was a pioneer. At that time, she may have been the only woman teaching at a minor seminary in the United States. Such were the strictures of the day that women were not allowed to

join the otherwise all-male staff in the monastic refectory. She would eat lunch alone in the guest dining room. Surrounded by monks who were mostly liberal democrats of the 60's, she was an unabashed conservative Republican. She was a proud member of the D.A.R. (Daughters of the American Revolution). As a former seminarian noted, she was viewed with a complex mix of deference and bemusement. She cut an imposing figure. Among the students, she was known as Madame K. The nickname was an oblique bow to a prominent Cold War figure of the time, Madame Chiang Kai-shek.

Her success as an instructor owed to key characteristics which she manifested in abundance. Mrs. Kneifl was devoted. The title of a book she authored speaks volumes about her passion for education - *Legacy, U.S.A.: Opportunity for Full Achievement of the Nation's Children*. She believed in and fostered the talents of her students, especially in the arena of public speaking. Many people shudder at the prospect of speaking before an audience. For someone studying to be a priest, it is a necessity. Johnny Carson once remarked that most people would rather be in the coffin than give the eulogy.

Mrs. Kneifl believed that she could instill confidence. She would corner a student and say, "you could become a top debater." Or as a former student later quipped, perhaps not a top debater, but at least an improved debater. She was ardent in support of her charges. Syl Schieber recalled that he and his debate partner lost in a close contest to the eventual state championship team from one of the largest schools in Omaha. Mrs. Kneifl was livid at the outcome because she thought her debaters made the better case. Interestingly enough, the topic that year was whether the United States should adopt a national health care system.

She believed in providing opportunity. Jim McDermott '66 recalled that Mrs. Kneifl encouraged him to enter the CYO speech competition which focused on Pope St. John XXIII's encyclical, *Pacem in Terris*. Under her guidance, Jim won the state contest. He was able to travel to Washington, D.C. to compete in the national competition because Mrs. Kneifl personally raised the funds. There was no way Jim's own family could have afforded the trip.

Fr. Gerry Gonderinger '66 was honored to be the homilist at the funeral of Mrs. Kneifl in 1991. He had written to her earlier that whenever he got a compliment about a homily, he felt that she had earned some of the credit. He was told by family members that his letter to her was on page number one of her scrapbook. Mrs. Kneifl paid the fees so that Fr. Gonderinger and his debate partner could attend a summer debate camp at the University of Nebraska.

Should any of Mrs. Kneifl's former students so desire, we would happily add a contribution in her name to that begun by Syl Schieber. As he wrote, "I first encountered Mrs. Kneifl as a sophomore in class. She had each of us stand up and do a presentation about ourselves in the class. To say that my presentation was awful would be an understatement. By my senior year, I was on the school debate team... In my professional career I have done innumerable presentations over the years... I have often thought that Mrs. Kneifl laid the foundation for my presentation capabilities." Along with Syl Schieber, we want to offer a thank you to Mrs. Kneifl. Her efforts on behalf of her students deserve this long overdue tribute.



UPCOMING EVENTS

NIGHT OF KNIGHTS
April 10th, 2021

*Get the latest updates
on Mount Michael!*



Mount Michael Benedictine School



@Mount_Michael



Mount Michael Benedictine



Head of School ● ●

DEAR MOUNT MICHAEL COMMUNITY,

As many of you know we have been operating with in-person classes since school started in August. We have kept to our calendar and have, until the week before our final exams in December, been in school every day.

Throughout the fall semester the teachers concurrently provided instruction via two methods: in-person and remote. We gave all our families the option to go remote, and of the 235 students, six chose to go remote for the entire semester. With the COVID virus present in our wider community we did end up with some student exposures and eventually, in November, had our first positive case. Allowing students to stay home, but still engage in their classes live through the remote option was critical to our success. Our goal was to make the transition easy for our young men and their families. It worked very well.

After Thanksgiving we started to see more positive student cases and a couple of staff member cases. Because of this, we decided to go remote the last few days of the semester and to provide our final exams online. This also worked extremely well.

During our fall semester we were able to complete our regular fall sports program. The tennis team played their matches, went to the state tournament, and won the championship! Our cross-country team also ran all their meets, took second in their district, and finished fourth place as a team in the state finals. Our football team played most of their games this season and had a full season. In so many respects it was a fantastic fall sports season. Our teams and coaches did a fantastic job. Yes, we had to adhere to social distancing, masks, and limited attendance. But the main point was that our boys were able to compete. We are very proud of them.

As I write this, our winter sports season is underway and the basketball, wrestling and swim teams are all participating and meeting their schedule expectations!

We have had to cancel many events, but we have been able to participate online for academic decathlon, math, and mock trial. Our students have been able to participate and we applaud and thank the many organizers and those hosting these virtual events!

Our seniors are currently getting ready to take that next step in their lives. We already have several who have earned early acceptance decisions and wonderful scholarship opportunities. Despite COVID, their futures are taking shape!

I want to thank our monastic community for providing their support and guidance during this past semester. We held one all-school Mass out on the football field and since then we have livestreamed Masses from the abbey. Fr. John provided the sacrament of reconciliation and has been able to hear individual confessions through the advent season. It is important that our students still experience the sacraments in this time of COVID. Weekly, Fr. John and our campus ministry offer a group rosary, on Tuesday mornings in chapel before school, and lectio divina on Thursday evenings beginning at 9:00 p.m. in the chapel.

Heading into the spring semester looks very promising. With the vaccines available we all hope and pray for an end to this pandemic and a return to normal routines and life. I want to compliment our staff, students, and families for adhering to our procedures and protocols. It is their commitment to these practices that have helped us to keep them in school, living in the dorms, competing, and participating in extracurriculars and experiencing, as much as possible the 2020-2021 school year.

Thank you all for your constant support and prayers. They mean the world to us.

God bless and please take care,

David J. Peters, Ed.D.
Head of School

HIGHLIGHTS

from the Athletic Director,
Derrick Spooner



One of the greatest gifts is the gift of time and the time to share one's passion with someone else. Mount Michael continues to be blessed with alumni who choose to return to our courts, fields, and track as coaches. This year we have had 23 alumni return to help guide and motivate our athletes (pictured to the right). I am not sure who is getting the most out of the experience – our students or the alumni coaches!

These alumni share their love of their sport, help develop and motivate our athletes, and become mentors to a new generation of Knights.

This winter we have 90 students, more than a third of all students, out for a winter sport. We are in the middle of a pandemic but they are still showing up to practice and compete, all within guidelines to protect the health of all. The pandemic adds many precautions and added steps, but these young men are so focused and motivated. Each day further into our seasons is a success.

Though it is a spring sport, I do want to give special recognition to senior Luke Gutchewski. In November, Luke was named the Nebraska Golf Association's 2020 Nebraska Junior Amateur Golfer of the Year. This past summer Luke won the Nebraska Junior Amateur Championship. This, coupled with other strong play finishes, vaulted him to the top of the NGA Junior Point Standings. Luke plans to play for Iowa State University in the fall. Congratulations Luke!



Mike Pecha '99
CROSS COUNTRY



John Roshone '99
BASKETBALL



Tom Swanson '01
BASEBALL



Matt Luettel '03
TRACK & FIELD



Jordan Dorsey '04
BASKETBALL



Cole Bunner '06
FOOTBALL



Riley Lebbert '07
SOCCER



Andy Jewell '08
JR. KNIGHTS



Michael Bonhoff '11
BASEBALL



Joe Ernst '12
BASEBALL



Zach Murphy '12
JR. KNIGHTS



John VonDollen '12
FOOTBALL, JR. KNIGHTS



J.T. Cronin '13
SOCCER



Matt Lingo '13
FOOTBALL



Tommy Maliszewski '13
BASEBALL, JR. KNIGHTS



Scott Townsend '14
TRAPSHOOTING



Matt Coghill '16
BASKETBALL



Matt Dugick '16
SOCCER



Jacob Idra '16
BASKETBALL



Jackson Thomsen '16
SWIMMING



Dan Jewell '17
BASEBALL



John Kuhry '18
WRESTLING



Jarret Cline '19
WRESTLING



Admissions



Something I have always appreciated about Mount Michael is the administration's realization that snow days are needed sometimes. In a year where cancellations seem to be the norm, a school day cancellation can still bring a welcome boost of morale for the students and teachers. I recall a

snow day my sophomore year at the Mount. My class had the four-man dorm, sharing the floor with the seniors in the neighboring dorm. Rumors began to spread during the 7:30pm study hall, and even the glimpse of hope for a snow day seem to totally hijack those precious 90 minutes to get our work done. Minute by minute, I remember hearing quiet conversations down the hall of other schools closing. With about two minutes left of study hall, our sophomore dean yelled for everyone to gather outside their dorm doors for an announcement, thus ending the 90 minutes of "focus." For us, study hall was over the minute it started.

Our dean, Mr. Tim Struckman, informed us that we were, in fact, going to have a snow day. He gave us the option that night to phone our parents to come pick us up before the weather got too bad, or we could remain in the dorm for the next day. The boarding students from the Class of 2013 didn't give it much thought, we for the most part decided to stay in- the thought of staying up late watching movies, snowball fights, snow football, and intricate snow tunnel

building seemed too good to be true. Waking up the next day, after sleeping in of course, to 10+ inches of snow was a dream. At breakfast we got wind that we were missing out on a party at the pond. Enthusiastically, we sprinted up to our dorm to get bundled up and headed outside. There must have been 40-50 students of all classes already on the frozen pond with the snow cleared off. Indoors, other students were laying low playing board games, video games, or pick-up basketball in the Palace. It seemed every student took full advantage of a day with no schedule!

One might think that COVID-19 would pose a serious threat to admissions. As a matter of fact, this year is proving to be a tremendous success. With a freshman class currently comprised of 64 students, the number of applicants and entrance exam registrations for the Class of 2025 are already exceeding last year. It has not been easy, as we have had to find new and creative ways to show off our school. Despite the adaptation to a virtual recruitment season, we were still able to host a socially distanced Open House where 90+ families were able to attend. Shadow visits have been limited, as have in person tours. However, the care and team effort towards recruitment displayed by the entire school has not gone unnoticed by this Admissions Director. I would like to say thank you to everyone for your help!

Proud to be a Knight,
Tom Maliszewski '13
Director of Admissions



Like a Flower She Rises in Winter as True Beauty

BY FR. JOHN HAGEMANN, O.S.B.



In December, in order to be in line with distancing during the pandemic, I stationed myself in the little Marian Chapel to hear confessions. Again, after all these years of being at Mount Michael, as I was sitting there, I was fascinated by the beauty and simplicity of the statue and the little chapel itself. When Andrew Tagel '23 came in for confession, I was reminded of the history of this chapel and how it came to be. I would like to share that history.

There is a plaque on the wall of the chapel that memorializes Bertha Peetz. It is in her honor. There is also a plaque with a photo of Bertha and Frank Peetz in that chapel. I never knew the full story of why this little chapel was memorialized to Bertha Peetz until 2013.

The name Peetz was not foreign to me, since I hail from Albion, Nebraska, just a few miles south of Neligh. I knew this area as Peetz territory. Dr. Dwaine Peetz I, the son of Frank Peetz, had drawn lots of notice as “the” doctor of the area. When he died recently, the mourners lined the way from the Church to the cemetery as a tribute to him. All the monks would come to know three students who attended Mount Michael High School: Mike Tagel '91, Brian Tagel '94, and Dwaine Peetz III '93. All three of these former Mount Michael students are grandsons of Dr. Dwaine Peetz I, and great-grandsons of Frank Peetz. Actually, the story continues with Andrew Tagel '23 and John Tuttle '21, but back to the story of Bertha Peetz.

Bertha had a lesion on her neck and she thought it should be removed. At that time Bertha and Frank lived in Sidney, Nebraska. Her son Dr. Dwaine was just beginning his practice in Neligh and he thought that he could easily take care of his mother's health issue. However, Bertha opted to go to Omaha and rely on another doctor's expertise. Unfortunately, what was

VIRTUAL FESTIVAL Sets Record

BY MELISSA GATHJE,
DIRECTOR OF ADVANCEMENT OPERATIONS

Ask God who gives to all. Many of us have heard some form of this advice when we are faced with challenges. It is a tall order to truly lift the challenge up and trust God will provide guidance. Lifting our quandary up to God is exactly what the Advancement Office did this year for the Fall Festival, the Abbey's largest yearly fundraiser. We could not gather but still needed to raise dollars to support the Abbey and their mission. In short, God answered: work hard, be creative, and remember the words of the prophet James as he spoke to the twelve tribes during the dispersion: "whenever you face trials of any kind, consider it nothing but joy" (James 1:2).

The Book of James opens with this guidance and then continues, telling us that good can come from trials and we can even find comfort in them. Working as a team, and with a few wonderful volunteers, good did come and fun (joy) was had along the way.

This year we raised over \$100,000, a record amount for the Abbey. Though we could not be at Mount Michael together on a beautiful fall day, we were definitely together as a family to support our monastic community.

Our Virtual Fall Festival kept several traditions and added a few new twists. There was a virtual version of the Gift Draw and even a virtual cake tent guided by two parent volunteers, Susan Gnann and Liz McAndrews. We added a coloring contest to engage kids and revived the 5K Run in a virtual format. The race was won by Mike Pecha '99 and Anne Gathje. Donors gave generously through outright donations and by purchasing or sponsoring specific needs of the Abbey from the Festival donation website. The support, prayers, and blessings shared during a difficult time was quite humbling. Thank you.

James advises us to "ask in faith, never doubting." His message in the beginning of Chapter One is that trials have purpose. Trials also bring wisdom. We learned and grew this Fall Festival, finding new ways to help the Abbey, and found great comfort in the love and generosity shared for our monastic community. It was a wonderful Fall Festival thanks to you!

a very simple procedure did not turn out in a positive way. Apparently, something went awry in anesthesia and Bertha died. Frank was so saddened by it all that he wanted to memorialize his wife. This all happened around the time Mount Michael was being built in the 1950's. There was a connection made with one of the monks and so it happened that Frank Peetz provided for the Marian Shrine in honor of his wife, Bertha Peetz.

In 2013, Mike Tagel approached me and requested that I help prepare him and his fiancée, Jodie Tuttle, for marriage. Jodi also desired to become a Catholic, and so we proceeded forward. Jodi was received into the Church in November of that year and a good portion of the Peetz-Tagel family were here at Mount Michael for that occasion. Even Dr. Dwaine Peetz I and his wife Carmen were here and we did a bit of reminiscing and memorializing in the Marian Chapel that day.

Now coming back to Andrew Tagel, after confession, I asked Andrew if he knew who Bertha and Frank Peetz were, who are pictured on the plaque of the chapel. He hesitated a bit and then I quickly offered "Well, they are your great grandparents!" He frowned. I realized a bit later that Bertha and Frank are his great-great-grandparents. So, we count five generations of members of the Peetz family over all the years of Mount Michael!

The story continues on with the Peetz family at Mount Michael. Andrew is now a sophomore and Jodi Tuttle/Tagel has a son here as well, John Tuttle, who is a senior.

At this time of the year, and especially the first Day of January, the Solemnity of Mary, the Mother of God, our Marian statue here in our little chapel, indeed, stands beautifully. She rises like a flower blooming in the wintertime. May she be a reminder of Bertha Peetz and Mary, the Mother of God, as a source of help and protection during these times of the pandemic.

ALUMNI ASSOCIATION



The Alumni Association annually plans many events for our members to gather together and meet with current students. Efforts to ensure everyone's safety during the COVID-19 pandemic led us to cancel many of these this past year. These were not decisions made lightly as these gatherings are some of our most beloved. We hope to return to these events in the upcoming year.

Over the past year, however, the Alumni Association introduced several new initiatives to our list of traditional events. I look forward to growing our recently founded Alumni Breakfasts and to be able to connect and support the school with our Career Knight. Some of our favorite annual events like the Alumni Basketball Tournament, Breakfast with Santa, Class Reunions, and the 5th Quarter gatherings, amongst others, will return as soon as we can safely gather!

On a positive note, unarguably our most successful event, the Annual Golf Classic, continues to flourish. With the appropriate safety measures in place, this past August was our fourth consecutive sell-out of the event at Iron Horse Golf Club in Ashland, NE. It would not have been possible without our sponsors, staff, and volunteers. One of our main goals is to make this flagship event better every year and I'm proud to say that is happening.

The success of our events not only gives us an opportunity to connect, but it also helps us raise funds to support the school. The Alumni Association's annual net income is allocated in the following ways:

- * **50% of net income goes toward the Fr. Benedict Dohle Alumni Scholarship.**
- * **10% goes toward the general fund of the annual appeal for the school – The Knight Fund.**
- * **40% of our association income goes toward the operating budget for the coming year's alumni events.**

Overall, the Alumni Association had a net income of approximately \$29,000 for the 2019-2020 year—with nearly \$15,000 going to scholarships and another almost \$3,000 going to the general school fund. Additionally, the alumni board approved a significant financial contribution to support the faculty and staff of The Mount to help negate the hardships of this pandemic.

\$29,000
2019-2020 YEAR

As we continue through these unprecedented times, I encourage you to stay connected. Whether that be by checking out our alumni webpage to see all the events and opportunities we have, joining our alumni Facebook group, or updating your contact information, it all helps us keep in touch. We strive to keep our database current so that you can connect with the entire community, find former classmates, and expand your network.

The mission of the Mount Michael Alumni Association is to create lifelong, mutually beneficial relationships between Mount Michael alumni, future alumni, and the high school through scholarships, social programming, and networking events.

Our association consists of a group that is drawn together by our shared experience at The Mount. Currently, the alumni board has thirteen members. Board members' graduation years range from 1979 to 2014. We meet several times a year to organize events and discuss ways we can further cultivate participation amongst alumni like you.

Thank you for your continued support of the Mount Michael Alumni Association, Abbey, and School.

Once a Knight. Always a Knight.

John Von Dollen '12
Mount Michael Alumni Association President

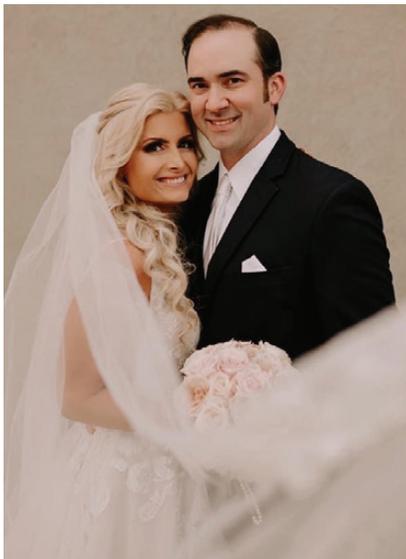


If you have any ideas on future alumni events, would like to contact the alumni board, or would like to make a contribution to the Alumni Association, please email alumni@mountmichael.org.

Alumni News

WEDDINGS

Greg Hall '04 married Elizabeth on November 21st, 2020.



BIRTHS

Jack Horgan '07 and his wife Melissa welcomed their second son Henry Schamel Horgan on November 23rd, 2020.



Zach Loeffelholz '11 and his wife Jori welcomed their son Theodore Joseph Loeffelholz on November 26th, 2020.



Mike O'Donnell '10 and his wife Meagan welcomed their daughter Grace Marie O'Donnell on December 12th, 2020.



Matt Brester '90

Caleb Brester '21

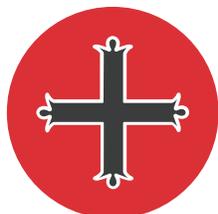
LEGACY HIGHLIGHT

Nearly ten percent of our current students have a legacy to the Mount. This connection made from father to son, uncle to nephew, or grandfather to grandson shows the pride our alumni take in our school. They enjoyed and benefitted from their experience so much as a student that they want to share it with their own family. One perfect example of this is the Brester legacy.

Dr. Matthew Brester '90 sadly died in 2008. His wife, Michelle, has countless stories of Matt's love for Mount Michael. Matt would tell her, "Mount Michael will always be a home and a family to me." One of his wishes was for their son, Caleb, to attend Mount Michael. Caleb is a senior this year. It is legacies like these that make the Mount Michael family special.

If you would like to include an announcement in an upcoming issue of the *Michaelen*, please contact:

John Von Dollen '12,
402-238-1447
jvondollen@mountmichael.org





ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT

CLASS OF 2020

BY JACOB GATHJE '20

As a college freshman in 2020, there were two key things I realized in my first semester at school. One, don't use the washer third from the left. All it does it fill with water and then stop for no apparent reason. Two, thank goodness I went to Mount Michael.

As the pandemic causes havoc across the world, members of my graduating class are living an unusual college experience. Vu Phan, who is studying at California State University, Long Beach, has all of his classes online. John Schroll has a mix of in person and online learning at UNL, as does Alex Payne at Creighton.

I'm attending St. John's University in Minnesota. To limit the spread of COVID-19, St. John's shifted to a block schedule, meaning I take one class every four weeks.

With all these different experiences around the country, there's one thing each of us rely on: the solid foundation we built at Mount Michael.

I've noticed two specific advantages of a Mount Michael foundation: time management and community building.

Time management is a skill every Mount Michael graduate possesses, whether they were a day student or a boarder. Freshmen, sophomores, and juniors have supervised study halls during the day. Seniors have a free period to study or take a break. And of course, boarders have study hall each night.

My first three years, I learned the benefits of study halls. They decreased time needed to study at home and were a set time to get work done. Senior year, those benefits were ingrained within me, and I still used them to get schoolwork done.

That concept applied to college. I don't have a set study time

because each day is different, but I designate times solely for study. I put my phone away and get to work, just like study hall at Mount Michael.

Additionally, time management allowed us graduates to participate in more than just school. Schroll joined the National Guard this fall and expects to balance both college and military service.

I run cross country and track and field, meaning I practice each day the entire school year. Thanks to my Mount Michael experience, I could also write for the student newspaper each week, manage a work study, and run for the school senate without hindering my academics or athletics.

Along with time management, another challenge for freshmen is meeting friends. This is heightened this year, as we are discouraged to be around people and occasionally spend weeks quarantined.

While we weren't exempt to these drawbacks, we still connected with people. We knew from our time at Mount Michael that the easiest way to do that is to get involved.

Since most of the clubs and athletics shut down or moved online, the only place I could meet people was in class. Most classes had the option of learning in person or online, so I went in person as much as I could. That helped me build relationships with my professors and classmates.

This was especially evident in my last class, where only nine of us were in the classroom each day. This was helpful both academically and socially, as I succeeded in my class while having fun.

My classmates also found ways to build community. Payne helped create a fantasy football league, where he could meet new people and interact with them throughout the fall. He even helped organize a draft night where all league members dressed up in suits and ties.

I never pictured my first year of college looking like this. However, thanks to Mount Michael, I felt more capable of handling whatever 2020 threw at me.



GO → 2021 Night of Knights

Please join us on Saturday, April 10, 2021 for Mountopoly- our 32nd Annual Mount Michael Night of Knights. This year will look a little different as we play a “Chance Card” and host a hybrid Night of Knights, playing it safe for all our community.

We are eager to support the school by raising funds from the silent and live auctions, advertising, virtual events, an underwriting campaign, and raffle. All proceeds from Night of Knights– 100% – are dedicated to the school’s operating budget; it is our most important fund raising event of the year! This event helps us provide the necessary learning environment, tools, and highly qualified faculty for the 236 students at Mount Michael.

More information and opportunities to support the event are available at www.nightofknights.org. Tickets to participate in our online event will go on sale soon. We hope to “see” you then!

Saturday | April 10, 2021
nightofknights.org

ABBEY GIVING

Everyone has their own unique journey that connected them to Mount Michael, but we are all drawn together by the Benedictine values, especially that of community and caring for one another.

Annual contributions to the Abbey’s Annual Fund provide a steady source of revenue for the Abbey, helping them continue their mission grounded in a life of work and prayer. They have dedicated their lives to serving God and caring not just for their Mount Michael family but also to serving in our wider community. Your partnership truly makes a difference and allows them the necessary resources to support their lives as they serve and guide others.

I encourage you to become an Abbey GEM (Giving Every Month). Our GEMs are individuals or corporations who choose to give to the Abbey on a monthly or quarterly basis. GEMs are a new category of donors and will be recognized each new year in the Michaeleen. Regular, scheduled giving, is a special blessing because it provides a stable foundation of funds to support our monastic community.

Also especially crucial to the Abbey are our Impact Partners. Impact Partners are those donors who choose to give one-time gifts or gifts for a focused purpose. These givers are especially important because they make an Impact. One-time and annual gifts directly support the daily life at the monastery.

BUS BARN



“I’d like to help.” That’s the message Abbot Michael received from several alumni. Thanks to the generosity of Bill Heller ‘62, Tom Hastings ‘69 and his wife Patty, and their son David we just completed construction of a new Bus Barn. The barn sits just north of the tennis courts and will not only protect the buses from the elements but also extend their life. The structure itself was donated by Bill who cites former Abbots Anselm and Raphael as influences. Bill also worked on the building’s electrical installation. The Hastings helped complete the project by funding and constructing the road that leads to the new bus garage as well as the concrete “hammerhead” in front of the barn that the Fire Marshall required.

IN REMEMBRANCE

Carolyn “Sue” Walters, mother of Matt ‘91, Justin ‘95, and Andrew Walters ‘03 and grandmother of Wyatt Walters ‘22

James “Jim” Lewis, father of Jim Lewis and grandfather of J.T. Lewis ‘10

John Synowicki, Jr., grandfather of John Davis ‘23

Bernard Akromis, father of Matthew Akromis ‘87

Rita Schall, grandmother of Jack ‘16 and Joe Hitzemann ‘19

Donna Rae Furlong, mother-in-law of B.J. Wilson ‘84 and grandmother of Andrew Wilson ‘18

Michael Obal, uncle of Andy ‘08, Graham ‘12, Kevin ‘14, and Daniel Jewell ‘17

Rose Marie Kirby, great-grandmother of Michael ‘21 and Nathaniel Oehler ‘23

Francis Kleinschmit, grandfather of Sam Kleinschmit ‘23

Phyllis Krahmer, mother-in-law of Tom Hastings ‘SJS and great-grandmother of Jagger Hastings ‘22

Mary Anne Cronican, mother of Michael ‘82, James ‘83 (RIP), and Matthew Bianchi ‘88

Jerry Hagemann, brother of Fr. John Hagemann, O.S.B. ‘68 and Alan Hagemann ‘83

David A. Distefano, father of Brian Distefano ‘83

Rose Marie Roberts, grandmother of Lucas ‘02 and Tim Struble ‘04

Michael T. Borer, friend of Mount Michael

Barbara Van Haute, grandmother of Vince ‘11, Nate ‘12, Sam ‘16, Luke ‘18, and Drew Van Haute ‘23

Elizabeth “Liz” Marasco, aunt of Nico Marasco ‘12

Chris Engelbert, uncle of Andrew ‘24 and Peter Gates ‘22

Dorothy Murphy, grandmother of Sean ‘10 and Zach Murphy ‘12



Mass Information

If you find that your pastor is unable to conveniently take care of Masses you wish to have celebrated for your particular intentions, Mount Michael Abbey welcomes the requests for such intentions. We will see to it that the Masses are celebrated as promptly as possible.

The offering you make should correspond with that suggested by the diocese in which you reside. Your pastor will be able to inform you of what the stipend of a particular diocese may be.

Mass Intentions: \$10.00

Please address such requests to:

**Mass Intentions
Development Office
Mount Michael Benedictine Abbey
22520 Mount Michael Road
Elkhorn, NE 68022**

Memorial & Tribute Information

Often, inquiries are made about our memorials and tributes for relatives and friends, living or deceased. At Mount Michael one can enroll families or friends in our memorial and tribute foundation. This consists of daily remembrance at the Eucharist and the Divine Office by the monks of Mount Michael Abbey. Upon enrollment, we will notify the family with a card.

The suggested offering for this memorial enrollment is:

INDIVIDUAL	FAMILY
One Year \$50	One Year \$100
Five Years \$100	Five Years \$200
Lifetime \$250	Lifetime \$500

In Memoriam & Honor

October 3rd, 2020 – December 31st, 2020

Mount Michael Benedictine keeps all those in memoriam and honor in our prayers.

In Memory of Bernard Akromis Pega

In Honor of Bill Behrendt
Mary Beth Wiese

In Memory of Joe Beninato
Mary Clare Beninato

In Memory of Robert Carlson
Dr. David and Nancy Peters

In Honor of the Class of 1962
Patrick Cunningham 'SJS

In Memory of Ross Crist
Lisa Crist

In Memory of Dr. Jennifer Dameron
Judy Fahey

In Memory of Helen Sinh Dang
Serge Tran '87

In Memory of Dr. and Mrs. Demman
Dan and Tricia Smith

In Memory of Salvatore DiGeronimo
BJ '84 and Lori Wilson

In Memory of Fr. Benedict Dohle
Sylvester 'SJS and Vicki Schieber

In Honor of Michael Fahey and family
Judy Fahey

In Memory of Charles Fellows
Greg and Kaye Tillotson

In Memory of Dale and Elaine Filkins
Gregory Filkins

In Memory of Donna Rae Furlong
Kevin and Linda Hitzemann
Brian '84 and Kris Morrissey

In Memory of Lloyd Gray
Dr. David and Nancy Peters
Boyd and Kathleen West

In Honor of Cole Gustafson '23
Debra Houghton

In Honor of Sam Gustafson '21
Debra Houghton

In Honor of Luke Gutschewski '21
Bernard and Vicki Gutschewski

In Memory of Jerry Hagemann
Dr. David and Nancy Peters

In Memory of John Heavy
Patricia Schaefer

In Memory of Dylan Johnson '16
Jeff and Colleen Starman

In Memory of Christine Kneifl
Sylvester 'SJS and Vicki Schieber

In Memory of Tim Koch '09
Bob and Lisa Goldsmith

In Memory of Theresa Kohanek
Derald and Susan Peters

In Memory of Bernard Kouba '69
Al '69 and Mary Liekhus

In Memory of Winifred Kouba
Al '69 and Mary Liekhus

In Memory of Nate LaFave '16
Jeff and Colleen Starman

In Memory of Vincent and Myra Langenfeld
Steven Langenfeld '71

In Memory of Donald and Barbara Lanspa
Mark Lanspa '80
Paul '86 and Katryce Lanspa

In Honor of Abbot Michael Liebl, O.S.B.
Joe 'SJS and Mary Borsh

In Memory of James Maenner
Tom and Caye Fulcher

In Memory of Fr. Albert Massmann, O.S.B.
David and Joanne Kolenda

In Memory of Fr. John McCaslin
Monica Clark
Edward and Jane Dineen
Ken and Janet Dudek
Dennis 'SJS and Darlene Koley
John and Carol Maginn
Cathie Neneman

In Memory of John McCoubrey
Michael and Betsy Sorensen

In Memory of Ruth McLeay
Bill and Jeanette Behrendt

In Memory of John Moylan
Daniel and Tricia Smith

In Memory of Samuel Okalebo
Jane Okalebo

In Memory of Josph Oligmueller
Eric and Emily Coldiron
Bill and Jeanette Behrendt

In Memory of Charles O'Rourke
Gerald and Mary Cook

In Memory of Walt Rauterkus
Jerry and Delana Rauterkus

In Memory of Rita Schall
Anonymous
Brian '84 and Kris Morrissey
John and Jennifer Pink
Margaret Tigges

In Memory of Br. Francis Schmitz, O.S.B.
Michael and Betsy Sorensen

In Memory of Sebastian Sequenzia
Bill and Jeannette Behrendt

In Honor of Jack Skahan '24
Don and Eva Skahan

In Memory of Br. Andrew Sorensen, O.S.B.
Michael and Betsy Sorensen

In Memory of James and Florena Sorensen
Michael and Betsy Sorensen

In Memory of Jon Tefft
Boyd and Kathleen West
Tom and Sue Tefft

In Memory of Fr. Richard Thell, O.S.B.
Jeff and Colleen Starman

In Honor of Matthew Thiele '18
Bob and Betty Knapp

In Honor of David Uwinganji '14
Anonymous

In Memory of Patricia Vonachen
Bill and Jeanette Behrendt

In Memory of Abbot Raphael Walsh, O.S.B.
Jeff and Colleen Starman

In Memory of Carolyn Walters
Rodney and Elizabeth Benson
Peter Martin
Dr. David and Nancy Peters
Andy and Teresa Ryba
Matt '91 and Paula Walters
Nick '96 and Erin Wessling

In Memory of Gerard Wemhoff
Robert and Annette Coon
Doug Kelley
Dr. Louis and Jackie Sojka
Don and Constance Taylor
Douglas '85 and Dee Wemhoff

In Honor of Bernie and Rose Wilson
David '78 and Laura Wilson

22520 Mount Michael Road | Elkhorn, NE 68022-3400
402-289-2541 | www.mountmichael.com

Michaeleen

A Quarterly Publication of
MOUNT MICHAEL BENEDICTINE ABBEY & SCHOOL

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Mount Michael Directory

Mount Michael Chapel
Visitors are welcome (currently closed to public due to COVID-19)
Daily Mass 7:15am | Sunday Mass 9:30am | Saturday 8:00am

Liturgy of the Hours (Monday-Saturday)
Morning Praise 6:30am | Noon Day Prayer 11:45am
Vespers 5:15pm | Night Prayer (In the Abbey) 7:00pm

St. Benedict Guest House
Gift Shop/Lunches/Teas/Dessert | Day Retreats
Brother Jerome Kmiecik, O.S.B., 402-206-2069

Vocation Ministry
For information about monastic life:
Brother August Schaefer, O.S.B., vocations@mountmichael.org

Oblates of St. Benedict Director
Brother Jerome Kmiecik, O.S.B., 402-206-2069

Alumni Association
For information about meetings/events or to report news:
John Von Dollen, 402-238-1447, alumni@mountmichael.org

Prayer Needs and Spiritual Direction
Abbot Theodore, O.S.B., 402-206-2089

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