

THE IRISH CONNECTION

What did
you do
on your
summer
vacation?

Heath Baldwin (HCP '19)
'feeling hungrier than ever'
after strong Olympic debut



Keith Crowell

Advancement Director
Catholic Schools of
Greater Kalamazoo
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ALSO IN THIS ISSUE:

- We Honor our Veterans (page 4)
- New Faculty (page 5)
- Hall of Famers and Award Winners (page 10-11)

What did you do on your summer vacation?

We've heard blissful recounts of gentle breezes by the lake, weeks up north, and some interesting out-of-state travels. But wow, some of the more aggressive pursuits within our Irish family resulted in some remarkable achievements:

- 2019 Alum **Heath Baldwin** won the USA Decathlon Olympic Trials in Eugene, celebrated a hometown send-off for the ages, and traveled to Paris where he had a strong showing in the Olympics; (page 8)
- Hackett theology teacher **Mary Gergely, J.D.** was accepted for publication by the Vatican for her Christological Pedagogy, *The Sanctity of the School*; (page 6)
- St. Augustine 8th grader **Kyler Germinder** won a spot in the Junior Olympics in Columbia, SC, and proved he's among the elite pole vaulters in his age group; (page 9)
- St. Augustine 8th grader **Danilo Ramirez** headed to NBA Summer School in the Dominican Republic and averaged 50 points per game, while leading all players in rebounds; (page 9)
- St. Augustine 7th grade race car driver **Luke Valkner** won the Midwest Thunder Regional Quarter Midget race in Columbus, OH; (page 9)
- **Seniors** eager to start their final year return a day early for an important art project. (page 7)

Welcome back. It was a memorable summer to be sure.

Join us for an Anniversary Mass
and reception to celebrate 60 years
of Hackett Catholic Prep,
and Msgr John Hackett

Bishop Edward Lohse, Celebrant

Wednesday, October 2, 10:45 am

Hackett Catholic Prep Auditorium
1000 W. Kilgore Rd. / Kalamazoo, MI 49008

Covenant Scholarship

*Covenant Scholarship available to students: preschool-8th grade

No child will be denied a
Catholic Education
due to financial need

*Must be an active and registered Parishioner
of one of the 8 supporting parishes

Teachers Receive Back-to-School Checks from Faculty Endowment

For the fifth consecutive year, all returning CSGK teachers received a back-to-school bonus check in the days prior to students' return. Checks were presented at in-service meetings by fund co-founders Andrew Riker and Ellen Brown, and CSGK Advancement Director Keith Crowell.

With the fund still in its infancy, the per-teacher amount of this year's distribution was more than three times the initial distribution in 2019.

Ambitious goals seek to continue growing this fund and narrow the pay gap with area public schools.

"Donors give to what they love, and they love our teachers," says Brown. "We've had a wonderful first five years, but the vision is so much larger. When I look five, 10, 20 years out, it makes my heart sing to think of the possibilities."

"Donors give to what they love, and they love our teachers...It makes my heart sing to think of the possibilities."

– Ellen Brown

As an endowment fund managed by the Kalamazoo Regional Catholic Schools Foundation, the fund principal remains untouched, invested in growth funds. Each year, a percentage of the fund's growth is paid out and over time, with continued donor support, the principal will build.

Says Riker, "Our donors will continue to be faithful and our prayers are for more remarkable blessings to fall on us."

CSGK Faculty Endowment by the Numbers

- Over \$600,000 donated to date
- Over \$70,000 distributed as bonuses to faculty
- Current fund balance \$630,000 (as of 3/31/24)
- Fund management by the Kalamazoo Regional Catholic Schools Foundation
- 388 gifts have been received to date

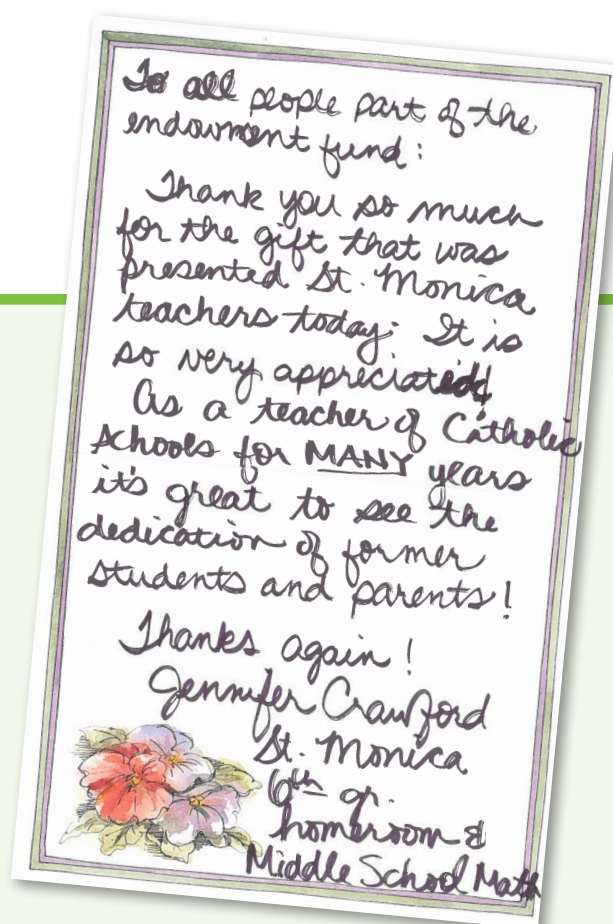
Help make a difference for our teachers!

Fund donations can be made via:

- 1 the **QR CODE** (to the right)
- 2 **GO TO** csgk.org/endowedfunds or
- 3 with a **CHECK** to CSGK, 1000 W. Kilgore Rd., Kalamazoo, MI 49008. Indicate 'Faculty' in the memo



For more information on the broader vision for the Faculty Endowment Fund, contact Keith Crowell at kcrowell@csgk.org or 269.381.2646 x109



WE HONOR AND REMEMBER OF OUR ALUMNI VETERANS

Over the past year, CSGK staff and students at Hackett have been working to identify and connect with our veteran alumni and their families and learn more about their service to our country. To date, more than 650 have been verified. Thank you to everyone who has helped track down our veteran heroes.

Below we are pleased to share a glimpse at a few of our alum's service duty. For recognition in a future *Irish Connection*, please send service details on behalf yourself or a loved one, to Tyline Zimmerman at Tzimmerman@csgk.org. Be sure and include the school and year of graduation, or final year of Catholic School.

Frederick Fisher, Hackett '67: Lieutenant Colonel USAF (Ret): "While serving in the Air Forces, I had the opportunity to travel to over 19 countries. Vietnam was the first in October 1969, where I served with the Military Assistance Command Vietnam (MACV) in Advisory Team 62. I served 27 years in the United States Air Force."

George Adams, St. Augustine '56: Lieutenant Colonel USAF (Ret): "I entered the U.S. Air Force in 1959, went through pilot training, was commissioned a 2nd Lieutenant in 1960, and was in the Vietnam War from 1961 through 1964. I have flown quite a lot and like to tell people that I've spent over a year and a half off this earth (12,274 hours in the air)...I retired from the Air Force in 1988."

Stephen Coles, Hackett '10: "I graduated Hackett in 2010 and joined the Navy 2015-2020."

Elizabeth A. Jones, Hackett '80: Captain U.S. Navy (Ret): "I served in the Navy from 1985 to 2008. U.S. navy captains are the equivalent of colonels in the other services."

Donald Courtois, St. Augustine '47: "I served in the US Air Force for four years, January 1951 to January 1955. I was trained as a radar technician and was stationed in Libya part of the time. At that time, we had a large Air Force base near Tripoli to help protect Europe from Russian aggression."

Julius "Matt" Matyas, St. Augustine '42: He served in the U.S. Army Air Forces during WWII receiving the Silver Star and two Bronze Battle Stars in five combat campaigns.

John F. Lattin, Hackett '67: Retired from the U.S. Army as a Command Sergeant Major.

Mike Hodges, Hackett '74: "I served in the United States Air Force from 1982 to 1990. I was an Air Force Officer and pilot. I flew hospital ships throughout the United States and a few missions in Europe."

Steve Russell, St. Augustine '62: "As for serving, it was an honor and a privilege. I was a Navy pilot, and I flew an A-7E jet from the U.S.S. Enterprise during the Vietnam War. After that, I became a Special Agent for the F.B.I."

William Magnan, St. Augustine '44: Mr. Magnan was a Navy veteran of World War II, one of six brothers who served their country during that War. He served in the South Pacific.

Ron Curley, Hackett '74: "I spent three years on a Naval aircraft carrier (1974-1977). I loaded weapons on jets for my job and did two seven-month deployments in the Mediterranean Sea. When we weren't on the line off the coast of Lebanon, we visited Italy, France, Spain, Africa, and many more seaports."

Doug Pawloski, Hackett '70: "I served in the Army 1973 to 1975 as a clerk-typist. I also served in the Navy 1976 to 1980 as an electronic warfare operator."

Mike Olszewski, Hackett '67: "I went in the Army June of '67, ten days after graduation. I served almost 3 years."

Kaelan Redmond, Hackett '17 1st Lt. U.A. Army: "Right now, I serve as an infantry platoon leader in the 1st Armor Division and have already deployed to South Korea and participated in multiple tank live fires."

Ed Rapacz, Hackett '67: "After Hackett, I went to WMU for a year, met my wife, and joined the Air Force in 1968. I served four years as a security policeman. I was sent to Vietnam in 1971 where I was stationed at Bien Hoa Air Base. I worked the night shift on base security duty. I was proud to serve my country."



WELCOME to the new year at Hackett!

We have been praying for you and your family this summer. We're excited about this school year and the opportunities it presents.

Hackett adopted an "Away For The Day" policy regarding cell phones and is pursuing sustained professional development throughout the year for our teachers. We want to provide you with the best education possible and to create an environment to nurture the growth of the whole person.

We pray and hope for a year filled with many blessings.

In Christ,
Trevor Scoles



WELCOME to St. Augustine Cathedral School!

Each new school year brings excitement and hope! We are excited to be together, to meet new friends and spend time with old friends. We are hopeful that we will realize our mission, to grow in faith, knowledge and stewardship.

Please join us in praying for our students, staff and parents, that we will be inspired by the Holy Spirit to live and love as He has commanded. Our patron, St. Augustine, teaches us that, "He who is filled with love is filled with God himself." This year let's fill our school with God!

Pax Christi!
Andra Zommers



WELCOME new families and happy returns to all others!

How wonderful it is to be back in our circle of faith and inspiration! I have heard great things about so many amazing summer adventures, but there's something comforting about returning our daily routine, to our St. Monica family.

For all the planning and preparation that occurs before opening day, we know there will be the unexpected issues to solve and Godly blessings to rejoice. We ask our Holy Father to give us the strength and endurance to share His teachings to our students and each other in honoring ways.

In Christ,
Jordon Beery

WELCOME TO OUR NEW TEACHERS

DOUG FULLER

Hackett Catholic Prep
Math

IAN DALY

St. Augustine Cathedral School
Middle School Social Studies

JEN WHITING

St. Monica
4th grade—Welcome back!

THERESA KOHLER

Hackett Catholic Prep
Math

AMY LINDSAY

St. Augustine Cathedral School
Middle School Science

DAN HELNER

St. Augustine Cathedral School
Middle School ELA



How can algebra help me become a saint?

by Pam Shebest

That is a question that continued to intrigue Mary Gergely from the time she was a freshman in high school.

Her search for answers became more intense in 2008 when she began researching how the subjects taught in schools find their natural end in theology.

“The idea is that it is all about how you make Christ and specifically the Eucharist, the center of Catholic education,” Gergely said. “I was frustrated (in high school) because

I literally was seeking the answer to how can algebra help me become a saint?”

“That’s where it started. This paper (*The Sanctity of the School; A Christological Pedagogy*) really represents these questions that I have been asking since high school. I got more and more into philosophy and theology in college and I continued after college to take classes and read as much as I could.”

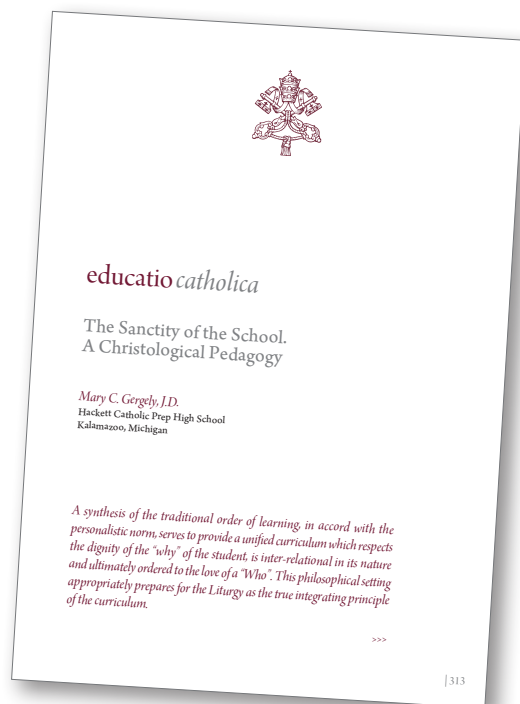
In 2008, she met David Clayton, who authored the book, *The Way of Beauty*.

“David really enlightened me as to the deeper meaning of the liturgy and I could then understand the order of learning in light of the liturgy,” she said. “In addition to that, I really got into St. John Paul II’s Personalism and Theology of the Body and began to understand education in the light of this deeper Christian anthropology.

“The basic idea of it is that there’s an order to education that corresponds to how we’re made for relationship, and we really find that the best explanation is found in the liberal arts. An ordered relationship among the disciplines permeates the very order of learning because it permeates the way we are made, even the way we think. This also takes into account St. John Paul II’s tremendous work that he did in understanding the modern mind and the modern heart. Rather than being a set of stagnate and abstract set of subjects, education when properly understood is rather a formation of the human person into coming into union with a God who has made us by and for love, with a purpose or mission; to be self-gift.”

Gergely explains that when looking at language arts for example, language actually helps a student prepare to learn mathematics because language is where people first learn about the relationship between subject and object.

“You’re not leaving those classes for the purpose of practical information.



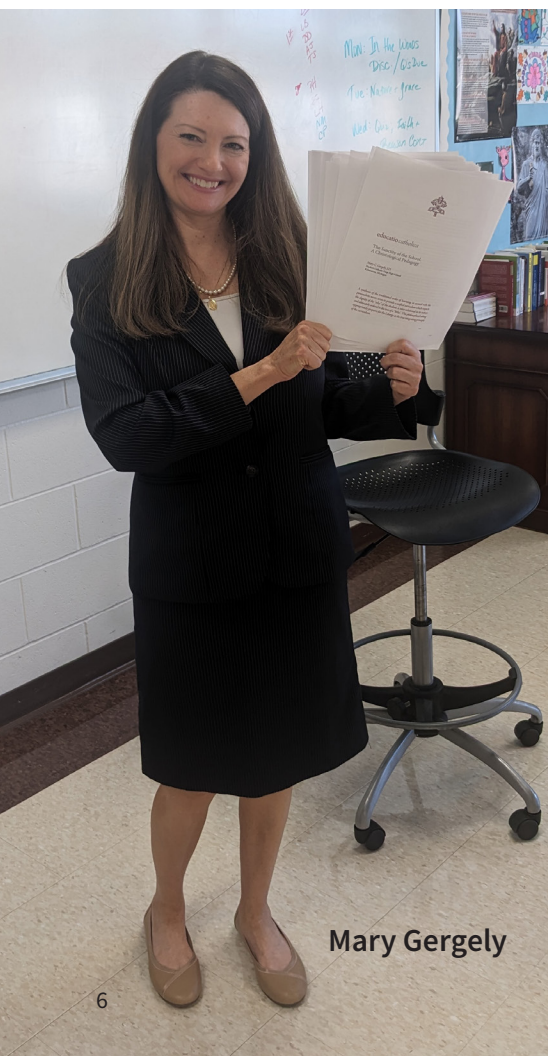
You’re leaving those classes because you’re developing the logical tools in your mind to see relationship.

“There is an order to learning. Tranquility or peace is when things are ordered. What I hope is that we can see that there is a deeper purpose to what we’re doing. The deeper purpose for going to school, the deeper ‘why’ is found in coming into union with Christ.

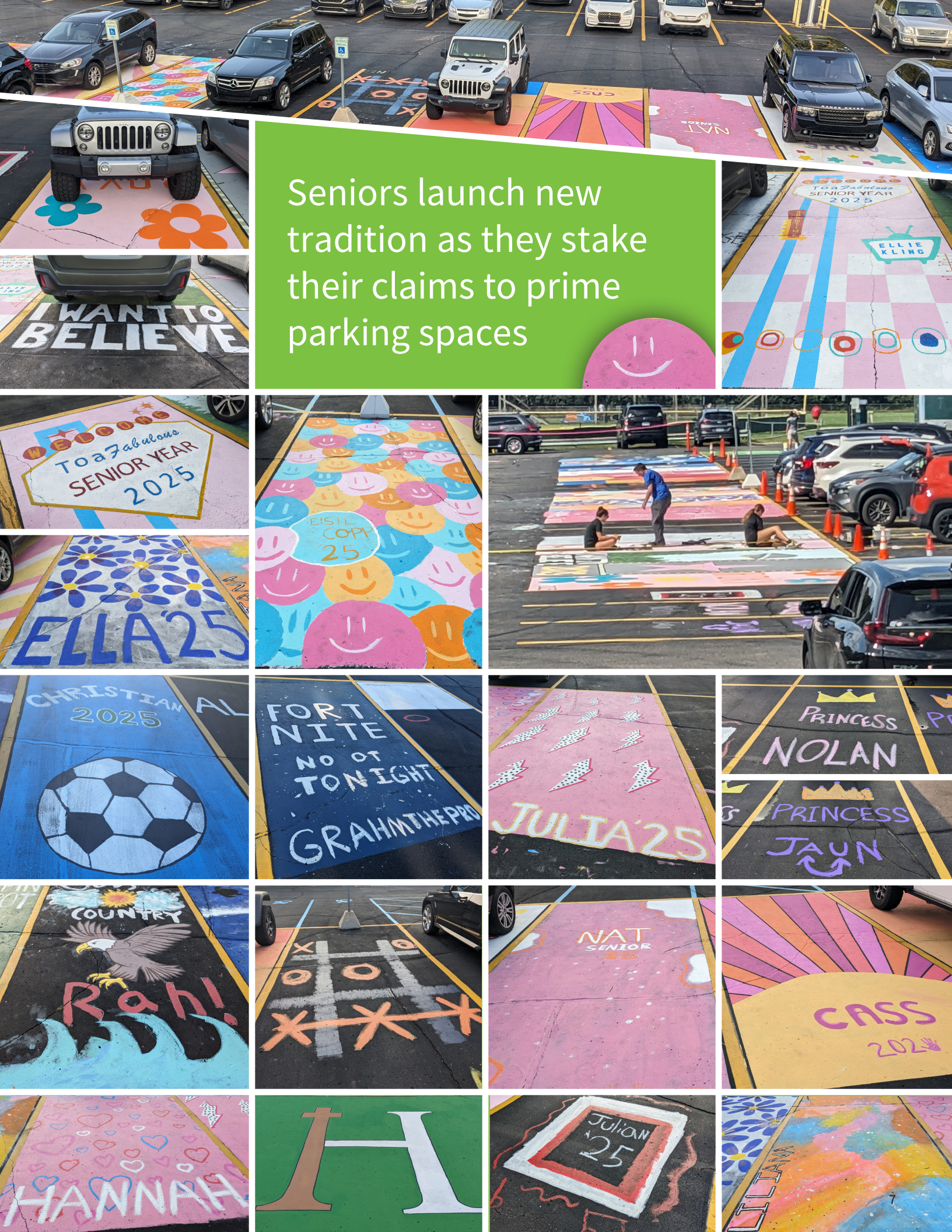
After completing the original draft in the fall of 2023, Gergely submitted the paper for consideration of publication to the Vatican press and received official word this past spring that her work would be published by the Congregation for Catholic Education’s *Educatio Catholica*. This publication of articles addressing the ministry of education within the Catholic Church has been printed quarterly since 2015, and this will be the final print edition before going to a digital-only platform beginning in 2025.

“My hope is that every student, whether in a math class, a science class or theology class, is recognizing that what they’re really doing is learning ultimately a Truth that is not simply a what, but more so a “Who”.

“This is really at the heart of what I’ve written about.”



Mary Gergely

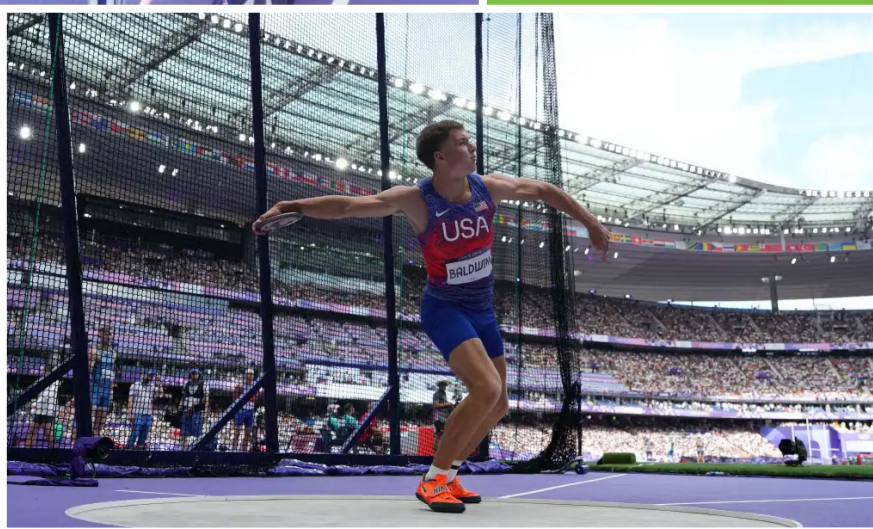
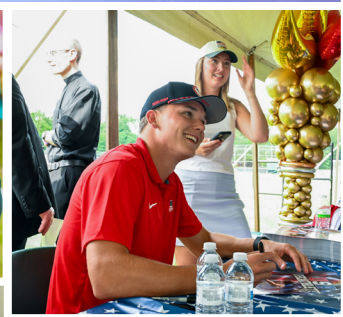


Seniors launch new tradition as they stake their claims to prime parking spaces



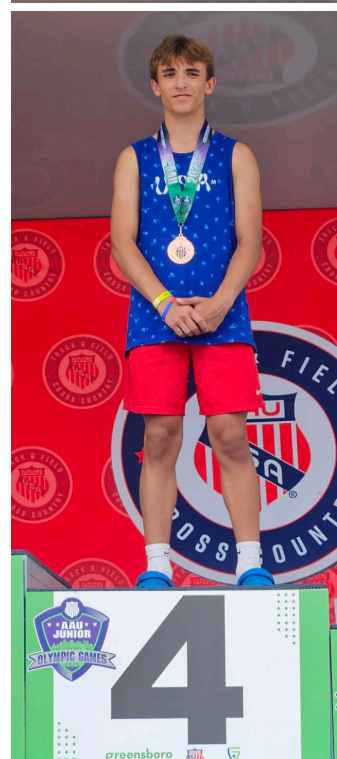
Since volumes have already been written about Heath's rapid ascent and bright future on the world stage of the Decathlon, here are a few of the memorable images from his Summer of '24, here and abroad

OLYMPIC PHOTOS: JAMES LANG-USA TODAY SPORTS



HEATH BALDWIN @ HACKETT PHOTOS: RENIER RESOURCES, LLC

Summer of Champions



Congratulations to **LUKE VALKNER** (above), Feature Winner at the Midwest Thunder Regional Quarter Midget race in Columbus, OH; **KYLER GERMINDER** (left) for his 4th place age group finish in the pole vault at the AAU Junior Olympic Games in Greensboro, NC.



DANILO RAMIREZ, St. Augustine 8th grader had a notable showing at NBA Summer Basketball School in the Dominican Republic, averaging over 50ppg while leading all players in rebounds. Danilo said highlights of the experience were visits from former NBA stars who spent time with the players offering advice and sharing experiences from their basketball careers.



Liked by nicole_joy_3 and 2,829 others
heathabaldwin My favorite people all in one place. What a season! None of this would be possible without the amazing support system of friends, family, coaches and loved ones that we have built. Feeling hungrier than ever after getting a taste of the big stage.

Athletic Hall of Fame and Awards Night



THOMAS B. MARTIN, '74 Distinguished Alumni Award

When Tom Martin reflects on his 10 years of student life in the Catholic Schools—five years at St. Ambrose, one year at St. Augustine, and four years at Hackett including his senior year as football captain—

he considers his primary take-aways. “I learned social justice. How to treat people right, lend a hand, and you don’t turn your back. That’s what I learned from my Catholic education. The theology came later.”

With this foundation, Tom has lived a lifetime dedicated to service to others, professionally through 41 years in law enforcement, and personally, as a man committed to serve wherever he is needed.

After a year at Benedictine College in Illinois, Tom’s career in law enforcement began in 1975, when he was hired as a para pro with the Kalamazoo Police Department. His path continued in various leadership capacities for 28 years, until retiring from the department as Captain in 2003. Following a short break, Tom accepted the position of Deputy Chief in South Haven, and six years later he was named Chief of Police, a position he held until his second retirement in 2016. Following several years of consulting, Tom says he’s retired from paying jobs for good.

Along with helping around the schools, St. Ambrose Parish, and at Knights of Columbus projects, a highlight of Tom’s service was a ten-day mission trip to Guatemala with his wife Denise, led by Bruce Martin (no relation). On this trip, they became immersed in the culture and life of their hosts. “I learned so much from that experience and I met some truly amazing, Godly people. If I made any impact, I hope I left the impression that there’s a nice man named Tom Martin in Michigan.”

NEOMA KILWAY

Bishops’ Service Award

Neoma Kilway began building her lifetime of generosity and compassionate service with her husband, Dr. James Kilway (1933-2012), from the moment of their meeting in Utah while he was in the Air Force. It is with the spirit of her husband closely by her side, that Neoma is named the 2024 Bishops’ Service Award recipient.



Dr. James B. Kilway, Sr.
and Mrs. Neoma I. Kilway

Neoma and her husband settled in Kalamazoo in 1969, where they raised six children who all graduated from Hackett Catholic High School, between 1973 and 1987.

“The first thing I did when we arrived here was ask our St. Monica pastor Fr. Nadrach, ‘How do I get my kids in the Catholic schools?’ He told me how and that was done,” says Neoma.

Through his practice, Dr. Kilway also did extensive missionary service working in the Philippines through the organization Helping Hands. He was twice joined by Neoma, and today, his work is continued by their son James. Throughout the years, Neoma supported her husband’s work through her leadership at home, finding strength in her faith raising their six children.

“God tells us that grace is given through trust in Him and I leaned on that a lot,” says Neoma, who now has 10 grandchildren and nine great grandchildren. “He put me here for a purpose and if I can make one person smile, it makes my day.”

As a tribute to Dr. Kilway’s life of service, and to fulfill the Kilway’s dream of making Catholic education accessible to more families, Neoma and their children established the Dr. and Mrs. James B. Kilway Scholarship in 2013, an endowed fund managed by the Kalamazoo Regional Catholic Schools Foundation that will forever provide tuition assistance to CSGK families.

St. Augustine High School

1949 STATE CHAMPION FOOTBALL

The 1949 St. Augustine football team was an undefeated and untied juggernaut, winning the Catholic League of Southern Michigan Title enroute to the State Championship.

The 1949 team played in a truly dominating fashion, winning by an average score of 38-8. Their depth was unmatched, and they had a reputation for coming at opponents in waves. The starting team rarely played much past halftime and it wasn’t until the sixth game that the starting defense gave up a score. Their closest game was against Jackson St. Mary which they defeated 32-19. While the starting running backs averaged 15 yards per carry, the reserves were nearly as dominant, averaging 12 yards per carry.

Coached by Bill Rajkovich, this team ranks as one of the best assembled in the history of Kalamazoo’s Catholic Schools, with 13 players and coaches from the 1949 team currently enshrined in the Catholic Schools of Greater Kalamazoo Athletic Hall of Fame.



Top row: Bruce Fleck (Manager), Dick Markus, Chuck Curry, Tom Kavanaugh, Dick Speese, Dave Kovach, Tom Wallace, Bill Ketelaar, Joe Kincaid (Manager)
Middle row: Head Coach Bill Rajkovich, Tony LaScala, Bernie Kavanaugh, Paul Coash, Kyran O’Brien, Lou Ocvirek, Bill Grogg, Ed Bourgeois, Jack Redmond, Jim Eady
Lower row: Clarence Hageman, Dick Loney, Gil Eady, Jim Holton, Dick Kennedy, Bob Barrett, Art Redmond, Bob Maat, Owen Bennett
Not shown: Coaches Abe Clark and Joe Maher, and players Jack Brady, Chuck Day, Robert Fleck, Art Jean, Roman Juzwiak, Rod O’Brien

KATHLEEN HAWKINS

*Hackett Catholic Central,
Class of 2010*



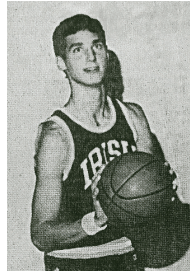
Kathleen Hawkins was a versatile three-sport star at Hackett, lettering in golf, basketball, and tennis. In golf, she rose quickly through the sport as a two-year letter winner, including receiving Most Improved Player recognition. In basketball, she was a three-time Kalamazoo Valley Association All Star, winning team MVP recognition each year.

However, tennis was Kathleen's true sport of notoriety, compiling a career record of 69-1 on her way to winning three consecutive State Singles Championships and earning recognition as All-KVA and All-State honors all four years. Her senior year, Kathleen was named Miss Tennis by the Detroit Free Press and the Michigan High School Tennis Coaches Association, spanning all divisions of prep competition.

Following graduation, Kathleen accepted a full scholarship to the University of Memphis for tennis where she was ranked in the top 75 in the nation for doubles competition, before transferring to Western Michigan University where she rose to top 50 in the nation in doubles and became the Broncos' winningest singles player, and highest rated player, of all time.

MARK ADAMCZYK

Hackett Catholic Central, Class of 1991



Mark Adamczyk was a standout Irish athlete and scholar, excelling in soccer and basketball. As a three-year starter in soccer, he led the Irish to the state semifinals while being named first team All-State and All-Kalamazoo Valley Association.

In basketball, Mark was a three-year starter, earning selection to the All-KVA team and the Kalamazoo Gazette GK Basketball All-Star team his junior year. His senior year he served as team captain while being named team MVP and received All-KVA and All-State honors. Following graduation, Mark received a full scholarship to John Carroll University where he played basketball and was named captain his sophomore year. Unfortunately, Mark's basketball career was cut short by an ankle injury.

While at Hackett, Mark was also a distinguished student and member of the National Honor Society while finishing second in his class academically. Mark went on to medical school at Creighton University and is now an Orthopedic Surgeon in Akron, OH.

JOE ROSENHAGEN

*Hackett Catholic Central,
Class of 1977*



Joe Rosenhagen was a true Hackett superstar, excelling in baseball while also leaving his mark in football and basketball.

In football, Joe was a 3-year starter and a Greater Kalamazoo All-Star during his senior year. Playing primarily as a defensive back, Joe set a GK record with seven interceptions and led the city in punting his junior and senior years. As a basketball player, Joe was the starting varsity point guard his junior year with a season-high 29 points scored in one game.

But it was in baseball that Joe is best remembered, earning honors as a GK All-Star and an All-State selection in his junior and senior years. As an infielder, Joe committed just one error during his three-year varsity career and in his junior and senior years, he finished second for the GK batting title. In all three seasons, Joe led area schools in runs scored. Joe capped off his Hackett career in 1977 as a High School All-American in baseball.

Joe went on to play at Jackson Community College where he served as team captain, played center field, and batted .423, earning him honors as a Junior College All-American. Joe finished his college career playing at Western Michigan with a .312 batting average.

Following his playing career, Joe became partner and General Manager of the Kalamazoo Kings baseball team, where he was named Frontier League Executive of the Year in 2002, and Assistant Coach of the Year for his role leading the Kings to the league title in 2008. During his tenure, the Kings were Frontier League Organization of the Year in 2001, 2004, and 2005.

Beyond the playing field, Joe was known as a dedicated mentor to many youths in the Kalamazoo area, a role he considers to be his most proud and important life legacy.

Hackett Central High School

1991 STATE CHAMPION MEN'S SOCCER

Following a loss in the state semifinals in 1990, the 1991 men's soccer team avenged the previous year's disappointing finish. Led by Coach Neil Crumpton, the 1991 team was loaded with talent and ranked number one in the state all season, winning the Kalamazoo Valley Association championship and finishing 21-3, with the only losses coming against Class A and B teams.

The State Championship game matched top ranked Hackett Catholic Central against second ranked Riverview Gabriel Richard, ending in a double overtime 3-2 victory for Hackett. The 1991 Irish claimed four spots on the All-State team and Coach Crumpton was selected coach of the year.



Back row, l-r: Coach Neil Crumpton, Chris Dooley, Chris Riker, Kip Adrian, Mo el-Mohammed, Jeff Klugg, Tim Walbridge, Paul Welch, Brian McAfee, Jack Reineck, Matt Thommen, Justin LaReau, Assistant Coaches Chuck VanHuysen and Rene Adrian

Front row l-r: Kevin Johnson, Brent King, Ryowa Tsurunaga, Marc VanderBeek, Chris Adrian, Chris Murphy, Jamie Lee, Mike DiBella, Scott Conway, Ryan Whiting

Not shown: Michael Dietz, Brian Mick

THE IRISH CONNECTION

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CSGK Advancement Office
1000 W. Kilgore Road
Kalamazoo, MI 49008

CSGK.org



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Thank you Paddy Aidan
for your summer work
restoring Mary in the Hackett
garden courtyard.

HACKETT CLASS OF 1989

35th
Reunion

Friday, September 27
6:00 pm

Old Burdick's Bar and Grill
(1st Floor of the Radisson)
100 W. Michigan Ave, Kalamazoo, MI
Please RSVP Karen Habra Smyth
at karen@place.com

ST. AUGUSTINE HIGH SCHOOL CLASS OF 1964

60th
Reunion

Saturday, September 28
4:00 pm

Traveler's Craft BBQ
5225 Portage Rd, Portage, MI
Please contact Bill Reetz at
reetzfam1@gmail.com

H HACKETT
CATHOLIC PREP
MORE THAN HIGH SCHOOL

Memorial Mass

November 1, 2024
10:50 am

Please check in at the main office upon arrival

CATHOLIC SCHOOLS
of Greater Kalamazoo

ST. AUGUSTINE
CATHEDRAL SCHOOL

H HACKETT
CATHOLIC PREP
MORE THAN HIGH SCHOOL

ST. MONICA
Est. 1958

A family of schools, learning together in faith now, preparing for the future.