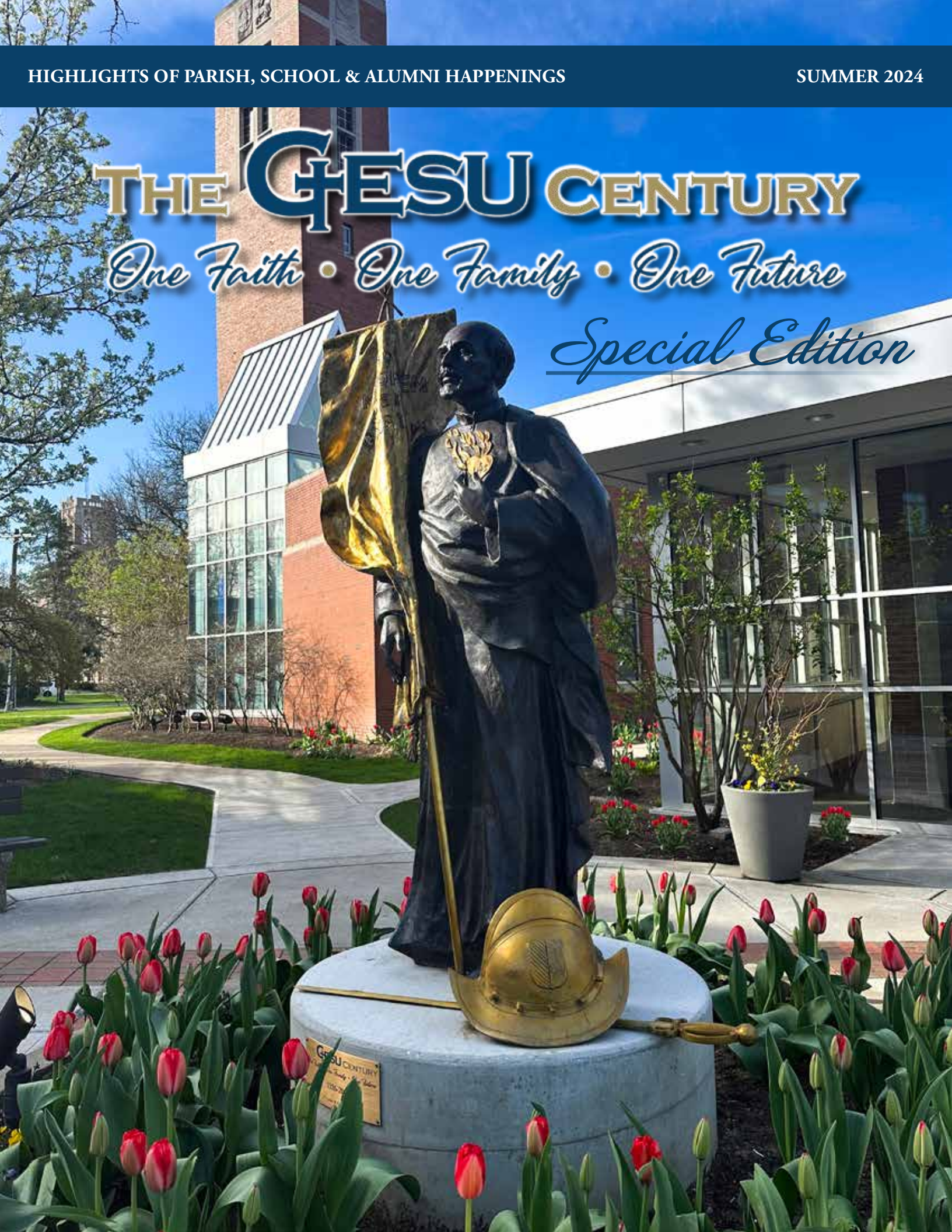


THE GESU CENTURY

One Faith • One Family • One Future

Special Edition



A Letter From Our Pastor

Dear Gesu Family,

One Faith, One Family, One Future. This motto, carefully and thoughtfully chosen to celebrate our upcoming 100th birthday in 2026, embodies the essence of our Gesu Community. Almost one hundred years ago, local people gathered in a simple home, celebrated Mass and began the community that we are blessed to call our family today. From that inaugural Mass to the 100th anniversary celebration, this community continues to grow, transform and inspire. I am confident it will do so into the future generations.



Being called to serve and lead this community, I am humbled daily by the generosity and

goodness of Gesu. It is from that storied history and the current members that compose this community, that we stand on this precipice and look to the future with great hope. I am very excited about this version of *News & Views*, as in the pages to follow, you will read about the transformational future that awaits Gesu and the launch of *The Gesu Century Capital and Endowment Campaign* to ensure the success of our next 100 years.

When I arrived as pastor three years ago, Gesu had begun to formulate a strategic plan that was the labor of love by many members of Gesu. Through surveys, listening sessions and our councils and commissions these members gathered data to lay the path of what we endearingly called: Gesu at Home and Gesu on Mission. These two guiding principles then led to the deeper questions of how we strengthen this strategic call for the future and find the resources needed to fulfill our mission at home



and beyond. To approach these needs with purpose and direction, we commissioned an audit of our plant, we surveyed our needs and held listening sessions to mine the needs that are before us. It was out of our strategic plan and all that mined information that we found three areas of greatest need: our physical plant both in structure and aesthetics, our outdoor space and our endowment.

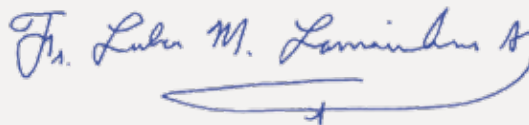
Since my installation as pastor, I have met with many of our parishioners and school families who deeply believe in this vision and have already committed to support these transformational initiatives. You will read about two such families in this issue along with the many moving parts and pieces that will compose our 100th celebration and campaign.

Gesu and its future is needed more today than ever. My most sincere hope is that our entire community both

near and far will take part in ensuring our future as a faith family. As we see war, violence, extremism and a culture of death and division pervade, it is more imperative than ever to stand united as one. Jesus sought this 2,000 years ago, and the community that gathered 100 years ago as Gesu desired the same. So, too, must we.

Please join us in a sign of that unity at our campaign kick-off on August 17th. Please support this campaign through your time, talent and treasure and, as always, shine as a light to be the proud Gesu family we are called to be!

ONE FAITH, ONE FAMILY, ONE FUTURE!



Fr. Lukas M. Laniauskas, SJ



Visit ChurchoftheGesu.org/Century or scan the QR code to learn more about *The Gesu Century Campaign* and to watch our Campaign kick-off video!



One Family, Three Generations!

By Mary Supler, Lifelong Parishioner & Volunteer



learned of the word *Magis*, which means “more” or “greater” and is related to the motto of the Jesuits, “for the greater glory of God.” It refers to doing more for Christ and, therefore, more for others. For me the word *Magis* describes what we all need to be. It’s a value that embodies striving for excellence while giving and providing service to those in need. It is a key element of Ignatian spirituality which has taken me a while to practice and embrace.

It was fifty years ago when I first began to call Gesu my home. My husband, Michael, and I had begun our family, and I was pregnant with our third of seven children. We were searching for a place where our children would receive the best Catholic education in the area. We bought a house in University Heights and enrolled in Gesu which was not an easy decision as Gesu was a fierce competitor of our previous parish. Fortunately, we moved next door to the Skerls, a wonderful Gesu family who welcomed us with open arms. Betty Skerl, the matriarch of the family and a pillar of Gesu Parish, became a second mother to me. I quickly embraced the Gesu School community where I served on PTO, various commissions and many fundraising committees. When my youngest child entered kindergarten, Betty gently suggested I become a Eucharistic Minister. It was through this ministry that I began to reflect on the importance of being involved in not only the school community, but also the church community.

Gesu is unique in that it is the only Diocesan parish with the identity of being Jesuit. I am embarrassed to acknowledge that when first moving to Gesu, I had no idea that Gesu was a Jesuit parish or what that actually meant. Through my years of involvement, however, I have come to learn that being part of a Jesuit parish means being truly men and women for others. I also

“ In order to keep our church and school strong, I believe we need to look towards the future while holding on to our traditions. ”

I am blessed to say that all seven of my children have settled in the area. They all attended Gesu Catholic School and have chosen to send their own children to Gesu as well. Now my 15 grandchildren are part of this next generation who will lead Church of the Gesu into the next century. In order to keep our church and school strong, I believe we need to look towards the future while holding on to our traditions.

Personally, Gesu has played an important part in my life and oftentimes helped me to weather storms. For example, after a recent car accident, I was completely overwhelmed with the outpouring of support, care, concern and prayers that were offered to me by Gesu parishioners. I am grateful everyday to be a part of this beautiful community. In my heart, I believe that together we can journey forward into the future knowing that our faith in God will be our guiding light. We have a bright future ahead, filled with a desire to worship Him and educate the next generation of Catholics. What better way is there to leave our mark than by leading our little ones to God, He who has given so much to us!



"In this crazy world we are living in, it's a place I know I can go to and feel safe, that people share my common beliefs, want to raise their children in a similar way. In short – it's my home, it's my community, it's my people!"

- Kristin Mergler & Family



What does Gesu mean to YOU?

As Gesu prepares for its 100th anniversary in 2026, **we would love feedback from our parishioners regarding what Gesu means to you.** Please take some time to reflect about Gesu and the impact it has had on your life.

"Gesu is where I celebrate my best days (faith formation, education, sports, baptisms, weddings, etc. with my family) and find comfort in community for the worst days (funerals, prayer, etc.)."

- Amy Zucca



"I don't know where I'd be without the relationships and experiences I have had and continue to have at Gesu. It is a living example to me of what Jesus wants for all of us...It is home."

- Mary Jo Cherry



WHAT Gesu MEANS TO Me



Forms can be found in the pews and at entrances to the Church, or by scanning the QR Code. **Thank you!**



"Gesu feels like home to our family. There's always a warm smile and a friend around to lift you up or keep you going... It's a wonderful thing to see so many families and friendships start at Gesu."

- Jenny Beesley



"Gesu is an anchor in my spiritual life. It represents love, goodness and hope for our community and world."

- Anonymous

"It makes me happy...I love all the events and fun things. The teachers are so nice, and I made so many friends."

- Jeffrey R.



Do you know a Gesu alum or former parishioner that would like to hear about the great things happening in our church and school? **Please scan the QR code** to add them to our mailing or email list. Or email their contact information to **GesuCentury@ChurchoftheGesu.org.**



"My three siblings and I attended Gesu, and we remain close to those families we grew up with to this day. My husband and I wanted the same for our own family and are so grateful for the Gesu experience we all had. Both our kids and the two of us made friends that will last a lifetime."

- Amy Boyle





Gesu Parish is established and its first Mass is celebrated at University Heights Town Hall with Rev. Francis J. Rudden, Gesu's first pastor

With the success of the campaign, the current Gesu Church structure is completed and dedicated

April 27, 1958

Gesu

The beautiful story of Gesu began in the early 1920's when outward migration from the City of Cleveland to the rapidly developing Cleveland Heights area was heavy. There were only two parishes in the area to care for the expanding population of Catholic families. In response to a need for another parish to service this growing Catholic community, Archbishop Joseph Schrembs founded a parish in University Heights, an area designated for the building of a new campus for the Jesuit College of St. Ignatius, now known as John Carroll University. Archbishop Schrembs asked the leadership of the Chicago Province of the Society of Jesus to mission a Jesuit priest to serve as pastor of this new University Heights parish which was to be named Church of the Gesu after the Mother Church of the Society of Jesus in Rome.

April 4, 1926

Organ donated by Frank Hruby to use in church services

March 1927



Blessing of new church (located in Bulldog Gym) and 8-room school building on current site

New convent completed for the housing of 21 Sisters of Notre Dame

Gesu wins their first city championship in football

October 1940

Summer 1949

Fall 1957



Sept 7, 1926

Gesu School is established at 3786 Silsby Road residence
 • 80 children enrolled
 • Teachers & administrators of the school were Sisters of Notre Dame

1950s

Gesu holds a capital campaign titled *Building a Great Parish* to build a rectory and the church we use today

Late 1940s

First Gesu football, basketball and baseball teams organized

Addition of the school's green wing completed – result of increased enrollment

1962



1988

Gesu Catholic School wins blue ribbon as a "Nationally Recognized School of Excellence," which it will go on to receive again in 1998, when the Ursuline Sisters become a part of our parish community

April 16, 2000

The Gesu Marian Chapel is dedicated and open for weekday Masses



Gesu Parish and School was officially established in 1926 under the leadership of its founding pastor, Fr. Francis J. Rudden, SJ, and the Sisters of Notre Dame. This newly organized Jesuit community included just 53 families. Rapid growth of the worshipping congregation and the school student body over the next several decades contributed to the building and continued renovation of the various church and school structures that occupy our campus today. We are currently blessed with over 2,600 families that proudly call Gesu home!

From its humble beginnings, Gesu has flourished as a center for learning and a faith-filled community dedicated to living the Word of God.



Sept 2016

Breen STREAM Center is dedicated

Through the years

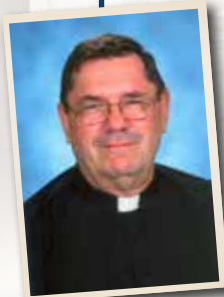


First Honduras Mission Trip

2000

Convent building is connected with school building to form the Gesu Educational Center

Sept 24, 1995



First Gesu Parish Service Day



100th Anniversary!

2026

Dec 2, 2006



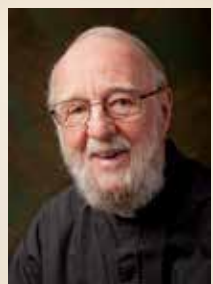
1994 - 2000

Feb 8, 1997

Gesu Family Center (a multi-purpose facility consisting of a new gymnasium, music room, activity room, faculty lounge, and kindergarten classrooms) is dedicated



Building the Future in Faith Campaign



100 YEARS
PLANNING FOR 2026

Gesu Parish will celebrate its 100th anniversary in 2026, and we are in the early stages of brainstorming ways to commemorate this milestone year. We welcome your ideas for parish events, invite you to join a planning committee, and/or ask you to share photos and memories for future Gesu publications. If you would like to get involved, send an email to GesuCentury@ChurchoftheGesu.org.

THE GESU CENTURY

One Faith • One Family • One Future

"I think building on a 100 year history is a gift, and to do that we have to build on what the past has given us and plan for the future. Gesu is a vital part of the Cleveland area and we want to ensure the community and our families that we will be here in the future." - Sr. Linda Martin, Former Principal

It is with great excitement that we kick off *The Gesu Century: One Faith, One Family, One Future*, a capital and endowment campaign that will ensure the vibrancy of Gesu for years to come. After the Parish's in-depth planning process that included a strategic plan, parish examen, listening sessions, feasibility study, facilities audit and other endeavors, Gesu began to determine what the parish needs are today and what they will be for the future. **The three main factors that led to Gesu's launch of this capital and endowment campaign, the first in over 20+ years, are:**

- **Gesu Endowment:** Increased cost of Catholic education and efforts to provide affordable and accessible education is of utmost importance. Growing the Gesu Endowment Fund will provide resources for faculty and staff, allow for financial assistance to those in need and help us fulfill our mission of Eucharistic Living, Lifelong Learning and Generous Serving.
- **Infrastructure and Preservation for the Church and School:** The buildings on the campus are aging and, therefore, addressing the need for repairs and upgrades is essential to maintain a safe and functional environment.
- **Outdoor Worship and Learning Spaces:** Utilizing specific outdoor areas of our campus for worship and learning will enhance our prayer and educational experiences.

The following is a sampling of some of the major projects we plan to undertake. It is by no means exhaustive and may change if unforeseen issues arise.

As of August 1, 2024, Gesu has raised over \$6.3 million in gifts and pledges toward our \$12 million goal.

School Infrastructure & Preservation

Church Infrastructure & Preservation



Replace 2 Hot Water Heaters	Summer 2024	Masonry Repairs	Summer 2024
HVAC Water Circulation Units	Summer 2024	HVAC	Fall 2024
Full Renovation of Green Hallways - Upgrade of electrical & network wiring - Drop ceilings installed with new lighting - Paint walls and doors	Summer 2024	McAuley Hall	Fall 2024
Full Renovation of Green Stairwell - New ceiling grid & tiles - Paint walls, stairs, risers - New lighting - Firewall & door installed	Summer 2024	Church & Sanctuary Renovations - Paint ceiling and walls - Interior woodwork - Confessionals - Marble, stained glass stations - Nativity Room - Cry Room - Narthex - Pews - Tabernacle move - Convert Reservation Chapel to shrine	January/February 2025
Full Renovation of Main Wing Hallways - Upgrade of electrical & network wiring - Drop ceilings installed with new lighting - Paint walls & doors	Summer 2025	Main Church Roof	TBD
		Sound & Streaming Equipment	TBD
Full Renovation of Main Wing Stairwells - New ceiling grid & tiles - Paint walls, stairs, risers - New lighting - Firewall & door installed	Summer 2025	Security	Ongoing
		Light Fixtures	TBD
Replace Roof on Green Hallway	Summer 2025	 Gesu Endowment Supports: - Faculty Resources - Student Financial Assistance - Deferred Maintenance and Capital Projects - Faith Formation & Outreach Programs	
Install Access Control to Secure School During Events	TBD		
Main Hallway Bathrooms - 1 st & 2 nd Floors	TBD		
Masonry Repairs	Ongoing		



Outdoor Space

This anticipated timeline is subject to change. It is contingent upon securing funds and permissions, and assuming no unforeseen future needs.

Phase 1 Landscape

- Worship Space
- Learning Space
- Statue Base & Installation
- Lighting
- Fencing
- Walkways
- Irrigation
- Signage
- Plantings
- Security

Phase 2 Landscape

- Learning Space
- Fencing
- Lighting
- Walkways
- Irrigation
- Plantings



A Special Thank You to Our Lead Donors

An Ignatian Pledge

By Mary Kate Farrar

What's the value of enlisting the help of a realtor when buying a new home? For Steve and Debbie Klug, it was priceless! Over 42 years ago, Steve and Debbie were relocating to Cleveland from St. Louis, Missouri. When they contacted a realtor she asked them a few key questions to guide her search in finding the perfect home for the Klug family. One question focused on what was most important to them in their relocation plans. Steve and Debbie confidently responded, "We want to be close to a strong Catholic school and an active parish community." With those instructions, the Klug's realtor brought them to University Heights, as she knew that Gesu Parish was a thriving community with an excellent academic and faith-based school. Steve and Debbie were thrilled with this choice!

Both Steve and Debbie grew up in Missouri and attended Catholic grade schools and high schools. While Steve was taught by the Sisters of Charity during his eight grade school years, Debbie attended St. Lawrence the Martyr. Steve then enrolled in the Jesuit-led St. Louis University High School, and Debbie studied at Incarnate Word Academy, an all-girls Catholic high school. As a result of these positive Catholic school experiences, the couple developed a strong belief in the value of Catholic education and felt it provided them with a foundation that has guided both through their personal and professional lives.

Steve and Debbie were committed to providing these same experiences for their three children, Kristin, Steve and Timothy, all of whom graduated from Gesu School. Each one of the children continued to benefit from Catholic education through high school as Kristin attended Beaumont School and the boys attended St. Ignatius. Steve and Debbie are happy to share that the Klug legacy has continued at Gesu through the next generation as well. They are the proud grandparents of thirteen wonderful grandchildren, many of whom have followed in their parents' footsteps of attending Gesu School and various Catholic high schools.

Steve and Debbie feel so passionate about the value of Catholic education that they have committed to providing continued support for this cause. Steve says, "We feel a responsibility to make sure Catholic schools are made affordable to the next generation. We want to pay it forward, and our philanthropy focuses on supporting strong Catholic schools including Gesu."

Gesu is extremely grateful to Steve and Debbie for their recent leadership gift commitment of one million dollars to *The Gesu Century Capital and Endowment Campaign*. This gift is part of what they call their "Ignatian pledge" which includes an annual gift each year to four different Catholic institutions. They have also graciously committed to naming these same four institutions in their estate plans. What a wonderful way to make certain that future generations will be able to benefit wholeheartedly from a strong, Catholic education based on love of God and service to others!

"Fr. Laniauskas is doing an amazing job leading Gesu Church and School, and he inspires us to give back. Our family's support will ensure that Gesu will be here for the next 100 years. It is a strong Jesuit institution in the Cleveland area, and we want to make sure other young families have the opportunity to join this special community."



A Legacy of Thanks

By Mary Kate Farrar

I grew up next door to Gene and Betty Skerl for 20 years, and I always knew how special they were. To sit down with her recently and listen to her genuine love and appreciation for her family and Gesu, is truly inspiring. Her humbleness and gratitude are admirable. In a world where there is so much self-indulgence and brokenness, it is beautiful to see a woman and her family who want to share their faith and gifts with others. In the Jesuit tradition, Betty is truly a woman for others...

Over 60 years ago, a young family moved to University Heights to raise their children in a nice neighborhood where they could walk to school. Gene and Betty Skerl moved onto Milford Road – eight houses away from Gesu Catholic School! Little did they realize this decision would be the beginning of an incredible life focused on their family, faith and friends.

Gene and Betty raised their six children – Mike, Jim, Nancy, Laura, Lynn and Tom - in Gesu Parish and School. Today, the family has grown to include 11 grandchildren and 13 great grandchildren. Betty says, "We wanted a place where our family could grow and flourish." Gesu pro-

vided all of them the opportunity to deepen their faith and grow.

When the children were young, Betty was committed to being involved in their school, and a highlight was volunteering to be a school room parent. This involvement allowed her to meet the parish and school staff as well as other Gesu families. In their early years at Gesu, much was changing with the Church due to Vatican II, and women were being given more opportunities to become involved. Betty accepted these opportunities and became a lector, Eucharistic minister and visitor for the homebound. Eventually, Betty became the Chairperson of Gesu's Liturgical Commission and trained lectors, Eucharistic ministers and servers. "It is all about the people – this is most gratifying for me."

During the 70's and 80's, Gesu was growing as a parish and school. Betty believes this was due to the strong Jesuit leadership of Fr. Dietz, Fr. McAuley and Fr. White. She worked



closely with Fr. McAuley and recalls him being like a brother to her. "Sr. Jeanne and Sr. Diane trusted my leadership and asked me to help lead the RCIA program. I embraced the chance to walk with individuals on their faith journey."

As Betty reflects on her six+ decades at Gesu, she says she didn't always realize the benefits of Gesu. Yet during two of her family's most challenging times - the passing of her husband Gene and of her son Jim - she greatly appreciated the strength, support and love of the Gesu community. That same love shone through many times during

Betty's most memorable moments with her children and grandchildren celebrating sacraments and graduations at Gesu. She comments, "Gesu has always been home to me!"

Betty was inspired to make a significant gift to *The Gesu Century Capital and Endowment Campaign*. She sees this as an opportunity to give back to a place that has been such a gift to her and her family. "Gesu has enriched my spiritual life more than I could ever imagine. I have so many blessings in my life, and many of them stem from this parish."



Rendering of new outdoor worship space

Last fall, when Betty and her sons, Mike and Tom, met with Fr. Laniauskas, she shared how much the liturgy has meant to her over the years. As a result, it is fitting for Betty's generous gift to the campaign to be designated for the building of the outdoor worship space. "I'm so grateful for the spiritual exercises as it has brought me closer to God. I hope and believe the outdoor chapel and gathering space will deepen others' spiritual lives too."

New Era, Same Commitment

By Regan Kazel, Principal



The 7:45 am bell sounds, and the hallways are abuzz with over 640 boisterous students in grades K-8. As one weaves their way through the crowd, emotions from the conversations heard are very similar to those heard 10-20-30 years ago...excitement about a field trip, nervousness about a science test, confidence about a presentation. Yet, one only has to dive a little deeper or ask a few more questions to realize the field trip, the test, the presentation is anything but the same as

a decade ago. Education has changed, should change, and is changing here at Gesu Catholic School. We are proud to share that enrollment continues to be strong with a 5% increase over the last ten years, a waitlist for several primary grades and a full preschool. The foundation of our mission, Catholic Faith Formation, is the priority and ever present with over 90% of our student body Catholic. Yet, to rest on our laurels and say we will continue to educate students in the same manner we have in the past is a slippery slope and one we do not intend to slide down.

Adaptability, collaboration and critical thinking are just some of the important 21st century skills we foster here at Gesu. Our dynamic and versatile faculty understand that these are more than mere educational buzz words, but rather, skills necessary for students to thrive in our changing world. In order to foster these skills, continued professional development for our faculty and staff is a necessity.

One of the many facets of the Gesu Endowment is faculty and staff professional support. A robust endowment enables us to retain and hire knowledgeable



Rendering of one of the new outdoor learning spaces

faculty while continuing to provide them with current professional development in areas such as the science of reading and project based learning, all while educating faculty on how to support students with various learning styles. Our faculty and staff are valued members of our community. Growing the endowment is one way to support and show gratitude to the Gesu faculty and staff.

Enhancing the aesthetics of the school both inside and out is another focus of *The Gesu Century* campaign. There is certainly some nostalgia in walking the halls of the current school building which look remarkably similar to how they did in the earlier days of the school. Many affectionately refer to the green and brown hallways as places where they first switched classes, met their favorite teachers, or made weekend plans with friends. However, be assured that the rich history of Gesu will not be erased with a new paint color. The interior renovations will only enhance the recruitment of future students by providing a cleaner and more vibrant space for young minds to excel.

Additionally, some funds raised from *The Gesu Century* campaign are earmarked for a variety of outdoor enhancements. Regardless of the unpredictable Cleveland weather, an outdoor play area and classroom will provide space for creativity and dynamic play. Our current outdoor environment already draws many classes outside, and it is exciting to think of the active learning additional space will allow for Gesu students.

Reflecting on the last 100 years, it is beautiful to see the accomplishments of Gesu graduates. *The Gesu Century* campaign will help ensure the students of Gesu will be prepared to make a difference in the world that awaits them.





Q & A



What is an Endowment?

An endowment is a permanent fund of assets that are invested to provide long-term support for a cause or an organization. The original assets, known as the corpus, grow over time through gifts and the interest earned from the investments. Each year a portion of the income is spent, while the remainder is added back to the corpus to grow. Gifts of all sizes are accepted to Gesu's Endowment and provide support to Gesu for ten, twenty, fifty years and beyond.

Describe Gesu's Endowment

The Gesu Endowment Fund was established on January 24, 1983, through the generosity of parishioners and friends of Gesu. It is a legally separate entity from Gesu Parish, yet it provides financial support to Gesu Parish and School. This support allows Gesu to continue its mission of Eucharistic Living, Lifelong Learning, and Generous Serving all for the greater glory of God.

Gesu has three main Endowment Funds. The general endowment fund supports many aspects of the parish and school and is comprised of many smaller endowments such as The Morrissey Family Fund (Boosters), Cathleen Coyne Teacher Fund, Sweete Family Fund, Mary Carol Jones Scholarship Fund, etc. Together these funds total just over \$10,000,000 as of June 1, 2024.

The Fr. Francis Dietz, SJ Scholarship Fund was established to provide financial assistance to parish students in grades 7-8 and high school students attending Catholic high schools.

The Fr. Robert J. McAuley, SJ Scholarship Fund was established to provide financial assistance to Gesu students in grades K-6.

Who manages the Gesu endowment?

The Gesu Endowment Fund is overseen by its Board of Directors, which is comprised of ten to fifteen individuals. The Board meets on a quarterly basis to review fund

performance and asset allocations and to discuss other endowment matters. Currently, Gesu's Endowment Board works with the Gesu Investment Committee to provide oversight of Gesu financials and investment practices. Gesu's Endowment Board also ensures that all assets are invested in a socially responsible manner. PNC is the outside organization that manages the investment funds that make up the Gesu Endowment Fund.

How important is the Gesu Endowment?

The annual "gift" from the Gesu Endowment to Gesu Parish and School is critical. Each spring, the Gesu Endowment Board carefully reviews the financials and approves the transfer of 4% of the previous 3-year average endowment values for Gesu Parish and School. These funds can be used for various items such as financial assistance, capital projects, facility maintenance, etc. The Gesu Endowment Fund has grown over 40 years and continues to provide support in perpetuity. To ensure that Gesu's mission continues for the next century, the *The Gesu Century Capital and Endowment Campaign* is committed to raising \$5 million to increase this fund.

What is a named endowed fund?

A minimum of \$10,000 is required to establish a named endowment at Gesu. It can be provided as a lump sum or accumulated within a five year period. Once the named endowment is established, the funds are invested and begin increasing in value. The endowment continues to provide self-sustaining funds as a permanent legacy. The donor of a named endowment works with Gesu to define the purpose of the fund. For example, The Morrissey Family Endowed Fund is restricted to Gesu's Athletic Program and the Mary Carol Jones Scholarship Fund is intended for students that may need financial assistance. The different funds may be used for scholarships, programs or unrestricted support. If you and your family are interested in learning more about the named endowed funds, please reach out to Mary Kate Farrar at MKFarrar@ChurchoftheGesu.org.

Goats, Grain & Giving From the Heart

By Sal Miroglotta

This is an exciting time at Gesu as we prepare for our 100th anniversary which is quickly approaching in 2026! As mentioned in Fr. Laniauskas's cover letter, it was determined that we should make significant improvements to our campus and raise additional funds for our endowment in order to ensure a lasting future for Gesu. We knew it was important to be strategic about these efforts, so we made the decision to embark on a major capital and endowment campaign. This is Gesu's first major campaign in over 20 years.

When nonprofit organizations or other institutions begin a campaign, there are usually questions regarding the purpose, and oftentimes people have reasons not to give or support it. These reasons may include: "I already pay tuition." "I give at Mass...that's enough." "I can't afford it." "They have some wealthy people in that parish. They should just ask those people." "I don't like some of the improvements they are planning."

You, too, can probably think of other reasons not to participate, but I believe there is truly one reason to give: Faith.

In many ways, we are fortunate. The Old Testament is rich with specific examples of the offerings that God required of His people. From goats to grain and from the building of the Tent of Meetings to seemingly endless wanderings through the desert, the path of faith was an often arduous one.

The New Testament also speaks of giving, but giving from the heart. There is that old saying of "to give until it hurts," unfortunate words because giving doesn't hurt. Rather, it creates joy. In fact, Saint Paul tells us that "...each one of you should set aside a sum of money in keeping with his income" to give to the church (1 Cor. 16:2).

Read that advice from Saint Paul again. No goat, no grain, no tithing, no single sum demanded from any or all. In keeping with our income, which we all have, we are all able to exercise our faith with the sum that we set aside. It simply takes thought and prayer.

Can we give \$1? Sure we can. How about \$10, \$100, \$1,000, \$10,000 or more? Sometimes, even much

more. We have faith. We can consider our income, what to set aside, and give it joyfully. The mechanics of a capital campaign give us the time, if we need it, to pledge our gift and pay it over weeks, months, or even several years. We also have the privilege of directing our chosen sum of money to a specific component of the campaign or place no restrictions on it and leave its direction to Gesu itself. We can even endow it and be a part of a 40 year tradition of endowed dollars supporting the efforts of the entire parish.

If you have read this far, you likely know the final message here is to set aside that sum of money, as Saint Paul advises. He offers no directive, no measure of grain or number of goats as the standard. Armed with only our faith and our free will, itself another blessing we enjoy, we have all we need to carry forward.

Be it the single dollar, the \$10,000 or much more, imagine if every member of our church considered the need, shunned the negative excuses, and did as we are called...to give from the heart!

Why would we do that? Simply, very simply, because of our faith!



The Gesu Century campaign will be transformative for parishioners, families, students and the Cleveland community. To learn more about ways to give, including making a planned gift to Gesu, please go to **ChurchoftheGesu.org/Century**,

scan the QR code, or contact Mary Kate Farrar at **MKFarrar@ChurchoftheGesu.org**. Thank you for your ongoing support – together will we celebrate 100+ years of Gesu!



Campaign Steering Committee

Bill Beck
Kimberly Berlin
Colleen Clemens
Donna Conry
Cynthia Druckenbrod
Mary Kate Farrar
Kerianne Hearn
Chris Jones
Regan Kazel

Chris Kelly
Fr. Lukas M. Laniauskas, SJ
Jared Limberg
Dan Malone
Sal Miroglotta
Jody Salata
Michael Santelli
Mary Supler
Lori Wright

Please join the Gesu Community for the launch of



THE **GESU** CENTURY

One Faith • One Family • One Future

SATURDAY, AUGUST 17, 2024 | 4:30 PM

The celebration begins with an outdoor Mass, followed by a short video presentation about *The Gesu Century - One Faith, One Family, One Future*. The Gesu Century is a capital and endowment campaign that will raise significant funds for Gesu Church and School. This campaign is focused on celebrating Gesu's 100th anniversary and ensuring for Gesu's future!

The festivities continue with the Annual Gesu Parish Block Party...
an evening of great food, fun and friendship for the whole family!

Don't forget your lawn chairs for Mass!