



Gaesdonck Parents letter

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Dear Gaesdonck families,

we say this every year, but maybe in this year it applies a little bit more than usual: Good that it's holidays for now! So, in this absurd, almost bizarre time we get a little breathing space.

Looking back on our school and boarding school life in the past months, there is above all reason for me to be **grateful**: first and foremost, that none of our students, teachers, colleagues and, as far as we know, nobody in the immediate environment of our Gaesdonck family has been seriously ill with COVID-19.

I certainly feel a sense of gratitude towards our federal and state policy, which has, by and large, guided our country through this special situation with prudence and care. For those who would like to concentrate on the shortcomings of the past few months, I would recommend that you take a look at some other countries around the world and the developments of this global pandemic there. Maybe that will help to be a little bit happy.

My special thanks - and this is also expressed rather too seldom - go to my colleagues in the Gaesdonck school and boarding school management, namely Mrs Mann and Mr Gysbers on behalf of all those who, together with them, have sometimes redeveloped the school and boarding school operations every hour.

I would also like to thank all the staff here on campus, the teachers and educators, the housekeeping, kitchen, administration and handicrafts departments, who have kept the school running for the students entrusted to us, even during holiday periods and on short or long weekends.

I would like to express my special thanks to all parents who, in these difficult weeks, have expressed the cohesion of the Gaesdoncker Community not least by continuing to pay the fees for the boarding school, day boarding school, upper school external school and in some cases even for the school bus service or by donating the difference to the scholarship foundation. I do not consider this to be insignificant, but rather a strong expression of the Gaesdoncker spirit. Bless you!

Finally, I would like to thank our students who have accepted the special conditions for teaching and boarding school life in a very unagitated and largely disciplined manner. This also helped. In this context I would like to remind you of many boarding school students who have not been able to see their families for months. And since flights to China, for example, are still hardly available, this situation will continue for some of them over the summer holidays.

Last but not least, we would like to thank the preparation team for our graduation ceremony last Friday. With an open-air picnic on our monastery grounds, we were able to present our graduating class 2020 with a dignified presentation of certificates and a good end to their school years despite the Corona restrictions. We wish all our graduates all the best for their future!



Picture: Tomke Janowitz

Parting...

The turn of the school year means that this year too we have to say goodbye to some of our dearest colleagues. **Dr. Mathias Henkel** is now taking on new tasks as a subject leader and our spiritual director **Cornelius Happel** is facing new challenges in community and school care in the Münster area. We would like to thank both of them for their work at Gaesdonck and wish them all the best for their new tasks.

In the administration office, **Mrs. Sarah Teuwen** is leaving us after her parental leave. She was known to the students of all ages through her presence at the reception and in the Gaesdonck student shop, to which she gave a friendly face for years with her courteous manner. We also wish God's blessing and the very best to Mrs. Teuwen and her extended family.

... and welcome

With great joy we are happy to welcome **Christoph Schwerhoff** as our new Spiritual Director for the new school year. He has been chaplain in Kevelaer and we wish him a happy hand in his future work here on the Gaesdonckern Campus.

We already told you in our last letter to the parents that **Mr. Dominique Huyben** will join our teaching staff at the beginning of the school year. We will inform you about new colleagues of the teaching staff at the beginning of the school year.

Junior Bachelor Camp

For information only, we would like to draw your attention to a new offer from Gaesdonck, which will be carried out for the first time during the next autumn holidays. Based on the long-standing success of the Gaesdoncker Kinder College, which is aimed particularly at primary school pupils from the Kleve district, its director, Markus van Briel, is now offering the Gaesdonck Junior Bachelor Camp for primary school children from all over North Rhine-Westphalia for the first time. With a challenging academic programme, 4th grade pupils can spend the first week of the autumn holidays on the Gaesdonck and get a taste of boarding school life. Perhaps you know someone in your circle of friends for whom this offer could be interesting. Further information can be found as always on our website.

KED Survey "Learning at Home

In the name of our deputy parent's association chairperson, Mrs. Schax, we would like to forward you an appeal to participate in a survey by the KED (Catholic Parenthood of Germany) in the appendix (available in German only). According to the self-experiment, the time required for participation is only about 10 minutes.

Bicycles

Over the last decades a phenomenal number of orphaned bicycles have accumulated on Gaesdonck campus and we would like to give up this heritage in the foreseeable future. The majority of the bicycles have long since passed their best years and in our opinion should be disposed. However, before we start with the disposal, we would like to give you the opportunity to sift through a possibly lost bicycle of your children and thus save it. The few usable bicycles will be made roadworthy again in the next school year within the framework of a working group of the Campus Time and will be used for further purposes. Should you or your child remember a bicycle that was once parked on the Gaesdonck, please contact us by e-mail to gysbers@gaesdonck.de by 26 July 2020 and send us a detailed description of the missing bike.

If the missing bicycle can be found, it can be picked up on site until 21 August 2020. Please make an appointment with our administration on 02823/961-0.

At the end

Perhaps the most idiosyncratic realization for me personally looking back on the past few weeks is that, while the virtues of agility, flexibility, drive and decisiveness were promoted and encouraged in the crisis period, the quiet, muse and joy in the finer things in life were threatened to fall by the wayside.

I therefore wish you all, your families and loved ones, a truly relaxing time for the holidays ahead of us. I hope you have a good time and rejoice in the miracles of life, big and small, which fortunately surround us in great abundance.

Tomorrow there will already be the first parents letter of the new school year with important information about the start of school.

Until then, I take my leave with a few lines from the expressionist poet Franz Viktor Werfel (1890-1945):

Ich staune

Ich staune, dass die rote Farbe rot ist,
Ich staune, dass die gelbe gelb erglimmt.
Ich staune, dass, was ringsum lebt, nicht tot ist,
Und dass, was tot ist, nicht ins Leben stimmt.

Ich staune, dass der Tag alltäglich nachtet,
Wenn ihm das Licht verwest zur Dämmerung.
Ich staune, dass frühmorgens überfrachtet
Von Sonnenglück, ein neuer kommt in Schwung.

Ich staune, dass durch alle Lebenssprossen
Das Männ- und Weibliche geschieden bleibt,
Und diese Zwieheit, niemals ausgenossen,
Als Wonne unsre Herzensfluten treibt.

Mein Staunen ist kein Forschen nach dem Sinn.
Mein Staunen ist des Sinnes selbst der Sinn.
Nur durch Erstaunung werd ich meiner inne.
Ich staune, dass ich staune, dass ich bin.

I'm amazed

*I'm amazed that the color red is red,
I am amazed that the yellow one glistens yellow.
I am amazed that what lives around it is not dead,
And that what is dead is not fitting to life.*

*I'm amazed that daylight comes at night every day,
When the light decays at dusk.
I'm amazed that early in the morning
From sun luck, a new one comes along.*

*I am astonished that through all the rungs of life
The male and female remain divorced,
And this twilight, never shed,
As a delight to our hearts' floods.*

*My wondering is not a search for meaning.
My amazement is the very sense of sense.
Only by astonishment do I know mine.
I'm amazed that I'm amazed that I am.*

Best regards from Gaesdonck campus

Dr. Markus Oberdörster
Direktor