



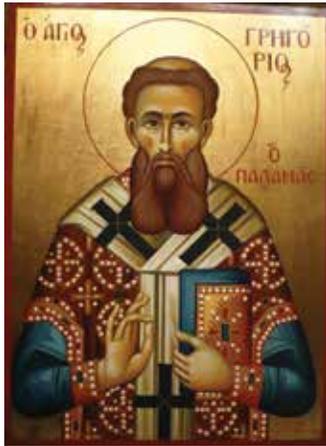
# The Minstrel

NEWSLETTER OF GREGORY THE GREAT ACADEMY

All Saints 2013

Dear Friend,

HAVE YOU EVER WONDERED why the Gospel for All Saints Day is the sermon of the Beatitudes? This famous passage outlines the law of salvation, expressing a fundamental mes-



Icon of St. Gregory the Great

sianic mystery: that the Kingdom of Heaven is shared now *and* that it is yet to come. The Beatitudes refer to the blessedness of the saints in the present and in the future, leaving their ultimate fulfillment to the next life. The message they impart is that *we are among the saints*, though our own sanctity is not yet achieved. By God's grace, we may more fully participate in the Law and the Kingdom established by Christ, and tread the path toward sainthood. Every saint that ever was was imperfect, and only achieved perfection by following the law of the Beatitudes. We all share the same beginning, and are called to learn the law of God in our lives.



This is precisely why the mission of Catholic education is arguably the most important one in the world—to make citizens for the next world by teaching the Divine Law. Dr. John Senior, the teacher whose educational methods and ideas informed the origins of our community, described Christian culture as the cultivation of saints in the traditions of Western Civilization, “the seedbed of saints.” During this time of year when we honor all the saints and all those souls who will become saints, I am reminded of this truth, and I am grateful that I have been given the opportunity to labor in this corner of the vineyard. My good friend and fellow teacher, Daniel Davidson, once told me that teaching is like gardening—constantly requiring weeding, watching, and waiting. I have always kept this in mind as I engaged in the art of teaching and, God willing, in the work of cultivating saints.

You have joined me in this work by making it possible to begin with. Thanks to you, the inaugural year of Gregory



the Great Academy is off to a strong start. Classes are going smoothly, the faculty are happy to be teaching in such a familial environment, the schola sounds wonderful already, the dormfathers led the charge with initiation activities based on “The Iliad,” our first rugby match against a visiting group of students from France ended in a draw, the Robin Hood Games were held with gusto, and families, friends, and alumni gathered in our hall to celebrate the feast of All Saints with a beau-



tiful banquet, lively song, and merry fellowship.

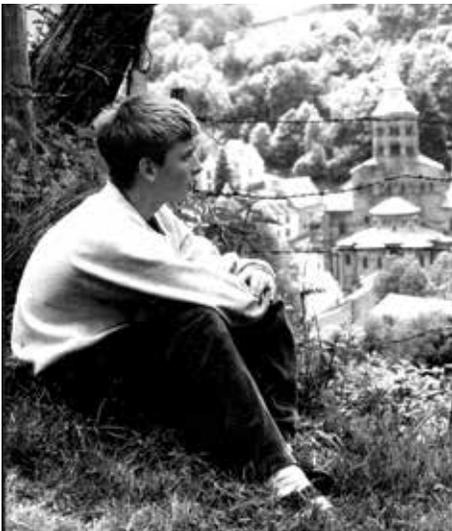
Without your unflagging loyalty, prayers, and financial support our efforts to make saints through traditional, cultural, Catholic education would cease. By your generosity and God's good graces, our work continues and continues well—we have 23 spirited boys, each one giving their all to the good school that God and all of you have provided for them. May it prove their path to heaven.

Though all is well and happy in the lives of our students, we stand in great need of financial assistance to keep up the good we have going, and to carry it on into the next year, and the year after that, and on. *Be generous.* Though we are blessed to have a school, we still have many hardships that must be overcome if we are to find a more suitable home for next year. Please make a gift to Gregory the Great Academy *today* and help keep alive the gift of Catholic education.

In Christ,



Sean Fitzpatrick  
Headmaster



In November, the month of the Holy Souls, we remember the students of Gregory the Great Academy who have died: Zachary Culley (pictured), Derek Foss, Paul Levine, John Blonski, and Patrick Horey. Requiescant in pace.

## Education Under the Greenwood Tree

We began our school year at Gregory the Great Academy with an expedition into the Pennsylvania wilderness, to give our students the opportunity to bind together as a community in the work of rugged woodland life. Several of our dormfathers are trained and skilled outdoorsmen, and they planned our wilderness adventure carefully.

The original plan was to lead the boys on a stretch of the Appalachian Trail, but it was unexpectedly closed with the government shutdown, which caused us to alter our courses. The alternative programs organized by Mr. Andrew Szemborski were no less exciting, however. The school was divided into two groups—one camped and cleared paths at Promised Land State Park while the other blazed a path, cleared a campsite, and began building a log cabin on the property of a local farmer, Mr. Russell Bateman, whose son attended St. Gregory's. The groups switched locations before concluding their ten-day outdoor experience together at the Bateman property.

The site they prepared together at this property is extraordinary. Under the direction of Mr. Nicholas Dalimata, the boys cleared a large section of beautifully picturesque woods, erected stone cooking stoves and firewood piles, and broke out a well-organized camp. Mr. Andrew Wilson Smith guided them in applying the geometric principles they read about in their correspondence text on mathematics, *String, Straight Edge and Shadow*, to measure out true lines and right angles for a log cabin. Before long, the boys were unearthing large stones, placing them in the fine trenches they had dug, and laying a solid flagstone floor and foundation. The project is an ongoing one, and one that the boys look forward to continuing over the course of the year.

On their last night in the woods, families and friends gathered with the campers for a rustic dinner of chicken legs and rice, and shook the dark treetops with laughter at skits and with songs round a fire. One of the staples of education at Gregory the Great is Howard Pyle's *The Merry Adventures of Robin Hood*. This adventure perhaps gave the boys a closer experience of life under the greenwood tree than any group of students before them.



## Our Chapel



With considerable help from our old friend, Fr. Christopher Manuele, we were able to section off part of our refectory and create a small but beautiful chapel. After building an altar with his own hands, covering it with beautiful cloths that he himself measured and cut, and raising an iconostasis, Fr. Manuele celebrated the school's first Divine Liturgy. Then, to our surprise and delight, our head chaplain Fr. Michael Salnick (pictured) donat-

ed a chalice to our school and obtained permission to reserve the Blessed Sacrament in our chapel. We are very grateful to God and to these two fine priests for the celebration of the Divine Liturgy and the consolation of Our Lord's Presence.

## Sophia Institute Conference

This fall, headmaster Sean Fitzpatrick attended a conference sponsored by Sophia Institute for the purpose of creating a new program for Catholic teachers. Mr. Fitzpatrick shared conversation with many like-minded educators of various backgrounds, uniting their perspectives and experiences in the hopes of strengthening Catholic education in America. (Please keep this endeavor in your prayers.)

Throughout the conference, Mr. Fitzpatrick was continually reminded of the great gift of our little academy. He often felt that he was regarded with incredulous faces as his fellows learned that there was indeed such a school as Gregory the Great Academy; a school where students could live their faith freely, read and consider the great works of Western Civilization, live a life of monastic rhythm, sing songs, and play rugby—enjoying authentic friendship and authentic education.



## Letter from Fr. Stemler, FSSP

Dear Friends,

What a joy when I heard that St. Gregory's Academy was rising again and restarting this coming fall! *Deo Gratias*. As a priest of the Fraternity of Saint Peter, I had the privilege and the honor to serve as a chaplain of this boarding school for four years (and more, for I took them as pilgrims to my country, France, many times, even after my departure). To say that these years were my best years as a young priest is the exact truth. And I will tell you why. The family spirit, the faith, the joyfulness I met at St. Gregory's—as a fruit of the spirit of John Senior—impressed me a lot. Boys are boys, with their weakness but with their generosity, too. Most of them became fine young men, and I keep praying for all of them. Some of the teachers for this fall were already there during my chaplaincy, as student and as teacher (Mr. Prezzia and Mr. Fitzpatrick), and so it is with enthusiasm that I warmly recommend any application for this holy project, blessed by the Lord, which follows the Good, the True and the Beautiful.



Fr. Bruno Stemler, FSSP  
Chaplain of Blessed Frassati's High School, France  
Chaplain at St. Gregory's Academy from 2000-2004

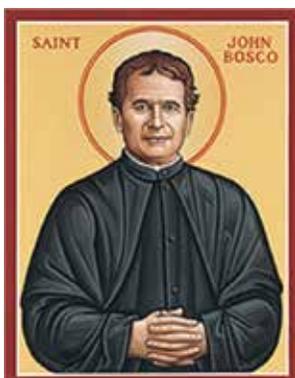
## All Saints Day Festivities



Former chaplain, Fr. Bruno Stemler, celebrates Mass for the Feast of All Saints



Students, dormfathers, faculty and friends celebrate the Feast of All Saints with a post banquet sing-along.



St. John Bosco, patron of youth, pray for us.



Students at the All Saints banquet. From left to right: Luke Romanchuk, Peter Doetsch, Andrew Davidson, Vincent Audino, and Paul Cummings.



Senior Jonathan Gearhart juggles fire during the All Hallows Eve singing in Scranton.



Mr. Matthew Williams leads the student schola during the All Saints Liturgy.