



The Minstrel

NEWSLETTER OF GREGORY THE GREAT ACADEMY

All Saints 2015

Dear Friend,

I am honored to call you a partner in our educational mission, a mission directed at nothing less than making saints for the Kingdom of Heaven. We rely entirely on the grace of God to do this work, and a large part of that grace is that He has given us your friendship. Perhaps you have never considered this, but, by helping us, you are fulfilling a duty to the Church and demonstrating your love for Her. You are making new, young disciples to spread the Good News beyond their school. With your support, we are doing everything we can to equip these young men for their apostolic journeys to heaven and to sainthood—and one way we do this is by teaching the boys how to honor the saints.

Here at Gregory the Great Academy, we place strong emphasis on devotions to the saints. Every All Saints Day, we hold a banquet to honor all the saints. At this celebration, we decorate the refectory with images of the Holy Ones and spread our tables with white linens, candles, and a special evening meal. We then welcome local families and friends as guests. In leading these young men to heaven, we teach how to keep a Feast Day by feasting and participating in ancient traditions with new life, which is central to sanctity. After revering the Holy Departed at Holy Mass, our boys gather in bright ties and brushed coats for the All Saints Banquet, where they enjoy the fellowship of our Catholic community, recite stories of the saints, and sing old songs in fresh praise of the heavenly nobility.

Such an event, simple as it may sound, is for many students a new and enriching experience. As a boarding school, we are blessed with the opportunity to teach throughout the day everyday; and we look upon this opportunity as an obligation. By taking care to guide our boys through things as rudimentary as how to prepare and partake in a meal with real purpose, we are teaching them a way of life—a way of life that is drawn by things that are worth doing and which, in turn, draw

and awaken the heart to the Divine Life.

This is your work as much as it is ours, for without you it would cease. The boys at Gregory the Great Academy rely entirely on your generosity as they set the course of their pilgrimage. Please continue to keep their education going strong, that they may all become the saints on earth that our times so desperately need. Make a gift today towards making these good boys good saints.

Thank you for your help, and may God and His saints bless you.

In Christ,

Sean Fitzpatrick

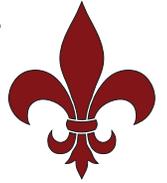


Sean Fitzpatrick
Headmaster



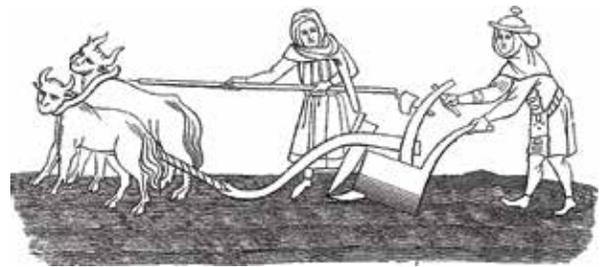
Making Saints

Culture, as in “agriculture” is the cultivation of the soil from which men grow. To determine proper methods, we must have a clear idea of the crop. “What is man?” the Penny Catechism asks, and answers: “A creature made in the image and likeness of God, to know, love, and serve Him.” Culture, therefore, clearly has this simple end, no matter how complex or difficult the means... All the paraphernalia of our lives, intellectual, moral, social, psychological, and physical, has this end: Christian culture is the cultivation of saints.



- Dr. John Senior, *The Death of Christian Culture*

At Gregory the Great Academy, we believe that the crisis in education is a symptom of cultural depletion. This crisis will only be reversed by a rebirth of Christian culture. This renewal is the mission of Gregory the Great Academy: to make saints through spiritual, intellectual, communal, and athletic awakening. True education cultivates the whole man, and that cultivation will result in the growth of holy men. One of the greatest tools in the course of Catholic education is the lives of the saints, for their example shows the way to God.



St. Louis, King of France, by El Greco.

Sanctity by Spiritual Renewal

It is striking that holiness can be found in so many different guises. One finds the slave Toussaint and the king Louis; the reclusive Mary of Egypt and the public John Paul II; the poor Servulus and the rich Helena; the mother Elizabeth of Hungary and Mother Teresa of Calcutta; the father Louis Martin and Father Damien. Although there is no one way to sanctity, there are common ways of sanctity. All saints pray. All saints practice the virtues. All saints are joyful. Consider the words of the great educator St. John Bosco:

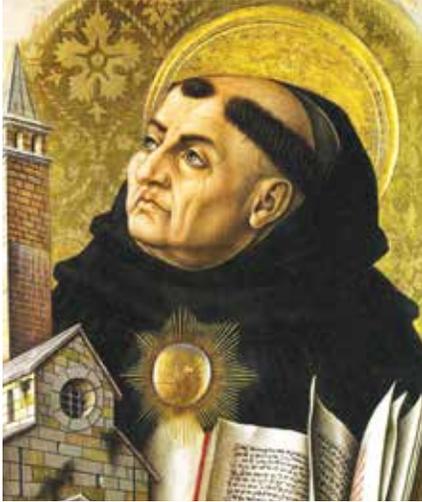
There are two main deceits with which the devil usually distances young people from virtue. The first is to make come to their mind that to serve the Lord consists in a melancholic life far from any amusement or pleasure. It is not so, dear youths. I want to teach you a Christian method of life, which is at the same time joyful and happy, pointing you to what are the true amusements and the true pleasures.

Joy is the distinguishing mark of any follower of Christ, for the message of the Gospels is good news indeed—and good news brings happiness. Christ is the Victor: He has trampled death by His death. We are already on the winning side. At Gregory the Great Academy, we want our boys to be joyful in battle, for Christ has already won the war. It is this spiritual joy and confidence that will attract others to the Faith of our students as it lights them on the way towards an even greater joy.

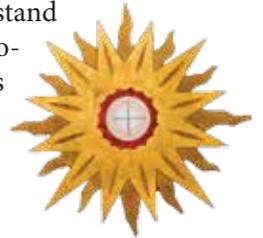
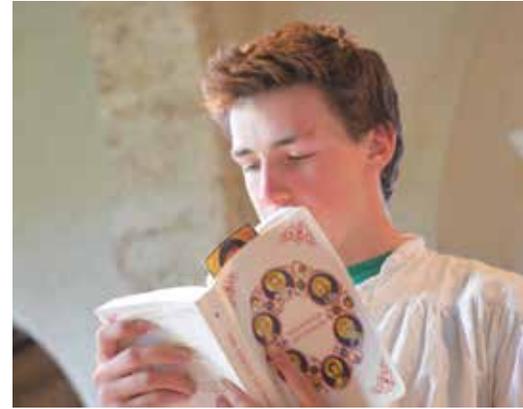
Sanctity by Intellectual Growth

To be a saint is to love: to love God and to love our neighbor. But love presupposes knowledge—we cannot love what we do not know. Greater knowledge brings with it a greater capacity to love.

The academic program at Gregory the Great Academy is an encounter with



truth: truth about numbers, nature, the human condition, and the Creator. Eventually, all authentic study of the truth converges around the One Truth. And this Truth sets us free. All of the saints came to know this truth to one degree or another. The intellectual life came naturally to Thomas Aquinas and with great difficulty to John Marie Vianney. Whether our intellectual capacity more closely resembles the former saint or the latter, our task is the same: we must strive to understand as much as we can about God and the created world, for in so doing we grow closer to Him. The fruit of such labor is love. This is the ultimate end of the course of studies at Gregory the Great.



Sanctity by Community Life

Throughout its history, the Academy has established devotions to certain saints. Among these are St. Benedict and St. Francis of Assisi. The seniors read the life of St. Benedict as written by St. Gregory the Great and Benedict's own famous *Rule*. We also study passages from G. K. Chesterton's biography of St. Francis, whom he called a *Jongleur de Dieu* as he rejoiced with his brothers in the good gifts of God.

It is no coincidence that both of these saints founded communities. Community life and monastic rhythms are

a vital part of the education at Gregory the Great. They provide a unique opportunity for the practice of many virtues, the most prominent of which is generosity. Benedict and Francis both knew the importance of this virtue and emphasized it often to those who followed them.



Community life, like many difficult endeavors, delivers as much as it demands. Living in the dorms prepares our boys for living in the greater communities of the world: families, parishes, and cities. A good roommate is conscious of the needs of his comrades and sacrifices his good for the common good. The dormfathers work closely with the boys to instill this sense of selflessness. It often does not come easily, but it does come, bringing with it new force to the golden rule of treating others as you would like to be treated, which is central to sainthood.

Sanctity by Athletic Invigoration

The boys at Gregory the Great Academy invoke the protection of St. Sebastian before all of their sports games. St. Sebastian is the patron saint of athletes, and his life exemplifies the virtues instilled in boys by our rigorous sports program. Although the authentic Christian life is joyful, it is not easy. In his life, St. Sebastian showed great constancy and bravery in the face of severe persecution.



We are preparing our boys for possible conflicts in a world growing ever more hostile in its attitude toward Catholicism. On the sports field, our boys learn that life can be painful and difficult. They learn that they need to persevere through hardships, face their fears, bind with their brothers, and keep getting up after every fall. They also learn the valuable lesson that victory is often not won quickly, but involves a process that mirrors the soul's passage to God through disciplined prayer.

Athletics require a high level of resolve; but, with continued practice, boys learn perseverance and the value of this moral virtue—one necessary for men to possess in the world if they will arrive in the next as sons of God and heirs of heaven.

Please support the Academy by sending your tax-deductible donation today!



Scranton Times-Tribune



The Highlanders 7's rugby team traveled to Susquehanna University this fall and, for the first time in the team's history, claimed first place in a 7's tournament. They overcame the reigning state champions, West Shore United, in the semifinal and last year's runner-up, Cumberland Valley, in the championship match to claim the tournament. Our Lady Queen of Victory, pray for us!