



The Minstrel

NEWSLETTER OF GREGORY THE GREAT ACADEMY

Graduation 2017

Dear Friend,

Did you know that St. Gregory's might be the only school in the world that judges its wellbeing by the happiness of its students? Happy boys and a happy life is our measure of success. Happiness is our goal, for it is the goal of any true education. Here at St. Gregory's, we remember our Penny Catechism when it comes to the reason why we are. God made us to know Him, to love Him, and to serve Him in this world, and to be happy with Him forever in heaven. And that is why, even on this side of His grace, we rejoice as happy warriors. *The world is so full of a number of things, I'm sure we should all be as happy as kings.* St. Thomas Aquinas called happiness the end of life; but, still, there are ends in life. There are tears in things; times when we cry, "I will never laugh again." Though loss is inescapable, there is also a sense in which things do not change or even diminish—in the heart of Christ, all things are made new.



Sean Fitzpatrick
Headmaster

This spring, we celebrated not only the graduation of twenty fine young men who have completed their journey with us, but also our school's return to its new-old home. Our new graduates now join the old ranks, to try their hands at greater things. They have scored a try, and I refer there to the rugby goal which is called a "try," when you place the ball behind the goal line and earn the privilege of a try, an attempt, to kick the ball through the upright posts for a few more points. A few more points that, when roads diverge, may make all the difference. Even in scoring a goal, we only earn a try. Every ending is only a beginning. And happy we are to try and try. To try is the way of Odysseus, it is the way of the Cross, it is the way of Don Quixote. *To strive, to seek, to find, and not to yield.*



There is a longstanding Highlander tradition when achievements are made on the field of battle, when the try is earned, our victors do not carry on and glory over their victory—for it is not our victory, it is the Lord's. Instead of exulting, the Highlanders happily prepare for future contests. After the match, they kneel in a dusty, arm-bound ring and lustily sing Psalm 115: "Not to us, O Lord, not to us, but to thy name give glory." This graduation marks a great ending and a great beginning. You, our supporters, together with our graduates, have scored a try for us and for many that will come after you—and we will try our best with this chance you have won to win glory for God's Name by making many people happy. Please remember St. Gregory's in your charitable giving this summer as we open the next phase of our Homeward campaign and accept new students to join our adventures in a happy education.

In Christ,

Sean Fitzpatrick



Graduation 2017

Right: Academic Dean Luke Culley awards a diploma to Christian Cummings of Front Royal, Virginia. The graduation exercises were held once again in the Auditorium of the Elmhurst facility, where hundreds of families, friends, and alumni gathered for this momentous and joyful occasion.



Center: Fr. Innocent Smith, OP assisted as Deacon at the graduation Solemn High Mass and celebrated Holy Mass on Sunday of graduation weekend in the St. Gregory's chapel. Fr. Innocent is an alumnus of St. Gregory's, Class of 2004, and it was a tremendous honor to welcome him once again to his old school as a priest.

At St. Gregory's, if we have given you anything, if we could give you anything, it has been to delight with you in the works of God, to play before Him, to begin to learn this activity of the wise man. You and I, indeed, — we



all have played — though perhaps, it seemed like a labor. But all the activities here at Gregory the Great, all that you have done, were done so that you and I could play, and play we did. The rigors of Euclid, Latin and Algebra,

our dabbling in philosophy and theology so as to know the truth; reading history and literature, to parade before our imagination what is noble: the images of the virtuous and evil men so that we might choose the good and flee from evil; the discipline of rugby to subjugate the body and train the passions for what is better; a common life to learn sacrifice and to fall in love with what is beautiful, by creating beautiful things, to delight in what is good.

— *From the Graduation Sermon of Fr. Christopher Manuele.*



As my classmate, Jack Davis, put it, Gregory the Great has given us a love and appreciation of the good things, the little things: books, music, a cup of coffee, a day of hard work. It's a place where we've shared real, physical experiences with one another, whether easy or tough, in a joyful way. We have shared a taste, we twenty, of what is truly good. We have experienced together something of what it means to experience anything at all through our daily prayer life, the sacrifice of teammates toward victory, and our mutual pursuit of the truth by study. This sharing of experiences, both big and small, has given us a brotherhood that is unique, both in its depth and its breadth that shall fill up our lives, and never cease to be a blessing to us. — *From the Valedictorian Address of David Hahn*



Above: The Snyman family from Oklahoma celebrates their son Timothy's graduation with their elder son—and St. Gregory's alumnus—Daniel. The refectory was filled with happy friends and families for a banquet in honor of the senior class and the return to the Academy's original home. After the meal, the students and alumni gathered for a rousing session of song, making the rafters roar once again.

Left: Senior Thomas Lawless played the fire-breathing dragon in the St. Julian Troupe's 2017 juggling show, *The Woodcutter's Dream*. The students worked very hard under the direction of dormfather Ben Strong and juggling coach Luke Culley to perfect the routines, costumes, sets, musical pieces, and special effects for a wondrous and joyous spectacle inspired by the myths of Ireland. The troupe put on two performances at St. Gregory's and two performances in Hudson, New York.



Above: James Anderson, Wisconsin, and Dominic Boucher, New Mexico, learned the skill of stilt-walking in order to play the walking trees in *The Woodcutter's Dream*. These show-stopping costumes were a great favorite with the many children who experienced this year's juggling show.

2017 Rugby State Champions



Top Left: Captain Jack Davis, Utah, holds with the Pennsylvania Title Trophy with classmates John Paul George, Ohio, and Brendan Pedulla, Oklahoma. Top Right: Dominic Valentine, Washington DC, defends possession during the semi-final match. Middle Left: Head Coach Garret van Beek enjoys the victory with Assistant Coach John Prezzia. Middle Right: The Highlanders pose as 2017 Pennsylvania State Champions in Harrisburg. Bottom Left: Richard Rojas, Pennsylvania, charges for a try. Bottom Right: Senior Kolbe Costello, Oklahoma, who suffered an injury earlier in the season, is embraced by classmate Tim Snyman, Oklahoma, after the championship match.

