



# The Minstrel

NEWSLETTER OF GREGORY THE GREAT ACADEMY

June 2018

Dear Friend,

I have a little story for you.

The campfire snapped merrily, throwing ruddy flashes on the faces around it as I took in the scene. Mike was chopping wood lustily. John sat on a bucket, looking anxiously at a sky perhaps growing heavy with rain. The other John and Jerry were swapping stories about Afghanistan deployments and practicing law in Chicago. Joseph and Nick shared memories of old times over sausages. Daniel strummed the guitar. Soon all were united in conversation about fatherhood, family, and which Beatrix Potter book was superior. Mike argued for Mr. Tod with vehemence while Dan drawled that Pigling Bland was longer than *War and Peace*.

Then, with a sharp crack, a rock in the fire pit exploded, launching bright embers every which way. Mike brandished his ax as though under attack. Afghanistan John took expert cover behind Big Jerry. Joseph and Nick vanished in the smoke with their sausages. Dan, ever steady, did not miss a beat on the guitar. And John, expecting water and not fire, tumbled off his bucket with a shriek I had not heard in twenty years—and I laughed as I had not laughed in twenty years. We were boys again, and it was a delight.

As you may know, I am a graduate of St. Gregory's. This spring, I had the pleasure of welcoming a number of my old classmates to our campus to celebrate our 20-year anniversary. It may sound unusual for folks to enjoy their high school reunion, but St. Gregory's is an unusual high school. The alumni of the Academy cherish their experiences at school as among the happiest of their lives, when friendships are formed that are long-lasting and very dear. They very much enjoy, even twenty years later, visiting their old school and spending time with each other to keep strong the bond of Christian brotherhood that is central to our educational vision.

Friendship is the foundation of our school. Not only do we believe that teaching is a species of friendship, but also that formation primarily arises from friendship. Therefore, as educators, we are careful to cultivate friendship in the context of the Mystical Body of Christ. When you give a gift to Gregory the Great Academy, you are giving the gift of holy and happy friendship to boys who seek that belonging among their peers in a Catholic environment that will shape who they will become as men. The time I spent with my old friends this spring was like remembering an old poem that suddenly bears new meaning with the ripening of years. Please help us give this grace to our students that they too may grow in the goodness of friendship with each other and with Christ.

In Christ,

Sean Fitzpatrick

PS: I hope you enjoy the enclosed booklet, "10 Poems Every Boy Should Know by Heart." I encourage you to share these poems with your children or grandchildren and, in so doing, share in their delight over them as we do with our students.



Sean Fitzpatrick  
Headmaster



## Capital Campaign Update

Greetings from the Development office.

Summer is almost upon us, signaling the end of another school year. For any other school, this is just the normal course of events as day follows night. But for Gregory the Great Academy, this particular year was one of great moment and significance. 2017-2018 was the first full year that the Academy operated in our beautiful Elmhurst campus. To say this has been a blessed and joyous time would be an understatement of elephantine proportion.

When we began our Homeward Campaign, it was with a mixture of faith and fear, of excitement and anxiousness. But through God's grace and your generosity, what once seemed impossible came to pass. We were able to raise a down payment more quickly than we ever imagined possible and the goal of \$1.6 million did not seem quite as formidable.

Now here we are, recently surpassing \$1.4 million and leaving only \$200,000 more to completely pay off the mortgage and obtain the security and permanence which has been our prayer for nearly a decade. God has been so good to us and so have you. While we hope to retire this debt, we will remain indebted to you. Again, on behalf of the faculty, staff, and students of Gregory the Great Academy, thank you for helping us get so far, and we know you will be there with us when we reach the summit of our Homeward Campaign.



A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'C.D. Smith'.

Christopher D. Smith ('03)  
Director of Development  
[csmith@gregorythegreatacademy.com](mailto:csmith@gregorythegreatacademy.com)



## Welcome, Bishop Timlin



The faculty and students were privileged to welcome Bishop James Timlin, former Bishop of Scranton, to preside over a Solemn Vespers service and a banquet to celebrate the feast day of St. Gregory the Great. Bishop Timlin was instrumental in the founding of the Academy in the early 1990's. In selling the old, abandoned diocesan Fatima Center to the Fraternity of St. Peter, Bishop Timlin shared Fr. Arnaud Devillers' desire to see a

boys boarding school established in the building. Bishop Timlin has remained a strong supporter of the Academy throughout the years, serving in the past as a graduation speaker and to confer the Sacrament of Confirmation. With the Academy's return to the Elmhurst campus, it was a momentous occasion to honor His Excellency for his constant and indispensable support of the Academy. May God grant him many years!





## Catholic Men's Conference

This spring, the Gregory the Great's Schola Cantorum attended the Diocese's Catholic Men's Conference at King's College in Wilkes-Barre to sing the Pontifical Mass of Bishop Joseph Bambera and perform a juggling show for the attendees. The conference brought hundreds of Catholic men together for good fellowship and a re-commitment to promoting and living out our Christian heritage in society. The Academy was honored to receive the invitation to participate and the students were a bright presence at the event.



## Guest Lecture Series 2018

As part of its academic program, Gregory the Great has developed a Lecture Series and welcomed a number of wonderful guests to present various topics to the students. 2018 was a particularly active year, featuring lectures and presentations from Dr. Patrick Clark and Dr. Annie Lefler of the University of Scranton's Theology Department, Bill Sockey from the World Apostolate of Fatima, John DeJak who is researching the canonization cause of Fr. Walter Ciszek, the sacred music choir from St. Tikhon's Monastery, and several others.



Above: John DeJak, President of Fr. Gabriel Richard High School, MI, tells the boys of St. Gregory's the story of Fr. Walter Ciszek. Above right: Bill Sockey of the World Fatima Apostolate addresses the boys with the famous Pilgrim Statue. Right: Dr. Annie Lefler of the University of Scranton spoke on the nature and history of philosophy.



## Rejoicing in Truth



*Above Left: The juniors juggle on pilgrimage in France. Above: Senior Tristan Lang, CA, delivers an address in Theology class on the life of St. Benedict. Below: The juggling troupe performed a lively show at the Scranton Children's Library. Below left: Bishop Nicholas Samra of the Byzantine Diocese of Newton visited the school this spring and the boys served his Hierarchical Divine Liturgy at St. Joseph's Church in Scranton. Left: Senior Nicholas Cuddeback advances the ball down Highland Field at the Academy.*

