



The Minstrel

NEWSLETTER OF GREGORY THE GREAT ACADEMY

Feast of St. John Bosco

Dear Friend,

For many people, a new year is an invitation to look ahead, even as we look back, with joyful and hopeful anticipation for what lies in store. The ancient Romans gave the passage into a new year to Janus, the god of gateways, who bore two faces, one facing forwards and the other backwards, beholding both the future and the past. The wisdom of the ancients is the bedrock of Christian culture, and we remember our heritage as we ring in this new year, looking back upon our community's traditions while looking forward to their re-enactment and rejuvenation.

Though the spell after the Christmas holidays is the longest and, in some ways, the most challenging stretch of our academic year, it is one that is punctuated with events and challenges that bring increased form and perspective on the picture that is each and every academic year.



January 31 is the feast day of one of our greatest patrons, St. John Bosco, and we plan on giving honor to this holy teacher and juggler by visiting local schools and parishes with our troupe performing a medieval morality tale replete with jugglery and music. February will bring our celebration of the earthy poetry of the hearth and heath with the Robbie Burns Supper of Scottish tradition. This is a favorite event at Gregory the Great Academy where we slaughter sheep to make haggis and meat pies and the boys memorize songs and poems by the Bard of Ayrshire.

February also marks the beginning of the Highlanders' pre-season rugby matches and our annual fundraising Soirée in McLean, Virginia, where we will be honored to welcome Catholic Answers president, Christopher Check, as our keynote speaker. Before we know it, we will be holding a banquet to honor Pope St. Gregory the Great, on March 12.

As any alumnus or returning student knows, these upcoming months are the tough months when it comes to rugby training. The winter is harsh in the Pocono Mountains and it plays a considerable part in conditioning our squad into dauntless ruggers. Though burdensome and exhausting, playing rugby in the teeth of inclement Pennsylvanian weather is a catalyst for friendship, an occasion for virtue, and serves to educate young men in coming to know something deep about themselves—something about their strength, their resolve, and their dedication. It is one of those experiences that can seem terrible at the time, but in hindsight, is valued tremendously. We look back, even as we look forward.

As you join us in looking ahead and behind, please consider the many ways you can help the boys at Gregory the Great Academy in this new year. Whether by a donation, or telling a friend about us, or by your prayers, we are relying on you to make this year as wonderful and fruitful as the years that have gone by. Education is all about the past and the future, and we hope that your plans for 2019 will include supporting the good work being done every day at the Academy. On behalf of the faculty, staff, and students, I thank you for your generosity and may God bless you in this new year.

In Christ,

Luke Culley
Interim Headmaster



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The Homeward Campaign Comes Home

Greetings from the Development Office.

The community surrounding Gregory the Great Academy is unique for a high school. Though it stands on the isolated, wind-weathered plateau of the Poconos, there are thousands of alumni, parents, and benefactors spread across the country actively supporting and nurturing this school like the rain and sun that give life to a mighty tree. So it has been ever since the Academy's inception and that community has only grown and strengthened over the years.

And so has the Academy.

It was in the confidence of this abundant loyalty and life that the Academy launched the Homeward Campaign in December, 2016 to purchase our original campus in Elmhurst, to revitalize the roots in the soil of our birthplace and homestead.

The pricetag to accomplish this goal was **\$1,600,000**, a daunting number for an institution of our size. Nevertheless, we kept our faith in God and in our community.

I am both honored and humbled to announce that as of the close of 2018, Gregory the Great has raised **\$1,738,000**, exceeding the campaign goal that we had set.

Thanks be to God and to you.

Here are some of the incredible facts about the campaign which reflect the generosity and magnanimity of our community:

- ♦ Over the course of the campaign, we received 4,792 individual donations
- ♦ The average donation was \$362.68
- ♦ Our two fundraising Soirées held during the campaign raised \$209,000
- ♦ The two matching-gift challenges held in April, 2017 and December, 2018 raised \$357,000
- ♦ Current and former parents of the Academy donated over \$500,000 to the campaign
- ♦ Over 150 alumni made contributions

You have given us the ability to retire our mortgage and own this beautiful property outright. This move will not only



Pictured above, a scene from the 2016 Soirée, which marked the Homeward Campaign kick-off. This annual event features a silent and live auction of beautiful and unique handcrafted works of art. This joyful event has proven a great success over the last three years, and has been graced with excellent speakers including Bishop James Conley of the Diocese of Lincoln, Nebraska, Anthony Esolen, Scott Hahn, and, this year, Christopher Check, president of Catholic Answers.



give us an institutional stability we have never known, but it will also allow us to apply more funds towards our tuition assistance programs, allowing even more boys to come to our school to grow in virtue, wisdom, and Catholic manhood.

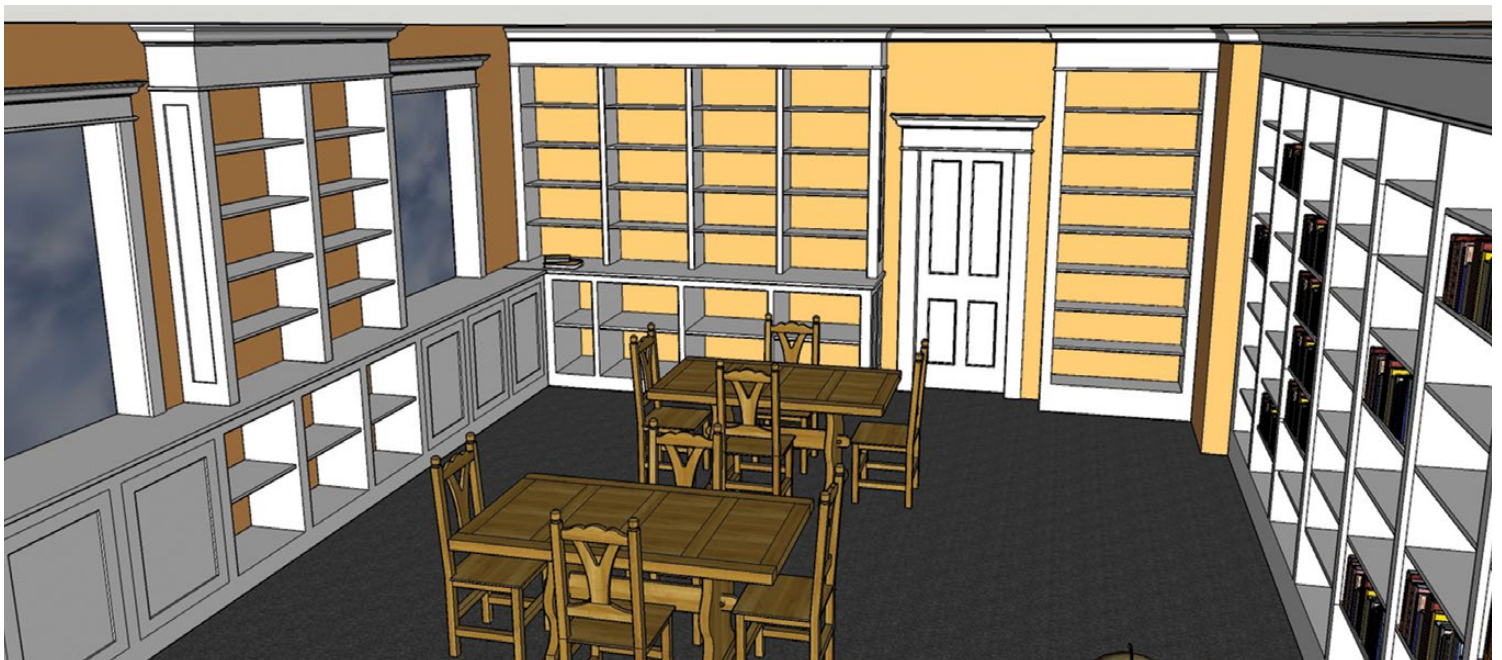
Thank you for all that you have done to make this dream a reality. We would be nothing without our community, and this building now stands as a monument to our friendship and mutual dedication to further the Kingdom of Heaven on earth.

Christopher D. Smith ('03)
Director of Development
csmith@gregorythegreatacademy.com

Plans Approved for the Fr. Edward E. Sipperly Library

One of the many blessings of the Homeward Campaign was receiving multiple generous donations from the Fr. Edward E. Sipperly Foundation of the Diocese of Albany, NY. One of these gifts was given not only to help us reach our campaign goal, but also to beautify the building for our students and memorialize the late Fr. Sipperly, who, in his lifetime, was devoted to propagating the traditions of the Catholic Faith. We are honored to continue the passion of his priesthood here at the Academy.

Plans designed by alumnus David Romanchuk have been approved and work is now underway to renovate a spacious room on the 3rd floor of the Academy's west wing into a formal library which will be named after Fr. Edward E. Sipperly. This library will provide the students and faculty with a noble space dedicated to study and the development of the intellectual life. We look forward to updating you on this exciting project for our school and our community.





Life at Gregory the Great Academy seeks to include and integrate all things good, true, and beautiful, providing students with the occasion to lead a full, well-balanced life in a community of friends. From classwork to conversation; from prayer to juggling; from sports to singing, the boys at Gregory the Great are given a taste of the happy life, of rejoicing in the truth, as they build up a friendship with Christ. Please remember the Academy students and teachers this new year in your prayers.

