



# The Minstrel

NEWSLETTER OF GREGORY THE GREAT ACADEMY

All Souls 2020

Dear Friend,

In September, a frightened boy arrived at our school—a ninth grader, small and unsure of himself, by the name of Thomas. Having left home for the first time, Thomas was swept up into the adventure of joining a merry band marching and laughing from Mass to class to sports. After some hard days of homesickness, tough academics, and finding his feet socially, Thomas came around, as they say.

But here's the interesting thing. The September I spoke of was seven years ago. Thomas lived and learned with us for four years and graduated in 2017. This September,



*Thomas Urgo as a freshman in 2013. This year, we are honored to welcome Mr. Urgo as a dormfather.*

Thomas arrived as a young man to be a dormfather. It is a joy for me to see Thomas lead our boys through the steps he came to know and love, teaching them the songs that his music teacher taught him, juggling and praying with them, and running along on the front field showing them how to throw a rugby ball. Especially poignant is that one of those boys is a ninth grader from Thomas's hometown, who is here because he admired Thomas and wanted to go to the school he went to.

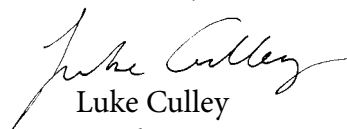


Luke Culley  
Headmaster

There is a cycle to our school that is like the seasons. Every year, a new group of young boys reads *Robin Hood* for the first time, and learns how to shoot bows out in the woods where they live for three days with a band of brothers, unseen by the world as they roam, sing, and roast food over fires. Every year, a new group of older boys reads *The Aeneid* for the first time, reflecting on the ups and downs of life and leading the charge of a school year with their brothers on their backs, learning how to sacrifice for others like a man. So run the seasons of our education, and so they pass. And as students like Thomas come and go from our school like the leaves of the tree, we ensure that the good, true, and beautiful things appear with the freshness that is their due, so that they may share them well with others some day.

In her wisdom, the Church has chosen this time of year to remember those who have fallen asleep in the Lord and who have received, or still await, their eternal reward. Please remember in your prayers those who have passed away from our community of friends, as we do in both chapel and cemetery. And pray for us, too, as we make good preparation with our boys for that final test with enthusiasm, which is the ultimate goal of a merry education. Thank you, and don't forget to give a gift this Thanksgiving to help us along our way.

In Christ,

  
Luke Culley  
Headmaster



## At the Feet of Our Lady



ful sight, heads flashing by, whether to sports or class or Mass, and hands shooting up one after another to touch the foot of their Heavenly Mother as she watches over her sons. The paint on the toes of that statue is worn away to white and it is a beautiful sign of wear. Our Lady Queen of Victory, pray for us.

The boys of Gregory the Great are well into their academic adventure this year and that adventure began with the hurdle of leaving home. Homesickness is just one of the challenges that our students must face with bravery, and they do—but through it all, they remember their parents and work hard to honor them and honor the gift they have given them in this educational experience. As they live their lives here with a new independence, there is also a shift from that parental attachment to a spiritual attachment. As mothers' apron strings are cut, new bonds are formed with a new Mother who is Mother to all.

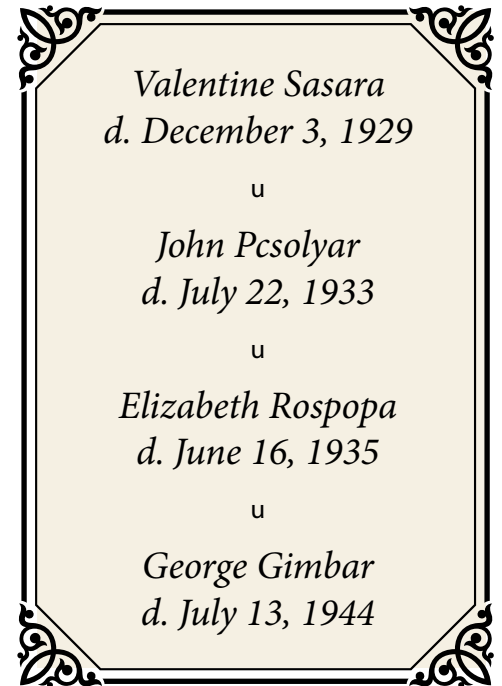
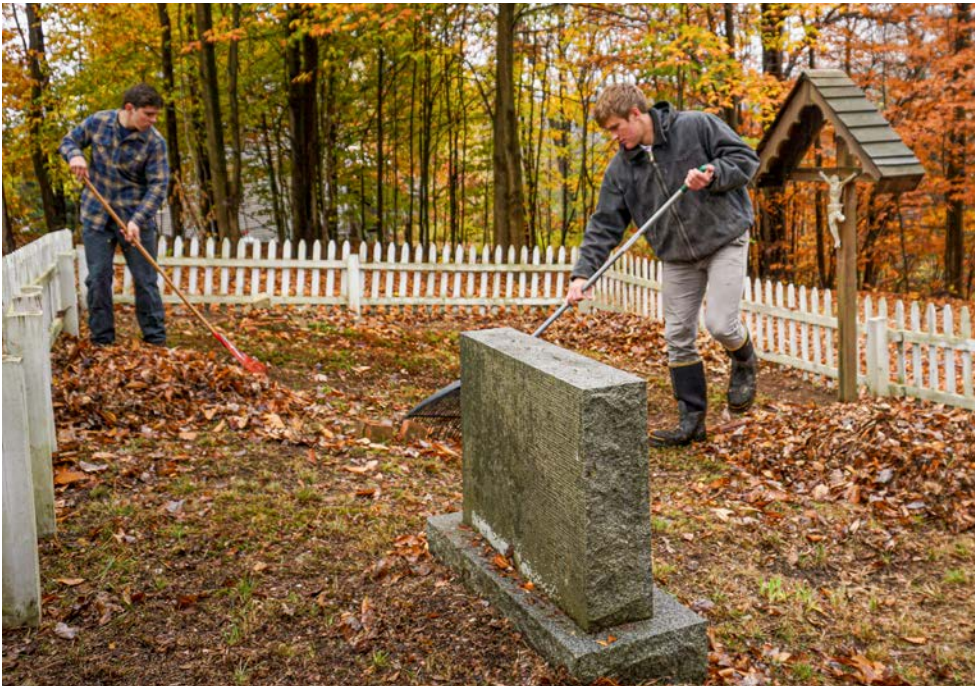
The boys' devotion to Our Lady the Theotokos, the God Bearer, is clear and strong, for it is she that they find when they leave their mother behind—and so it should be. There is a statue of Mary set in an alcove in the main stairwell of our school. The boys troop and fly past this statue a hundred times a day. And every time they do, they touch her foot. It is a wonder-

## The Voice Squad

While many schools have a soccer squad like ours, no school has a voice squad like ours. At every soccer game, all the students who are not competing in the match, gather in a tight group on the sidelines, and sing and cheer *for the entirety of the game*. No pauses, no flagging energy, no question about it. They belt out war songs from Scotland, rollicking American tunes, sea shanties, and even a Latin haka and hymns to Our Lady. With drums, pipes, flags, and songs, the voice squad emanates a spirit of joy, confidence, and a little absurdity that is one of the rarest things in the world today. It is not only a way for all the boys to participate in the game, but it also gives them a wonderful chance to proclaim the Catholic optimism in battle and enact the liberal artist's ability to bring play into his work. Three cheers for the voice squad. And one for the Highlanders.



## The Orphanage Cemetery



Over in the woods of the far western corner of our campus, enclosed by a picket fence and overlooked by a roofed crucifix, there lies a little cemetery dating back to the St. Nicholas Orphanage (1923-1950), which was run by the Sisters of the Order of St. Basil the Great. Over the years, the Academy students have processed to the old Orphanage Cemetery to pray for the dead, especially during the octave of All Souls. The ground has four subsidences that indicate grave sites. Only one of these is marked with a headstone bearing the name Brother George Gimbar, 1932-1944. For years, we have wondered who the other orphans are who are laid to rest there and, to that end, our chaplain, Fr. Christopher Manuele, made inquiry regarding any old burial records with the Order of St. Basil. After some time, we received

a letter from the Province Secretary sharing the names of those buried in our cemetery.

We thank Sister Margaret Kapusnak, OSBM for her help in securing this information for us. Please join us in praying for the repose of the souls of these children whose earthly remains are in our keeping in the old Orphanage Cemetery. May the souls of the faithful departed through the mercy of God rest in peace. Amen.



## O Salutaris Hostia: A Monstrance for the Academy

Thanks to the extraordinary generosity of a benefactor, Gregory the Great Academy now owns its very first monstrance. Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament has been a mainstay of the spiritual life for our students, and for years we have had a small, simple monstrance on loan to us from a local parish. But our boys will now adore Our Lord housed in a beautiful new monstrance made of chiseled brass plate with bicolor gold plate finish and silver overlays. On the base there are

representations of the Pelican and the Lamb of God and the upper portion features angels supporting the Crown and Cross of Christ containing a red Swarovski crystal. The boys are blessed to have this piece among our church plate where it will be used for exposition and adoration weekly. Please pray for our benefactor who kindly gifted our community with this exquisite liturgical piece.



Top: The Highlanders were blessed to enjoy a modified soccer schedule this fall and enjoyed a robust season of competition with local area schools. Middle: October 7th brought the glorious Feast of Our Lady of the Holy Rosary, complete with the recitation of the Rosary before our Marian shrine, the annual re-enactment of the Battle of Lepanto on our pond with cardboard fleets, and a hearty feast. Bottom: The Academy boys rejoiced for three merry days of stout woodland living and sport for Robin Hood Days, a cherished and hardy event of competition, campfires, and food held every year as the world turns towards winter.