



The Minstrel

NEWSLETTER OF GREGORY THE GREAT ACADEMY

Graduation 2022

Dear Friend,

I am happy to tell you that the Senior Class Pilgrimage was beautiful this year. The newly graduated seniors, Fr. Christopher, a couple dormfathers, and I journeyed to a holy site in a country that our annual pilgrimage has never brought us to before: Poland. There, at the Shrine of Our Lady of Częstochowa, we venerated the glorious Black Madonna that tradition tells us was painted by St. Luke himself, and from there walked to Kraków.

As usual, we did not bring any money with us, but only our pilgrim trust in God, our juggling arsenal, and a string of merry songs, praying and performing for our daily bread as we wound our way through the Polish countryside. And the Polish people were wonderful. We quickly learned to call, “*Bóg zapłać!*” or “God bless you!” as it was constantly being called out to us with broad smiles and sturdy Polish fare.



But there was something that I was not prepared to find on this pilgrimage. I have led these trips with seniors for over 20 years; we have been to Santiago and Rome and other famous shrines, but Poland showed me something I had never seen before. Poland is a country that is full of churches, which might be said of Spain or Italy as well, but here is the difference: the churches in Poland are full of Catholics.

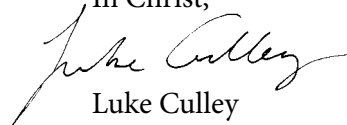
I made a point of visiting the churches we passed along our journey, and every one had people in them—young and old, morning or evening, whispering, reading, praying. The Catholic Faith is alive in the Polish people in a way that I have never seen or sensed it among other nationalities, and it was a wonder—the very thing, in fact, that one seeks on a pilgrimage: to find that renewal of faith by coming into contact with the practice of faith.

Częstochowa was a particularly dramatic instance of the vivid and vital faith in Poland and was a fitting beginning to what we would find upon our way. I have seen multitudes meander throughout Rome; I have seen the cathedral of the tomb of St. James clogged with pilgrims; but Częstochowa was different. Here, on a daily basis, thousands come, Polish thousands, with a devotion that is so intentional, so ingrained, and so important to them, it exceeded anything I have ever witnessed in places of greater fame like Rome or Santiago.

It was so clear the place that Our Lady of Częstochowa occupies in the hearts of these people. It is truly a love that they bear her and show her, and it was among the most moving things I have seen in all my years of pilgrimage.

Thank you for making our school and our pilgrimage possible. Your regular support, no matter how small, is a great gift that allows us to give these tangible experiences of the Catholic world and Catholic culture to our students. I was passing the hat in Poland recently to make our mission possible, and I extend it here to you as well. Will you make a donation this summer to help us along our way? Please, give a gift. Thank you. *Bóg zapłać!*

In Christ,


Luke Culley



Luke Culley
Headmaster



Meet the Class of 2022



Luke Patrick Burch

Favorite Curriculum Book:
The Brothers Karamazov

Prefectship: Farm

Favorite Song: "Raglan Road"

Thesis Title: "Man Need Not Fear
Death"

Next Year: University of Dallas



Demetrius Gergerich

Favorite Curriculum Book:
Nordic Gods and Heroes

Prefectship: Classrooms

Favorite Song: "The Minstrel Boy"

Thesis Title: "What If the United
States Had Been Founded by
Catholics?"

Next Year: Discernment year



Lawrence Benedict Godfrey

Favorite Curriculum Book:
The Brothers Karamazov

Prefectship: Third Floor
Bathrooms

Favorite Song: "The Old
Churchyard"

Thesis Title: "Hamlet: The Sins of
the Father"

Next Year: Mission year in Mexico



Gerard Grenier

Favorite Curriculum Book:
The Brothers Karamazov

Prefectship: Stairwells

Favorite Song: "Parcel of Rogues"

Thesis Title: "Machiavelli in
Modern Politics"

Next Year: Christendom College



Ryan Patrick Holihen

Favorite Curriculum Book:
The Aeneid

Prefectship: Farm

Favorite Song: "Men of Harlech"

Thesis Title: "Progression in
Morals from *The Iliad* through
The Aeneid"

Next Year: Benedictine College



William Roper Howerton

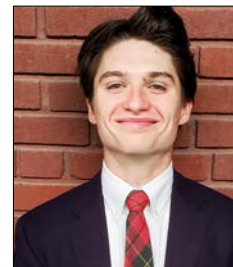
Favorite Curriculum Book:
The Odyssey

Prefectship: Kitchen

Favorite Song: "Loch Tay Boat
Song"

Thesis Title: "Heaven Is the Land
of Fancy"

Next Year: Mission year in Mexico



Joseph Michael Kersteins

Favorite Curriculum Book: *The Merry Adventures of Robin Hood*

Prefectship: Second Floor Hallways

Favorite Song: "A Man's a Man"

Thesis Title: "The Importance of Song and Poetry in the Works of J.R.R Tolkien"

Next Year: Mission year in Mexico



Patrick Gerard Kerstiens

Favorite Curriculum Book: *The Lord of the Rings*

Prefectship: Outside Areas

Favorite Song: "The Old Church Yard"

Thesis Title: "On the Angelic Nature of Gandalf"

Next Year: Discernment year



Michael Robert Koneazny

Favorite Curriculum Book: *The Odyssey*

Prefectship: Kitchen

Favorite Song: "A Man's a Man"

Thesis Title: "Dostoevsky and the Problem of Evil"

Next Year: Landscaping



Luke William Moran

Favorite Curriculum Book: *The Confessions of St. Augustine*

Prefectship: Second Floor Bathrooms

Favorite Song: "The Town I Loved So Well"

Thesis Title: "How Can Evil Exist If God Is Good?"

Next Year: Benedictine College



Augustine Michael Prieto

Favorite Curriculum Book: *The Brothers Karamazov*

Prefectship: Third Floor Hallways

Favorite Song: "Rolling Down to Old Maui"

Thesis Title: "Hernan Cortes: Savior Not Scourge"

Next Year: Mission year in Mexico



Isaac Graham Shipman

Favorite Curriculum Book: *"The Blue Cross" and Selected Fr. Brown Stories*

Prefectship: Refectory

Favorite Song: "Oft in the Stilly Night"

Thesis Title: "Why the World Needs Poets"

Next Year: Mission year in Mexico



VALEDICTORIAN

Joseph Patrick Robert Sladky

Favorite Curriculum Book: *The Aeneid*

Prefectship: Refectory

Favorite Song: "Mingulay Boat Song"

Thesis Title: "Man's Search for Meaning"

Next Year: Landscape Engineer



Gabriel John Wright

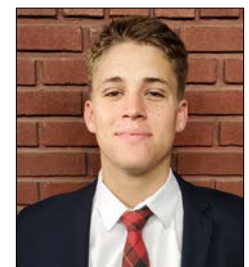
Favorite Curriculum Book: *The Brothers Karamazov*

Prefectship: Commons

Favorite Song: "Here's a Health to the Company"

Thesis Title: "The Honor of Man and the Glory of God: Work and Play at Gregory the Great"

Next Year: Franciscan University





2022 Senior Pilgrimage to the Shrine of Our Lady of Częstochowa



This year the senior class of Gregory the Great Academy performed a condensed version of Mozart's opera, "Don Giovanni." After months spent mastering the difficult score, they presented the old morality tale—dubbed "Circo Giovanni" for its joyful circus setting—as part of the graduation festivities. **To watch the full performance of "Circo Giovanni,"** sign up for The St. Nicholas Guild monthly giving club at gregorythegreatacademy.org/saintnicholasguild/