



# The Minstrel

NEWSLETTER OF GREGORY THE GREAT ACADEMY

September 2024

Dear Friend,

The beginning of the academic year involves not only the glad welcoming of returning students, but also the solemn reflection on the absence of those who do not return. Our school is small, and one personality can make a significant difference in a class. Though our attrition rate is very low, it's still hard for students to find even one of their classmates departed. But the coming and going of friends is a reality of life that these boys are learning to accept.

This summer, we heard from the father of one of the students who, after a year with us, chose another educational path. His son was in a serious car accident. The car hydroplaned in a storm, flipped over, and careened down a ravine, destroying the vehicle. Miraculously, the young man was totally uninjured. He told his father that he attributed his safety to the travel prayer he said to St. Christopher before starting out, a devotion he learned with us at St. Gregory's.



Luke Culley  
Headmaster



In the words of the boy's father:

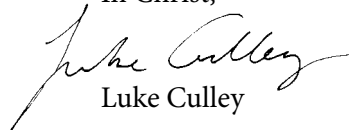
*I share this story to give glory to St. Christopher's intercession and God for His mercy and protection, and praise to Gregory the Great Academy for helping us raise a son that would think of praying for the intercession of a saint given the adverse travel conditions. Although [my son] may not be attending Gregory the Great Academy, you are forever part of our family, and we are eternally grateful for everything you do.*

It's always fascinating to consider in what ways and in what moments our school changes and even saves lives, whether a boy is here for one year or more. Perhaps God sent this boy to our school just to learn this practice of protective prayer. In any case, though boys may not finish the course with us, we trust that they will grow and thrive in those things that they experienced with us and inevitably take with them.

This year we also saw the return of two boys who left us a year ago, after they decided they made a mistake in leaving. We joyfully welcome these fellows back even as we bid farewell to others, beginning our school year looking before and behind, remembering and welcoming old friends and meeting new ones as well.

Remember us, too, and the full house of fine lads that we have here, ready for study and soccer and spiritual adventure. They rely on your generosity for their education, as our school would not be able to operate without your charity. Give generously, then, so we can carry on our labor of love to enrich and preserve lives, by the grace of God. Thank you for your gift.

In Christ,

  
Luke Culley





## Preparing for the Next 100 Years

A monumental and vital project was launched this summer at Gregory the Great Academy. After nearly a century of deferred maintenance, we began the work of reinforcing the mortar joints in our noble brick building—for those years have seen significant deterioration and resulting moisture infiltration.



We partnered, therefore, with a highly-experienced masonry preservation company to repoint and repair, beginning with one of the chapel's exterior walls, where the damage is most evident and least welcome. The work went very smoothly, and we are happy to report that this first phase of what will be a multi-summer job was very instructive regarding mortar condition, lintel replacement, capstone flashing, and installing modern water-repelling technology.



Next summer we will continue our march around the building, ensuring that our fortress will remain strong and sturdy for the next 100 years. Thank you for your continued support which will help make this necessary work possible and keep our school going strong.



## Welcome Marcus Broom



Marcus Broom is from Rye, New Hampshire. He attended Thomas Aquinas High School in Dover, where he captained the soccer and lacrosse teams. He received an academic scholarship from the Catholic University of America and, after two years of study, Mr. Broom attended the St. Kateri Tekakwitha Internship in New Mexico to help build a Shrine to Our Lady of Guadalupe. While there, he learned about Gregory the Great Academy, and seized the opportunity to serve as a dormfather before continuing his college career. He also teaches folk music and coaches soccer and rugby.



## Camp Highlander 2024

Summers at Gregory the Great have traditionally been a peaceful time. With the boys away enjoying their much-earned respite, the building and the property quietly wait for their return. But for the past four summers, that tranquility has been blessedly broken by the joyful adventures of another group of boys: the 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> graders of Camp Highlander.

Forty boys from all over the country travel to our campus in the Poconos to experience a slice of the Highlander life. Over the course of seven days, every hour is filled with singing, playing, building, exploring, praying, sleeping under the stars, and rising with rosy-fingered Dawn. The days are brimming with activity, all with a focus on preparing the boys for their pilgrimage, walking 12 miles to Scranton to sing the Liturgy, then juggle through the town in order to raise money for their final feast.



To see these little lads enthusiastically take up a condensed and concentrated version of student life is a thing to behold. And what is wonderful in all of this, is that the experience is handed on to them by our graduated seniors, who come back from their senior pilgrimage to be camp counselors, no longer as students, but as teachers. It is a poetic end to their own journey as students at the Academy.

If you or anyone you know has a rising 7<sup>th</sup> or 8<sup>th</sup> grader who yearns for adventure, email Mr. Christopher Smith at [csmith@gregorythegreatacademy.com](mailto:csmith@gregorythegreatacademy.com) to sign up for camp updates and registration information.



## Welcome David Kuplack



David Kuplack is from Post Falls, Idaho. He attended Gregory the Great Academy before taking up work in the electrical trade in Washington State and Northern Idaho. He then worked in Virginia as an apprentice timber-framer, and also did a turn in landscaping, food service, and electrical contracting. He serves the Academy as a dormfather, folk music teacher, and soccer and rugby coach.



# Back to School 2024

