



GREGORY THE GREAT ACADEMY

Christmas 2020

Dear <<<<<<<<NAME>>>>>>>>>,>

Do you believe in Santa Claus? That may seem like a strange or even a silly question, but it actually isn't. The real question is, who are we to say he doesn't exist? Why should we not, especially as Catholics who believe in all things visible and invisible, limit the scope of God's creation? It is only in retaining an open heart to such possible, or impossible, wonders that we may actually find some things to be true that we never imagined could be.

*I'll let you in on the secret of Santa Claus at our school,
but first, let me tell you a little story.*

When I was a boy, my family celebrated Christmas with the understanding that Santa Claus did indeed come down our chimney with presents that he left under the tree. And though we were all quite ready to believe it, this marvelous event was taken as a simple point of fact and was not really spoken of, just as we wouldn't make very much of a snowfall on Christmas Eve. These things just happened, as wonderful as they were. But there was also a kind of sacred silence, I suppose, around my family's inclusion of Santa Claus, as though he were a secret that we all knew and enjoyed keeping.



Luke Culley
Headmaster



O COME, LET US ADORE HIM!



Imagine my surprise when some years beyond my childhood, my older brother said to me, “Do you remember how mom and dad had us all believing in Santa Claus?” I said that I did. “You know what’s funny about the whole thing?” he went on, “There were always presents under the tree that mom and dad didn’t know anything about. Santa Claus is real.”

Though my brother’s conclusion surprised me, I agreed with him, and I still do—especially in light of Gregory the Great Academy. Miracles like our school can only exist by the assistance of those invisible ministers who help the will of God to be done on earth as it is in heaven. I have no difficulty in believing that St. Nicholas is here, and is often here. After all, our school is under his patronage, this building having been the St. Nicholas Orphanage. There is a beautiful stained glass window of St. Nicholas in our chapel, patron of boys, reminding us that he has his eye on us and his hand on our tiller.

Believe me, there are many things that happen here almost on a daily basis that are as mysterious and wonderful as those presents that appeared beneath our Christmas tree. There is no doubt that our school is a miracle that God sustains by the prayers and intercession of his saints and angels, and Santa Claus is among them—especially in the sense that it is a gift.

And this school is a great gift.

While the Academy is a retreat from secular, political, and technological turmoil, it is increasingly becoming a stronghold of a common sense that is growing more uncommon. And we are determined to be a sensible stronghold, not only for these boys but also for all of you as well.



I hope you might find it comforting that there is a place where boys are singing Lauds at dawn, Mass at midday, and Compline before bed.

There is something encouraging in knowing there is a place where boys are raising animals, reading the Bible, and learning poetry.

It is a joy to know that, even in this darkening world, there is a place of light where boys play and work and pray, learning to bring their faith along for the adventure of their lives.

Please remember the boys of Gregory the Great Academy this Christmas. The ugliness of the times poses new challenges in keeping our beautiful school strong. Your support through the last year has been wonderful, but we still need you as we stand tall while others are closing down and falling to corruption or even despair.

Not us!

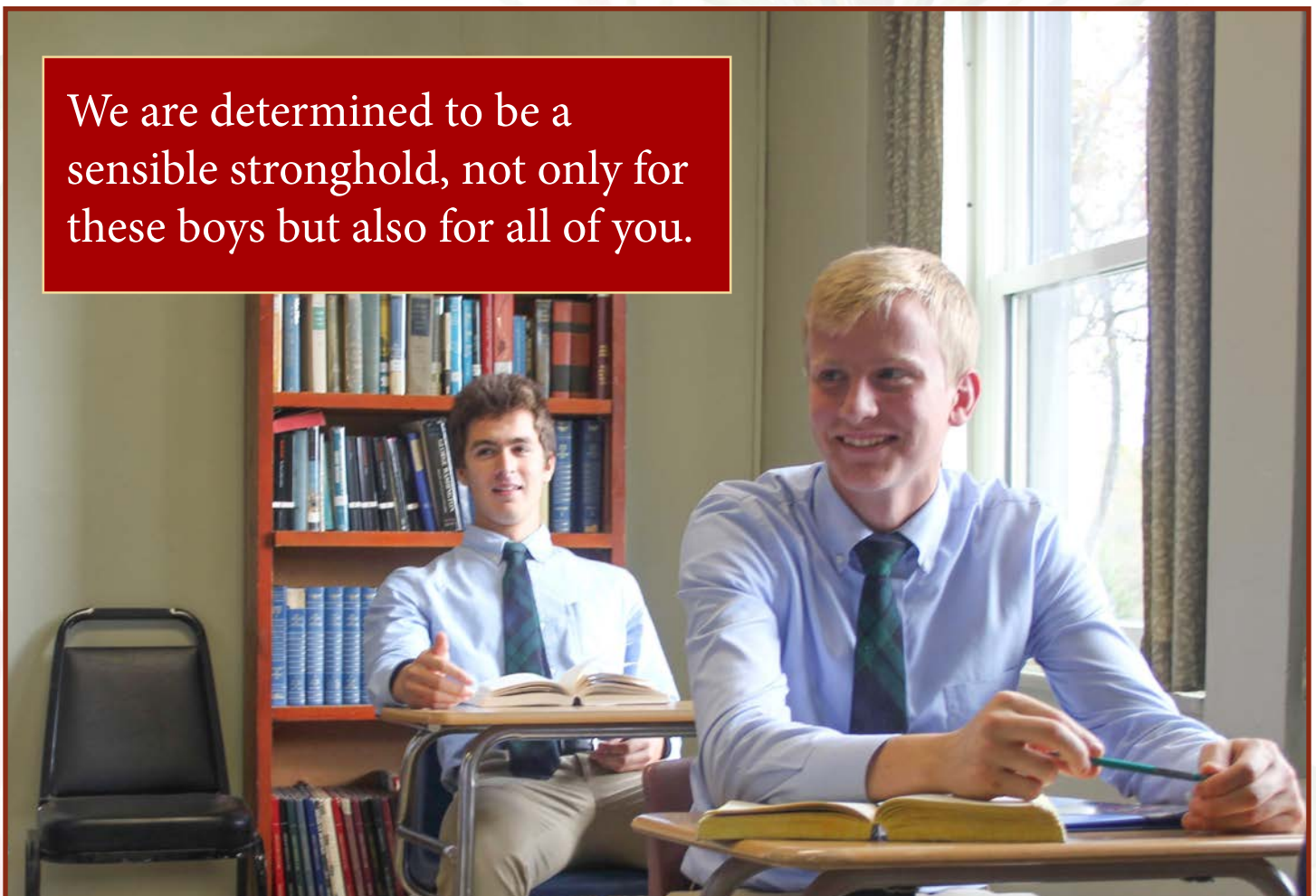
Our mission is to be a beacon of cultural hope and Catholic courage. At the same time, we still have to provide the basics—our boys need to be supplied with books and tools, warmed and fed... and costs are rising. But, with your help, with God's help, with St. Nicholas's help, nothing is impossible.

All of this uncertainty makes me certain of our happy and holy purpose, which seems to me part of the true Christian spirit and the true Christmas spirit. We have sailed through hard times before with you by our side, and we will do it again. St. Nicholas has found our school worth saving and he will save it as many times as he has to—so long as we have faith.

And so long as we have you. You see, there can be no doubt about the existence of Santa Claus when we consider the existence of this school. When you give to the boys of Gregory the Great, you are confirming the existence of Santa Claus and perpetuating the presence of heaven on earth. You are giving your hands and hearts to the mission to save souls and make the Incarnation new again through your selfless generosity. What more is Santa Claus than that?

Please make a special Christmas gift to the Academy during this giving season. *These boys need you, even as they need their patron saints.* God knows that it's hard to decide where to place our loyalties these days, but I

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am blessed and honored in the confidence that I have in presenting these boys and this school to you as worthy recipients of your charitable giving, for it is with us that your gift will have, I daresay, the greatest impact for good in this country.

Have a merry Christmas and a holy New Year, and thank you for your tremendous support.

In Christ,



Luke Culley
Headmaster

P.S. **Please remember to send a Christmas present for the boys.** After all, they give each of us a gift every day by their prayers and labors. They are a great hope for the nation and the church, and they are working hard to rise to that challenge. They are doing their part as friends of St. Nicholas. Won't you do yours?

