



Dear Friend,

I hope you are well and staying strong through the ongoing crises that are shaking the world. But with the bright rejuvenation of springtime and Easter upon us, perhaps you're wondering what you might do to counteract these troubles and be a beacon of hope and happiness.

*Keep doing the good you are doing
and support the good others are doing.*

It's a simple piece of advice, but I'm convinced it's solid. It's ***a real plan of action and intention*** that gives the solidity and the security that is necessary during shifting and insecure times, and my experience working at Gregory the Great Academy bears it out.

On the morning of the World Trade Center attack, the headmaster of our school called an assembly. I thought he might propose a moment of prayer, or give a meditation about what had happened, or even announce that we had to temporarily close the school. But this is what he said:

Boys, we are doing great good here at this school. You are learning how to be virtuous, Christian men. We are not going to let these enemies of the good stop us. *The best thing that we can do in moments like this is to keep doing what we are doing*, because it's the very thing that the powers of evil wish to disrupt and destroy. So, Latin will begin, as usual, in five minutes.

The best thing that we can do in moments like this is to keep doing what we are doing.





We should all take this wisdom to heart in our homes, with our families, in our jobs, at our churches, and even as we pursue our leisure. **We should read good books, make our homes beautiful, work and play with our children, be active in our community and parishes,** and refuse to succumb to anything like despondency or defeat. Let us not surrender to chaos, but rather commit ourselves to the order which makes life beautiful, strong, and wholesome.

C. S. Lewis delivered a great sermon in 1939 at St. Mary the Virgin Church in Oxford called, **“Learning in War-Time”** and you should read it. With characteristic clarity, Mr. Lewis emphasized this principle of doing what you’re doing, despite the difficulties of the day:

I think it important to try to see the present calamity in a true perspective. **The war creates no absolutely new situation:** it simply aggravates the permanent human situation so that we can no longer ignore it. Human life has always been lived on the edge of a precipice. Human culture has always had to exist under the shadow of something infinitely more important than itself. If men had postponed the search for knowledge and beauty until they were secure, the search would never have begun. We are mistaken when we compare war with “normal life.” Life has never been normal.



The notion of remaining steadfast in crisis is especially true regarding activities that enrich the mind and soul, delivering the important message that **it is during times of emergency that we should devote ourselves more earnestly to the work of learning and the art of education**—those undertakings which form the foundation of any culture. Again, from Mr. Lewis:

Plausible reasons have never been lacking for putting off all merely cultural activities until some imminent danger has been averted or some crying injustice put right. But humanity long ago chose to neglect those plausible reasons. They wanted knowledge and beauty now, and would not wait for the suitable moment that never came... They propound mathematical theorems in beleaguered cities, conduct metaphysical arguments in condemned cells, make jokes on scaffolds, discuss the last new poem while advancing to the walls of Quebec, and comb their hair at Thermopylae. This is not panache; it is our nature.

This is precisely the attitude we have adopted at Gregory the Great Academy throughout whatever trial or tribulation was at hand, and we are proud of that. **It is this undaunted outlook of determined optimism that makes me believe that this school is one of the greatest cultural endeavors of the last 50 years**, and it is making a profound difference in the lives of an ever-growing community.

I would like to share with you not only the reassurances that Mr. Lewis's words impart, but also how we at Gregory the Great Academy are resolutely doing good things in response and as a remedy to cultural deterioration, leading a way of life that gives glory to God through intellectual and spiritual growth, which we see as our special duty in times such as ours.

Mr. Lewis says good philosophy must exist and be fostered if bad philosophy is to be kept at bay, and he is absolutely right, and we are doing all we can to keep the good going. Our students . . .

- ✧ **Read and discuss the great works of Western Civilization** with delight and depth, from Homer to the Bible to Shakespeare, memorize beautiful poetry, and learn to sing and appreciate folk and sacred music.
- ✧ **Study ancient and American history**, giving them a knowledge of the past so that they can serve the future well, and not fall to the distortions that are trying to shape the reality of our place and purpose in history.
- ✧ **Tackle the intricacies of theology and science**, getting to know the truth about heaven and earth so they can navigate the latter well and arrive at the former.

And, what's more, we are doing all that we do with joy, which is perhaps the most important aspect of this attitude. We juggle, put on plays and concerts for the local community, raise pigs and chickens for our table, celebrate the Sacraments of the Church, engage in manual crafts like carpentry, spend time out of doors camping and exploring, and play rugged sports with manly courage and discipline.



Our school stands as a positive response to the negativity all around us, *and we need your support to keep standing strong*. By helping us do what we are doing, you can join us in making sure that the truth of our dignity and duty as a risen people will never die.

Enclosed with this letter is a booklet of eight poems that reflect on the mysteries of Easter. Their optimism is reflective of what we are doing in our poetic and pragmatic education here at Gregory the Great. *I hope you enjoy them in your meditations and with your family, as well.*

As we work diligently and confidently to undertake the study and the preservation of all that is good, true, and beautiful—the things that do not change—we are giving these boys lessons that, we pray, will keep them safe from the enemies and errors brought on, as Mr. Lewis says, from undue excitement, frustration, and fear.

This is what we do, and it is what we are doing, and we will keep on doing it despite collapse and cataclysm because this is the very thing that we can and must do to resist and reverse such calamities.

And this is where you come in: What we are doing, you can do, too.

Won't you make a gift to Gregory the Great Academy today?

Thank you for all that you are doing and for joining us in doing what we, *together*, are doing for the greater glory of God. On behalf of our joyful community, I wish you a blessed Easter.

In the Risen Lord,



Luke Culley
Headmaster

P.S. Please consider making a gift to Gregory the Great Academy this spring. Your generosity allows us to do the good work we are doing. Thank you and God bless you.

