



Easter 2023

Dear _____,

*I'd like to tell you a story that reminds me of our mission, not just because of its manly grit, but because it captures the human determination *and destiny* to live. In fact, it's a story that has a powerful connection to the Easter mysteries—even the mystery of eternal life.*

After abandoning their ship, *The Endurance*, where it lay locked and languishing in the crushing grip of the Antarctic ice on a failed trans-Antarctic voyage, Sir Ernest Shackleton and his men were faced with a terrifying prospect on Easter Sunday, 1916. Stranded and freezing in the most desolate place on earth, their only hope was to traverse 800 miles in a lifeboat to South Georgia Island to seek help from Norwegian whalers that had an outpost there.

On Easter Monday, Shackleton and a crew of five launched out on the Weddell Sea for South Georgia Island. Over the next two weeks, they scaled mountains of frigid water, were whipped by winds, threatened by icebergs, and battled against starvation and exhaustion. *And the whole time, even in the jaws of death, one of the crew, Tom Crean, sang "The Wearin' o' the Green."* **Shackleton and his shipmates miraculously made it, and the rest of the crew were soon rescued.**

*Their tale of survival is one of endurance that gives assurance—
assurance in the strength to find salvation against all odds.*



Easter Monday 1916



This story strikes at the hungry hope of the human spirit. In their efforts to be immortalized in the chronicles of time, Shackleton and his comrades refused to surrender to death in a dramatic symbol of every person's desire to live—even to live forever.

A few years ago, Dr. Annie Lefler, a longtime friend of the Academy, gave a talk to our students about the nature of philosophy. Captivating teacher that she is, every boy was listening attentively there in the commons, hanging on her every word as Dr. Lefler said:

*"The only reason we do anything as human beings,
the only reason we have arts like philosophy and theology,
the one reason behind everything we do, whether we know it or not,
is that we want to live forever."*

That is quite a thing to say—and in a large part because it's quite true. Down the ages, man has labored through craft toward higher standards of living while his poetry and study grasped at the holy mysteries of life. Our motivation to live well, to know, to do, and to discover can all be attributed to the stirring desire for eternal life: not only to avoid death as long as possible, but also to come into contact with those realities that are beyond the reach of death, to come into contact with abundant life itself. Agriculture, medicine, gymnastics, myths of gods and heroes, religious rites, and even feats of endurance and survival like Shackleton's all testify in their own way to the human drive to live abundantly and to live forever.

The Resurrection of Jesus Christ on the third day brought about, through divine grace, an answer to these longings, and at Gregory the Great Academy we are doing nothing less than teaching boys how to live a life of grace, and hence, how to live forever.

The great Church Father, St. Irenaeus, wrote that *“the glory of God is man alive.”* Man glorifies God by living fully and he can only live fully as man if he is formed into the image of Christ. Our mission as educators is to work with one another and with God to make our boys more fully alive through participation in the resplendent form and being of Christ. And we lead them to encounter the font of this Life through the sacraments, music, poetry, sport, history, literature, logic, mathematics, farm chores, juggling, and much, much more.

We are teaching our students to strive for life everlasting by being enduring yet singing sons of the Resurrection, unafraid to live their life to the fullest so they can enter into the next and find fulfillment.

Our school is truly an ***Easter school, a school of resurrection—***
a school where the Resurrection and the Life is the single reason for everything we do,
from praying to working to playing.

BUT we can't have such a school without YOUR help.

OUR BOYS need books if they are to read the perennial wisdom of the Church and the greatest tales ever told. *Our boys* need a warm dormitory to take the chill from their hands and dry their muddy boots after rugby training. *Our boys* need wholesome, hearty food to nourish their growing bodies. *Our boys* need tools in tending hogs and building picnic tables to keep the farm and campus in order. *Our boys* need incense and candles to celebrate the Divine Liturgy.





***Our boys need YOU to help them get to heaven through all these assertions of life—
of the good life that leads on to immortal life.***

***Please make a donation TODAY to provide the means for these boys to continue their voyage dauntlessly... and,
in so doing, you will further yourself on your own.***

Any amount helps, and will go directly to the lives of the boys,
or even (one might say) to the eternal lives of the boys.

I look forward to hearing from you, as together, we look forward to the resurrection of the dead and the life
of the world to come. *Amen!*

In Christ,

Luke Culley
Headmaster

PS: Although we all must die, a well-planned legacy is a wonderful way to live on in the lives of those still on their
journey to God. **I strongly encourage you to take a look at the back of the enclosed Easter card to take advantage
of our partnership with MY CATHOLIC WILL and create a legal will for yourself AT NO COST.** Please jump on
this fantastic opportunity to provide for your loved ones and Gregory the Great Academy. Thank you!