



Easter 2024

Dear Friend,

Let me tell you a story about how our boys victoriously invaded a city, like an army of Easter rebels.

But first, I'll tell you why Easter is all about rebellion. Easter Sunday marks the greatest uprising that the world has ever known—when the Son of God tore the doors of Hades off their hinges and trampled down Death by His death. The Council of Trent taught that, through the Fall, mankind became captive in the empire of the devil. But through Christ, we revolt against that dominion and break free of the foe's chains.

What greater revolution is there than the Resurrection from the tomb on the third day? And what more glorious rebel is there than Jesus Christ, Who toppled down eternal oppression to give any who joined his rebel band eternal life? *Being Catholic means being a rebel against death, against slavery to sin and godless society.* And to do that, we need a rebel courage, like the gentle Francis of Assisi, the quixotic Ignatius of Loyola, or the wild Don John of Austria.

Our school is a part of that holy rebellion that began on Easter Sunday. The old war songs our boys sing about noble rebels like William Wallace give voice to this vision, crying out that we will not die if we believe. The books our boys read about honest outlaws like Robin Hood show us the goodness of not bending the knee to evil tyranny.

...And with that, to our tale!

Joining our rebel band is not easy. For a freshman, leaping into a life so full and so countercultural is a challenge—





no cell phones, far from home, a busy schedule of classes, chores, and liturgies, and bristling with rough-and-tumble brotherhood. One freshman drew my attention this year as he tried to get used to it all. Between homesickness and the often-tricky balance of fitting in and making friends, he has faced difficulties—and faced them bravely—and I was waiting for the moment when he would find the belonging we want for all of our boys.

And sometimes that moment comes when you least expect it.

Not long ago, this lad marched out the front doors of Gregory the Great Academy with his class, well armed with walking sticks, juggling equipment, and musical instruments. They had a great conquest before them: to shake up a sleepy city with vibrant life. I remember seeing the boy, taller than most of his classmates, striding resolutely along to the strum of a guitar and the honk of an accordion as the others hooted and hollered their way down the hill and onto the road.

Their mission was to trek the 12-mile path through the woods, skirting the river, and along the railroad tracks all the way into Scranton; and once there, to spring an invasion upon the inhabitants humdrumming in the streets that Saturday afternoon. Nobody had the faintest idea that they would be besieged with song and ambushed with entertainment by a gang of rebels with a beautiful cause—a cause I hoped one boy might enter into on that day of rollicking battle.

After the revolutionaries had been at the front for a while, I decided to do some reconnaissance on them—and on that boy in particular. They weren't hard to find. There they were in the town square, singing and juggling like wildfire. I watched them rush from shop to restaurant to cafe, entering each quiet establishment with a roaring song and leaving

everyone in their wake dying with laughter and grinning ear to ear. ***But how was that boy doing?*** I saw him in the ranks, and wondered how this day's merry up-endings were affecting him.

In the end, the rebels won enough money from happily conquered Scrantonians to purchase a pizza feast, and their hearts were as full as their bellies with the joy they had given and received. *It was a glorious victory.* The rebels had landed, and Scranton lay vanquished at their feet.

But the real victory, in my mind, came when the rebels returned to their hideout. I passed by a knot of them talking over each other, reviewing the exploits of the day, and overheard the boy of my thoughts cry out, ***"That was the best day of my life!"***

Small as they are, moments like these define what you might call our Catholic revolution, when boys rise up to new life, to live as they never have—and even to live forever. **Our education is a lively revolt against the culture of death and the label of toxic masculinity which drags so many down.** With uplifting liturgy, stirring tales, manly music, beautiful poetry, rigorous sports, and a brotherly community, we take a stand of happy defiance with our boys, **boldly participating in the Resurrection and the Life.**

Boys who are ready and hungry to seize the good by the horns, find that opportunity here in so many ways, both delightful and difficult, *gathering the strength to rise up in the glorious promise of Easter Sunday to become saints*, to become what the world would see suppressed. We are a rebel school because we believe in the Resurrection of the dead and the life of the world to come.

Will you express your own faith and join our rebel band?

As the tides rise—and the costs of things, too—there was never a time when we so needed your support as we do today. *Your* gift makes our Resurrectional life here a reality, a training ground for boys who will grow to be men who will refuse to knuckle under to the dictates of secular pressures; *a school that will give them the strength, the wisdom, the virtue, and the laughter to be a Catholic death-defying rebel.*





Youngsters like the one in my story are the best reasons to make a sacrifice. And boys like him need your sacrifice. Please, be generous. Keep this school strong where boys like him are learning to be hardworking, healthy, holy souls. Won't **you** rise up with us? Join our revolution. Give these boys the chance of becoming a force for goodness and truth in this country. **They need your help, and we all remain confident in your continued generosity. Thank you and God bless you!**

In the Risen Christ,


Luke Culley, Headmaster

PS: *I know I can count on you to support our school of Resurrection.* Make a donation today and make a difference. Our rebel flag flies emblazoned with the Cross of Christ, and we need you to help us keep it hoisted high in the face of the enemy.

PPS: The enclosed poster features an illustration by N. C. Wyeth for *The Scottish Chiefs* by Jane Porter (1809). It depicts Sir William Wallace rallying his rebels against their English overlords as he makes a pledge to serve his country. This image evokes the glorious revolution of life and love that animates our school. I hope you enjoy it as an Easter symbol of the Catholic warrior, and that it might inspire you to rise up every day to live valiantly in and for Jesus Christ.