



# The Minstrel

NEWSLETTER OF GREGORY THE GREAT ACADEMY

Graduation 2023

Dear Friend,

This year, we graduated sixteen seniors. While that number may sound small—especially given the grand graduation jargon of “changing the world”—there is something about a small group of great souls that actually can, by God’s grace, change the world as the Twelve did. When I consider the young men who graduate from our school, or these sixteen in particular, I see strengths that few possess today: minds for truth, hearts with music and poetry, souls afire with the flare of the spiritual life, and a real sense of friendship. These graduates can make a tremendous difference despite their numbers because they have learned to live bravely and beautifully.

Here is a story to show you the stuff these graduates are made of. John Paul Adams, our head cantor and long-time piper, applied to the Virginia Military Institute and received an opportunity to interview for a scholarship. He arrived and was set before a panel of uniformed men and women. The VMI faculty and officers began with questions about Gregory the Great Academy—about the meaning behind the crest and the Latin motto, *Bonum Verum Pulchrum*. They wanted to know why John Paul went to a school where he couldn’t have a cell phone. John Paul answered all confidently. He was doing well.



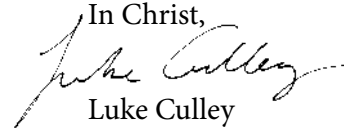
Luke Culley  
Headmaster

Then one of the female officers asked, “What has your ethical training been?” John Paul paused for the first time. He asked for clarification. The woman leaned forward. “What would you say is an important ethical issue today and how would you solve it?” John Paul looked earnestly at her and said, “I think abortion is the biggest ethical problem of our day.” He went on to state that while changing the law is one aspect of solution, it also required that the culture be changed, that the hearts of people be changed to see the tragedy that abortion is and would therefore never desire to dispose of an innocent, defenseless child for selfish reasons. The room was silent for a spell before the next topic was put forward.



John Paul Adams received a full scholarship with compliments from all present. And we offer our compliments as well—compliments for being fearless and faithful, for exercising the manly virtue he worked hard to achieve here, for being courageously and courteously Catholic. John Paul Adams and the rest of his classmates are the kinds of young men we look to send out into the world—and they might very well change it in the same way that each of their worlds were changed by coming to St. Gregory’s.

Thank you for your support for John Paul and his honest, hardworking classmates. As they depart, another class rises to take their place and prepare to bring the light of Christ into a darkening world. Please remember these strong young men in your charitable giving and your prayers, and help them make ready to respond to the challenges that abound with joyful, Catholic courage. Make a gift today.

In Christ,  
  
Luke Culley



## John Paul Sanyu Adams

Favorite Curriculum Book:  
*God Made Sunday*

Prefectship: Refectory

Favorite Song: "Loch Tay Boat Song"

Thesis Title: "Hobbits and the Strength of Beauty"

Plans for Next Year: Virginia Military Institute



## John Francis Massoud Balan

Favorite Curriculum Book:  
*The Ballad of the White Horse*

Prefectship: 2nd Floor Bathrooms

Favorite Song: "Boulavogue"

Thesis Title: "Mercy: The Destruction of the Ring"

Plans for Next Year: University of Dallas



## Paul Salvatore Conti

Favorite Curriculum Book:  
*The Merry Adventures of Robin Hood*

Prefectship: Lost and Found and Cleaning Supplies

Favorite Song: "Rocky Road to Dublin"

Thesis Title: "Tom Sawyer: The Student of Boyhood"

Plans for Next Year: University of Steubenville



## Benjamin James Davis

Favorite Curriculum Book:  
Father Brown Stories

Prefectship: Commons

Favorite Song: "The Town I Love So Well"

Thesis Title: "The Sea: A Bridge Between Colmain and God"

Plans for Next Year: University of Dallas



## Joshua Anthony DeGregoria

Favorite Curriculum Book:  
*Quo Vadis*

Prefectship: Classrooms

Favorite Song: "Saint Therese"

Thesis Title: "The Unconverted Soul of Gaius Petronius"

Plans for Next Year: Ave Maria University



## Paul Benedict Fay

Favorite Curriculum Book:  
*The Aeneid*

Prefectship: Farm

Favorite Song: "The Mountain Dew"

Thesis Title: "Rome's Spoiled Foundation: Educating Augustus Through the Failure of Aeneas"

Plans for Next Year: Work/Gap Year



## Alfred Francis Ferguson

Favorite Curriculum Book:  
*Ballad of the White Horse*

Prefectship: Dishes

Favorite Song: "The Town I Love So Well"

Thesis Title: "King Alfred the Great: An Icon of Virtue"

Plans for Next Year: University of Dallas



## Patrick Joseph Gilheany

Favorite Curriculum Book:  
*Beowulf*

Prefectship: Refectory

Favorite Song: "Spencil Hill"

Thesis Title: "Pagan Nobility Completed in Christ"

Plans for Next Year: University of Dallas



## Gregory Alexander Kosten

Favorite Curriculum Book:  
*Romeo and Juliet*

Prefectship: 3rd Floor Bathrooms

Favorite Song: "The Wild Rover"

Thesis Title: "Machiavelli and the Politics of Winston Churchill"

Plans for Next Year: Christendom College



## Daniel Christopher Kuplack

Favorite Curriculum Book:  
*The Odyssey*

Prefectship: 2nd Floor Hallways

Favorite Song: "Parcel o' Rogues"

Thesis Title: "Eternal Rewards: Beowulf's Movement Toward Virtue"

Plans for Next Year: Flight School



## John Isidore Martin

Favorite Curriculum Book:  
*The Song of Roland*

Prefectship: Farm

Favorite Song: "Parcel o' Rogues"

Thesis Title: "A Life Worthy of Song"

Plans for Next Year: University of Dallas



## Michael Andrew Miller Jr.

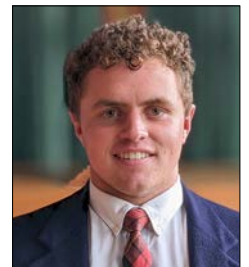
Favorite Curriculum Book:  
*The Iliad*

Prefectship: Dishes

Favorite Song: "Climb the Tree"

Thesis Title: "*Robin Hood*: A Life of Humility in Pursuit of Happiness"

Plans for Next Year: Mission Trip to Mexico



VALEDICTORIAN

## Matthew Thomas Nies

Favorite Curriculum Book:  
*The Cleaving of Christendom*

Prefectship: Weight Room and Senior Bathroom

Favorite Song: "The Parting Glass"

Thesis Title: "*Romeo and Juliet*: The Failures of Friar Lawrence"

Plans for Next Year: Cincinnati State University



## Ryan Michael Robinson

Favorite Curriculum Book:  
*The Revolution Against Christendom*

Prefectship: Outside Areas

Favorite Song: "The Battle of Sheriffmuir"

Thesis Title: "St. Anthony of the Desert: A Man of Leisure"

Plans for Next Year: Working at a convent in France



## Abraham Leo Kebede Schmiesing

Favorite Curriculum Book:  
*The Persian Expedition*

Prefectship: Stairwells

Favorite Song: "Jock Stewart"

Thesis Title: "Aeneas: The Cornerstone of Rome"

Plans for Next Year: University of Steubenville



## William Sawyer Shaifer

Favorite Curriculum Book:  
*The Lord of the Rings*

Prefectship: 3rd Floor Hallways

Favorite Song: "Killiecrankie"

Thesis Title: "*Quo Vadis*: The Conversions of Vinicious and Chilon Chilonites"

Plans for Next Year: University of Steubenville







*For the fifth time in their history, the Highlanders claimed the Pennsylvania state title, competing against talented athletes and strong rugby programs from gigantic schools. Playing with discipline, heart, and the trust born of close friendship in the Faith, the lads from Gregory the Great never lost a match and offered everything to Christ the King and Our Lady Queen of Victory.*

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St. Paul Center for Biblical Theology

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