

# *Summer Reading for 8th Graders 2025*

St John the Beloved Academy



## **Greetings Parents and Students**

Dear Parents,

The books, stories and poems have been carefully selected to foster an enjoyable and thoughtful reading experience. Enjoy this special time with your child. These assignments are meant to be enriching and meaningful. Be sure to balance the assignments with lots of fun, enjoyable time outside with family and friends.

Best to you and your family,

Mr. Jeffrey P. Presberg  
Headmaster

## House of Alpha



Love

## House of Blue



Contemplation

## House of Eagle



Inspiration

## House of Omega



Wisdom

## Core Elements for Rising 8th Graders

### Journal & Books

- You will need a writing journal (a leather journal that you may keep and reuse over time).
- Read 3 books from the list below.
- You are encouraged to read as many as you like.
- For each book draw a picture of something interesting or an image that strikes you and illuminates something important to the story. Think about the characters, the setting and the sequence of events as you draw. Sketch the picture and then color it.
- Write 1-2 paragraph(s) describing each picture inside of your journal (pictures may be drawn and placed inside journal if you would like).
- Draw a picture of your house emblem on a sheet of clean paper ready to share. House emblems are included above.

1776 - David McCullough

Empires of the Sea - Roger Crowley

Gulliver's Travels - Jonathan Swift

The Fellowship of the Ring,

The Two Towers,

The Return of the King - J. R. R. Tolkien

Murder on the Orient Express - Agatha Christie or your choice of another mystery by Agatha Christie

The Hound of Baskervilles - Sir Arthur Conan Doyle

The Time Machine - H. G. Wells

David Copperfield - Charles Dickens (counts as 2 books)

The Plot to Kill Hitler: Dietrich Bonhoeffer: Pastor, Spy, Unlikely Hero by Patricia McCormick

Pride and Prejudice - Jane Austen

A Tree Grows in Brooklyn - Betty Smith

No Bullet Got Me Yet - John Stansifer



## Poems

- **Read all four recommended poems, copy one in your journal and memorize, reciting it at home (at the dinner table or some other spontaneous moment). This will also be recited at school.**

"Digging" by Seamus Heaney

"God's Grandeur" by Gerard Manley Hopkins

"Mending Wall" by Robert Frost

"Musée des Beaux Arts" by W.H. Auden

## Spiritual

- **Read these Gospel selections focused on the religious leader Nicodemus and the resurrection moment with Mary Magdalene.**

Nicodemus John 3: 1-21 and John 19: 25-42

Mary Magdalene and the Resurrection John 20:1-18

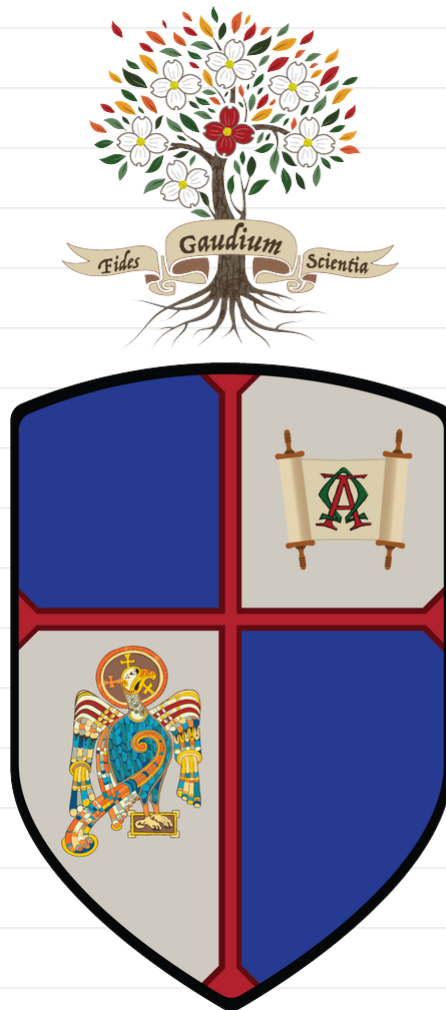
Please view (and ponder) H.O. Tanner's paintings of Nicodemus and the *The Three Mary's (below)* to help you enter the scene of those moments.

- Choose one of the Gospel passages to reflect on, such as the challenging (and rather abrupt) conversation of Nicodemus and Jesus, as well as what happened inside Nicodemus that led him from secretly seeking Jesus at night to the bold and risky action of requesting the dead body on the cross.
- Write a paragraph about the other Gospel passage imagining you are a servant or creature observing what is going on. Tell it like a story.



*"There are far, far better things ahead than any we  
leave behind." C.S. Lewis*

**Donate to our Annual Fund**



## St John the Beloved Academy

Saint John the Beloved Academy was founded in 1954 to offer quality Catholic education to parish children. Saint John the Beloved Academy continues to provide children in preschool through eighth grade with a Catholic liberal arts education rooted in rich tradition of academic excellence and spiritual formation, captured by the school's motto, "*Fides, Scientia, et Gaudium*." By Faith, children are led beyond themselves to entrust their formation to God. By forming the entire child, we impart the Knowledge for both intellectual and spiritual growth. The Mission of Saint John the Beloved Academy is manifested in genuine Christian Joy—rooted in the Sacraments, self-sacrifice, charity, and service to others.

Top painting: watercolor by J.S. Sargent: *Corfu Lights and Shadow*



Christine White



