

# 10 THINGS I LOVE ABOUT BROOKEWOOD

by Cherie Walsh, Upper School Director

*When Head of School Rich McPherson lobbed a prompt at a meeting—“Let’s see if we can think of ten things that make Brookewood distinct”—I thought about my different teaching experiences and about what I love about Brookewood. I found it easy to come up with different aspects that allow for the Brookewood magic, though I could not stop at ten:*

## 1 PORTABLE ART

Memorization of poetry is a way of internalizing the rhythms and sounds of beauty and truth, of making the tradition one’s own.



## 2 FESTIVAL DAYS

Joy is part of the curriculum, regularly and in a panoply of ways, from Capture-the-Flag to singing, all in honor of the Church’s feasts.

## 3 “PARVUS SED POTENS\*”

Brookewood remains small but strongly connected with the larger, vibrant Catholic world; everyone at school knows each other (though, of course, Rich knows—and Joe, even more, knew—everyone everywhere he goes). The palpable feeling of school community is a source of strength for all.

*\*Parvus sed potens is Latin for “small but mighty.”*



## 4 BROOKEWOODTONIAN

One doesn’t join Brookewood, just as one doesn’t “join” the Catholic Church (h/t: Flannery O’Connor); one becomes a Brookewoodtonian. I, for one, am transformed daily by this place.

## 5 OUR LADY AND BEATRICE AND JANE AUSTEN

Brookewood allows for real discussion of St. John Paul II’s “feminine genius” and gives girls an authentic sense of the multiplicity of ways to be a woman in the world.





**6 FIELD TRIPS**  
 Brookewood moves in the world often, to experience nature and culture where we find it.

**7 HUMILITY**  
 Simple classrooms, tech as tool (not as fetish or idol), allow us to attend to what's important. Along the same lines, personal communication among faculty members allows for simple, Occam's-razor solutions to school problems without a lot of administrative machination.

**8 PIETY**  
 Brookewood offers daily Mass for those who seek it and monthly all-school Mass as part of the school's identity.

**9 ITALIANO**  
 The Italian program brings to school the language itself as well as the rich culture of Catholicism's Roman home.

**10 PILGRIMAGE**  
 Our pilgrim school gathers and walks to show our understanding that there's struggle involved in reaching God, along with a lot of laughter, a few orange slices, and frequent prayer.

**11 LIBERAL ARTS**  
 The curriculum prepares girls for life in the larger world, providing excellent academic preparation for college that's also in keeping with our ideas about liberal arts education as the cornerstone of sophisticated thinking, reflective citizenship, and a sense of one's place in the universe.

*In short, Brookewood is an amazing place founded and populated by the best people I can imagine knowing; not an academic pressure-cooker but a serious-minded, joyful community, the school, at its best, brings out excellence and strength in its teachers and students they did not know they could reach.*