The Brookewood Magazine
for alumnae, family, students, & friends
A WAVE OF GROWTH
For the 2022–2023 school year, Brookewood will see its highest year of growth with a student body of 213 students! Pictured here are the Pohlhaus sisters, performing a traditional dance during last year’s Saint Cecilia’s Festival.
A History of Pilgrimage

Brookewood’s Head of School Rich McPherson chronicles the history and purpose of this annual tradition for both Brookewood School and The Avalon School.
IN THIS ISSUE
ON THE NATURE OF BROOKEWOOD JOY

FROM THE PRESIDENT/HEAD
Richard McPherson writes about G.K. Chesterton & Brookewood culture

FROM THE ASST. HEAD OF SCHOOL
Cherie Walsh greets us with the importance of story-making for joyful memories

J.W. McPherson Contest
Ana Pantoja recounts the 2nd annual poetry contest; winner’s poem included

JOY IN PRACTICE
Faculty write about different aspects of joy in Brookewood’s subjects

ATHLETICS
Five fall teams and eight winter and spring teams

CLASS OF 2022
Congratulations to our graduating class!

ALUMNAE
Catch-up on some of the exciting news that our alumnae have to share

Fall 2022
R. J. Hawley
Executive Director

Richard B. McPherson
President, Head of School

Cherie Walsh
Assistant Head of School

Andrea Francois
Grades K–6 Director

Charmie Vince
Director of Advancement
and Alumni Relations

Brookewood School, established in 2006, is an independent day school for girls, grades K–12, located in Kensington, MD. Brookewood School admits students of any race, color, creed, and national or ethnic origin.

THE BROOKEWOOD MAGAZINE

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Lower school friends, Gemma Andrews and Gianna Dettleff. Photo by Maria Stohlman

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I attended the 41st Annual American Chesterton Society Conference in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, in July. It was held in honor of the British writer, G.K. Chesterton (1874–1936). The theme was “Chesterton and Conversion.” The conference lasted three days but the final day, July 30, 2022, was special because it happened to be the 100th anniversary of G.K. Chesterton’s being received into the Catholic Church. It is one of the reasons we hold him in such high esteem. When Chesterton was asked why he became a Catholic, he said because Catholicism was true. He later added, to get rid of his sins. It was a wonderful conference with some excellent speakers.

As many of you know, I have a particular love for Chesterton. I own over 200 books either written by him or about him. I even named one of my sons, Gilbert Keith, after him! Chesterton was an apologist for the Catholic faith, poet (we recite his poem “Lepanto” on the feast of the holy rosary), playwright, literary critic, biographer, essayist, novelist, detective writer, historian, and artist (have I forgotten anything?). And, by his own description, a journalist. He is known for his goodness, his wonder, his wit, his gratitude, and his joy. I love him for all those reasons.

I especially like his short poem “Evening,” which captures some of these qualities:

Here dies another day,
During which I’ve had eyes, ears, hands
And the great world round me;
And tomorrow begins another.
Why am I allowed two?

We try to inculcate this wonder, this gratitude, this joy at Brookewood. Like Chesterton, we believe the Catholic Church is true. Students learn that by getting to know and love the person of Christ, following the Church’s teachings, loving the Mass, and getting “rid of sins” frequently, they will be happy. There is a great confidence and joy in knowing you are a child of God. And you can see it each day in our school—the learning, the singing, the dancing, the poetry, the laughter, and the love of life. Joy permeates the school in all that we do. It makes for a special place.

In Chesterton’s final chapter in Orthodoxy, one of his greatest works, he tells us, “Joy, which was the small publicity of the pagan, is the gigantic secret of the Christian.” Well, it is not a secret at Brookewood!
C.S. Lewis writes, “Joy bursts in on our lives when we go about doing the good at hand and not trying to manipulate … to achieve joy.” Joy is a hallmark of Brookewood. We find that the girls’ considerable natural energy, guided toward the good at hand, allows for the transformation of a potentially mundane moment into one of real joy.

I think of an example from this year: Several seniors engaged in a collective activity that, umm, went too far, and they were given a detention (unusual at Brookewood). They showed up at the prescribed time, ready to clean tables. They played music, they sang, they scrubbed. It became an experience, potentially disagreeable, they had together, and they transformed it. The fact of their being together along with their choice to engage cheerfully produced this somewhat unlikely result.

Lewis writes more about the connection of joy and memory. The detention becomes a story. More from the seniors, a story they tell again and again: When they were in middle school, one day (dynamic, risk-taking Brookewood founder) Joe McPherson drove away from school without Sofia, who ran behind the van. They all remember the story: she ran; they opened the back doors; Yvette leaned out; Sofia ended up in the van. The joy is in the telling of the story, a memory where they were together, where there was risk but they were safe (because they know the end of the story). It becomes an exalted moment, an elongated moment, what Virginia Woolf calls a “moment of being,” a kind of story that lives in the space of a lyric moment in a poem, one that invites us to adventure and makes us laugh.

And, further, there is the deeper joy that comes from reflection, from how our school memories shape us, tell us who we are, remind us that we are children of God called to this particular adventure. When we can see at once the crossbeam of community and the vertical connection to the past and to eternity, we can’t help but be joyful.
Student LIFE
At the beginning of the 2021–2022 school year, Brookewood opened its first full size, official kindergarten class. This joyful crowd could be seen following its teacher Laura Nelson through the upper school halls in a single file line on its way back from art class or sitting quietly in the front pew at an all-school mass.

Mrs. Nelson, who graduated from Hollins College with a double major in Art History and French, was previously a teacher at The Learning Center for Young Children in Kensington where she worked with 2-, 3-, and 4-year-olds for eleven years. In addition to working at The Learning Center for Young Children, she also taught Art History at Brookewood for the three years prior to the addition of a kindergarten class.

When asked about her approach to starting Brookewood’s first official kindergarten class, Mrs. Nelson’s response was clear. Above all, she wanted “to make sure that [her] kinders loved coming to school. [She] wanted them to experience Brookewood as a joyful, nurturing place full of God’s love, good friends, and kind and helpful adults.” And to this end, she has most certainly been successful. Her attention to detail has resulted in a classroom that is a great learning environment for kindergartners. With a word wall, an abundant library, an arts-and-crafts table, and a playhouse station, the young girls have thrived, forming friendships, while also benefiting from Mrs. Nelson’s carefully crafted lessons, which use “a variety of senses, and integrate different learning styles.”

Kindergarten is a very formative time in a child’s life, a fact that Mrs. Nelson clearly understands, stating, “A big goal of kindergarten is to teach the girls how to be students in a classroom. We learn how to interact kindly and appropriately with one another and with the teachers, how to care for our classroom and our learning materials, and how to navigate the routines of the school day. Everything we do has a goal of kindness toward one another.”

Mrs. Nelson’s loving leadership throughout the year has resulted in young girls who not only know how to read but also love to read and come up to Mrs. Nelson frequently, saying, “I’m going to read to you, Mrs. Nelson.”

The kindergartners have themselves benefited from being a part of Brookewood with its festival days and creeking trips, but, more importantly, Mrs. Nelson notes, “The kindergarten has brought a new level of joy to an already joyous place. Upper-school girls especially love to see the kinders, high five them in the hallway, visit them at recess, hang out in our room and read with them, create art, do a puzzle or play a game. The cuteness is overwhelming, and the whole school is smitten.”

If you want to learn more about Brookewood’s kindergarten and the amazing activities and imaginative books they read together, contact our admissions office at admissions@brookewood.org.
Go to our website (brookewood.org) and visit our Admissions Center to learn about the application process. We’re happy to answer any questions you may have!
For the second year, the McPherson family has hosted a tri-county poetry competition/contest in honor of Joseph W. McPherson, the founding headmaster of Brookewood School who so dearly loved poetry. McPherson especially loved sonnets, penning thousands including his own collection of sonnets, *The Ark and The Dove*, which retells the story of the founding of Maryland.

The theme of this year’s competition was “hope ... a renewal of spirit, a rediscovery of wonder in the ordinary, or a simple stepping forward into new possibility.” Any student in grades 9–12 in public, private, or home schools in D.C., Prince George’s County, and Montgomery County, MD, was eligible to enter a maximum of two original poems for the competition. The judges then narrowed the pool down to ten finalists, who met on April 30th at Brookewood School in Fellowship Hall for the final competition, in which the finalists would recite their own work before a crowd.

Finalists arrived in the morning with family to support them, while they prepared and recited the poems to themselves. Assistant Head of School, Mrs. Cherie Walsh greeted and welcomed the guests, leading the way into a stunning sequence of recitations. For example, “Koi Pond,” by Abigail Rakow, artfully weaved childhood memories together with amazingly clear imagery and a clever choice of words.

The judges then left to evaluate and decide on the winners, soon returning with the news that Brookewood senior Ella Bostick had won first place with a $1,000 prize, Grace Thomas from Blair High School came in second with a $750 prize, and Brookewood senior Sofia Ghosh came in third with a $500 prize. We joyfully congratulated the winners and took pictures on the stage, afterwards enjoying some refreshments.

*The Joseph W. McPherson Memorial Poetry Contest was started in 2021 in memory of Brookewood’s founding headmaster. To learn more about this annual contest and to purchase McPherson’s sonnets, visit https://www.brookewood.org/jwm-poetry-contest.html.*
Legacy—a Pantoum
by Eleanor Bostick

I keep wondering if we’re alright: if the examples of those before us are a blessing or a curse in the night, while we sing off-key in their life chorus.

If the images of those before us are really a mirage, were never right, while we sing off-key in their life, chorus voices ringing in the barely dawning light,

then it is really just a trick, wrong not right to think or hope at all that we are different; repeating in the dark and black of night their forceful echoing errors. Miss it,

thinking at all that we are different, still failing and falling softly so often. Our embered echoing errors miss it; still missing deadlines, failing to soften

falls from grace. We are landing in folds and ditches, night light’s sharp hard places, still stoically following in their cold half shadows, and missing their faces.

Ditches, and dark, hard, sharp places are both a blessing and a curse in the night. We are half-shadows, missing their faces. I’m wondering if we’re alright.
My first conversation with Mr. Joe McPherson was in 2006, when he interviewed me for a teaching position at a school that was soon to open its doors. I thought he was looking for a Latin teacher, but he told me he wanted to have Italian in the curriculum: he was picturing his Brookewood girls being capable of ordering carbonara in proper Italian, the beautiful language of Dante. I was surprised he wasn’t thinking of having Spanish, a much more useful language to know for an American. After all, Americans have managed to travel to Italy and enjoy it very much without knowing a word of Italian. Joe told me he didn’t want a language for its useful potential, but rather for its rich culture and its beauty. The idea of Brookewood students speaking Italian gave him joy.

At Brookewood, we like to talk about how students exude a sense of joy and cheer throughout the hallways, but we can’t forget that this joy begins in the classroom: with teachers loving what they do! Two of our founding members and current Italian teachers, Irene Sorensen and Donatella Brown, reflect on the work they’ve been given to do over the years in the Italian classroom.

La Carbonara per Tutti

by Irene Sorensen

My first conversation with Mr. Joe McPherson was in 2006, when he interviewed me for a teaching position at a school that was soon to open its doors. I thought he was looking for a Latin teacher, but he told me he wanted to have Italian in the curriculum: he was picturing his Brookewood girls being capable of ordering carbonara in proper Italian, the beautiful language of Dante. I was surprised he wasn’t thinking of having Spanish, a much more useful language to know for an American. After all, Americans have managed to travel to Italy and enjoy it very much without knowing a word of Italian. Joe told me he didn’t want a language for its useful potential, but rather for its rich culture and its beauty. The idea of Brookewood students speaking Italian gave him joy.

La Vita è Bella

Teaching Italian
His desire has since become mine and has been the goal for my teaching: sharing with my students the beauty of the Italian language and culture. Beauty is a wonderful way to be introduced to God: it requires only to be received. In front of a painting from Caravaggio or a fresco from Giotto, I am deeply moved as I am immersed into the truth. And it gives me joy. Wearing a beautiful dress from an Italian designer gives me joy. Being able to make a good carbonara and sharing it with friends gives me joy. Reading the story of the great love between Dante and Beatrice shows me how true love and poetry are deeply connected, and it gives me joy. Sharing all this with my students, guiding them to meet the Italian masters in art, literature, fashion, cuisine, gives me joy. My 16th year of teaching at Brookewood has just ended. Many students have been introduced to the beauty of the Italian language and culture in my classes. Many of them can make delicious authentic carbonara, can pronounce it correctly and experience joy. Dear Joe, I hope I have made your desire true, by making it my own.
For the last few years, I have taught the Italian AP course which focuses on aspects of contemporary Italian life and its connection to Italy’s rich history and culture, all the while improving communication skills. When I first started teaching the class, I feared that students would not be interested in the topics, as we wouldn’t be delving into the classics of Italian art, literature, or opera, but into the lifestyle of modern Italian families and people, the global challenges of immigration, the environment, the use of technology, etc. Moreover, I wondered whether students would fear not being able to adequately express their ideas on such complex issues. I was pleasantly surprised by how interested the girls were in all the topics we discussed. Our discussions often became an occasion for them to reflect on their own lives, such as when we discussed the role of progress and technology or when we talked about the role of women in society. We also enjoyed learning about the connections between contemporary life and Italy’s history and culture as we discussed Italian innovators in fashion and design, the idea of “slow food” versus “fast food,” and Italy’s rich culinary traditions.

Most students were able to overcome their shyness and willingly participated in writing essays, making presentations, and taking part in conversations. I was happy to be able to share my Italian identity and life with my students.
DID YOU KNOW?

Three years in a row, our Italian department has received a grant from the Italian Embassy of the United States for $10,000 to help with teaching Italian in the classroom.

Since 2013, we’ve had 16 students receive a 5 on the AP Italian Language and Culture exam, the highest score possible on the college-level exam.

Brookewood exchange students traveled around 5,000 miles from Washington, D.C. to Rimini, Italy. Last year, we started our first exchange program. High school students who are interested in spending a semester in Italy should contact our Italian department to get more information about our program.
Joy in our PRACTICES
The next three articles focus on some essential aspects of our education that contribute to a cheerful heart: bearing one another’s burden through prayer, time spent in nature and contemplation, and maintaining a healthy relationship with technology.
The weather was miserable. It was cold, windy, and rainy. For some, the rain soaked through their clothing, especially their shoes. And yet, like the previous 14 pilgrimages, the day was filled with joy, laughter, and thankfulness for all that God has given us.
The event was the Avalon/Brookewood 15th Annual Pilgrimage on Saturday, May 7, 2022. We began at 8:30am with Mass at Holy Redeemer in Kensington. We journeyed to four churches—Our Lady of Lourdes in Bethesda and then into D.C. to the Church of the Annunciation, the Church of the Immaculate Conception, and Holy Rosary Church, all churches dedicated to Our Lady. At each stop we recited a rosary. We ended at the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception at 4:30pm for the celebration of Holy Mass. Another pilgrimage in the books.

The pilgrimage has been an important part of our schools since 2008 when Avalon was moving from Radnor Center in Bethesda to First Baptist Church in Gaithersburg. We had commissioned a bronze statue of Our Lady, Most Pure from internationally renowned sculptor H. Reed Armstrong. Unfortunately, the Baptists wouldn’t allow a statue of Mary of such size (4 ½ ft tall) in their building. Since it was close to May and since May is Mary’s month, we decided a pilgrimage was in store for us. We decided to carry her 23 miles to the property we had obtained in Clarksburg. The theme was “In Thanksgiving” for helping us start two small schools, Avalon and Brookewood. It was a beautiful day weatherwise as we pushed the 189-pound statue from Bethesda through some local streets, then the length of Old Georgetown Pike, and then for 17 miles more up Route 355 through the heart of Montgomery County. The statue was carried on a television cart with industrial size wheels. A tradition was born!

Our Second Year: 2009
The 2nd pilgrimage was for the “Year of St. Paul,” and we walked 21.6 miles from St. Paul’s Methodist to St. Paul’s Catholic Church in Damascus carrying an icon of St. Paul. We called the pilgrimage, “From St. Paul’s to St. Paul’s: On the Road to Damascus.” I am especially proud of that title!

Our Third Year: 2010
The 3rd pilgrimage was for the “Year of the Priest.” Pope Benedict declared St. John Vianney (also known as the Curé of Ars) as the patron saint of priests. We made a novena of churches saying five times each the Our Father, the Hail Mary, and the Glory Be for each priest stationed in each parish (26 priests in all). In between the nine stops we said rosaries while walking, eight in all. A lot of prayers were said that day! This was the first year we carried a fiberglass copy of Our Lady, Most Pure, surrounded with red roses, on a six-foot litter, a practice that has continued.

Our Special Pilgrimages
Some of the other special pilgrimage years, as declared by the pope, were “The Year of Consecrated Life,” “The Year of Mercy,” and “The Year of St. Joseph.” My personal favorite, however, was “The Year of Faith” in 2013. We started at Christ the King in Silver Spring with Mass at 7:45 am. We prayed the Joyful Mysteries at Blessed Sacrament Church in Chevy Chase. We stopped at the National Cathedral of Washington and prayed for the unity of all Christian churches. Next, we recited the Luminous Mysteries at Holy Trinity Church in Georgetown. We crossed the Key Bridge into...
Arlington and stopped at St. Thomas More Cathedral to pray the Sorrowful Mysteries. We went by the Air Force Memorial and then entered Arlington Cemetery through the South gate. As we passed the thousands of gravestones we prayed for our departed veterans and their families. We left the cemetery, crossed Memorial Bridge, walked past the Lincoln Memorial, along the National Mall, past the White House to St. Matthew’s Cathedral where we prayed the Glorious Mysteries. We finished at the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception with 6:45pm Mass in the Upper Church. The total distance of the pilgrimage was approximately 21 miles. With this pilgrimage we prayed at the four largest churches in the D.C. area. And it was especially wonderful to carry Our Lady so close to the White House. Now that is a pilgrimage!

Another special pilgrimage was from Old St. John’s in Silver Spring to St. Anthony Shrine in Ellicott City, and twice we ended at St. Mary’s Church in Barnesville, the official Fatima Shrine of the Archdiocese of Washington. The second time at St. Mary’s was May 13, 2017, the 100th Anniversary of the first apparition. Another pilgrimage was to JP II Shrine in D.C. on Saturday, May 18, 2019, what would have been John Paul’s 99th birthday.

When it is not a special year or a particular pilgrimage spot, we go on pilgrimage to the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception, the Patronal Church of the United States of America, ending there five times.

Our pilgrimages will continue. Next year will be our 16th! We hope our devotion to Mary will continue to grow at both our schools. We take to heart the words of Msgr. Ronald Knox about the Virgin Mary: “Not less intimate because so high above us, not loved less personally because her munificence is so wide, she permeates the thought, the art, the poetry, the lives of Catholics with radiance as of a spring day, or of good news heard suddenly,... [a] Touchstone of Truth in the ages of controversy. Romance of the medieval world, she has not lost, with the rise of new devotions, any fragment of her ancient glory. Other lights may glow and dim as the centuries pass, she cannot suffer change; and when a Catholic ceases to honor her, he ceases to be a Catholic.”

**WHY DO WE GO ON PILGRIMAGE?**

It may seem strange to see a long line of people walking around the D.C. area carrying a large and heavy looking statue, but the practice of incarnating a spiritual journey into a felt journey, with tactile objects, sweat, and tired aching knees, is a reminder of the literal spiritual body of Christ. Instead of one person training for a true physical feat such as a marathon by him/herself, Brookewood and Avalon stress the beauty of a community walking together because we bear each other’s burdens through prayer and our continued physical presence. The communal journey is ultimately a personal journey of holiness: a process of sanctification.

**FIVE GREAT CATHOLIC PILGRIMAGES**

Camino de Santiago (Spain)
Camino de Fatima (Portugal)
Croagh Patrick (Ireland)
Lourdes (France)
The Vatican (Italy)
The most abundant and accessible gifts that our daily lives offer us are found in the natural world. Those that come from people are more precious but are mixed with the emotional complexities of our human relationships; instead, those from nature are the simplest, most gratuitous gifts. The natural world literally showers us with treasures each day. Some of them are very recognizable: the vivid foliage of a maple tree, sunlight on a brilliant day, the first snowfall, the earliest spring blooms. Most of nature’s gifts, however, are far more subtle—the naked silhouette of a tree against the winter sky, the layers of variegated clouds, displaying the many hues of blue-gray, the deepening green of spring into summer, the seasonal promise that the brown, seemingly dead landscape will turn green again, almost miraculously. Many of these gifts require some effort and focused observation to receive. I have noticed over the years that straining my neck to look up regularly is a very good habit. It has taught me to recognize types of woodpeckers and nuthatches, to see what type of nut, seed or pod a tree may produce in fall, to find inch worms coming down from tree trunks, to notice the variety of cloud types and the direction of the wind from the cloud shape. An equally important habit is that of simply spending time outside. The nuthatches almost never appear to those who only glance out periodically. Often, we are laden with so many distractions that we tend to look right through the things that we see. We are distracted by our to-do lists, our next big decision or problem, our most recent frustration or disappointment. We tend to ruminate on these problems, or we tend toward the pleasures we habitually seek to relieve our worries, such as food, social media, the games we play, or the shows we watch. These distractions are not bad in and of themselves, it’s simply that they fill our mind to the point of preventing us from fully seeing what is in front of us, from fully living the moment that we are in. And so, the shower of natural beauties that surrounds us is usually overlooked or ignored.

I have had the great good fortune of being a mother and then being a teacher, and moreover a teacher of natural history. In both of these roles, I realize that I ardently desire my children and my students to LOOK at the natural world and to be filled with wonder. This is an ambitious goal, especially in this time when so many appealing distractions are offered to kids and teens. Being given this task of educating kids has motivated me to go outside even when I’m feeling lazy or chilly, to strain my neck to look up, to push back my distractions in order to truly see and observe the things around me. Years of doing this have been richly rewarded: nature’s subtle habits and displays have revealed themselves to me with greater clarity. Now, my eyes are more keen; my mind is more curious; and my heart more receptive to even small natural changes. By desiring that my children and my students have eyes filled with wonder, I have begun to develop my own eyes of wonder. I am grateful to Avalon for having included Natural History in my sons’ Lower School curriculum and to Brookewood for having asked me to teach Natural History to the younger girls, as well as science to the older girls (for wonder also belongs to the sciences, which are simply a more complex natural display). Both of these opportunities have offered me a tremendous education to the beauty of nature.
Brookwood’s founding head of school, Joseph W. McPherson, often quoted St. Irenaeus to our students and faculty: “A spirit is where it acts.” St. Irenaeus was telling us that we are what we do, though at the same time we have been given free will and can alter what we are doing or plan to do. When we are young is the time to set good habits; we are motivated to reflect on who we are, who we wish to become, what we will do in the world, and what our relationships will be like. Hopefully we formulate wishes and goals for ourselves having to do with education, careers, etc., but what is more important is to contemplate answers to the harder questions: how will we define living well, faithfully, with joy? How will we live within communities, within families and within friendships? We act in many areas, but we choose the things we want to focus on. Brookwood and Avalon embody the belief that one of those must be a focus on the people God has put before us.

The Church and our own experience affirm that human beings are meant to live in relation to one another. As teachers, parents and administrators at Brookwood and Avalon we work to build an intentional community in which families, including our own, can raise children, experience love and joy in day-to-day life, and provide aid and love in difficult times.

Social media and texting are great at connecting people and helping us maintain relationships—until the moment they take us away from the people in front of us and the world around us. Seeking distraction by scrolling ceaselessly also keeps us from sitting with our own thoughts, from praying and reflecting, from formulating wishes and goals for ourselves. It is noteworthy that three years ago the inventor of ‘infinite scroll’ said that he regrets what his invention has done to society.

In considering the roles technology plays in our lives we must keep in mind that the business model of social media companies entails keeping as many people on their screens for as much of the day as possible. They offer us interesting, personalized, unending content. But none...
has our best interests at heart, and all will offer whatever keeps us engaged, whether good or bad for us. Catholic economic teaching is that the economy and business must exist for sake of the human person, not the person for the economy. This person-focused economy is not our current reality, as technology companies give us mostly unlimited, personalized distraction for a place to act.

I was talking to a Brookewood alumna recently, a senior in college, about life at her school. Interestingly to me, during her junior year she removed all social media from her phone and laptop after observing her friends and acquaintances on campus and noting that everyone had the same reflex; to pull out their phone at any small gap in the day, even if just for a few seconds of scrolling. It seemed to her a strange addictive behavior that took away the pleasure of observing people, meeting stranger’s eyes while walking, and enjoying moments of quiet reflection. At the same time looking at their phones did not appear to provide any joy. If a spirit is where it acts, a spirit must choose what it will do.

Brookewood’s aim in minimizing phone, screen and computer time and maximizing human time, in and out of the classroom, is what we believe is best for our community members’ long-term happiness. We also aim to help our students balance increasing personal freedom with personal responsibility as they grow. We do not ban cell phones for all students, though we do have rules about their use at different ages. As in our own families the lack of a complete ban yields a messy, complicated process that leads to many conversations about screens, media and their proper use, all of which is ideally an extension of the same conversations occurring at home. Joe McPherson believed a good school was messy in good ways, and that few important problems can be solved for all time with rules and enforcement. The solutions to the problems of how we live are found in how we frame the world. It is an important role of adults to keep explaining to the young what we are trying to do and why. At Brookewood many of those young people then set a beautiful example for others of how to live.

I deeply appreciate our Avalon and Brookewood schools, alumni, students, families, and the community we foster, all grounded in the ancient wisdom concerning how and why to live, wisdom being kept alive by the Church. I am especially thankful for the people I have met who embody these teachings and create practices and traditions that we follow when we are at our best.
On May 28, 2022, the class of 2022 marched down the aisle of Holy Redeemer church with deep pride and satisfaction: they had finished the long race of 12 years of hard academic work. In the nave of Holy Redeemer Church, the Head of School Richard B. McPherson gave a warm welcome to the Brookewood family members and friends. Brookewood’s Executive Director R.J. Hawley opened the commencement ceremony, introducing the three seniors voted by both their peers and the faculty to give the Senior Class Remarks: Lupe Garvey, Rose Armstrong, and Maggie Tobin.

Next, Mrs. Cherie Walsh presented The Maryland State Merit Scholarship Award for highest GPA to Lupe Garvey, our valedictorian. She also received the Joseph W. McPherson Prize, in recognition of the graduating senior who personified those qualities that the founding headmaster brought to Brookewood School: a love for the True, the Good, and the Beautiful as expressed in the ardent exercise of intellectual curiosity, the sharing of ideas, and the capacity to experience the wonder and praise of the Creator in beauty.” Garvey will be attending the University of Notre Dame with an ROTC Scholarship.

Mr. David Booz, Upper School Theology Teacher, presented The Cardinal’s Award for Catholic Citizenship to Maggie Tobin. Tobin also received the Vince Family Prize for the student who best exemplifies the qualities of “great-hearted generosity and cheerful liveliness.” Tobin will be attending Benedictine College in Atchison, Kansas.
Sofia Ghosh won the Michael T. Stroot Prize which was given for the first time this year in honor of Brookewood's long-time math teacher. Sofia will be attending the University of Maryland at College Park.

Headmaster of The Avalon School and founding parent of Brookewood School, Kevin Davern delivered the keynote address, stressing the core of a Brookewood education and its ability to confront evil without fear: “Your Brookewood education— informed as it is with solid grounding in Christian Civilization—has within it the means to overcome our fears....You've experienced a culture here at Brookewood, a joyful culture, that has helped and will continue to help you develop into the strong, capable, daughter of God that you were born to be. And your future motherhood, either in your own future nuclear families or in the spiritual sense of other vocations, both in the house and in the workplace, will be a vital force for the salvation of souls and the rebirth of Christian civilization that John Paul the Great so often spoke of.”

Congratulations to the Class of 2022! We anticipate with deep joy hearing about your adventures. Nolite Timere!

The Class of 2022

The class of 2022 is Brookewood’s 13th graduating class, with several students beginning and ending their K–12 school education at Brookewood!

College Acceptances

Ave Maria University | Bay Path University | Belmont Abbey | Benedictine University | The Catholic University of America | Christendom College | Clark University | Culinary Institute of America | Franciscan University | Franklin & Marshall College | Hillsdale College | Ithaca College | Mary Baldwin College | McDaniel College | Mount Saint Mary’s University | Notre Dame University | Saint Bonaventure | Salem State University | St. Joseph’s College of Maine | St. Mary’s College of Maryland | Temple University | Towson University | University of Dallas | University of Maine at Orono | University of Maryland, Baltimore County | University of Maryland, College Park | Xavier University

Graduates

Front Row
- Sofia Patricia Ghosh
- Eleanor Maria Bostick
- Francesca Milano
- Ashley Moran
- Grace Ann Carr
- Ella Marie S.M. Stroot

Middle Row
- Piaoyi Gan
- Benedetta Pellegrini
- Rose Armstrong
- Paula Carolyn Kloehn
- Cara Marie Dudenhoefer
- Not pictured
- Caterina Giuliano
- Anna Sofia Grilli
- Brianna Daniela Luna

Back Row
- Mary Guadalupe Garvey
- Fiorela D. Constanza Arias
- Bella Marie Boogaerts
- Margaret Denise Teresa Tobin
- Rachel Elizabeth Davern
- Kyra Sophia Smith

“Your Brookewood education— informed as it is with solid grounding in Christian Civilization—has within it the means to overcome our fears.”
—Kevin Davern, Avalon Headmaster, founding parent of Brookewood
I decided at eight years old that losing friends was too painful to make friendship worthwhile. My plan was to keep all the friends I already had while not making any new friends. Of course, that plan fell through. But it shows a little something about my take on friendship from an early age: Being friends isn’t a casual hobby. It’s a commitment to care for the other person despite everything that threatens to pull you apart.

During my time at Brookewood, my classmates and I had many gains and losses, good times and bad times, and countless dramatic stories that we’ve retold ‘til even those who weren’t there for the event can join in our dramatic retellings: From Sofia jumping into a moving van to Rose’s early attempts to get out of school, or the horse incident on our 7th grade camping trip and the creation of the Fluffy Purple Fire Breathing Unicorn song (our class mascot), even to our somewhat unsuccessful attempt at a senior swap—our class has had adventures. And even with so many girls who’ve left us for one reason or another, many of my classmates have remained the entire 12 years!

While the classes and subjects at Brookewood have brought so much growth and joy to my life—in fact, they have taught me almost everything I know, having been where I’ve had 12 out of my 13 years of formal schooling—it’s not the things that we’re able to articulate at the open houses that have really formed me.

Which is not to say that I didn’t love Festival days, poetry recitation, and many of the other elements that make our school stand out. It’s just that I’ve loved the people more. From my teachers to all of my classmates, there is no experience that I would trade for growing up with a small class of these girls. There have been terrible times and wonderful moments but the fact that I have known every single person that has ever been in my grade and have missed them when they left has been a huge blessing in my life. Brookewood has taught me how to say hello and how to say goodbye, but more importantly how to cherish what I have even when it isn’t what I would have chosen for myself. That’s an experience that just can’t be explained by a teacher-to-student ratio or a class size average.

From our class of 6 at the beginning of 1st grade to those of us who graduated in May, alongside all of the exchange students we’ve had and those who have left us, as well the teachers that have come and gone and sometimes even come back again, it is the feeling that I have had friends who are more like sisters, and upperclassmen who have felt like the older siblings I never had, that has brought joy to my Brookewood experience.
Lupe Garvey will enter the University of Notre Dame in September inspired by her faith, her family, and the spirit of Brookewood School. The oldest of eight children, she attended Brookewood with four of her sisters, and as captain of Arundel House, editor of the yearbook, and a three-sport athlete, she has set a stellar example both in and out of the classroom. The AP Scholar has been awarded a four-year scholarship through the U.S. Army, and she looks forward to participating in Notre Dame’s ROTC program. Lupe plans to major in Philosophy and Theology with a minor in Constitutional Studies, an interest ignited during her eight years at Brookewood.

“History was one of my least favorite subjects, until I had Mrs. Julie Wilson’s class junior year. In U.S. History, her depth of knowledge about the Constitution—as well as the rest of American history—and her desire to share this knowledge greatly affected me.”

“I’m most appreciative of the deep rooted desire for knowledge that the school has given me,” Lupe further explains. “My Brookewood education has taught me how to think critically and strive for excellence. In particular, Mrs. Cherie Walsh and Mr. David Booz have helped me develop the skill of critical thinking which I know will aid me next year and beyond.” However, it is not only the faculty that generates the student’s drive to succeed, she further notes. “My classmates have been amazing examples of what it means to work hard, overcome obstacles, and succeed, all for the greater glory of God. The whole Brookewood community has given me an irreplaceable gift: a deep set love of Christ.”

Upon graduation from Notre Dame, Lupe will serve as an officer in the United States Army. And after that? “I can see myself becoming a lawyer, and perhaps one day even a judge,” she says. “And I hope to be blessed with the ultimate career, motherhood, and serve both my family and my country.”
Varsity Soccer

Coached by Ralph Acevedo, the Varsity Soccer team consisted of four upperclassmen and 14 8th, 9th, and 10th grade students, with two seniors—Annabelle Begley (a homeschool student) and Kyra Smith. They played 11 games and their record was 6–5. Their biggest win was a Varsity game against Washington Christian Academy a shutout, 13–0.

Varsity Volleyball

Coached by Nagy Abdelrazek, the former V Volleyball Coach at Catholic University, the Varsity Volleyball team had a winning season, with a record of 12–4. They played 13 regular season games and only lost one game towards the end of the season to Covenant Life (1–3). 10 girls rounded off the team with one senior, Francesca Milano, four juniors, and five 8th and 9th graders.

Field Hockey

Coached by Jessica Love and assistant coach Rosie Wilson, the Varsity Field Hockey team played a total of 11 games with a record of 1–9–1. 18 girls were on the team with six seniors who have played since the 6th grade. Senior Maggie Tobin and Margot Houle shared goalie duties for the season.

Middle School Field Hockey

Coached by Jennifer Davern (her 14th year coaching), the MS Field Hockey team had 22 girls from 6th–8th grade. The team’s record was 1–5 with one cancellation due to rain. They won their game against Stone Ridge 1–0. Maggie Teleki scored the goal with an assist from her sister Lily Teleki.

Middle School Cross Country

Coached by Helen Williams, the Middle School Cross Country team consisted of nine girls from 4th–7th grades. In their first season, the team participated in Colleen’s BA 5K a fundraiser in memory of Colleen Mitchel who died at the age of 19 of Biliary Atresia. They also ran in 4 meets, placing well in each meet.
Winter & Spring Sport **ROUNDUP**

### Varsity Basketball
*Coach: Joyce Shorb*
*Record: 4–7*

**Highlights:** Wins over National Cathedral school’s JV and Oakcrest’s JV and Covenant Life’s and IDEA PCS V Teams’ as well.

### MS Basketball
*Coach: Jennifer Davern*
*Record: 2–3*

**Highlights:** Win over National Cathedral in a close game. The Middle School team consisted only of 7th and 8th grade students.

### 6th Grade Basketball
*Coach: Jennifer Davern*
*Record: 1–2*

**Highlights:** There were 11 girls on the team and they played 3 games, with one of them canceled due to snow.

### Varsity Swim
*Coach: Betsy Bajwa*
*Record: Placement in 4 of the 6 meets*

**Highlights:** The team competed well at several meets hosted by Seton School in Manassas. Junior Elise Bajwa attended the National Catholic Championships and the Washington Metro Championships.

### MS Swim
*Coach: Helen Williams*
*Record: 4 meets with several placements*

**Highlights:** The team was comprised of 6th–8th graders, and there were 11 girls on the team. They had 4 meets and were competitive in all of them. In the Seton JV Invitational meet they place 4th out of 5 teams.

### Varsity Softball
*Coach: Tim Pohlhaus*
*Asst: Glenn Rakow, Joe Madison*
*Record: 2–2–1*

**Highlights:** The team was comprised of 8th–12th graders, with 17 girls on the team. The last game of the season was a senior game against Don Bosco. It was played at Wheaton Regional on one of their top-notch ball fields, and Brookewood won 15–10.

### Varsity Lacrosse
*Coach: Rosie Wilson*
*Asst: Jessica Love*
*Record: 4–5*

**Highlights:** There were 17 girls on the team and 5 seniors. They had a nice win, 10–8, against Woodrow Wilson early in the season.

### MS Lacrosse
*Coach: David Booz*
*Record: 3–2*

**Highlights:** For the first time we had tryouts for MS lacrosse because so many girls wanted to play. Therefore, the team was limited to 20 players, 6th–8th grade. The team had two strong wins against National Cathedral and St. Andrew’s Episcopal. They beat NCS 8–0 and St. Andrew’s 8–3.
Aristotle says in his *Nicomachean Ethics*: “The ideal man bears the accidents of life with dignity and grace, making the best of circumstances.” Brookewood’s first varsity swim team has indeed made the best of a season in which they could not control the circumstances. Brookewood’s team began with six members practicing at the University of Maryland’s recreation center, learning and improving under coach Betsy Bajwa. In December, when the university had to shut down the recreation center due to an uptick in COVID, Bajwa went ahead and wrote out training plans for her swimmers, asking them to self-train at a local public pool where she was not allowed to be on deck and coach.

The six swimmers successfully managed to practice on their own, improving their individual and relay times. The varsity team, which has competed at five meets thus far in its first season, came in second place at the Seton Winter Invitational on January 15th. One of its members, Elise Bajwa, qualified for the National Catholic Swimming and Diving Championship in Baltimore, placing 13th in the finals of 100 breaststroke. Considering that several of the swimmers are new to high school swimming where the distances swum are longer, and many of the students who they have competed against are year-round swimmers, Brookewood’s team has performed very well in its first season.

According to Coach Bajwa, “I am impressed with the level of commitment these girls have shown. They have been thrown different obstacles, and they continue to persevere.”
CLASS OF 2013
Marisol (Alicea) Ross just gave birth to her first child, Joseph Ross, in July. In November of 2021, Marisol married Garrett Ross. She currently lives in Nashville, TN.

Marta Brown is engaged to Dennis Mundt, third-year law student. Marta and Dennis will be getting married in December at Holy Redeemer Church in Kensington. Brown also graduated from PA school at Ohio Dominican University in December 2021. She has been working at an Urgent Care outside of Scranton Pennsylvania since April 2022.

Morgan Kurtz is engaged to be married to Tyler Aaron Gamble.

CLASS OF 2015
Tatti Galli lives in St. Gallen, Switzerland, and will be working at a new boarding school teaching extracurricular courses and working in the boarding department.

CLASS OF 2016

Sarah Rivas begins medical school with Thomas Jefferson University, at the Sidney Kimmel Medical College this fall.

CLASS OF 2017
Meaghan (Croarkin) Hilger married John Hilger in early July. They currently reside in Florida.

Tricia Davern was the assistant for the University of Dallas graduate program for Classical Education in Rome. This fall, she will teach the 2nd grade at St. Jerome’s Academy in Hyattsville, MD.


CLASS OF 2018
Kaylor Stroot is engaged to be married to David Bergman.
The first full day of school in 2006, all the students lined up and Mr. Joe McPherson marched several blocks across town and into the park, all the while carrying a birthday cake. He announced the new year, the new school, and our first ever Festival day. It was the feast of the Nativity of the Blessed Mother, and we celebrated with games and laughter. And, of course, we sang happy birthday to Mama Mary and to the school. This tradition has been carried on every year, and this month, we celebrate Brookewood’s 17th birthday. With that first school-wide tromp to the park, Joe inextricably linked that birth over two millennia ago to the kickoff of our academic year. In the 16 years since, our alumni continue to celebrate our achievements, our families, and our faith.
2021–22 ACADEMIC AWARDS

LATIN AWARDS

7TH GRADE
Teacher: Mr. Eames
Audrey Stroot
Elena Aldrette
Lily Teleki
Vivi Herber
Bridie Garvey

UPPER SCHOOL
Teacher: Mr. Eames
Latin II & III
Shannan Croarkin
Allison Hunt
Fiat Le

UPPER SCHOOL
Teacher: Mr. Kantor
Latin I
Daniela Pico
Arianna Magluziozi
Annamaria Brown
Katie Stroot
Pia Aldrette
Ana Pantoja
Madison Hunt
Sofia Herber
Amanda Borger

ITALIAN AWARDS

GOLD
Katie Stroot (1)
Bella Dmitiev (1)
Pia Aldrette (1)
Annamaria Brown (1)
Daniela Pico (1)
Clara Lopez (1)
Clare Hawley (2)
Elif Ozaydin (2)
Ana Pantoja (2)
Astrid Rosa (2)
Benedetta De Marchi (3)
Eleanor Bostick (4)
Maggie Tobin (4)

SILVER
Arianna Magluziozi (1)
Vicky Sanjines (1)
Siena Do (2)
Lucia Rosa (3)

BRONZE
Margot Houle (2)
Nicole Ortiz (2)
Anna Ferrante (3)
Isis Reyes (3)

Latin & Italian National Exam Award Winners
The mission of the Brookewood School Advancement Office is to secure resources for the present and future operation of the school. This undertaking is accomplished by building relationships through organized activities designed to attract and engage support from the school’s constituencies. Our connections with current and alumnae families, donors, businesses, and foundations provide the lifeblood and base of support to achieve fundraising and enrollment goals for the school.

2022–23 EVENTS

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WAYS TO GIVE

NOLITE TIMERE FUND
Unrestricted gifts to the annual Nolite Timere Fund help meet the school’s ongoing needs, including faculty salaries, co-curricular activities, testing, books, fees, and maintenance of the buildings. These funds become a part of the operating budget.

Restricted gifts are designated for a specific purpose, such as the athletic program, the Avalon and Brookewood Actors Guild, scholarships, or a particular renovation project.

IN MEMORIAM GIFTS
A gift made in memory of a deceased relative, classmate, or faculty member may be designated for the scholarship fund, or for a special project, subject to approval.

IN HONOR GIFTS
A gift may be made in honor of the accomplishments of a living teacher, student, alumna, or friend of the school and can be designated to reflect a specific interest.

SECURITIES
A gift of securities, stocks, or bonds entitles the donor to an income tax deduction; a gift of appreciated securities may also reduce capital gains tax liability.*

BEQUESTS
A bequest is a gift made through a will. It can be a percentage of an estate, a fixed dollar amount, or specific personal property or real estate. A bequest will reduce the size of the taxable portion of an estate and may lower federal estate tax liability.*

DEFERRED GIFTS
Various trust and other forms of deferred gifts offer immediate and long-range tax advantages and benefits for both your family and Brookewood School*.  

*Consult your attorney or financial advisor for specific information tailored to your circumstances.
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