

Upper School Houses

Dear Upper School Parents,

As I think about all the time spent with my 4 month old son Harvey, the call to fatherhood and the leadership implied in that title comes to mind. Harvey is now beginning to recognize his mother and me by sight and hearing, and soon he will be communicating with us and watching everything we say or do. I shudder at the thought of my sin on parade in such a manner in my child's life, and I am chastened and forced to approach my role as father with prayerful fear and trembling. A little child's focus and imitation of his elders is not unlike the admiration younger students hold for the upperclassmen at WA. Prominent among their peers for their roles in formal leadership are the four Senior House Captains for 2011-2012.

This summer, amidst jobs, trips, movies, cruises, and summer reading, the House Captains will be reading *Good to Great* by Jim Collins, an excellent book that documents why some companies make the jump from being good companies to being great ones while others simply hover around adequacy. Collins' conclusions are surprising. Among the factors he finds present in the great company is a Level Five Leader. These leaders constantly seek to better the company's reputation *instead of* their own. They are passionately devoted to their companies and spend time training successors and laying groundwork for future success instead of seeking personal adulation from the press, shareholders, or employees. In a word, these leaders are humble. Though the correlation between success and business and success in the House System is not a perfect one, there are lessons for our House Captains to draw from this work.

Though Collins' may not use these words what he is describing is a servant-leader. The paradigmatic servant leader is, of course, Christ. One of the most eloquent statements of his service is found Paul's words in Philippians 2 where he details the lengths Christ went to serve man. Paul calls us to act like Christ toward one another, saying that Christ "Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be used to his own advantage; rather he made himself nothing by taking the very nature of a servant." Paul eventually points to Calvary as the height of this service. This is the type of leadership that I and the faculty and staff at WA want our students to incarnate. This is the foundation upon which we want to build the Houses. Two brief conclusions follow from this fact.

First, we want the students to lead in this fashion not primarily because it is successful but because it is how God has called us to be faithful. That Level Five Leadership is a sign of successful companies is wonderful, but we are pursuing Level Five Leadership because it is Christ-like. We are looking for kingdom success. Second, as our students understand more

and more each year, the most important student leadership roles at WA primarily call for serving one's fellow students. The House Captains do much, much more behind the scenes planning and organizing activities than the time they spend in public reaping praises and adulations. Furthermore, three of the House Captains do not win the House Cup in a given year. That means no glory, no trophy, and no immediate legacy to point to for these seniors. Also, I have not even taken into account the myriad of seniors, juniors, and others who have no formal role in leading yet serve nonetheless. When the dust settles at the end of the year, the personal glory does not spread very far, and it does not last very long. Sounds a lot like parenthood, doesn't it?

This is the way of Christ; it calls for serving without glory. As our students serve in this fashion, they are modeling Christ in their leadership. The paradox is that this kind of service will actually cause one's House to flourish. But it is a flourishing that cannot be coerced by false humility. For our Houses to go from good to great, our students will have to lay down their lives for each other. Please pray that this leadership blossoms in the classroom, in House meetings, at field day, and in all areas of WA.

Thanks,

Harvey Kay
Director of Houses

P.S. Please take note of the 2011-2012 House Captains and House Masters listed below.

Athanasius House

House Master: Anne Walker

House Captain: Graham Throckmorton

Becket House

House Master: Greg Kinney

House Captain: Rebekah Matthews

Boniface House

House Master: Maylon Jones

House Captain: Matthew Miller

Columba House

House Master: Faith Shaunak

House Captain: Spencer Johnson