



**XAVIER COLLEGE PREPARATORY HIGH SCHOOL
SUMMER READING 2026**

Dear Incoming Junior,

We hope that this letter finds you well and anticipating the beginning of a rewarding junior year. We hope that you will have many good experiences this summer and make many good decisions before we see you again in August. One of those decisions we would like to help you with is the decision to remain engaged in a reading activity this summer. It is our belief that encouraging students to read year-round is a key element in the development of lifelong learners. While the summer is certainly time to be away from school, we hope that it is not a time to stop reading, thinking, and growing.

You will read one book this summer (see below). This required work will be part of the overall theme of the year. This book has been selected for its interest level and readability as well as for its compelling content. In short, you should expect to think, but you should enjoy reading as well.

Please read the assignment below. You will find information to help you focus your attention while you read.

Required Reading:

- ***Tattoos on the Heart: The Power of Boundless Compassion*** by Father Greg Boyle
Down-to-earth and utterly heartening, these essays about universal kinship and redemption are moving examples of the power of unconditional love in difficult times and the importance of fighting despair. With Gregory Boyle's guidance, we can recognize our own wounds in the broken lives and daunting struggles of the men and women in these parables and learn to find joy in all of the people around us. *Tattoos on the Heart* reminds us that no life is less valuable than another.

Assignment for *Tattoos on the Heart*:

As you read, create margin notes and annotations. Keep in mind and jot down annotation notes, especially, on several of the following:

- Characters' interactions with one another and with God
- Setting and the importance of place
- Resilience of various characters
- How characters exhibit the five "Grad at Grads." (Information on the "Grad at Grad" principles can be found at <https://www.xavierprep.org/about/grad-to-grad.cfm> .)

Upon your return in August, **you will be asked to complete an in-class essay**; this essay will center on the aforementioned topics. You can use the graphic organizer on the next page to help you remember how the characters represent the Grad at Grads. We suggest you print out the graphic organizer and take notes. You will be permitted to use a hard copy of **your** annotated book for the essay assignment, which means that you must find a personal copy of the book. Students are not permitted to use another student's book.

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Use the graphic organizer to think about characterization and the Grad at Grad Principles:

<https://www.xavierprep.org/about/grad-to-grad.cfm>

<p>What are the Grad at Grad Principles? List and give a definition below.</p>	<p><i>Tattoos on the Heart</i>: Find examples of the Grad at Grad Principles at work in the people/actions encountered in the book. As you read, annotate with the principles in mind.</p>
<p>Grad at Grad #1: Explain which people/actions remind you of this principle:</p>	
<p>Grad at Grad #2: Explain which people/actions remind you of this principle:</p>	
<p>Grad at Grad #3: Explain which people/actions remind you of this principle:</p>	
<p>Grad at Grad #4: Explain which people/actions remind you of this principle:</p>	
<p>Grad at Grad #5: Explain which people/actions remind you of this principle:</p>	