

### **Brief Biography of Luke Whetstone, written by his mother**

My son, Luke Whetstone, who graduated from Montgomery Catholic in 2018, passed away in the summer of 2022. Some of you who have been here for a few years knew him. For those who did not, I'd like to tell you about him.

Luke started Kindergarten at St. Bede and then attended Montgomery Catholic Middle and High School, where he enjoyed many years of learning, friendships, and athletics. I would describe Luke as resilient, having had to navigate a lot of changes in his family life over the years. He was smart, easily distracted, perceptive, disorganized, and funny. He loved to do impressions and make his friends and family laugh. He was passionate early on about Alabama Football and fishing.

Towards the end of his life, even as he struggled with his mental health, he knew what was important to him. He preferred the simple things in life. Family, music, writing, art, traveling and being outdoors brought him joy and peace. He had a deep appreciation and love for the beauty of God's creation: waterfalls, sunrises and sunsets, trees, Spanish moss, streams, rivers, beaches, and mountains. He had a rare gift of being able to slow down, be in the moment and take the time to notice what others might overlook. He desired and enjoyed meaningful conversations. He loved his family. As much as he struggled, he got a lot of things right.

I'd like to share his words from a text he sent me: "At the end of the day, I think a lot of people forget we're all human...Everyone has their own battles to fight and everyone copes with it differently, so why not be kind?"

During Luke's Memorial Mass, Monsignor Bill Skoneki told us "The best response to Luke's untimely death is for each and every one of us to live life faithfully and selflessly, loving God and neighbor...to live a life that makes the world around us better...to live a life that makes a difference for others."

Establishing this scholarship is one way our family has chosen to respond, in hopes of living out this call to love God and neighbor and make a difference for others. Father Bill also said "Luke's sudden death reminds us how short life can be and how our everyday words and actions matter." You may have heard the quote "Everyone you meet is fighting a battle you know nothing about. Be kind. Always." Luke echoed this sentiment in his text I shared above.

Luke's scholarship will seek to promote and recognize kindness and compassion. We chose to focus on these Gospel values, not because Luke was a model of kindness and compassion while he was a student here, but because as he struggled with mental health challenges, he recognized the importance of these attributes and desired them for himself and others who were facing similar issues. Luke's scholarship is an opportunity for you to recognize those students who live a life of kindness and compassion, making a difference in the lives of those around them. This scholarship is also an opportunity to encourage those students who may be "fighting an unseen battle" yet persevere through the challenges they face. They can be recognized for perseverance, hard work, service to others, or any other gift, talent or attribute that is less obvious and may go unrecognized by your typical scholarship/award. I thank you for taking the time to consider nominating one or more students and making a difference in the lives of our Montgomery Catholic Community.

With Appreciation,  
Katherine Barranco (Luke's mom)



## **Montgomery Catholic Preparatory School Luke J. Whetstone, Class of 2018 Memorial Scholarship Nomination Form**

**Instructions:** We appreciate your willingness to nominate an applicant for this award. We ask you as an MCPS teacher and staff member to prayerfully consider nominating a middle school or high school student for the scholarship. This is an opportunity for our adult community to acknowledge students who need encouragement, who have special talents or gifts that may go unnoticed, or who live a life of kindness and compassion.

**"At the end of the day I think a lot of people forget that we're all human. We all have our own battles to fight and everyone copes with it differently, so why not be kind?"**

**- Luke Whetstone**

With the establishment of this scholarship, Luke's family wishes to honor his memory by extending the blessing of kindness to Montgomery Catholic students and their families.

This scholarship was established in August 2022 in memory of Luke J. Whetstone by his family and gifts made to Montgomery Catholic Preparatory School in his memory. The scholarship seeks to encourage the Montgomery Catholic community to put kindness and compassion first. Luke's scholarship also offers a reflection on how living a life faithfully and selflessly, loving God and neighbor, makes a positive difference for those in our lives and those who will enter our lives.

### **General Information**

Name of Nominator: \_\_\_\_\_

Email address of Nominator: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone number of Nominator: \_\_\_\_\_

**In Luke's memory, and as a member of the Montgomery Catholic faculty I have prayerfully considered my nomination of:**

Student Nominee Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Student Nominee Current Grade: \_\_\_\_\_

as a candidate to receive a minimum of a \$1,000 tuition scholarship for next year.

Please complete the following questions to complete your nomination.

1. Keeping in mind that living a life of kindness will make a difference in the world around us, I would like to nominate this student because (please tell the committee why this student should be considered):
2. Are there gifts or talents that this student has that go unnoticed? Please explain:
3. Keeping in mind that Luke's scholarship seeks to encourage kindness and compassion, how is your nomination a reflection of these gifts?

May we share your name as the nominator with the student applicant?

- Yes
- I prefer not

Signature of Nominator: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_