

Form VIII English
Summer Reading
Class of 2018
(Revised assignment!)

For your summer reading you will be given sometime next week a modified form of the packet Fr. Gregory has used for the past many years. It will include a section of Virgil's *Aeneid* as well as material on medieval Florence— social and political history and architecture. I will include as well a few essays which I would like for you to be familiar with, some which relate directly to the *Inferno* and some that don't.

I will expect that you will have read this material when you arrive at school next fall; we will have several "learning experiences" over the material during the first few days back from your last summer break as Cistercian students! It will be of benefit to you as we plow through the **entire** *Divine Comedy*. Be sure as well that you have a copy of the Musa translation of the *Divine Comedy*. **This is a change from last year** We will be making frequent use of the many fine notes which the Musa translation (an inexpensive Penguin Classic edition) provides.

In addition, please read one "hellish" work by C. S. Lewis, *The Great Divorce*. **I would like for you to write your first response paper over *The Great Divorce*, which will be due on the first day of class (and the prompt and requirements for the essay are found below).** We will begin the semester with analyses both of the packet and *The Great Divorce*, and will be making references to both throughout the semester.

I look forward to teaching you again.

Dr. Pruitt

The Great Divorce prompt: What choices, habits, view of oneself, according to C. S. Lewis (at least in this fictional account of his beliefs), gets a person thrown into Hell? That is the central question to answer in the paper, and the following questions should help you formulate a response: a) how is Hell described in the beginning of the book, as they await the bus? b) What is the purpose of the bus ride which the passengers have volunteered to take? c) What is the purpose of the "Reality" they souls encounter once they step off the bus? d) By whom are the souls visited and for what purpose? e) How is the narrator's situation a little different—who becomes his guide, and what effect doe that have on the narration of the story? f) What discovery does the narrator make about the size and substance of Hell near the end of the story?

In answering the central question posed above, begin with an introductory paragraph which states your thesis sentence. Then in your body paragraphs, illustrate your understanding with an explanation of 3 different encounters which the narrator describes over the course of the story. In a final concluding paragraph, summarize or reflect on your thesis in some way. The essay should be around 3 full pages typed (around 750 words) and is due the first day of actual class, August 23.