

On behalf of the Board of Trustees and the entire faculty and staff of Bishop Grimes, I would like to thank you all for being here today to celebrate our Commencement 2020 with this school community. Parents, family members, and distinguished guests, thank you for your support of our graduates.

As you know, I have only had the opportunity to work with these fine young men and women for one school year, but even in that time, I have come to know what an amazing group of young people they truly are. We have had a very interesting year, to say the least. Because of these unprecedented times, we have faced many challenges and many “firsts.” But through it all, which included and abrupt ending of in-school classes, remote instruction, social distancing, loss of many seniors events, or senior events held in different, unique ways, the Class of 2020 has shown over and over again the strength of their character. Even through disappointments of the last few months, they remained strong, committed to each other, flexible in the face of adversity, and positive role models to the entire community. I know for certain that this Class of 2020 truly loves their school and each other. It has been my privilege to be their principal. Parents, you have raised such fine young men and women. I am very proud of them, and I know you must be, too.

As I thought about the words of wisdom I would like to share with the Class of 2020 as they begin this new adventure in their lives, I thought of words that have inspired me throughout my lifetime. Immediately, I thought of Mother Teresa and the many words of wisdom I have received from her writings. Most notably, her “Do It Anyway” poem has always guided me to do what is right – no matter what. Mother Teresa tells us to forgive, be kind, succeed, be honest, be happy, do good. At some point when you have time to

“google it” you should read the poem in its entirety, but I will share the line that inspires me the most. It reads – “Give the world the best you have and it may never be enough. Give your best anyway, because you see, in the end it is between you and God,” anyway. So graduates, give the world the best you have, as you have so much to give. And when you have given your very best, be comfortable with that accomplishment. It is all that God asks of any of us.

But, then I finally settled on the absolute message I wanted to leave you with today, which is from the letter of St. Paul to the Philippians. Philippians 4 was designed by Paul as a guide for living and dealing with the normal problems a Christian might encounter, and guidance on how to conquer life’s challenges. Well, Paul is a much better expert than Mrs. Brillante, so I decided to use his words. Then, I listened to Mr. McKenney quote a section from Philippians 4 in his message to the athletes and without knowing it, Mr. McKenney had just stolen my thunder. Initially, I thought I should rewrite my message. But after reflection, I thought how really cool it was that the very academic principal and the athletic director, who had no idea of what the other one was planning to say, would use some of the very same words in their messages to the Class of 2020. I think that speaks volumes about who we are here at Bishop Grimes.

So Bishop Grimes, Class of 2020, my words of wisdom to you come from the Bible – Philippians Chapter 4 verses 4-9. These words are framed and set in my office for me to read and reflect on each day. The words are:

“Rejoice in the Lord, always. I shall say it again: rejoice! Your kindness should be known to all.

The Lord is near. Have no anxiety at all, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, make your requests known to God.

Then the peace of God, that surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus.

Finally, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is gracious, if there is any excellence and if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things.

Keep on doing what you have learned and received and heard and seen in me.

Then the peace of God will be with you.

Please know seniors that you will continue to be in my prayers. This commencement is the beginning of new and exciting times for you. Also, please know that no matter where you go or what you do, your Bishop Grimes family will always be there for you. I am incredibly proud to know you. I wish you much love, happy times, and the peace of God.

Be blessed, and most importantly, be a blessing to others.