

- The central miracle of religious life, which should take place on an average of about once every other day. When sinking in our honest sense of helplessness, we reach out for what a university can never offer, a love greater than we ourselves can ever express. What a university can never offer, a truth deeper than we could ever articulate. What a university can never offer, a beauty richer than we ourselves can ever contain. When we too cry out Lord save me, he who died to make men holy does indeed transfigure you and me. Ask for a thimble full of help and you get an ocean full in return. How many people in this country wish the story ended right here? What greater relief to an unhappy soul than to find stability in a world of turmoil, certitude in a world of doubt, contentment amid pain? But the goal of religious life is not to save your soul, it is to transcend yourself. To make a gift of yourself. To vindicate the human struggle of which we all are a part. To help hope advance. Peter doesn't say to Jesus, now that you saved me Lord, let's walk off just you and me into the sunrise of a new day and forget about all those fellas in the sinking ship. Having abandoned the sinking ship for Jesus, Peter now returns with Jesus and there is a baccalaureate message. Our baccalaureate example for patriots who call themselves or wish to be religious. America, love it and leave it. Leave it for Jesus. Leave it for God. For America's sake and for your own sake. And then return with Jesus to the ship. That's how we're supposed to love America. With Christ's compassion. With Christ's wisdom. With Christ's concern for the whole fusing once again freedom and virtue in order to renew the patriot's dream that sees beyond the years, her alabaster cities gleam undimmed by human tears. Departing seniors and graduate students, it is dull to seek only private gain. It is futile to try to possess your soul by possession of something outside it. There are two ways to be rich. One is to have lots of money, the other is to have few needs. It is boring to live,

(people laughing) It is boring to live life to the minimum, to retreat from the mysterious to the manageable, to retreat from freedom to bondage and need I remind you that even if you win a rat race, you're still a rat. (audience laughing) So, be different. Be generous. Have a kinda nose thumbing independence of all the powers of death militant in this world. Be loving and remain so, then 50 years hence, you will look back on the spring time of your life and say, ah, but summer and fall were even better. When Peter returned to the boat with Jesus, the winds abated. I think our own ship could once again recover headway and direction if you and folks like you graduating this month and next month across this land could follow Peter's example. So, a final word to you and about our country. To you, departing seniors and graduate students, let me simply offer the benediction that Unamuno, that great Spaniard offered all of us in the last sentence of his great book, *The Vision of Tragedy*, "Que Dios no te de paz y si Gloria." May God deny you peace, but give you glory. And of our beloved country, what can we say, but those more prayerful words that Longfellow addressed to our nation at the end of his poem, *Sail on*, nor fear to breast the sea, our hearts, our hopes are all with thee, our hearts, our hopes, our prayers, our tears, our faith triumphant or our fears are all with thee, are all with thee. Amen. (organ music) (choir words drown out by organ)

- Let us unite in this historic confession of the Christian faith. I believe in God the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth and in Jesus Christ his only son, our Lord who was conceived by the holy spirit, born of the virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified dead and buried. He descended into hell. The third

day he rose from the dead. He ascended into heaven and siteth at the right hand of God the Father Almighty. From thence he shall come to judge the quick and the dead. I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Holy Catholic Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body and the life everlasting. Amen. The Lord be with you.

- Also with you.

- Let us pray, be seated. Gracious God, source of all wisdom, light and truth, we give thanks that you have brought us to this happy day wherein we might celebrate the accomplishments of these graduates and confirm the high purpose of this university. Grant us the grace, we pray, that in our joy of achievement we might be mindful of the needs of others who are less fortunate than ourselves and the responsibilities which our attainments place upon us. If we have struggled to achieve and excel, only to obtain self-centered prestige, if we have amassed knowledge only to accumulate things, if we've earned a degree only to get personal privilege, then give us one more bit of knowledge, we pray. The insight that life lived solely for self is little life at all. Having attained great knowledge in our various fields of study, we ask the more valuable, more difficult wisdom to see the needs of others as clearly as we see our own. To think of others as we're inclined to think of ourselves, to feel the hurts and hungers of others as if they were our own. Thus we pray. For those who will not know the liberation of the sort of education we celebrate here, because they have never had the opportunity. For those who know not the joy of a peaceful May morning like this one, because they live in the midst of war and violence. For those whose situation has denied them the love and encouragement of wise and devoted parents. Because we know what gifts our parents have been. For those whose minds and bodies are broken because they were deprived of food, medical care and the necessities of life. Knowing that you've given people like us many of the means to make a better world for people like them, give us the strength to use those means. For the people of South Africa we pray, oppressed and oppressors, remembering the crippling effects of our struggles with racism here, we pray for the victims of racism there. For Katie O'Brien, beloved classmate, we pray for a speedy recovery from her accident. For Serena Wu Dun, member of the class of 1985, whose tragic death denied her this moment with us. For her and her family, we pray. Oh God who gives life, on a day like today, so full of joy and promises kept and dreams fulfilled, we know your goodness. And in that knowledge we lift up these, our brothers and sisters here and afar. Amen. (organ music) (choir singing in foreign language)

- Please rise. Almighty God as you have granted us place and part in this university hallow to us now this day, when we dedicate ourselves to the life and work to which you have called us. That we may remember with gratitude the families and friends who have cared for us.

Audience: We ask your grace, oh God.

- That in the life ahead, we may keep faith with those who loved us and trusted us and whose hopes follow us.

Audience: We ask your strength oh God.

- That we may enter with good courage and constant purpose upon the task which await us.

Audience: We ask your presence oh God.

- From all vanity and pride, as if our accomplishments were of our sole creation.

Audience: Dear Lord deliver us.

- From neglect of the opportunities which are all about us and from distrust of our ability to meet the duties of each dawning day.

Audience: Dear Lord deliver us.

- That the example of wise and generous people who have gone before us in our families and here in this university may save us from folly and self indulgence.

Audience: We ask your wisdom oh God.

- More especially that you would show to us your way of love in all that we do or say, that we should come to love the Lord our God with our soul and mind and strength, and our neighbor as ourselves.

Audience: We ask your love, oh God.

- These things and whatever else you see needful and right for us, we ask in your holy name. Amen. (organ music) (choir's words drown by organ)

- And now class of 1985, the Lord bless you and keep you, the Lord make his light to shine upon you and be gracious unto you. The Lord lift up his countenance upon you and give you peace. ♪ Amen ♪ ♪ amen ♪ ♪ amen ♪ ♪ Amen ♪ ♪ Amen ♪ (organ music)