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Prepared text by Dr. Gerald Sperrazzo USD Professor of Psychology Commencement Address at Our Lady of Peace Academy

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Prepared text by Dr. Gerald Sperrazzo
USD Professor of Psychology
Commencement Address at
Our Lady of Peace Academy
May 30, 1970

Your Excellency Bishop Maher, Sister Sheila, Members of the Faculty,
Parents, and Graduates.

Today is one of a series of memorable days that you will have in the course of your life time. For you today marks an end and a beginning. It marks the end of four years of working together, playing together and of sharing many memorable experiences. But for most of you it also marks the beginning of a new era.

I was informed before this commencement that well over 80% of you would be continuing your education at a university. And because most of you will be embarking on this new educational experience I thought I would share with you some of my feelings of what you should expect in this new educational endeavor that you are about to encounter.

The university means many things to many people. For some, it is a continuation of high school with very little change, growth or excitement. For others the university is the fulfillment of their parents desire for them and for still others the university is a place where one can become the full and complete person he hopes to be. In spite of what the university may appear to be, my feeling is that the university is a place where three important processes occur.

Firstly, it is a place to explore. By that I mean it is a place where the student can come to feel the freedom to examine vast areas of knowledge with few restrictions and prohibitions. It is a place where he can come to ask the whys of nature and of man, a place that contains no limit to the frontiers of knowledge; a place that leaves man more excited about the unknown and satisfied with the known.

Amore

From this healthy confrontation with new knowledge we begin to develop the important virtue of intellectual humility. For as one comes to know more he also comes to recognize the limitations of his knowledge and this is the seed of wisdom.

Secondly, the university is a place where we can come to learn to express ourselves. It is a place where we can feel free to examine our values, our personal aspiration, express our hopes for the future and our despair with the past. Of course when I say that the University is a place to express oneself I do not mean that it is a place to express oneself in revolution.

Quite the contrary the university is a unique institution in society that teaches us to dissent without hate, how to disagree without aggression, how to solve problems without anarchy and revolution. This is the place, and this is the time where we come to express ourselves as individuals in our own unique way. The time in which we come to develop a sense of dignity for ourselves and for all others.

Lastly, the university is a place to grow. It is the place wherein the human metamorphosis unfolds the mature man and woman from the once uncertain high school student. This is the time for us to experiment in our growth; to take the risks by assuming more responsibility, the time for gambling with success because we are more ready for it, the time for becoming what we could potentially become. This is the process in which we develop character, that unifying thread that makes us uniquely ourselves.

These are the essential characteristics of the university. You are about to become a part of this institution. Those of us who are in it are welcoming you in the hope that you can add to the stature and dimension of the institution that you are going to be part of.

The university has much to offer you and you much to offer the university. Bring to it your sense of youth, your sense of courage, your sense of excitement

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and add to it your personal responsibility, your commitment to life, your human concern, and you will flourish to your personal fulfillment.

Perhaps what I wish to say is best said by an unknown author who said:
"Time to live".

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