

Graduation Day Commemorative Speech

Saturday 30 November 2013

Good evening everyone and a belated welcome to you all to our Year 12 Graduation for 2013. In particular I want to especially welcome Brothers Lawrie and Bill and thank them for joining us tonight as we celebrate this special occasion of Graduation.

And, indeed, a special event it is: the end of school, the end of the years at Marist, and the setting out on a new episode in the journey of life. It's only fitting that we commemorate the Marist journey and in doing so acknowledge the contributions, achievements, events and successes which have been part of the journey we have travelled together these last years.

First, on behalf of us all I'd like to thank those who have worked hard to organize these Graduation events: Chris Morrissey, Jane Pamentor, Viv Komorowski, Sandra Marron, Peter Hawes, Kathleen Garvie, John Folan, the House Deans, Year 12 Associates, the Year 11 parent volunteers and the Facilities staff. I'm sure you'd agree with me they have done an outstanding job.

Second, thank you to all who have made speeches yesterday and tonight. Thank you Fr Brian, Liam, Christine Robertson, Matthew, Dan Fulton and Damon for your reflections and for the heartfelt sentiments and wisdom that each of you has so eloquently expressed to our gatherings. The speeches have been outstanding and certainly memorable.

Damon, thank you for your toast to the College. Your sincere words as always are rooted in a deep commitment to Marist and to the Marist ethos and they leave us better for having reflected on them.

Third, to you Year 12, 2013 congratulations to each of you on graduating and as well and equally important congratulations to all the parents, family members and to staff – Graduation also celebrates the efforts of those people in helping you reach this point here tonight. To those families ending their direct association with Marist, thank you for your support and our sincere best wishes for the future, a future which I hope will see you remain connected to Marist.

Farewell to **Glen Seivers, Christine Robertson** and **Anne Fulton**.

As we enjoy the occasion of tonight no doubt there will be lots of memories of the past. For many of you the journey began in Year 4 in 2005, then many more boys came in Years 5, 6 and 7 and more since then. In your first days at Marist there was no doubt some hesitation mixed with pride and uncertainty, hope and excitement and the Marist journey was underway. It is wonderful to look back and see just how far these young men have grown and matured. It has been a privilege being part of their journey and one which will leave me with many happy memories.

The first memory I'd like to share is the massive effort made by you towards service and this has been spoken about at length already. Every boy has achieved his bronze Mates award for 25 hours service. Extraordinary. Never has service in the College been so strongly supported. Your gift to the College of a Mates Service honour board is an appropriate one and much appreciated. Your service sets an excellent benchmark for future years to follow. So has your leadership in Youth

Ministry – an area of College life primarily for seniors and heavily supported by many of you.

My second memory will be of the generous way you participated in school life. Your involvement was wide ranging and again you leave us with a good legacy for younger boys to follow. Many of you have done many things over many years right across the spectrum of offerings at Marist. Sport has played a major role in your co-curricular activities and for me seeing the senior teams play for Marist with spirit, passion and pride has been wonderful. Three teams stand out: it was great to see our First XI football team return to Marist and play again in Marist colours and do well, it was inspiring to see our First XIII AFL team stay competitive and determined during a season in which they faced overwhelming odds; and it was great to see our First XV play courageously to reach the final only to be beaten. Many of you came to Canberra Stadium to watch the Grand Final and few if not all will remember that part of the match while defending their line the Marist team rallied to the singing of sub tuum by the Marist supporters almost certainly started by the single voice of one of our seniors. Such is the Marist spirit.

My third memory will be of boys growing up. Every boy has his own story to tell and any number of boys could be the subject of this short story but one boy's journey will always stay with me and reflects really well on the school, on the young man and on his parents. In his early years this boy was in constant trouble and unhappy. He spent a lot of time in his House Dean's office and with Mr Morrissey. To be honest he was probably lucky to reach Year 9. But now he finishes school at Marist as a mature, sensible, generous and good young man. He is a fine example of growing up the Marist way as all these young men are each having his own story to tell of his journey to tonight.

My final and most important memory will be of you being an outstanding year group: positive, generous, supportive, boys who gave more than they took, boys who looked after the younger boys, boys who worked together, kept together, boys who were proudly Marist and who did their best to live by our College values.

Those are my memories and for them and everything else, I thank you.

So here we are at the end of the Marist journey, a chapter in the story of your lives which I hope sees you leave with happy memories and good friendships.

It's customary to give advice on such occasions and while I hesitate to do so I do wish a number of things for each of you.

I hope your years ahead continue to be characterized by generosity of spirit, compassion in service, understanding and kindness.

I hope you always find time to let Jesus, Mary and Marcellin guide you as they guide our school.

I hope you work hard, enjoy life, give your best in all you do.

I hope you always stay Marist, live your lives by our values and see good in all the things that come your way.

And finally, **I hope** you always keep the faith and remain faithful, Thank you again. Congratulations and sincere best wishes for the future.

Servo Fidem