

# Address to the Class of 1972

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How are you, '72?

Welcome home, everybody!

I enjoyed the reminiscences last evening in conjunction with the recollection of colleagues whom I haven't seen in 50 years.

Thank you, my friend, for that kind introduction.

Many thanks, as well, to those members of the Holy Cross Family who inspired, initiated, and/or fulfilled the process resulting in my presence here today.

And surely a salute to you, the great Tiger Class of 1972, for sharing your Golden Jubilee with me. . . . But first and foremost, let's be clear: Today is not about me. It is about you. . . . Congratulations to all of you.

Certainly, it is with equal measures of HUMILITY and PRIDE that I wholeheartedly and gratefully accept this honorary diploma. . . . You'll never know how much Holy Cross's gesture means to me. . . . Indeed, it is a treasure!

Additionally, I am privileged to join you and all of the other Holy Cross Men in our special bond of brotherhood. I truly cherish such inclusion.

Shifting gears somewhat, I want to recite a short prayer for you. It is entitled "A Teacher's Prayer." It appears on the back of this "holy card." Don't recall where I got it. Must have been at a retreat or some archdiocesan workshop. No authorship is cited.

I would refer to it to seek solace after a tough day in the trenches, particularly in the early years when one discovers how to become a good teacher. To me, it expresses the NOBILITY of the teaching profession.

I want to teach my students how  
To live this life on earth  
To face its struggles and its strife  
And improve their worth

Not just the lesson in a book  
Or how the rivers flow  
But how to choose the proper path  
Wherever they may go

To understand eternal truth  
And know the right from wrong  
And gather all the beauty of  
A flower or a song

For if I help the world to grow  
In wisdom and in grace  
Then I shall feel that I have won  
And I have filled my place

And so I ask your guidance, God,  
That I may do my part  
For character and confidence  
And happiness of the heart.

Some years ago, a fellow teacher once remarked, "Teach, don't allow yourself to love an institution because it is incapable of loving you back."

Well, Holy Cross's gesture to me seems to expose that notion as possible mythology. Here's the evidence!

You know, our 32<sup>nd</sup> president, Franklin Delano Roosevelt opined, "Man's desire to be remembered is colossal."

Accordingly, thanks for the memories – and for REMEMBERING!

FDR also had some thoughts about public speaking: "Be sincere, be brief, be seated."

I think I've achieved the first two requirements. I figure it's time to heed the third.