

**Graduation Remarks**  
**Saint Xavier High School**  
**May 22, 2016**

Members of the Class of 2016, congratulations, once again! It was a pleasure for Mr. Espinosa and me to present a diploma to each of you and to honor Oliver with the very special Xaverian Award. Oliver, in recognizing you, we recognize the Xaverian journey you have experienced within the context of your class.

You know, in some ways it does seem like yesterday when you registered for freshman classes, came to your first team practice or activity meeting, or when I spoke to you each summer at the class orientation assembly. Since those days, extraordinary things have happened:

- You learned how to get around in a big school; remember the first searches for rooms and traffic patterns?
- You learned how to hear and find what was being offered or what opportunities you had to connect to St. X, but also to discern your talents and interests and to hone your skills. Think about how you felt in those first assemblies, meetings, practices, first days of class each year, and countless other events and gatherings. How have you seen change in yourself over these short years? Think about your classmates sitting around you here and others who were there with you as you came to know yourself and experienced each event.
- We, as administrators, teachers, counselors, coaches and staff, see that you have become yourselves --- the men

you were intended to be. You have learned how to navigate the waters, the options, make decisions, schedule your time, become responsible for yourself. You have demonstrated that you certainly have become better at all those things. That's quite extraordinary! Those traits will be crucial next year.

- You have dealt with successes, achievements, many championships, awards and honors --- each a wonderful accomplishment and collectively quite extraordinary.
- Individually and collectively, you have learned how to read analytically, to write, research, calculate, compute, conjugate, code, shape, phrase, tune, draw, paint, sculpt, and graph ---- all regular school topics and developmental skills, but some of you have mastered them beyond your years and all of you have been exposed to more than you probably expected or dreamed that you could do when you entered St. X.
- Even more, all of these academic and skill areas taken together mean you have learned how to think. Critical thinking will serve you wherever you land for further study, in whatever career you find yourself and however your unique and extraordinary journey unfolds.
- Just as you have celebrated success, you have practiced humility in defeat, dealt with grief, learned how to persevere when times are tough in a course, in a season, in learning another language, or as you didn't get elected, didn't get a part, sat on a bench or stood on a sideline. Those things are now part of the fabric of your life and

provide strength in your toolbox for challenges ahead in life.

- You also have learned how to serve, being a good steward of your resources, gifts and talents and generous in your responses to needs near and far.
- All of these things and events are part of the common, ordinary experience of daily life as a high school student, son, brother, friend and Tiger.
- But your collective learning and response have been quite extraordinary! And that has been our theme for the year, coming out of *Xaverian Fundamental Principles*: Finding the extraordinary in the ordinary; becoming extraordinary through hard work, effort, perseverance, and service.
- In so doing and in all that you have accomplished, these traits have developed you into leaders who have made a difference at St. X and who can make a real difference on college campuses, in professional life, in your families, in our parishes, and literally all over the world in the years to come.

Thus, we send you forth to continue to study, think, sweat, struggle, persevere, serve, pray, and contribute positively wherever life's journey leads you. You have the talents. You are prepared. Be confident, step up, shoulder the weight or take a big swing. You will continue to see the extraordinary things you will accomplish and your St. X Family will be very proud!

Now, as we take leave from this final full gathering for the Class of 2016, I ask all of the St. X alumni other than this class to please stand. Look around, these men and thousands of others welcome you into the alumni ranks, will work to open doors for you and stand with you in your achievements and your challenges. Stand up, Class of 2016, our newest alumni, and join us. Together, we all can turn the ordinary stuff we have to do into extraordinary outcomes.

And now I ask all to stand as we offer a blessing and prayer:

- God of all ages, we give you thanks for the wonderful men in this class. Continue to bring to fulfillment the good works that you have begun in them. Give them grace that they may be wise; trusting in their own abilities and education and those of their classmates; proud, yet humble servant leaders; and X-men filled with zeal for life, compassion for others, and a gift for finding simplicity in our most complex world. Help keep them connected to one another and to St. X, watch over them, and fill them with faith and hope.
- We ask this through Christ, our brother and friend, who is with us always and calls us to share his extraordinary life as people made in God's image.
- In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.....AMEN.