

Jordan Jones

St. Andrew's Priory Class of 2018 Commencement Speech

Aloha everyone and welcome to the commencement ceremony for the St. Andrew's Priory Class of 2018. My name is Jordan Jones, and I am so honored to stand before you as president of this amazing graduating class, who have been a part of my life for 13 wonderful years at this school. Every single one of them has touched my life in some way, and I know that the memories we have created together will stay in our hearts long after this ceremony is over and we exit this cathedral as high school graduates.

Before that happens, however, I want to take a moment to pause and reflect on one of the most important lessons I have learned from my time at the Priory. Throughout our time here, our class has experienced moments of grandeur but also moments of failure. Each of those moments, good and bad, have been instrumental in shaping who we are as individual people and who we are as a class. I have witnessed each of you grow into mature, strong individuals who have been steadfast through uncertain change or difficult trials. In the movie *Rocky VI*, boxer Rocky Balboa tells his distressed son, "You, me, or nobody is gonna hit as hard as life. But it ain't about how hard ya hit. It's about how hard you can get hit and keep moving forward. How much you can take and keep moving forward. That's how winning is done!" I believe this is absolutely true. It is not just applicable to winning a boxing match or a competition; I believe this is also true in our every day lives. We are all called to be people of integrity and character who can move mountains only if we have the determination to do so. If I can leave you, my dear classmates, with any piece of wisdom as we are moments away from entering the real world, it would be that no matter what obstacle you face, no matter who is standing in your way, and no matter how truly defeated you may feel, you can and you will persevere. I have seen this fighting spirit in each one of you and am inspired daily by the way you each stand up for yourself and each other. I encourage you to carry this with you throughout your entire lives, and never forget to give thanks to God and never stop believing in yourself or your capabilities.

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To conclude, I would like to tie this lesson back to our class theme: Finding Seniors. Through perseverance, each of us has found our calling after high school, and we are very different people than we were at the beginning of this year. We went from drowning in an ocean of uncertainty to surfing on the waves of opportunity. Thank you to everyone who has poured into our lives and guided us through this amazing journey, including our families, friends, trustees, alumni, teachers, and staff. Mahalo St. Andrew's for everything you have done for our class and for the many lessons we have learned here.