

Fairfield University
Graduate Commencement Address 2011

who we are today aligns with who we are called to be. Through reflection, we can bring about the change we need in our own lives, so that we are prepared to enact change in the world.

Excellence means seeking greatness in small things.

In *The Jesuit Guide to (Almost) Everything*, Jesuit author Fr. Jim Martin wrote “Anyone who dreams of doing great things for God can live out the *magis* – whether you are a father caring for your young child, a middle-aged woman nursing your aging parent, or an inner-city teacher working overtime to tutor a needy student. Great works are of

unappreciated by my boss, Janet Canepa. She genuinely cares for my personal well-being and has been one of my biggest supporters in pursuing my graduate degree. Although I don't need to be thanked for doing "my job," her small, daily acts of kindness, her thank you notes, and her friendship are the greatest gifts of all – they affirm who I am as a person.

Excellence means living passionately.

We have a responsibility to share our talents that have been bestowed upon us to be "men and women for others". I can think of no better example of someone that espouses this Jesuit

the loneliness. We must have the courage to recognize it. The poor you may have right in your own family. Find them. Love them.” We can learn from Mother Teresa how to live out our personal vocations by respecting the dignity of all people, starting with those in our families, at work, and in our communities. There is real truth in the ancient African proverb: “It takes a whole village to raise a child”. I know I would not be able to live out my vocation without the love and support from my family, friends, and this Fairfield community.

Excellence means transforming the world with our hearts and minds.

We all have a calling to be ethical and responsible, not only to our employers, but to the common good. Those in business must work to ensure that the company and the community

Those who are writers connect us through language that enlivens us and reveals to us who we are through stories, poetry, novels, and memoirs. Among us today are the first graduates of the Master of Fine Arts in Creative Writing program, whose art is the outcome of inspiration, patience, and perseverance. May we all learn to harness the demands on our time to refocus our attention on what's truly important and employ our words to bring about positive change.

Those who are health care professionals play a critical role caring for the whole person, from shepherding life into the world to helping transition souls to the next. Through the School of Nursing's master's and Doctor of Nursing Practice programs, Fcn54004 cm0.86 cm B7(ne) 4 -2 (ng) 20 ra

Master in Nursing Education. Mom, thank you for serving as an inspiration to your family, for never giving up, for pursuing your dreams, and for teaching us to live with purpose and meaning.

At times, this constant longing for excellence may feel like mixed blessing where there is