

Dear Graduates,

I know that least one of you, but probably all of you will know the source of this quote: "What we do in life, echoes in eternity."

What you probably don't know that the original source of this quote is the *Meditations* of Marcus Aurelius.

"What we do in life, echoes in eternity." This is very compelling when it is boldly declared by Russell Crowe before his character leads his men into battle.

It should be compelling to you here and now as you begin the adult stage of your life. Eternity. We are all created for an eternal end--Heaven. Of course, we all know that some people reject this end. Some people reject Heaven. But no one can escape the inevitability of spending eternity somewhere.

So if there is one thing that I would like for you to take with you it is this: Always structure your life according to your eternal end. As your responsibilities grow, this task will grow too. The task will demand more or more. This is why your call to grow in knowledge does not end here. It is just the beginning. For you will need to listen for God's will for your vocation and order it according to your eternal end. Someday you may need to order a marriage and the raising of children according to your eternal end. You may need to play a role in ordering your community and Church according to your eternal end. That is what our two honorees tonight have been doing all their lives.

These task will be challenging. You will need to grow in knowledge and virtue. You will need to seek God's grace, especially through the sacraments. You will need to commit yourselves as if you were going into battle.

To bear witness to corruption in the hierarchy of the Catholic Church was a painful decision for me, and remains so. But I am an old man, one who knows he must soon give an accounting to the Judge for his actions and omissions, one who fears Him who can cast body and soul into hell. A Judge who, even in his infinite mercy, will render to every person salvation or damnation according to what he has deserved. Anticipating the dreadful question from that Judge – "How could you, who had knowledge of the truth, keep silent in the midst of falsehood and depravity?" -- what answer could I give?

May God always give you the courage and knowledge to order your affairs according to your eternal end. Thank you and may God bless you!